

## ABSTRACT

### INTENDED INFIDELITY: MALE-FEMALE DIFFERENCES IN INTENTION-BEHAVIOR CONGRUENCE AND THE RELATIVE PREDICTION POWER OF GENDER, RELATIONSHIP AND INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCE VARIABLES

By

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Compared to actual infidelity, little research has been carried out on intended infidelity. Based on male-female differences in sexual interest, stronger male than female interest in extra-dyadic sex (EDS) was predicted. The effects of relationship quality and individual differences in sexual interest, sensation seeking, and masculinity on intended EDS were also assessed. Males scored significantly higher than females on almost all sexual interest variables and indicated a significantly greater interest in EDS.

Sexual interest, as measured by socio-sexual orientation (SO), was a much stronger predictor of intended EDS than gender or relationship quality. SO fully mediated the effect of gender on EDS; however, sensation seeking and masculinity revealed no mediation. Contrary to expectations, relationship satisfaction had a greater impact on intended EDS at higher levels than at lower levels of SO. Willingness to have sex with someone who is already in a relationship proved the strongest predictor of intended EDS.

*Keywords:* Infidelity, Male, Female, Sexuality, Extra-dyadic sex (EDS),  
Relationship quality, Socio-sexual orientation (SO).

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BEHAVIOR CONGRUENCE AND THE RELATIVE PREDICTION POWER OF  
GENDER, RELATIONSHIP AND INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCE VARIABLES

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

EDS	Extra Dyadic Sex
EMS	Extra Marital Sex
SOI	Socio-Sexual Orientation Inventory
BSSS	Brief Sensation Seeking Scale
BSRI	Bem Sex Role Inventory

## CHAPTER 1

### MALE-FEMALE DIFFERENCES IN ACTUAL AND INTENDED INFIDELITY

#### Introduction

A couple hires a contractor. One day while the husband is at work the man, who is himself married, corners the wife in the laundry room and asks her to have sex. She declines and the husband fires him.

A woman applies for a job. The boss, although married, says he will only hire her if she has sex with him. She decides not to take the job.

A nanny is approached in the middle of the night by the husband of her employer. He asks her to have sex but she declines. The next day when she tells his wife, the wife does not believe her and the nanny quits her job.

In each of these cases, a man who is in a committed relationship attempts to have sexual relations outside the committed relationship but finds himself unable to realize this. As I gathered more and more of these stories from around the world, always with the man initiating and the woman refusing regardless of who was in the power position, I began to wonder whether there was a larger discrepancy between actual and intended infidelity for males than for females.

#### Observational Input for a Greater Male than Female Discrepancy between Intended and Actual Infidelity

My interest in intended infidelity was initially roused through observation. Several of my female friends had repeatedly been sexually approached by married or co-

habiting men; however, they usually declined these approaches because they were not interested in having an affair with an already occupied man. That means the affair did not actually take place, even though the male party had strongly indicated an interest in it. Other observations include the staggering number of live-in nannies and female housekeepers all over the world who are sexually approached by married men each year, and the sexual harassment that frequently occurs in the workplace. Several women I had met from the Middle East, for example, had to decline jobs because the employer, often married, required them to sleep with him in order to get the job.

In addition, I came across many happily married or romantically involved males but not females who were actively looking for low-cost sexual opportunities on the side. When asked what compelled them, they often indicated that it gave them excitement. However, they frequently had to go to great lengths to convince a woman to enter into a sexual relationship with them, and often did not succeed unless they significantly lowered their standards. Many women made it clear that they did not want sex unless they had a relationship, while these men wanted exactly the opposite: sex but no relationship.

Considering the difficulty of engaging in affairs – the overwhelming majority of people disapprove of them (e.g., Laumann, Gagnon, Michael, & Michaels, 1994; Lieberman, 1988; Smith, 1994; Thompson, 1984; Treas & Giesen, 2000; Weiss & Slosnerick, 1981; Wiederman & Allgeier, 1996) and generally spouses as well as relatives, friends, and the community seem to do everything to prevent them from happening – it would come as no surprise that many people cannot turn their desires into reality, or cannot do so as often as they would like. There are large costs associated with infidelity, such as the risk of being discovered and getting into trouble with one's partner

or spouse, losing one's spouse, being battered or killed by one's spouse or his or her relatives, retribution by the spouse of the consenting party if that party is also involved in a relationship, and contracting a sexually transmitted disease (e.g., Buss & Schmitt, 1993; Daly & Wilson, 1988; Ellis & Symons, 1990; Greiling & Buss, 2000; Stone, Goetz, & Shackelford, 2005; Symons, 1979). Also, since women are often specifically not interested in men who are already in a relationship (Buss & Schmitt, 1993), opportunities to engage in infidelity for males are further reduced. Opportunity has been found to be a strong factor in the occurrence of infidelity (Atkins, Baucom, & Jacobson, 2001; Blumstein & Schwartz, 1983; Traeen & Stigum, 1998; Treas & Giesen, 2000; Wiggins & Lederer, 1984), indicating that when people have the opportunity to engage in affairs, they often do.

These observations led me to hypothesize that males are generally more interested in sexual infidelity than females, such that there is a greater discrepancy for males than for females between actual and intended infidelity. I also expect that barking dogs do bite: that those who display a greater interest in extra-dyadic sexual affairs through joking and flirting are, in fact, more interested. I further predict that the association between relationship quality and intended infidelity is weaker for males than for females, such that males are more likely to be interested in extra-dyadic sex regardless of their relationship status.

In sum, I propose that females are essentially monogamous, while males are essentially polygamous, although there are tremendous individual differences within the sexes and much overlap between them (Lippa, 2009). Some men would probably never cheat, even when given the opportunity, while others actively and continuously look for

it. I propose, however, that on the whole, polygamy would generally be preferred by a large number of males if societal deterrents were removed. In fact, in many traditional societies polygamy was the norm, although it was usually reserved for those with greater resources or higher status because such males had the ability to provide for multiple females (e.g., Betzig, 1986; Buss, 2003; Symons, 1979; R. Wright, 1994).

The following literature review will address the incidence of actual, intended and attempted infidelity, male-female differences in sexual interest, and the association between relationship satisfaction and infidelity. I will conclude with a statement of hypotheses.

#### Extra-Dyadic Sex: Incidence and Intention

Infidelity has been a recurring theme throughout history ever since Paris ran off with Helen of Troy. It is the single largest cause for marriage dissolution (Betzig, 1989) and a major reason for couples to seek therapy (e.g., Atkins, Baucom & Jacobson, 2001; Whisman, Dixon, & Johnson, 1997). Instances of infidelity are on the rise, and have been especially increasing for women since they have entered the workforce (Edwards & Booth, 1976; Greeley, 1994; Hunt, 1974; Lawson & Samson, 1988; Schwartz & Rutter, 1998). Studies have mostly been carried out in anonymous questionnaire form, although some have employed person-to-person interviewing. Respondents have been recruited from universities as well as the general population. Earlier studies have mostly focused on extra-marital sexual – and sometimes emotional – relations, while later studies have started to look at extra-dyadic involvements for dating and co-habiting couples as well. I will focus mostly on extra-dyadic sexual relations for heterosexual couples in any type of

committed, not just married, relationships. I will take “infidelity” to mean involving at least some extra-dyadic genital contact or intercourse.

Different terms have been used throughout the literature for infidelity. Besides the general terms, “affair”, “adultery”, “cheating”, “infidelity” and “betrayal,” which are not always clear on exactly what behavior is involved (although they generally assume inclusion of sexual contact), more specific research terms have been used, such as extra-marital or extra-dyadic sex, involvement, relations, coitus, and intercourse. I will mostly use the terms EMS (extra-marital sex) and EDS (extra-dyadic sex) in addition to the general term, “infidelity” and occasionally the terms, “affair” and “cheating” (which, in this context, are meant to include sexual activity). See Thompson (1983) for a review on term usage and relative advantages and disadvantages of each.

#### Incidence of Actual Infidelity

Infidelity estimates range from 25-60% for men and 15-50% for women, depending on measurement instruments and target groups (e.g., Gangestad & Thornhill, 1997; Glass & Wright, 1992; Hunt, 1974; Simmons, Firman, Rhodes, & Peters, 2004; Thompson, 1983). Estimates from national probability samples are generally lower, but have tended to allow respondents to fill out questionnaires in the presence of family members, which is known to reduce estimates (R. E. Johnson, 1970a). Measuring techniques matter: anonymous computer-assisted self-interviews yielded much larger numbers of infidelity admissions than face-to-face interviews: an annual prevalence of 6.13% versus 1.08%, respectively (Whisman & Snyder, 2007).

The first to study human sexual relations in depth was Kinsey, who estimated that by age 40, about half of men and more than a quarter of women will have had sexual

relations with someone other than their marriage partner (Kinsey, Pomeroy, Martin, & Gebhard, 1953). In an extensive study using personal interviews with 3,000 married men and 6,000 married women, Kinsey and his associates found that 36% of men and 25% of women under age 40 had engaged in EMS (Kinsey, Pomeroy, & Martin, 1948; Kinsey et al., 1953). Subsequent studies have found similar numbers. In the NHSLS (National Health and Social Life Survey), one of the largest studies on sexuality using a probability sample of U.S. adults, Laumann et al. (1994) found that 25% of men and 15% of women had engaged in EMS at some point in their married lives. Although the NHSLS used face-to-face interviews, questions about infidelity were asked in self-administered anonymous questionnaires. In an analysis of the 1989 General Social Survey (GSS), which also used a national cross-sectional sample of U.S. adults, Wiederman (1997a) found that 23% of men and 12% of women had engaged in EMS. Although the GSS also used personal interviews, questions about infidelity were asked in anonymous, self-administered questionnaires as well. In an analysis of the 1991 GSS, Greeley (1994) found that 21% of males and 11% of females had engaged in EMS, and Atkins, Baucom and Jacobson (2001) who analyzed data from the GSS of 1991 to 1996 found that 13% of respondents had reported EMS. These numbers are likely to be under-estimations, however, because of the possibility of family members being in the room while filling out the questionnaires (Wiederman, 1997a).

Employing anonymous questionnaires, Glass and Wright (1985) reported that 44% of men and 24% of women had had sexual intercourse outside the marriage; Athanasiou, Shaver and Tavriss (1970) found that 40% of men and 26% of women had had EMS, and Hunt (1974) found that 41% of men and 18% of women had had EMS. In

a literature review on infidelity, Thompson (1983) concluded that about 50% of married men will have an affair at some point in their lives (p. 18). Hunt (1974) similarly gives a cumulative estimate of 50% for men, while Nass, Libby and Fisher (1981) project that by age 40, 50-65% of married men and 45-55% of married women will have had EMS (as cited in Thompson, 1983). In her book, *The Monogamy Myth* (1988), Vaughn estimates that about 60% of men and 40% of women will have an affair at some point in their married life, and she adds that this estimate is conservative (p. 7).

Separate studies on women's sexuality reported that 26% (R. R. Bell, Turner, & Rosen, 1975), 39% (Levin, 1975; Tavris & Sadd, 1975), and 32% (Maykovich, 1976) of women had engaged in EMS, while studies on men reported that 47% (Yablonsky, 1979), 66% (Hite, 1981), and 40% (Egan & Angus, 2004) had engaged in EMS at some point in their lives. Several of these studies employed very large sample sizes: for example, *The Hite Report on Male Sexuality* surveyed 7,239 men. However, they are not national randomized probability samples.

Dating and cohabiting couples appear to engage in EDS more frequently than married couples (e.g., Hansen, 1987; Lawson, 1988; Lieberman, 1988; Treas & Giesen, 2000). Regarding dating relationships, Feldman and Cauffman (1999) found that over a third of adolescents had cheated on their partner at some point in time, although they did not necessarily include sexual intercourse in their definition. For serious dating relationships, reported numbers for having engaged in EDS range around 40% for women and 50% for men (e.g., Lawson & Samson, 1988; Sheppard, Nelson, & Andreoli-Mathie, 1995; Thompson, 1984). Forste and Tanfer (1996) broke down the numbers for married, dating and cohabiting women from the 1981 National Survey of Women, and found that



10% of the overall sample had had a secondary sex partner, of which the percentages were 4% for married women, 18% for dating women and 20% for cohabiting women. Treas and Giesen (2000) found no difference between cohabiting (12%) and married (10%) respondents, while Hansen (1987) found that 35% of male and 12% of female students had had EDS. Wiederman and Hurd (1999) found that 49% of men and 31% of women had engaged in EDS while in a serious dating relationship.

Obtained values in infidelity studies are, if anything, an under-estimation of actual numbers, because even if guaranteed anonymity, some people still do not feel comfortable enough to report their affairs candidly (e.g., Drigotas & Barta, 2001; R. E. Johnson, 1970a; Thompson, 1983). Age of respondents should also be taken into consideration when asking about infidelity over the lifetime, since older people have had more opportunities to engage in extra-dyadic affairs. That means surveys generally under-estimate lifetime occurrence (Thompson, 1983).

#### Male-Female Differences in Actual Infidelity

There is some disagreement as to whether males are more likely to be unfaithful than females. An important issue is whether infidelity is defined as including sexual intercourse or not. There is some evidence that males are more likely to engage in sexual extra-dyadic relations, while females are more likely to engage in non-sexual ones (Glass & Wright, 1985). Blow and Hartnett (2005) and Thompson (1984) have argued for inclusion of both sexual and emotional components of infidelity in research; however, this study focuses primarily on sexual infidelity.

Most studies show that males are more likely to engage in infidelity than females both in marriage and in cohabiting and dating relationships (e.g., Allen & Baucom, 2004;

Blumstein & Schwartz, 1983; Glass & Wright, 1985; Hansen, 1987; Hunt, 1974; R. E. Johnson, 1970b; Laumann et al., 1994; Lawson & Samson, 1988; Spanier & Margolis, 1983; Treas & Giesen, 2000; Waite & Joyner, 2001; Wiederman & Hurd, 1999; Wiggins & Lederer, 1984). For example, all things being equal, according to Treas and Giesen (2000), being male increased the odds of having extramarital sex by 79%. According to Glass and Wright (1985), “the greater incidence of extramarital sexual intercourse by men is one of the most replicated findings in this literature” (p. 1114). Laumann et al. (1994) state that men are twice as likely as women to have had an extra-marital affair. Also, of those who cheat, men usually have a greater number of affairs (Lawson, 1988; Spanier & Margolis, 1983). According to Athanasiou et al. (1970), men generally have EMS earlier in their marriage and have more extramarital partners than women.

However, women seem to be catching up. In younger and more recent cohorts, rates of infidelity are much more similar for males and females, and some authors claim that women are as unfaithful as men (Brand, Markey, Mills, & Hodges, 2007; Carroll, Volk, & Hyde, 1985; Choi, Catania, & Dolcini, 1994; Laumann et al., 1994; Mark, Janssen, & Milhausen, 2011; Oliver & Hyde, 1993; Thompson, 1983). For example, Wiederman (1997a) found no difference between men and women under 40, and Atkins, Baucom and Jacobson (2001) found no difference for men and women under 45. Lawson (1988), in her book, *Adultery: An Analysis of Love and Betrayal* notes that gender differences in infidelity have largely disappeared.

According to Spanier and Margolis (1983), an almost equal percentage of males and females had engaged in EMS, but males had a greater number of EMS partners than females. In fact, they found that 26% of unfaithful husbands had had more than three

extramarital partners, while only 5% of unfaithful wives did. Lawson and Samson (1988) similarly found that half of women who had EMS had only one to three involvements while 40% of men had four or more. Extra-dyadic involvements are also more likely to include sex for males. For example, Feldman and Cauffman (1999) found that male and female late adolescents had similar rates of cheating, but males' extra-dyadic involvements were more likely to include intercourse.

#### Male-Female Differences in Intended Infidelity

Comparatively few studies have been carried out on intended infidelity. All have found a greater male than female desire to engage in EDS. R. E. Johnson (1970b) found that, among married people who reported they had not experienced an opportunity for extra-marital sex, almost half (48%) of men indicated they would like to have such an opportunity, while only 5% of women did. In a study on German couples, Sigush and Schmidt (1971) found that among dating couples, 46% of men, but only 6% of women indicated they would take the opportunity to engage in sexual intercourse with an attractive person of the opposite sex if it were provided. Medora and Burton (1981) asked 100 middle-aged American couples whether they would like to engage in EMS, and 48% of husbands answered affirmatively, while only 5% of wives did.

Prins, Buunk and VanYperen (1993) noted that although men and women did not differ in actual behavior, men had a stronger desire to engage in EMS. Buunk (1981) asked a sample of Dutch couples whether they would have EMS if an opportunity was provided, and found that men had a significantly greater inclination towards EMS than women. On a 5-point response scale from "absolutely not" (1) to "absolutely" (5), men averaged a 2.4, while women averaged a 1.8. Andrus, Redfering, and Oglesby (1977), in

a study on actual infidelity, also found that males had a greater desire for EMS than females, but did not specify any gender-breakdown in responses (their overall regression equation had a significance value of  $p < .001$ ). Greeley, based on personal interviews, reported that “some Americans admit they would have extra-marital sex if their mate would not find out” (as cited in Treas & Giesen, 2000, p. 49). Buunk and Bakker (1995) also found that males had a significantly greater willingness to engage in EDS (men:  $M = 2.36$ ,  $SD = 1.49$ , women:  $M = 1.81$ ,  $SD = 1.17$  on a 5-point scale), and that those cohabiting were somewhat more inclined than those who were married. McAlister, Pachana, and Jackson (2005) used EDS inclination as a proxy for actual EDS in a study on multiple predictors of infidelity. They found that males had a much stronger inclination to engage in EDS than females ( $R = -.28$ ,  $p < .001$ ), although the correlation decreased significantly when all other predictors were added to the model.

Buss and Shackelford (1997), in a study on the likelihood that people will engage in infidelity in the future, found that less than 2-5% of respondents were so inclined, with no significant male-female differences. However, they only studied couples who had just married, and inquired about the likelihood they might engage in infidelity within the next year. Also, they asked whether people believed they would engage in infidelity, not whether they would if they had the opportunity and there were no constraints. When imagining themselves in a marriage (Townsend & Levy, 1990) or committed relationship (Lalasz & Weigel, 2011), men also reported greater interest to engage in infidelity. Lastly, males in a committed relationship were twice as likely as females to desire sex with their opposite-sex friends (Bleske & Buss, 2000).

Stone et al. (2005), in a study on ideal mating arrangements, provided several options, among which “marriage to one partner, with freedom to have casual sex partners” (p. 273). Significantly more males than females chose this option (men: 13.4%, women: 9.5%). Males also chose as more interesting the option of having multiple wives. However, at the same time, males and females both overwhelmingly preferred a monogamous mating arrangement without extra-dyadic involvement (“Faithful marriage to one partner”: men: 78.0%, women: 84.8%), although the possibility remains they may have done so because they wanted their *partner* to be faithful. Boekhout, Hendrick and Hendrick (2003) similarly found that males favored non-exclusivity in their relationships more than females did (male  $M = .76$ , female  $M = .33$  on a 0-4 point scale at  $p < .001$ ).

In the only experimental study on interest in extra-dyadic involvement, Seal, Agostinelli, and Hannett (1994) measured willingness to go out on a date with an attractive person while in a relationship. Males indicated a much greater willingness than females to become physically involved with an attractive stranger they had interacted with or observed (males  $M = 48.5$ , females  $M = 27.6$ ), and those with a more unrestricted socio-sexual orientation (SO) reported greater interest in it than those with a more restricted SO (this will be covered later). Lastly, Schmitt’s (2003) cross-cultural study on male-female differences in sexuality indirectly found evidence for a greater male interest in infidelity. Regarding their question on desired future sexual partners, they found that 3.5% of married women but 12.8% of married men indicated they desired more than one sexual partner in the next month.

Males also hold more permissive attitudes toward infidelity than females (e.g., Christensen, 1973; Glass & Wright, 1992; Lieberman, 1988; Medora & Burton, 1981; Oliver & Hyde, 1993; Peplau, Fingerhut, & Beals, 2004; Reiss, Anderson, & Sponaugle, 1980; Sheppard et al., 1995), and are more approving of sexual reasons for infidelity than females (Dreznick, 2003; Kitzinger & Powell, 1995; Oliver & Hyde, 1993). There is a strong association between attitudes toward infidelity and actual behavior as well as willingness to become extra-dyadically involved (Buunk & Bakker, 1995; Feldman & Cauffman, 1999; Glass & Wright, 1992; Prins et al., 1993; Simpson & Gangestad, 1991; Smith, 1994; Thompson 1984; Treas & Giesen, 2000; Wiederman, 1997a). Males are also more approving of the desire for sexual variety as a reason for extra-dyadic involvement, whereas females generally indicated they could not understand it (Kinsey et al., 1953; Lieberman, 1988). All in all, males appear to be more interested in EDS than females, and are more frequently involved in it. There are more males than females who indicate a desire to be extra-dyadically involved but have not been able to translate this desire into action. Reasons for males' generally greater interest in infidelity, as well as reasons some males have not been able to turn this desire into action, or have not done so as often as they would like, will be addressed in Chapter 2.

## CHAPTER 2

### MALE-FEMALE DIFFERENCES IN SEXUALITY

#### Grounds for Expecting Male-Female Differences in Intended Infidelity

Males are generally known to be the pursuers and females the gate keepers when it comes to sexual relationships (e.g., Buss & Schmitt, 1993; Daly & Wilson, 1983; Egan & Angus, 2004; Greer & Buss, 1994; Kenrick, Sadalla, Groth, & Trost, 1990; McCormick, 1979; Regan, 1998; Rubin, Peplau, & Hill, 1981; Simpson & Gangestad, 1991; Stone et al., 2005; Symons, 1979; Trivers, 1972). Formerly, there was a consensus that males and females were similar in sex drive and degree of sexual interest (see Baumeister, Catanese, & Vohs, 2001, for a review), but this has turned out to be incorrect. Study after study has found that the average male has a stronger sex drive and shows more interest in sex than the average female (see also Baumeister et al., 2001; Peplau, 2003; and Sprecher & McKinney, 1993 for reviews). In fact, the region of the brain dedicated to sexual pursuit is about 2.5 times larger in men than in women (Brizendine, 2006). Evidence for male-female differences in sexual interest and behavior will be addressed below.

According to Parental Investment Theory (Trivers, 1972), women are more discriminating when it comes to casual sex because in our evolutionary past they had more to lose by mating with incapable or non-committed males. If the father of their offspring did not stick around to provide resources or protect them, they and their offspring had a lower chance to survive (e.g., Buss & Schmitt, 1993; Daly & Wilson,

1983; Gangestad & Simpson, 2000; Greer & Buss, 1994; Kenrick et al., 1990; Scheib, 2001; Symons, 1979; Townsend & Levy, 1990; Trivers, 1972).

According to Trivers (1972), the sex that invests more in its offspring should be more discriminating about whom to mate with. It has indeed been found that the heavier-investing sex is the one which is more selective with regard to short-term mating in every species, whether this is the male or the female (Archer & Lloyd, 2002; Clutton-Brock, 1991; Trivers, 1985). Lesser-investing males have been found to be less discriminating across all species (Alcock, as cited in Schmitt, Shackelford, & Buss, 2001; Bateman, as cited in Schmitt, 2003; Geary, 1998), whereas in sex-role reversed species, it is the female who is seeking multiple partners and requiring less time to consent to sex (Reynolds, 1987; Schmitt, 2003; Trivers, 1985). As Schmitt, Shackelford and Buss (2001) put it, “For the heavy-investing sex, a poor mate choice can have dire reproductive consequences” (p. 216).

In the human species, females are clearly the heavier-investing sex because of the cost of fertilization, gestation and lactation, while the minimum cost of parental investment for a male is often the act of sex itself (Barash & Lipton, 2001; Bjorklund & Shackelford, 1999; Ellis & Symons, 1990; Greer & Buss, 1994; Oliver & Hyde, 1993; Schmitt, 2003; Symons, 1979; Trivers, 1985). It is therefore no surprise that males would be more interested in short-term sex than females. Evolutionarily speaking, males had more to gain by desiring sexual variety and possessing a lower threshold for sexual arousal, because it would have generally left them with more offspring, even if not all those offspring survived (e.g., Bailey, Gaulin, Agyei, & Gladue, 1994; Buss & Schmitt, 1993; Clutton-Brock & Vincent, 1991; Ellis & Symons, 1990; Knoth, Boyd, & Singer,



1988; Townsend & Levy, 1990). Because of their lower levels of required minimum parental investment, males may be more likely to adopt a short-term mating strategy than females, although this is generally not the only strategy they adopt (Buss & Schmitt, 1993).

Because men are the lesser investing sex, they not only have less to lose from a poor mate choice, but also more to gain in terms of reproductive benefit by engaging in short-term as well as EDS with multiple partners (Buss, 1988; 1995; Davies & Shackelford, 2008; Schmitt, Shackelford, & Buss, 2001). This is not to say that females never gained by multiple mating, just that males were overall more likely to gain than females in reproductive output (Barash & Lipton, 2001; Buss & Schmitt, 1993; Schmitt, 2003; Schmitt, Shackelford, & Buss, 2001; Symons, 1979). For women, the quality of partners would have had more effect on their reproductive success than the quantity of partners, which would further explain their greater selectiveness (e.g., Bailey et al., 1994; Ellis, 1992; Gangestad & Thornhill, 1997). Engaging in indiscriminate, short-term sex with numerous partners could have caused additional problems for women, such as incurring a bad reputation, and the risk of being abused at the hands of a jealous husband (e.g., Bjorklund & Shackelford, 1999; Buss, 2003; Buss & Schmitt, 1993; Ellis, 1992; Gangestad & Thornhill, 1997; Hinde, 1984; Kenrick et al., 1990).

So in essence Parental Investment Theory predicts that the lesser investing sex has to compete more intensely for short-term mates by being willing to mate more quickly, at a lower cost, and with more partners (e.g., Barash, 1997; Bateson, 1983; Clutton-Brock & Parker, 1992; Maynard Smith, 1977; Schmitt, 2003; Symons, 1979; Trivers, 1972). In other words, males are expected to have evolved a greater desire for casual sex and

sexual variety, relaxing their standards for casual sex partners and allowing less time to elapse before engaging in sexual intercourse (Buss & Schmitt, 1993; Ellis & Symons, 1990; Schmitt, Shackelford, & Buss, 2001; Symons, 1979). Research addressing this will be discussed in the next two headings. Specifically, “Sexual Strategies Theory” predicts that men will express a greater interest in short-term mating than women in that they tend to desire a greater variety of sexual partners, allow less time to elapse before engaging in intercourse, and more actively seek out short-term sexual encounters than women do (Buss & Schmitt, 1993; Schmitt, Shackelford, & Buss, 2001).

This would also explain why women more often withhold sex until a man commits, while men more often evade commitment (Townsend & Levy, 1990). According to Gangestad and Simpson (2000), “It is more profitable (in general) for females to be coy, to hold back until they can identify males with the best genes. It is also important for the female to select males who are more likely to stay with them after insemination” (p. 576). Women also need time to evaluate potential partners on willingness and ability to commit to them and invest resources (Blumstein & Schwartz, 1983; Egan & Angus, 2004; Greer & Buss, 1994; Kenrick et al., 1990; Townsend & Levy, 1990). Indeed, as mentioned earlier, women who preferred men who displayed the ability and willingness to invest time and resources in them and their offspring increased the chances of those offspring surviving and reproducing, resulting in greater reproductive success (see Buss, 2007, for a review).

This would explain the stereotypical notion that women often do not want sex unless there is a relationship, as well as the idea of men wanting sexual variety, both of which I will address below. Lastly, it can explain why males may be more likely to adopt

a “mixed” sexual strategy in which they are committed to and invested in their wife and offspring, yet at the same time remain open to low-cost sexual opportunities on the side (Gangestad & Simpson, 2000; Trivers, 1972; Symons, 1979; R. Wright, 1994).

Evolutionarily speaking, men can increase their reproductive success more than women by engaging in EDS, and may therefore show more interest in it (Buss, 1988).

### The Biological Basis of Male-Female Differences in Sexuality

Although part of the male-female difference in sex drive may have been acquired through social learning, at least part of it is biological. Individuals going through hormonal treatment for medical purposes or sex-change, reported increased sex drive when treated with testosterone, and decreased sex drive when given estrogens (e.g., Bancroft, 1984; Sherwin, Gelfand, & Brender, 1985; Shifren et al., as cited in Baumeister et al., 2001; Van Goozen, Cohen-Kettenis, Gooren, Frijda, & Van de Poll, 1995). The self-identified “Butch”-type in lesbian relationships has also been found to exhibit higher testosterone levels as well as more typically male behaviors, such as sexual promiscuity, dominant behavior, and a greater interest in erotica (Loulan, 1990, as cited in Baumeister et al., 2001; Pearcey, Docherty, & Dabbs, 1996; Singh, Vidaurri, Zambarano, & Dabbs, 1999). The sharp increase in thinking about sex in pubescent males is directly related to their rising testosterone levels, which are much higher in boys than in girls (Udry, Billy, Morris, Groff, & Raj, 1985; Udry, Talbert, & Morris, 1986). See Baumeister et al. (2001, p. 265) and Regan (1999) for more information on the increasingly important role of testosterone in human sexual behavior and desire, and Lippa (2005) for a general review on the biological basis of gender differences in sexuality.

## Males Have a Stronger Sex Drive than Females

Males experience significantly more frequent and intense sexual arousal than females do (e.g., Beck, Bozman, & Qualtrough, 1991; Ellis & Symons, 1990; Eysenck, 1971; Kinsey et al., 1953; Jones & Barlow, 1990; Knoth et al., 1988; Peplau, 2003; Regan & Atkins, 2006), and this appears to be the case across cultures (e.g., Asayama, 1975; Schmitt, 2005; Useche, Villegas, & Alzate, 1990). For example, in a study across 53 nations, men were found to have a significantly greater sex drive than women (Lippa, 2009). In fact, men think about sex more often (e.g., Buss, 2003; Eysenck, 1971, 1976; Hunt, 1974; Laumann et al., 1994; Regan & Atkins, 2006), want sex more often (e.g., Ard, 1977; Baumeister et al., 2001; Brown & Auerback, 1981; Eysenck, 1976; Johannes & Avis, 1997; Useche et al., 1990), have sexual fantasies more often (e.g., Baumeister et al., 2001; Ellis & Symons, 1990; Hessellund, 1976; Kinsey et al., 1948, 1953; Knoth et al., 1988; Leitenberg & Henning, 1995; Wilson, 1987) and have sexual fantasies with a greater number of partners as well as a higher frequency of changing partners mid-fantasy (Barclay, 1973; Ellis & Symons, 1990; Gold & Gold, 1991; Leitenberg & Henning, 1995). Men's fantasies are more often impersonal, frequently involving strangers, while women's fantasies are more often romantic and typically contain partners they are romantically involved with (Barclay, 1973; Ellis & Symons, 1990; Gagnon & Simon, 1973; Hessellund, 1976; Hunt, 1974; Iwawaki & Wilson, 1983; Knafo & Jaffe, 1984; Oliver & Hyde, 1993; Peplau et al., 2004; Wilson & Lang, 1981). Men's fantasies focus less on context and emotions and more on the explicitly sexual part, at which they arrive faster (Barclay, 1973; Brickman, 1978; Ellis & Symons, 1990; Follingstad & Kimbrell, 1986; Hessellund, 1976; Knoth et al., 1988). Males also have more EDS

fantasies than women (Barclay, 1973; Frenken, as cited in Buunk, 1981; Hicks & Leitenberg, 2001). They report greater intentions to engage in risky sexual behaviors (Kalichman & Rompa, 1995; Turchik & Garske, 2009), and masturbate more frequently and from a younger age (e.g., Arafat & Cotton, 1974; Asayama, 1975; Gagnon & Simon, 1973; Jones & Barlow, 1990; Kinsey et al., 1948; Knoth et al., 1988; Laumann et al., 1994; Oliver & Hyde, 1993; Peplau, 2003). Men use more direct techniques for initiating romantic encounters (C. L. Clark, Shaver, & Abrahams, 1999; Greer & Buss, 1994), and initiate sex more often (Brown & Auerback, 1981; O'Sullivan & Byers, 1992; see also review by Impett & Peplau, 2003). In fact, both genders considered all strategies for obtaining sex more typical of men, and all strategies for refusing sex more typical of women (LaPlante, McCormick, & Brannigan, 1980). Men want sex sooner in dating relationships (Gross, 1978), and the group of dating individuals who wanted to have sex but were not getting it, consisted almost entirely of men (McCabe, 1987). Men were much more likely than women to indicate that the reason they were not having sex was because they could not talk their partner into doing so (Driscoll & Davis, 1971). When male's socio-sexuality (the desire for uncommitted sex with multiple partners) was controlled, female's socio-sexuality strongly determined how soon a dating couple first engaged in sex. On the other hand, when controlling for female's socio-sexuality, male's socio-sexuality was no longer significant. These results indicate it was strongly up to the female when sex first occurred in a relationship (Simpson & Gangestad, 1991).

Women generally indicate they want to wait longer than men to have sex in dating relationships (e.g., Buss & Schmitt, 1993; Cohen & Shotland, 1996; Sprecher, Barbee, & Schwartz, as cited in Baumeister et al., 2001), and within cohabiting couples

men also desire and initiate sex more frequently than women do (e.g., Ard, 1977; Byers & Heinlein, 1989; Johannes & Avis, 1997; McCabe, 1987; O'Sullivan & Byers, 1992, 1995; Peplau, Rubin, & Hill, 1977). In fact, sex within heterosexual couples may reflect a compromise between males and females because gay male couples engage in intercourse more frequently and lesbian couples less frequently than heterosexual couples do (Blumstein & Schwartz, 1983; Ellis & Symons, 1990). The term "Lesbian bed death" was specifically coined to describe lesbians' often low levels of sexual activity in long-term relationships (Iasenza, 2000). Men are more often upset by refusal of sex while women are more often upset by sexual aggressiveness: female's sexual disinterest is more often a source of a couple's disagreement than male's (Buss, 1989; O'Sullivan & Byers, 1995). Women are more likely to refuse or avoid sex (e.g., Byers & Lewis, 1988; McCormick, Brannigan, & LaPlante, 1984), and far more women than men felt they never really needed or wanted sex (19% vs. 2%; Carroll, Volk, & Hyde, 1985). Women were also more likely than men to report avoiding sex because they lacked an interest in it (Leigh, 1989). According to Buss (1989) there is a conflict between the sexes because men want sex sooner after meeting, want sex more often, are more persistent about having sex, and desire more sexual partners than women.

Men also consume more pornography than women, which is usually more visual and contains short-term sex with multiple anonymous partners (e.g., Kenrick, Stringfield, Wagenhals, Dahl, & Ransdall, 1980; Kinsey et al., 1948, 1953; Laumann et al., 1994; Salmon & Symons, 2001). In fact, there is virtually no market for pornography for women (Abramson & Pinkerton, 1995, Baumeister et al., 2001). Diverging male and female fantasies are reflected in the literature they consume: male-oriented pornography

focuses mostly on physical encounters without emotional attachment, while female-oriented romance novels generally focus on romance and love (Ellis & Symons, 1990). Males are also more willing than females to return flirtatious acts (Cunningham, 1989; Downey & Vitulli, 1987) and often interpret friendly behavior by women as flirtatious even when it is not intended as such (e.g., Abbey, 1982; Abbey & Melby, 1986; C. B. Johnson, Stockdale, & Saal, 1991; Shotland & Craig, 1988). They often welcome sexual attention, and it is not uncommon for men to express a wish to be sexually harassed by attractive females (Fitzgerald & Weitzman, 1990; personal observation). In judging e-mails with sexual content, females found those with sexual propositions from strangers very offensive, while men found them mildly enjoyable (Khoo & Senn, 2004). About 25% of men report having engaged in sexual harassment at some point in time (Fitzgerald, Weitzman, Gold, & Ormerod, 1988), and sexually solicitous messages on the internet are generally sent by males (e.g., Wolak, Finkelhor, Mitchell, & Ybarra, 2008). Half of college women reported having experienced sexual aggression, while a third of men admitted having engaged in it (Maxwell, Robinson, & Post, 2003). In fact, many countries have now installed separate busses and trains for women during rush hour because they are so often sexually harassed on crowded public transit (e.g., McKone, 2010). Lastly, males are over-represented in virtually every category of sexual compulsion and deviation (e.g., American Psychiatric Association, 2000; Cantor, Blanchard, & Barbaree, 2009; Kafka, 2001; Kalichman & Rompa, 1995; Kaplan, 1979; Kuzma & Black, 2008), and the overwhelming majority of sex offenders is male (Cantor et al., 2009; Maxwell et al., 2003; H. Snyder, 2000).

### Males Have a Stronger Desire for Casual Sex and Sexual Variety

Males appear to be more interested in uncommitted short-term sexual relationships than females and have a greater desire to engage in casual sex, or sex without commitment (e.g., Bailey et al., 1994; Buss & Schmitt, 1993; Ellis & Symons, 1990; Kinsey et al., 1948, 1953; Schmitt, Shackelford, & Buss, 2001; Symons, 1979; Trivers, 1972). In a meta-analysis of 177 studies on sexuality, one of the largest male-female differences that emerged regarded the interest in casual sex (Oliver & Hyde, 1993). Males report that casual sex is more desirable and appealing (Buss & Barnes, 1986; Carroll et al., 1985; Eysenck, 1976; Hendrick, Hendrick, Slapion-Foote, & Foote, 1985; Wilson, 1987), and seek out short-term encounters more than females do (e.g., Barash & Lipton, 2001; Buss & Schmitt, 1993; Peplau, 2003; Schmitt, Shackelford, Duntley, Tooke, & Buss, 2001; Simpson & Gangestad, 1991; Townsend & Levy, 1990; T. M. Wright & Reise, 1997). For example, males are more likely to indicate an interest in “friends with benefits” which are sex-only relationships, and engage in them more frequently (Puentes, Knox & Zusman, 2008). Males appear to be more interested in casual sex and sexual variety across all socioeconomic levels, cultures and history (Betzig, 1986; Buss & Schmitt, 1993; Laumann et al., 1994; Lippa, 2009; Schmitt et al., 2003; Symons, 1979).

The most definitive study on male-female differences in desire for short-term sex and partner variety was carried out by Schmitt (2003), covering 52 nations on six continents. Schmitt and his collaborators asked respondents how many sexual partners they would ideally like to have over certain periods of time, as well as the amount of time they would require before having sex with a suitable partner. Time levels were provided



ranging from 1 hour to five years for sexual consent, and from 1 month to a lifetime for number of sexual partners desired. Because mean levels can be severely distorted by a few extreme outliers (e.g., Pedersen, Miller, Putcha-Bhagavatula, & Yang, 2002), median levels were also calculated. At every time interval, males desired significantly larger numbers of sex partners than females. This was so for both mean and median levels, and with outliers of over 100 eliminated from the analysis. In every region of the world, significantly more males than females desired more than one sexual partner over the lifetime, although no more than 50% of men did so.

In most regions of the world, about a quarter of men, but only about 5 % of women desired more than one sexual partner in the next month, and almost half of men and about a quarter of women desired more than one sexual partner in the next 30 years. Males desired an average of 6½ and females an average of 2½ sexual partners over the lifetime. The gender gap was consistent for both homosexuals and heterosexuals, and across committed and single persons. Likewise, across all sexual orientations and current commitment levels, men's mean and median levels of consenting to sex after knowing a potential partner for a certain amount of time differed significantly from women's mean and median levels at each time interval less than 5 years. Respondents were also asked to what extent they were currently seeking short-term partners, to which men reported more actively seeking short-term partners than women in every region of the world. However, a sizable portion of women was also actively seeking a short-term partner (for example, the average American man ranked 3.08 and the average American woman 2.23 on a 1-7 scale of "actively seeking").

The initial study on male-female differences in time required to consent to sex and number of sexual partners desired over time was carried out by Buss and Schmitt (1993), who reported that for every time interval, men desired significantly more sexual partners than women (an average of 18 for men and 4.5 for women over the lifetime, with outliers over 100 truncated to 99). Time required to have known a partner before considering sex also differed significantly between the sexes. For example, after one week men were mildly positive, whereas women indicated it was “highly unlikely.” After one hour, men were overall “slightly disinclined,” while for most women it was completely impossible to consider having intercourse with someone they had just met (Buss & Schmitt, 1993, p. 211). The average time to consent to sex for men was one week; for women it was six months. With regard to the degree to which people were currently seeking a short-term or long-term partner there was no difference between males and females in seeking a long-term partner, but males were much more likely to indicate they were interested in a short-term affair.

Miller and Fishkin (1997) asked college students how many sex partners they would ideally like to have over the rest of their life if they were not constrained by factors such as disease or societal rules and repercussions. Women’s mean response was 2.7, while men’s mean response was 64. However, the median was 1 for both genders: the much greater number for men was due almost entirely to outliers. That means we can merely state that the number of promiscuously inclined men is greater than the number of promiscuously inclined women, but not necessarily that the majority of men is promiscuous.

In response to Buss and Schmitt's (1993) study, Miller and Fishkin (1997) as well as Pedersen, Miller, Putcha-Bhagavatula and Yang (2002), pointed out that mean-level statistics are not always accurate indicators of central tendency since they are unduly influenced by outliers when the distribution is skewed. Indeed, a few men in Buss and Schmitt's (1993) study requested an inordinate number of future partners, inflating the number of partners the average man desired. Pedersen et al. (2002) demonstrated that males and females did not differ in median number of desired short-term partners and differed only marginally in median number of desired dating partners before settling down. They maintained that in the end, most men and women desire only one sexual partner over the next 30 years (52% of men and 66% of women).

Schmitt, Shackelford, Duntley, Tooke and Buss (2001) replicated Buss and Schmitt's (1993) study with samples from four US states, but with median instead of mean tests for responses to the Number of Partners measure. They found that for every level of time, the median male desired significantly more sexual partners than the median female. Also, the American male was likely but the American female unlikely to consider sex after knowing a potential partner for a month. Women were significantly more long-term seeking than men, while men were significantly more short-term seeking than women (in this study, 58% of men and 40% of women desired more than one sexual partner over the lifetime).

In agreement with the general direction of these data, gender differences in willingness to engage in intercourse the same day with someone one had just met held up for patrons of singles bars (Herold & Mewhinney, 1993), and men, more than women, appear to exhibit a preference for easily accessible and sexually permissive partners for

short-term sexual relationships (Oliver & Sedikides, 1992; Schmitt, Couden, & Baker, 2001).

The most unambiguous study demonstrating male-female differences in desire for casual sex was carried out by R. D. Clark and Hatfield (1989) on a college campus. Male and female students were approached by a moderately attractive person of the opposite sex and asked if they wanted to go out on a date, or, alternately, if they wanted to have sex. When asked to go on a date, a roughly equal number of men and women agreed (50%). When asked to have sex, however, fully seventy percent of men said yes, while hundred percent of women said no. This study was replicated four years later at a different campus with the same results.

In a study on wishes, Ehrlichman and Eichenstein (1992) found that men were much more likely to wish for the ability to have sex without commitment. Male-female preferences for a wide variety of wishes were very similar, except for the wish “to have sex with anyone I choose.” Twenty-eight percent of men chose this option as opposed to only six percent of women. At the same time, although more females than males rated “to have one sexual relationship” as highly desirable, more males rated “to have one sexual relationship” as highly desirable than rated “to have sex with anyone I choose,” as such, indicating that males on the whole may not necessarily prefer casual sex over committed sex, whereas females on the whole clearly prefer committed sex over casual sex. (Nevertheless, in this study there is again the possibility that people chose the monogamous option because they did not want their partner to be unfaithful.)

In a study on tactics for promoting sexual encounters, Greer and Buss (1994) found that women typically refrained from using the most effective tactics. Tactics for

promoting sexual encounters were generally perceived by both sexes as more effective for women than for men, and women's tactics were considered most effective when they signaled immediate sexual availability. The most effective tactics for men were considered those implying love or commitment.

Lastly, the male's greater desire to engage in casual sex is most clearly reflected in the fact that they are the overwhelming consumers of prostitution all over the world and throughout history (Barash, 1997; Bess & Janus, 1976; Burley & Symanski, 1981; Buss, 2003; Elias, Bullough, Elias, & Brewer, 1998; Symons, 1979; R. Wright, 1994). In addition, in many societies men bring gifts to women in exchange for short-term copulations, and sexual favors almost always flow from women to men (e.g., Buss & Schmitt, 1993; Symons, 1979; R. Wright, 1994).

Males are also overrepresented on casual sex dating sites (Buss & Schmitt, 1993), and look for casual dates online more frequently than females do (Peter & Valkenburg, 2007). While relationship-oriented dating sites have a fairly equal ratio of male-to-female membership, sex-focused dating sites have an overwhelmingly male membership (personal observation, 2011). For example, Ashley Madison, one of the most popular married-but-looking sites, has a membership ratio of roughly 80 % males to 20 % females (with some of the females potentially being prostitutes), and Craigslist contained roughly 400 ads of "women seeking men" versus 3600 ads for "men seeking women" (personal observation, 2011). Symons (1979), in his book on the evolution of human sexuality, describes how for a regular advertisement placed on a partner-exchange site, the average couple would get about 3 or 4 responses, while a single average-looking woman would get at least 500 responses (p. 248). Advertisements on general dating sites

also receive many more male than female leads. For example, Goode (1996), who placed fictional ads in personal columns, received the following responses: 668 for a beautiful waitress, 15 for a handsome cabdriver, 240 for an average-looking female lawyer, and 64 for an average-looking male lawyer.

#### Males but not Females are Willing to Lower their Standards for Sexual Opportunities

Males also adopt less stringent standards for casual sex partners than females do. In fact, while males and females hold similar standards for long-term partners, males are willing to significantly lower their standards for a variety of traits when it comes to short-term sexual opportunities (Kenrick et al., 1990; Landolt, Lalumiere, & Quinsey, 1995; Nevid, 1984; Regan, 1998). In Buss and Schmitt's (1993) study, males imposed significantly lower standards on 41 out of 67 traits given for short-term casual sex partners. They were also more accepting of negative characteristics. For no characteristic except physical attractiveness were men more selective than women when it came to casual sex. Kenrick et al. (1990) asked what qualities a potential partner needed to have in order to be considered for a serious relationship or marriage. Both sexes indicated the person needed to possess, among other things, at least average kindness and intelligence. When asked what was required of a potential partner to be considered for casual sex, however, women retained almost the same standards, while men indicated that in that case a prospective partner's kindness and intelligence were allowed to be much lower. Males also relax their standards at the approach of closing time at singles bars (Gladue & Delaney, 1990), and in India males but not females will engage in sexual relations with "untouchables" (Mahar, as cited in Baumeister et al.,

2001). It seems that in the context of short-term mating, males are more concerned about quantity whereas females are more concerned about quality (Schmitt, 2003).

To conclude, males have a more unrestricted socio-sexual orientation (Lippa, 2009; Schmitt, 2005; Simpson & Gangestad, 1991; T. M. Wright & Reise, 1997). Socio-sexual orientation (SO) is defined by a “willingness to engage in uncommitted sexual relations in the absence of strong affectional bonds” (Simpson & Gangestad, 1991, p. 878). A less restricted SO indicates a greater willingness to engage in uncommitted sex with a variety of partners. People with a less restricted SO are more willing to have sex without love or commitment, require less time before engaging in sex with a new partner, and desire multiple sex partners, placing less value on sexual exclusivity (Simpson & Gangestad, 1991). As should not be surprising from this literature review, males have been found to have a more unrestricted SO than females around the world (Gangestad & Simpson, 2000; Lippa, 2009; Schmitt, 2005). However, individual differences within the sexes are much greater than those between them (e.g., Buss & Schmitt, 1993; Eysenck, 1976; Gangestad & Simpson, 1990, 2000; Hendrick et al., 1985; Kinsey et al., 1948, 1953; Lippa, 2009; Miller & Fishkin, 1997; M. Snyder, Simpson, & Gangestad, 1986). A subset of women does engage in short-term relationships with the primary goal of sexual gratification: women with a more unrestricted SO reported more benefits from engaging in casual sex (Simpson & Gangestad, 1991), and sexual gratification was the primary benefit of casual sex reported by both men and women (Greiling & Buss, 2000). Lawson, in her book *Adultery: an Analysis of Love and Betrayal* (1988) describes women from her interviews who actively pursued brief liaisons for sex, and across all nations women’s standard deviations in sex drive are much wider than those of men

(Baumeister et al., 2001; Lippa, 2009; Ostavich & Sabini, 2004). Female sexuality has also been found to be more malleable and more responsive to cultural and social influences (Baumeister, 2000; Lippa, 2009; Peplau, 2003). That means we can only state that the “promiscuously inclined minority of males is larger than the promiscuously inclined minority of females” (Baumeister et al., 2001, p. 250), but not necessarily that promiscuously inclined males are in the majority.

#### Males do not always have the Opportunity to Act on their Inclinations

As the previous headings indicate, males do not have as many opportunities as females to turn their inclinations into action. Three additional reasons for this are outlined below: females generally require an emotional attachment before consenting to sex, same-sex male couples have an inordinate number of casual sex partners as well as EDS partners compared to same-sex female couples, and high-status males but not attractive females who enjoy more opportunities for casual and extra-dyadic sex appear to act on these opportunities.

#### Females Typically Require a Relationship Context before Consenting to Sex

It appears that with regard to casual sex, men often want sex but no relationship, whereas women often do not want sex unless there is a relationship (Symons, 1979). As Oliver and Hyde (1993) note, “many females see the existence of a committed relationship as the prerequisite for sexual expression” (p. 32). This poses yet another obstacle for those males attempting to translate their desire for EDS into action (apart from having sex with prostitutes). There is abundant evidence that women typically require a relationship context before consenting to sex, while males more often desire and pursue sex without commitment (e.g., Baumeister et al., 2001; Blumstein & Schwartz,



1983; Carroll et al., 1985; Greer & Buss, 1994; Hite, 1976; Peplau, 2003; Reiss, 1967; Simon & Gagnon, 1970; Simpson & Gangestad, 1991; Townsend & Levy, 1990). In fact, Buss and Schmitt (1993) note that in order to obtain sexual access, males often have to feign long-term interest. “Women show reluctance to mate quickly, requiring instead prolonged courtship, investment, and signs of commitment” (Buss & Schmitt, 1993, p. 215). Buss and Schmitt (1993) maintain that males can obtain a more desirable mate if they are willing to commit, whereas females can get a more desirable mate if they are willing to have sex. As Stone, Goetz and Shackelford (2005) put it, “Most men and women must make compromises in sexual strategy in order to mate. As women are the choosier sex, monogamy is often a strategy that men pursue to attract, secure, and maintain sexual partners” (p. 271).

In dating relationships, women at least typically require some emotional intimacy before consenting to sex and have difficulty enjoying sexual intercourse without such an emotional connection (Carroll et al., 1985; DeLamater, 1987; Peplau, 2003; Regan & Berscheid, 1996). Women indicate that the primary reason for engaging in sex is love or intimacy, while men typically either value love and pleasure equally, or indicate that the primary reason for engaging in intercourse is the pleasure of sex itself (e.g., Brown & Auerback, 1981; Carroll et al., 1985; Ehrmann, 1959; Hendrick et al., 1985; Knoth et al., 1988; Leigh, 1989; Peplau, 2003; Regan & Berscheid, 1996). It appears that men are more intrinsically and women more extrinsically motivated for sex; women also more often use sex in order to obtain love or commitment (Baumeister et al., 2001; Brown & Auerback, 1981; Symons, 1979). Whitley (1988) asked respondents to give the most important reason they had sexual intercourse on the most recent occasion and found that

51% of women and 24% of men gave love/emotional reasons, while 9% of women and 51% of men gave lust/pleasure reasons: sex for its own sake. This may be one reason women more frequently express guilt over sex-only relationships as well as over extra-marital sex (Athanasidou et al., 1970; R. E. Johnson, 1970b; Oliver & Hyde, 1993; Spanier & Margolis, 1983).

Men's greater ability to separate sex from love has been extensively corroborated by research (e.g., Bailey et al., 1994; Barash & Lipton, 2001; Buss, 2003; Carroll et al., 1985; DeBurgher, 1972; Ehrmann, 1959; Feldman & Cauffman, 1999; Glass & Wright, 1985, 1992; Peplau & Gordon, 1985; Regan & Berscheid, 1999; Reiss, 1967; Simon & Gagnon, 1970; Townsend, Kline & Wasserman, 1995; T. M. Wright & Reise, 1997). For example, Simon, Berger and Gagnon (1972) found that 46% of men were not emotionally involved with their first sexual partner, while 59% of women planned to marry their first sexual partner. Likewise Carroll et al. (1985) found that 61% of men indicated that emotional involvement was only sometimes or never a prerequisite for engaging in sexual intercourse, while 85% of women indicated it was a prerequisite always or most of the time. In a study by Townsend and Levy (1990), in which the attractiveness and potential socio-economic status (SES) of photographed men and women were varied, men indicated an overall greater willingness to have sex with the female subjects, while women indicated an overall greater willingness to enter into a serious relationship or marry the male subjects. At every level of attractiveness and SES, women indicated a much greater unwillingness to have sex than did men, while men indicated a much greater unwillingness to get married than did women. It seems that women are more often willing to trade sex for commitment or favors, while men are more often willing to

trade commitment or favors for sex (Townsend & Levy, 1990; see also Barash & Lipton, 2001; Symons, 1979; R. Wright, 1994). As Townsend and Levy (1990) put it, “Sexual access thus becomes a bargaining chip that, consciously or unconsciously, women trade for emotional and material investment, whereas men trade investment for female sexuality and beauty” (p. 374).

#### Same-sex Couples’ Sexual Behavior as an Indicator of True Male and Female Intention-Action Congruence

The previous heading indicated that males who desire EDS do not always have the opportunity to do so. This is further corroborated by the fact that when both partners are male, casual as well as extra-dyadic sex is much more likely to occur. Homosexual males have a much greater number of casual sex partners than do heterosexual males or females (Bailey et al., 1994; Bell & Weinberg, 1978; Blumstein & Schwartz, 1983; Ruse, 1988; Symons, 1979), and are also more likely to have sex outside of the relationship (Bailey et al., 1994; Blumstein & Schwartz, 1983; Buss, 2003; Peplau, 2003).

Homosexual females have a lower number of casual sex partners than heterosexual females or males (Bell & Weinberg, 1978; Buss, 2003; Blumstein & Schwartz, 1983; Ruse, 1988; Saghir & Robins, 1973) and are less likely to have sex outside of the relationship (Blumstein & Schwartz, 1983; Cotton, as cited in Baumeister et al., 2001; Saghir & Robins, 1973). For example, almost 50% of gay men but no gay women reported having had over 500 sex partners in their lifetime (Bell & Weinberg, 1978; Greenberg, as cited in Schmitt, Schackelford, & Buss, 2001; Ruse, 1988). Not only are homosexual males more likely to cheat on their partners, but frequency of infidelity is higher as well. For example, 43% of gay males versus 1% of gay females admitted to having had more than 20 EDS-partners (Blumstein & Schwartz, 1983). Gay men do not

desire significantly more sexual partners than straight men (Bailey et al., 1994), so the fact that they have more sexual partners is a direct indicator that they have more opportunities to act on their inclinations. Bailey et al. (1994) measured this by comparing gay and straight men's responses on the intentional and behavioral items of the SOI (Socio-sexual Orientation Inventory), as well as by comparing responses on the entire SOI to those on their own *Interest in Uncommitted Sex Scale*, which consisted of intentional items only. Homosexual men scored significantly higher than heterosexual men on the behavioral items of the SOI but not on the intentional items. On the *Interest in Uncommitted Sex Scale*, homosexual and heterosexual men scored the same. As Symons (1979) explains: "Heterosexual men would be as likely as homosexual men to have sex most often with strangers, to participate in anonymous orgies in public baths, and to stop off in public rest rooms for five minutes of fellatio on the way home from work if women were interested in these activities. But women are not interested" (p. 300).

#### Highly Desired Males but not Females act more Promiscuously

Males of higher status and females of greater physical attractiveness experience more opportunities for affairs, because males place a greater value on physical attractiveness and females on power and socio-economic status in evaluating the eligibility of potential partners (e.g., Barash & Lipton, 2001; Buss, 1989, 2003; Buss & Barnes, 1986; Ellis, 1992; Feingold, 1992; Gangestad & Thornhill, 1997; Goode, 1996; Kenrick et al., 1990; Schmitt & Buss, 1996; Schmitt et al., 2003; Townsend & Levy, 1990; Wiederman & Allgeier, 1992). The lower the supposed status of a prospective male, the less likely women indicated they were willing to enter into a relationship or

have sex with him (Townsend, 1987; Townsend & Levy, 1990). Females have also been found to be more selective for short-term liaisons than for long-term ones, making it even harder for males to obtain the often necessary no-strings attached sex required for an extra-dyadic affair (Greiling & Buss, 2000). Lastly, as noted earlier, women are much less willing to compromise their standards while men typically lower their standards when it comes to sexual opportunities (e.g., Buss & Schmitt, 1993; Kenrick et al., 1990; Regan, 1998). This means that males of higher status, as well as females of greater physical attractiveness have access to a much greater range of potential partners for casual sex. Indeed, the media is full of scandals of high-status male politicians and celebrities having affairs, and many men have jeopardized their careers by having extra-marital affairs (e.g., Baumeister et al., 2001; personal observation). Men of high socio-economic status (SES) have indeed been found to have more sexual partners than men of lower SES across the world (Betzig, 1986; Buss, 2003; Chagnon, as cited in Buss & Schmitt, 1993; Perusse, 1993, as cited in R. Wright, 1994; R. Wright, 1994), and those with higher income or employment status were found to have a higher incidence of engaging in extra-marital sex (Allen et al., 2005; Atkins, Baucom & Jacobson, 2001; Buunk, 1980).

On the other hand, more attractive women did not necessarily have sex with a greater number of men than less attractive women, even though men overwhelmingly favor women of greater physical attractiveness (e.g., Buss & Schmitt, 1993; Gangestad & Thornhill, 1997; Udry & Eckland, 1984). This indicates greater choosiness on the part of more attractive women, as well as the previously mentioned greater male willingness to lower their standards when they cannot get what they want (more attractive women do

marry wealthier husbands, Udry & Eckland, 1984). In fact, one study found that 46% of men chose the option: “never neglect an opportunity” for sexual intercourse, whereas 0% of women chose that option (Carroll et al., 1985, p. 135). Lastly, there is some evidence that women place greater emphasis on physical attractiveness in evaluating men for short-term or EDS than for long-term relationships (Buss & Schmitt, 1993; Li & Kenrick, 2006; Scheib, 2001; Thornhill & Gangestad, 1994). In fact, they seem to value “good character” less and good-looks more for short-term liaisons than for men with marriage potential (Scheib, 2001). For example, women appeared to show a preference for more masculine and symmetrical men when ovulating (Gangestad & Thornhill, 2005). Indeed, more attractive men and men with more symmetrical features reported more life-time sexual partners (Thornhill & Gangestad, 1994) as well as more extra-dyadic ones (Gangestad, Albuquerque, & Thornhill, 1997; Gangestad & Thornhill, 1997).

Because of men’s greater interest in casual sex and women’s greater choosiness in sexual affairs, I predict that the frequency with which a large subset of males desire to engage in EDS is not at all matched by the ability to translate this desire into action. In fact, in one study the correlation between the desire to engage in EMS and the actual action was only  $r = .29$  ( $p < .01$ ) for males, while for females it was  $r = .50$  ( $p < .001$ ) (Prins et al., 1993). This can be taken as another indication that men have fewer opportunities to act on their inclinations than women do, although the researchers did not draw this conclusion.

## CHAPTER 3

### RELATIONSHIP QUALITY AND ITS CORRELATION WITH INFIDELITY

#### Relationship Satisfaction and its Prediction of Infidelity

There has been a pervasive belief in this society that people have extra-dyadic affairs because there is something wrong in their primary relationship (e.g., Atkins, Dimidjian, & Jacobson, 2001; Corey, 1989; Hunt, 1974; Wiederman & Allgeier, 1996; Zinczenko, 2006). In fact, authors such as Corey (1989), Levant and Brooks (1997), and Zinczenko (2006) have argued that sex is not the primary reason males engage in infidelity. Many studies have found a correlation between relationship satisfaction and infidelity, but this relationship is not as strong as often assumed, and is not always equally strong for men and women. Thompson (1983), in his literature review on infidelity, concluded that dissatisfaction with the primary relationship accounts for about 25% of the variance in EMS. Research findings on the correlation between relationship satisfaction and infidelity are mixed. Relationship dissatisfaction has been found to positively correlate with infidelity for both males and females in many studies (e.g., Atkins, Baucom, & Jacobson, 2001; Barta & Kiene, 2005; Bell et al., 1975; Edwards & Booth, 1996; Glass & Wright, 1985; Mark et al., 2011; McAlister et al., 2005; Spanier & Margolis, 1983; Treas & Giesen, 2000; Waite & Joyner, 2001; Wiederman & Allgeier, 1996). In particular, infidelity has been associated with marital unhappiness earlier in the marriage for males, and later in the marriage for females (Forste & Tanfer, 1996; Glass & Wright, 1977). Many other studies, however, have not found a significant correlation

between relationship satisfaction and infidelity (Atwater, 1979; Bell et al., 1975; Blumstein & Schwartz, 1983; Choi et al., 1994; R. E. Johnson, 1970b; Neubeck & Schletzer, 1962; Spanier & Margolis, 1983), have found only a marginal correlation (Prins et al., 1993), or have found relationship satisfaction to be fully mediated by divorce prone-ness (Previti & Amato, 2005). Regarding open-ness to extra-dyadic affairs, those with marital problems generally indicated a stronger interest in EMS (Buss & Shackelford, 1997; Prins et al., 1993), although R. E. Johnson (1970b) did not find a difference in marital satisfaction between those who indicated a desire for EMS and those who did not.

Many studies did not separate emotional and sexual dissatisfaction or emotional and sexual extra-dyadic involvement, however. Mixed results are reported by studies that did. Blumstein and Schwartz (1983), for example, found no significant difference between high and low emotional and sexual satisfaction and the occurrence of both emotional and sexual infidelity, while Glass and Wright (1985) found that relationship dissatisfaction was positively correlated with both sexual and emotional extra-dyadic involvement. They found that those who had combined-type affairs involving both sexual and emotional involvement with the extra-dyadic partner, reported the highest dissatisfaction with their primary relationship (Glass & Wright, 1985). Spanier and Margolis (1983) and Choi et al. (1994) found that quality or frequency of marital sex was not related to EMS occurrence, while Edwards and Booth (1976) found it was related for both men and women. Other studies found it was related for men or women, as will be addressed below.



## Male-Female Differences in Type of Relationship Dissatisfaction and its Correlation to EDS

Findings on male-female differences in type of dissatisfaction and its relation to infidelity are also mixed. Most studies have found that sexual dissatisfaction is a stronger predictor for male EDS, while emotional dissatisfaction is a stronger predictor for female EDS (e.g., Allen & Baucom, 2004; Barta & Kiene, 2005; Buunk, 1980; Maykovich, 1976). This is consistent with the fact that it is generally easier for men than for women to separate sex from love, as described in Chapter 2. Indeed, males more often cite or approve of sexual reasons, such as curiosity and excitement, while females more often cite or approve of emotional reasons, such as love and connection, for self or others engaging in EDS (e.g., Barta & Kiene, 2005; DeBurgher, 1972; Dreznick, 2003; Glass & Wright, 1992; Greene, Lee & Lustig, 1974; Kitzinger & Powell, 1995; Roscoe, Cavanaugh, & Kennedy, 1988; Yeniceri & Kokdemir, 2006). Those who were able to separate sex from love were generally more accepting of extra-dyadic relationships (Weiss & Slosnerick, 1981) and engaged in them more often (Weiss, Slosnerick, Cate, & Sollie, 1986). Some studies have not found a difference between unfaithful males and females in relationship satisfaction, however (see Dreznick, 2003, for a review), and some found that both sexual and emotional marital dissatisfaction predicted infidelity more for males than for females (Edwards & Booth, 1976; R. E. Johnson, 1970b; Whitehurst, 1969).

Relationship dissatisfaction has generally been found to be a stronger predictor of infidelity for women than for men. In fact, no differences were observed in relationship satisfaction between men who were and were not involved in EDS (e.g., Buss, 2003; Cohen, 2006; Glass & Wright, 1985; Mark et al., 2011; Prins et al., 1993; Spanier &

Margolis, 1983), with over 50% of cheating men considering their marriage happy (Glass & Wright, 1985; Hunt, 1969). This is not so for women. For them there appears to be a stronger connection between relationship dissatisfaction and openness to affairs (Allen & Baucom, 2004; Greeley, 1994; Lawson, 1988; Mark et al., 2011; Pestrak, Martin & Martin, 1985). Women involved in extra-dyadic relationships reported greater relationship dissatisfaction than men or their non-cheating counterparts (Bell et al., 1975; Glass & Wright, 1977, 1985; Hunt, 1969; Prins et al., 1993). Only a third of women involved in EMS reported being happy with their relationship (Glass & Wright, 1985; Hunt, 1969). In a study on divorced couples, Spanier and Margolis (1983) found that 66% of males admitted they had started their EMS “well before separation seemed likely”, whereas only 33% of women had done so (p. 33). Women were also more likely to be unfaithful as a result of perceptions of inequity in the relationship, which did not seem to play a role for males (Prins et al., 1993). However, in this area there are contradicting findings as well. R. E. Johnson (1970b) found a higher percentage of extra-dyadically involved females than males being happy with their marriage (60% of females versus 30% of males), and Levin (1975) reported that fully 50% of cheating females were satisfied with their relationship (although the satisfaction rate among non-cheating wives was yet higher). Also, non-cheating males and females still report overall greater marital satisfaction than cheating ones. For example, R. E. Johnson (1970b) found significantly greater sexual marital satisfaction in males who had not engaged in EMS than in males who had.

When it comes to sexual dissatisfaction, there appears to be a stronger correlation with EDS involvement for males than for females, with those less sexually satisfied

cheating more (e.g., Buss & Shackelford, 1997; Buunk, 1980; Cohen, 2006; Glass & Wright, 1977, 1992; Greene et al., 1974; R. E. Johnson, 1970b; Liu, 2000; Mark et al., 2011; Maykovich, 1976). Unfaithful men were nearly twice as likely as unfaithful women to report a sexual motivation for infidelity (Barta & Kiene, 2005; Glass & Wright, 1985; Greene et al., 1974; R. E. Johnson, 1970b). Not all studies found that sexual dissatisfaction was a stronger predictor of EMS for males than for females, however. Prins et al. (1993) found a stronger correlation between sexual dissatisfaction and EMS for women, but found no male-female difference for desire, possibly because it would be easier for women to translate this desire into action. Some women do engage in EDS because they are dissatisfied with the sexual aspect of their primary relationship (Bell et al., 1975; Kinsey et al., 1953; Prins et al., 1993), especially when it involves premature ejaculation (Masters & Johnson, 1970). There is a subset of women who report having sex-only affairs without any problems in their primary relationship, although this prevalence is generally lower than that among men (e.g., Bell et al., 1975; R. E. Johnson, 1970b; Lawson, 1988; Prins et al., 1993).

It appears that sex-only affairs are less related to the state of the primary relationship than are affairs which include an emotional component (DeBurgher, 1972; Glass & Wright, 1985). As Blow and Hartnett (2005) note, it only makes sense that a deep emotional extra-dyadic connection would more likely relate to problems in the primary relationship than a one-night stand while away on a business trip (p. 222). This appears to be the case for both men and women. In fact, as noted previously, 56% of men and 34% of women involved in EMS considered their marriage happy (Glass & Wright, 1985). Indeed, having the opportunity for an extra-dyadic affair increases the

likelihood of having one (e.g., Laumann et al., 1994; Traeen & Stigum, 1998; Treas & Giesen, 2000). Those who travel for work were found to have a higher prevalence of extra-marital affairs (Blumstein & Schwartz, 1983; Gerstel, as cited in Prins et al., 1993; Wellings, Field, Johnson, & Wadsworth, 1994), and those involved with co-workers reported higher marital satisfaction than those involved with non-co-workers (Wiggins & Lederer, 1984). As previously mentioned, those with higher status and income were also more likely to obtain partners for extra-dyadic affairs (Atkins, Baucom, & Jacobson, 2001). This indicates that people often act on the opportunity available to them regardless of the status of their primary relationship.

#### Measures of Sexual Interest and their Prediction of EDS

The trait of socio-sexual orientation (SO) plays a role in the susceptibility to EDS independently of gender. Both men and women scoring high on the SOI (Socio-sexual Orientation Index) were significantly more likely to have engaged in EDS (Barta & Kiene, 2005; Simpson & Gangestad, 1991; Treas & Giesen, 2000). They were also significantly more likely to indicate a desire to engage in EDS (Seal et al., 1994). The SOI measures “individual differences in willingness to engage in uncommitted sex with different partners” (Simpson & Gangestad, 1991, p. 873), and is therefore a reliable indicator of interest in casual sex. Those indicating a stronger interest in casual sex or a stronger effort to obtain sex were indeed found to be more likely to engage in EDS (Hansen, 1987; Liu, 2000; Rowe, Vazsonyi, & Figueredo, 1997; Treas & Giesen, 2000). People who had more previous sex partners, had more one-night stands, were sexually active before their marriage or started being sexually active earlier in life were also more likely to be unfaithful (Athanasίου & Sarkin, 1974; Barta & Kiene, 2005; Feldman &

Cauffman, 1999; Forste & Tanfer, 1996; Kinsey et al., 1953; Mark et al., 2011; Treas & Giesen, 2000). Those who started extra-dyadic involvements earlier in their relationship or had affairs in past relationships were more likely to repeat them (Banfield & McCabe, 2001; Barta & Kiene, 2005; Levant & Brooks, 1997; Thompson, 1983; Wiggins & Lederer, 1984). Indeed, the behavioral measures of having had several sexual partners in the past year, engaging in sex at an earlier point in the relationship and having had previous one-night stands correlated with a higher interest in casual sex on the SOI (Simpson & Gangestad, 1991). Of course it only makes sense that those with a greater interest in casual sex would be more likely to pursue it, and this may be independent of whether they are in a relationship or of the quality of that relationship.

It is likely that males are more inclined to have EDS regardless of the status of their relationship as well as in response to sexual dissatisfaction because they generally score higher on the SOI (have a less restricted SO) than females do (Barta & Kiene, 2005; Simpson & Gangestad, 1991). Indeed, when permissive values and interest in sex were controlled, the main effect of gender for EDS disappeared (Treas & Giesen, 2000). Barta and Kiene (2005) similarly found that the effect of gender on sexual motivations for infidelity was partially mediated by SO. Lastly, there exist strong individual differences in SO, and, as mentioned previously, variability within the sexes greatly exceeds variability between them (Lippa, 2009; Simpson & Gangestad, 1991).

The trait of sexual excitability, or the propensity to become easily sexually aroused, similarly predicts infidelity for both males and females, although more for males than for females (Mark et al., 2011). However, because women generally score lower on sexual excitation (SES) and higher on sexual inhibition (SIS) than men (Carpenter,

Janssen, Graham, Vorst, & Wicherts, 2008), the factor of relationship quality becomes more salient for them. In fact, Mark et al. (2011) found that women who were dissatisfied with their primary relationship were 2.6 times more likely to have cheated on their partners than those who indicated they were satisfied. There was no such correlation for men (although zero-order correlations indicated there was a relationship). Similarly, the correlation between SES and infidelity for women disappeared in the multiple regression model. The propensity for sexual excitation has been found to relate to several factors indicating sexual interest and arousal, such as level of sexual desire, sexual compulsivity, and lifetime number of casual sex partners (e.g., Bancroft, Graham, Janssen, & Sanders, 2009; Janssen & Bancroft, 2007). This indicates that, just as for the SOI, the SES correlates with a variety of other attitudinal and behavioral measures indicating elevated sexual interest.

#### Non-sexual Individual Difference Variables Related to EDS: Sensation Seeking and Masculinity

In addition to measures of sexual interest and excitability, two traits that appear to differentiate between males and females and are simultaneously related to elevated sexual interest and EDS, are sensation seeking and masculinity. High sensation-seekers have been found to have a higher frequency of engaging in casual sex and risky sexual behaviors (Bogaert & Fisher, 1995; Hoyle, Feifar, & Miller, 2000; Kalichman & Rompa, 1995; Seto, Lalumiere, & Quinsey, as cited in Peter & Valkenburg, 2007; Turchik & Garske, 2009, Zuckerman, 2007), as well as in actual EDS (Wiederman & Hurd, 1999). In fact, in one study the trait of sensation seeking fully mediated the relationship between gender and intended infidelity (Lalasz & Weigel, 2011). It is well known that males generally score higher on Sensation Seeking and impulsivity than females (e.g., Cross,

Copping, & Campbell, 2011; Kalichman & Rompa, 1995; Zuckerman, Eysenck, & Eysenck, 1978). Also, males score much higher on the Sexual Sensation Seeking Scale than females (Kalichman & Rompa, 2005). A related construct, dysfunctional impulsivity, implying low self-control over behavior, was also found to be associated with EDS-inclination (McAlister et al., 2005). Bogaert and Fisher (1995) extracted a super-factor comprised of sensation seeking, hyper-masculinity, psychoticism, and erotophilia which they labeled 'Disinhibition', which strongly predicted number of sexual partners. The disinhibition subscale of the Sensation Seeking Scale also particularly predicted recent sexual activity with multiple partners (Bancroft et al., 2004). In line with this research, I also expect level of masculinity to relate to a propensity for EDS in both males and females. Several studies have found increased levels of social dominance and masculinity to be related to an increased number of sexual partners and greater sexual activity for both males and females (Bogaert & Fisher, 1995; Leary & Snell, 1988; Lucke, 1998; Mosher & Sirkin, 1984; Ostavich & Sabini, 2004; Singh, Vidaurri, Zambarano, & Dabbs, 1999).

#### Male-Female Differences in Type of Extra-dyadic Involvement

Lastly, type of extra-dyadic involvement differs for males and females. Females report greater emotional involvement with their extra-dyadic partners than males (e.g., Allan, 2004; Allen & Baucom, 2004; Blumstein & Schwartz, 1983; DeLamater, 1987; Dreznick, 2003; Glass & Wright, 1985, 1992; Gurgul, Bowers, & Furstenberg, as cited in Glass & Wright, 1985; Hunt, 1969; Spanier & Margolis, 1983). For example, 41% of females, but only 11% of males described their last affair as a "more long-term love relationship," while 29% of males versus only 5% of females described it as a one-night

stand (Spanier & Margolis, 1983, p. 33). Forty-four percent of men but only 11% of women reported “slight or no emotional involvement” with their last extra-dyadic partner (Glass & Wright, 1985, p. 1109). Males are much more likely to describe their affairs as purely sexual than females are (Allen & Baucom, 2004; Buss, 2003; Glass & Wright, 1985, 1992; Thompson, 1984; see Barta & Kiene, 2005, for a review). For example, Boekhout, Hendrick and Hendrick (1999) found that 61% of cheating male but only 25% of cheating female college students described their extra-dyadic relationship as sexual only. Females were more likely than males to indicate the primary reason for EDS was intimacy, whereas males were more likely to indicate it was casual (e.g., Allen & Baucom, 2004; Banfield & McCabe, 2001; Dreznick, 2003; Glass & Wright, 1985, 1992; Hunt, 1969; Spanier & Margolis, 1983).

Women appear more likely to pursue emotional involvements whereas men pursue sexual extra-dyadic involvements (e.g., Barta & Kiene, 2005; Pestrak et al., 1985; Thompson, 1984); women are more likely to have combined-type affairs or engage in extra-marital emotional involvement without intercourse (Banfield & McCabe, 2001; Cohen, 2006; Dreznick, 2003; Glass & Wright, 1985; Spanier & Margolis, 1983; Thompson, 1984). This agrees with their general “no sex without a relationship” attitude as described in Chapter 2. Because it is harder for women to separate sex from love, they may find it more difficult to get extra-dyadically involved unless there is something wrong with their primary relationship. If they do get extra-dyadically involved, there is often an emotional component.

Males usually have briefer, more sex-oriented affairs than females, and their infidelities more often include one-night stands (e.g., Allan, 2004; Humphrey, 1987;



Lawson, 1988; Spanier & Margolis, 1983; Yablonsky, 1979). Roebuck and Spray (1967), for example, describe business men who were perfectly happy with their relationship but nevertheless became sexually involved with single women they met at a cocktail lounge. While men more often characterize their affairs as recreational, women more typically use them as an “exit strategy” when they are already dissatisfied with their relationship (Hunt, 1974). Although women more typically report being in love with their extra-dyadic partner, it appears that when men’s affairs are as emotionally involved as women’s, they report similar degrees of marital dissatisfaction (Gurgul et al., as cited in Glass & Wright, 1985). In fact, with type of EM-involvement held constant, men and women did not differ in marital dissatisfaction (Glass & Wright, 1985).

As indicated in Chapter 1, men are much more likely than women to report a desire to engage in EDS, especially if there are no strings attached. Men also more often reported that the reason they abstained from EDS was not a lack of desire, but rather a feeling of responsibility, religious morality, or not wanting to get in trouble. Women, on the other hand, were more likely to report a lack of desire (Hunt, 1974; Neubeck, 1969; Pestrak et al., 1985). In their ethnographic research on HIV-risk factors in rural Mexican communities, for example, Hirsch et al. (2007) found that many men were interested in cheating but did not do so because they did not want to get in trouble. To cheat, men informed the researchers, you had to know “where and with whom”, because “small town, big gossip” (p. 989). In fact, many men took advantage of work-related mobility to have EMS (Hirsch et al., 2007). As Pestrak et al. (1985) note, “Apparently, many males engage in extramarital activity for sexual release or recreation, while quite satisfied with their marital relationship” (p. 114). In fact, Hirsch (2007) observed that Mexican men

who had strong emotional bonds with their wives often chose to visit professional sex workers in order to protect their feelings for their wives, while those with lesser emotional connections to their wives were more likely to maintain long-term girlfriends.

Lastly, happily married individuals who visited internet chat rooms for flirting and more, often reported being content with their relationship but crave the excitement of something new, or the “taste of some forbidden fruit” (Mileham, 2007, p. 28). Mileham, who interviewed anonymous visitors of internet chat rooms, found patrons who were searching for a connection that was missing from their relationship, as well as those who were happily married but just looking for a thrill on the side. Thirty percent of respondents reported they went on to have an actual affair with the person they flirted with online (Mileham, 2007).

For some men, EDS actually appears to improve the quality of their primary relationship (Gurgul et al., as cited in Glass & Wright, 1985; Kinsey et al., 1948; Ostertag, as cited in Bett, 2002), or, as long as kept secret, caused no significant problems or changes in feelings toward their partner (Hunt, 1974; Kinsey et al., 1948; Pestrak et al., 1985). For example, Glass and Wright (1977) found that extra-dyadically involved males in older marriages were more content with their primary relationship than those who were not extra-dyadically involved, and many Greek and Turkish men reportedly visit prostitutes while being perfectly content with their primary relationship (personal communication, 2011).

Although problems in the relationship can and often do contribute to involvement in EDS, I propose that relationship dissatisfaction is not the main factor driving the desire for EDS relations in men, unless that dissatisfaction is of a sexual nature. I expect that

individual difference variables related to sexual interest will be stronger predictors of intended and actual EDS than relationship variables for both men and women. I expect those scoring higher on the SOI to exhibit a greater interest in EDS as well as a greater involvement in it, regardless of the quality of their primary relationship, and regardless of whether they are male or female. A correlation between intended EDS and satisfaction with the primary relationship might even be absent for high scorers on the SOI. On the other hand, for those with a lower score on the SOI, I expect the effect of relationship quality on intended EDS to become more salient, which would explain why for women relationship quality has been found to be a stronger predictor of EDS than for men. Although females generally score lower on the SOI than males, I expect females who score high on the SOI to exhibit the same patterns as their male counterparts.

#### Hypotheses for the Current Study

There are three primary hypotheses for this study, each with several sub-headings. The first addresses gender differences, the second the effects of relationship quality, and the third the effects of individual difference variables on intended infidelity.

##### Male-Female Differences in Intended Infidelity

1a: Replicating earlier studies, there will be a significant difference between males and females in intended EDS (extra-dyadic sex). Some have used intended EDS as a proxy for actual EDS, and several studies were small or limited to university populations. The present study broadens the scope to a larger and more representative segment of the population through Internet questionnaires.

1b: There will be a greater frequency of attempted infidelity for males than for females. Studies on intended infidelity have asked whether respondents would take

advantage of an opportunity for EDS if it were provided (see Introduction). I am adding to this a measure of the frequency of EDS-attempts, in order to compare this with the frequency of actual EDS to assess the extent to which limits are imposed on actual EDS by lack of opportunity. In particular, I expect a significantly greater discrepancy between actual and attempted EDS for males than for females. While studies have found male-female differences in intention but not action, none have compared discrepancies between actual and attempted infidelity (actual and intended EDS cannot be directly compared).

1c: In agreement with the women-as-gate-keepers paradigm, I expect homosexual males to be similar in interest in EDS to their heterosexual male counterparts, but with less discrepancy between actual and intended EDS.

1d: Based on the existence of large individual differences within the sexes with regard to the SOI or any other sexuality measure, I expect there to be large individual differences in the propensity for intended EDS within the sexes as well.

#### Relationship Quality and its Prediction of Intended EDS

2a: Because of the expected greater importance of socio-sexual orientation (SO) in predicting intended EDS, I expect a relatively small correlation between relationship satisfaction and intended EDS, such that those more satisfied with their relationship are less likely to consider cheating. I expect a small correlation between general relationship quality and intended EDS for males and a moderate correlation for females, while for sexual relationship satisfaction I expect a small correlation for females and a moderate correlation for males.

2b: I expect females to be more open to romantic (emotional) extra-dyadic involvement when imagining themselves in a relationship that is “not so good,” and

males to be more open to sexual extra-dyadic involvement when imagining themselves in a “not so good” relationship. When imagining their relationship as “good,” I expect males to still show some interest in sexual extra-dyadic relationships, whereas I expect females to show very little interest in either sexual or romantic extra-dyadic relationships. So I expect a main effect for relationship quality, such that people are more interested in extra-dyadic relationships when in bad than in good relationships, a main effect for gender such that males are generally more open to extra-dyadic relationships than females, and an interaction effect of gender and relationship quality such that females are more open to romantic extra-dyadic relationships only when they find themselves in a bad relationship, and males are somewhat open to EDS even when they find themselves in a good relationship.

2c: I expect a much stronger correlation between measures of SO (as indicated by scores on the SOI) and intended EDS, as well as between other measures of sexual interest and intended EDS, for both men and women than between measures of relationship quality and intended EDS.

2d: I also expect a moderation effect such that at low levels of SO the effect of relationship quality on intended EDS becomes more salient for both males and females.

#### Measures of Sexual Interest, Sensation Seeking and Masculinity

3a: In line with previous research, I expect that there will be large male-female differences with males scoring higher than females on all items measuring sexuality, including total score on the SOI, composite score of the seven sexual interest items, frequency of sex desired, and desire to have sex on a first date. Lower female interest in

sex on a first date should especially give support to the ‘women-as-gate-keepers’ paradigm.

3b: Reflecting the importance of SO, the number of casual sexual encounters, number of lifetime sexual partners, and age at first intercourse will be relatively strong predictors of intended EDS for both males and females.

3c: Similarly, frequency of pornography consumption, interest in having a threesome, ability to have sex without love, frequent desire to have sex with attractive people encountered, and the importance assigned to sex in general will be very strong predictors of intended EDS for both males and females.

3d: The paradigm “barking dogs don’t bite” does not hold for intended infidelity: those who frequently flirt and make sexual jokes will be more inclined to desire EDS.

3e: High scores on the SOI as well as high scores on the composite scale of sexual interest items will predict attempted EDS more than actual EDS – or will predict the discrepancy between attempted and actual EDS – because attempted infidelity is free of external constraints. Both will also strongly predict the main question assessing intended EDS.

3f: High scores on sensation seeking and masculinity will predict intended EDS for both males and females. One study has found higher sensation seeking scores to predict intended EDS (Lalasz & Weigel, 2011), but as far as I am aware, no studies have found higher masculinity scores to predict intended EDS. I expect women who score high on masculinity to be similar to males in their scores on the SOI and their interest in EDS. Besides one-phrase statements, the BSSS-4 will be used as an indicator of

sensation seeking tendencies, and the BSRI as an indicator of masculinity and femininity (see description in the method section).

3g: I expect the straightforward item, “I can have sex without love” to correlate highly with the sum total of the three attitudinal items of the SOI, thus potentially having the ability to replace them. The items on the SOI are: “Sex without love is OK”; “I can imagine myself being comfortable and enjoying “casual” sex with different partners”; and “I would have to be closely attached to someone (both emotionally and psychologically) before I could feel comfortable and fully enjoy having sex with him or her” (Simpson & Gangestad, 1991, p. 883). I will also test how strongly the item, “I am a sensation seeker” correlates with the total score on the short form of the BSSS-4, and how strongly the item, “I am considered to be a masculine type” correlates with the total score on the BSRI.

3h: A simple, straightforward test of gender differences in interest in casual sex will be carried out by asking respondents whether they more often require a relationship context as a prerequisite for sex, or prefer sex without a relationship. These statements are supposed to get at the essence of male-female differences in sexuality, and are therefore expected to relate most strongly to differences in intended EDS. Male-female differences in casual sex interest have been tested, but never in this manner. Most studies have asked about respondents’ feelings regarding their actual relationships, although Townsend & Levy (1990), in their study on mate preferences, did find that males were more interested in having sex with hypothetical partners while females were more interested in marrying them. Although the attitudinal items on the SOI ask about these preferences, they do not ask respondents to choose which is more important to them. I

expect this to be the single strongest predictor of intended EDS. A preference for sex but no relationship will be predominantly expressed by males and will correlate with a high score on the SOI and strong interest in EDS; a preference for “no sex unless there is a relationship” will be predominantly expressed by females and will strongly correlate with a low score on the SOI and low interest in EDS, as well as provide support for the ‘women-as-gate-keepers’ paradigm.

3i: I expect the relationship between gender and interest in EDS to be fully mediated by items indicating level of sexual interest, and to be partially mediated by sensation seeking and masculinity (although Lalasz & Weigel (2011) found the effect of gender on intended EDS to be fully mediated by sensation seeking). I will use the SOI as a measure of sexual interest and the BSSS and BRI as indicators of sensation seeking and masculinity.

3j: Lastly, respondents will be asked whether they would be able to have sex with someone who is already in a relationship, to assess more directly whether women are indeed the “gate-keepers” they are presumed to be. My prediction is that women will be less willing to be involved with someone who is already in a relationship, making it more difficult for those males desiring extra-dyadic relations to turn these inclinations into action. I also expect this variable to be a strong predictor of intended EDS.



CHAPTER 4  
METHODOLOGY

Respondents

Respondents were recruited from several places. An advertisement was placed on the website of a Hungarian sports club, e-mails were circulated among friends, the owner of a large recreation center in the Netherlands passed around an announcement per e-mail to all of its members, several acquaintances posted an announcement on their Facebook page, and the owner of a health magazine in Hawaii -- "OnFitness Magazine" -- circulated an announcement per e-mail among its members.

These combined efforts produced 328 responses to the questionnaire, but only 259 people (79%) filled out the majority of the survey. Responses of those who agreed to the consent form but opted out of the survey after a few questions were discarded. Because of the sensitive nature of the questionnaire, some people in the remaining sample left some questions blank, but because different parts of the questionnaire were largely independent, non-response in one section was not presumed to affect response in another section, so sections that were responded to in full were still included in the analyses.

The average age of the respondents was 48 ( $SD = 12$ ). The sample consisted of 108 males and 148 females (3 did not identify). Ethnic background was predominantly Caucasian (85%). Sixty-nine percent of respondents indicated they were currently in a relationship. Respondents were not compensated for their time.

### Procedure

The survey was created in SurveyMonkey (<https://surveymonkey.com/>). The following announcement was circulated in the e-mails and announcements:

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am a Masters student in Psychological Research at CSU Long Beach and am conducting a study on gender differences in sexuality and infidelity for my thesis.

I would very much appreciate if you would take a few minutes to fill out my questionnaire. It should take about 15 minutes to complete, and will ask questions about infidelity, sexuality, relationship quality, sensation seeking and masculinity. You can also skip parts of the survey and still submit it. Please click on the link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/P87WPKH> to continue. If you have any questions you can e-mail me at [Rozemarijn97@yahoo.com](mailto:Rozemarijn97@yahoo.com) or my professor at [Kevin.macdonald@csulb.edu](mailto:Kevin.macdonald@csulb.edu). My sincere thanks for your time.

When potential respondents clicked on the link to the survey, they were first asked to read an Informed Consent form to which they had to agree in order to take to the survey. The Informed Consent form addressed confidentiality, participation, procedure, purpose of the study and identification of investigators, and was approved by CSULB's Institutional Review Board. The full consent form is displayed at the heading of the questionnaire in Appendix C. Participants were asked not to submit their responses if they felt they could not be completely candid.

### Measures

Level of intended infidelity, frequency of attempted infidelity and engagement in actual infidelity (EDS) were assessed in a questionnaire. The main question, assessing

intended infidelity, asked whether respondents would engage in EDS with an attractive person if they had the opportunity to do so and the guarantee not to be found out. Two questions compared frequency of attempted and actual EDS during the current or most recent (at least 6-months long) relationship: the number of times the respondent had attempted to engage in EDS versus the number of times he or she had actually engaged in it. Two other questions asked whether the respondent had ever attempted to have sex outside the current or most recent relationship, and whether he or she had ever had EDS during any committed relationship.

Demographic information was collected for gender, age, sexual orientation, ethnicity, current relationship status, and length of time in current or last committed relationship. Questions about age at first intercourse, number of lifetime sexual partners, and total number of one-night stands were also included. The question “how many one-night stands have you had” was dropped from the questionnaire because it was already included in the SOI (in different wording).

Relationship quality was assessed by asking respondents how they felt about their current relationship, and how they felt about the sexual aspect of their current relationship. Response options were given on a 4-point scale from “very happy” to “very unhappy.” The first question was taken as an indicator of overall emotional relationship satisfaction; the second as sexual relationship satisfaction. Different measures have been used to assess quality of relationship in previous studies, but many have used a single face-valid question, such as “are you happy with your current relationship?”, which appeared to give a good indication of the construct and obtained satisfactory correlational

results (Atkins, Baucom, & Jacobson, 2001; Buss & Shackelford, 1997; Glass & Wright, 1977, 1985; Mark et al., 2011; Spanier & Margolis, 1983).

As an additional check on the impact of relationship quality on interest in emotional and sexual infidelity, four hypothetical statements were given: “When my relationship is good (‘not so good’, resp.), I can (still) see myself getting romantically (‘sexually’, resp.) involved with someone else, if that person is attractive.”

Also included were several individual difference variables indicating sexual interest: ability to have sex without love, frequency of porn consumption, flirting and making sexual jokes, interest in sex with people encountered, importance assigned to sex generally, and desire to have a threesome. These seven items were later combined into one scale to be compared with the predictive value of the SOI. The scale was labeled “Composite Scale of Sexual Interest Items.” An additional two items assessing general sexual interest were included: willingness to have sex on a first date, and frequency of wanting sex compared to one’s partner’s. Willingness to become sexually involved with an already committed person was also assessed. Finally, two statements were provided for which respondents had to indicate which they found themselves thinking more often: “I’d like to have sex with that person, but I don’t want a serious relationship” and “I don’t want to have sex with that person unless we have a serious relationship.”

The quantitative questions asked respondents to enter a number; response options for intentions, individual difference variables, and relationship quality were on a four-point scale, so that respondents were forced to stay away from the undecided middle. Response options consisted of “definitely yes, mostly yes, mostly not, definitely not” for extra-dyadic intentions and personal tendencies, and of “fully agree, mostly agree, mostly

disagree, and fully disagree” for relationship satisfaction. Since my items started with the confirmatory response option and the established questionnaires with the disconfirming option, my items were reverse-coded for analyses where necessary. The full questionnaire is provided in Appendix C.

Four established, validated questionnaires were attached at the end of the questionnaire: the 7-item Socio-sexual Orientation Inventory (SOI), a measure of interest in casual, uncommitted sex (Simpson & Gangestad, 1991); the 4-item Brief Sensation Seeking Scale (BSSS-4), an abbreviated questionnaire measuring sensation seeking tendencies; the 2-item BSSS-2, assessing orientation towards risky activities in general (Stephenson, Hoyle, Palmgreen, & Slater, 2003); and the 20-item short form of the Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI), measuring instrumentality and expressiveness as indicators of masculinity and femininity (Campbell, Gillaspy, & Thompson, 1997). The first ten items on this last scale measure instrumentality as an indicator of masculinity and will subsequently be called BSRI-M; the second ten measure expressiveness as an indicator of femininity and will be called BSRI-F. The established questionnaires can be found in the survey as follows: SOI: questions 35-41; BSSS-4: questions 42-45; BSSS-2: questions 46-47; BSRI: questions 48-49. The BSRI only provides four sample items, since the company does not allow full publishing for copyright purposes.

## CHAPTER 5

### RESULTS

#### Preliminary Work

Aggregate scores were computed from the established questionnaires BSSS-4, BSSS-2, BSRI-masculine, BSRI-feminine, and SOI. Since the BSSS-4 had better predictive value than the BSSS-2, the BSSS-2 was dropped from further analyses.

I created a unitary scale from the seven sexual interest items mentioned in the Method Section. Varimax factor rotation indicated that all of my items loaded more than 50% on the first extracted factor (Eigenvalue = 2.96), which I called “sexual interest.” Item-total correlations indicated that only “Sex is very important to me” shared less than half of the variance with the other variables ( $r = .32$ ). Cronbach’s Alpha for the composite scale was  $r = .77$ , which is generally considered sufficient for an established scale,  $F(6, 245) = 62.71, p < .001$ .

Regarding demographics, ethnicity was dropped from further analyses because there was not enough variety. Age and length of current or last relationship were only included in the questionnaire for potential more in-depth future analyses: since they would balance out across conditions, they were not considered here.

#### Hypotheses 1

1a: As in previous studies, there was a significant difference between males and females in intended EDS (extra-dyadic sex),  $t(254) = -4.34, p < .001$ . Males scored an average of 2.69 ( $SD = 0.92$ ) and females an average of 3.19 ( $SD = 0.91$ ) on a scale where

1 equaled “definitely yes” and 4 equaled “definitely not.” However, this difference disappeared when other variables were added to the model. In a hierarchical regression, gender by itself predicted intended EDS very strongly,  $B = .27, t(180) = 3.80, p < .001$ , but when the Socio-sexual Orientation Inventory (SOI) was added to the model, the impact of gender on intended EDS went down to  $B = .13, t(179) = 1.94, p = .05$ . Gender by itself accounted for only 7% of the variance in intended EDS ( $r^2 = .07, F(1, 213) = 14.46, p < .001$ ), while SO (socio-sexual orientation) accounted for 21% of the variance when added ( $r^2$ -change = .21,  $F$ -change (2, 179) = 52.98,  $p < .001$ ). When all predictors of the questionnaire were added to the model, the effect of gender became completely non-significant at  $B = .09, t(167) = 1.41, p = .16$ . Its zero-order correlation with intended EDS was  $r = .27$ , but its partial correlation, after adding all sexual interest variables to the model, went down to  $r = .11$ . However, this should not be taken to mean that gender is irrelevant, since the SOI essentially serves as a proxy for gender differences.

Also, despite the general tendency for males to have higher levels of intended EDS than females, more males endorsed “definitely not” (21 males) than endorsed “definitely yes” (12 males) for intended EDS (for females, 9 endorsed “definitely yes”, while 69 endorsed “definitely not”). Finally, only 18 males but 60 females endorsed “because I am not interested in a sexual affair with someone else” as the reason they abstained from infidelity. On the other hand, fewer males than expected endorsed “I never turn down an opportunity” (4 males versus 3 females),  $t(248) = 3.75, p < .001$ .

As in previous studies, there was no difference between males and females in actual EDS, as measured in the question “have you ever had sex with someone else while you were in a committed relationship”,  $t(251) = -1.49, p = .14$ .

1b: In order to compare whether there is a greater discrepancy between actual and attempted EDS for males than for females, discrepancies between number of actual and attempted infidelities during the most recent relationship were calculated. These discrepancies were then compared. No significant difference between males ( $M = 2.55$ ,  $SD = 24.53$ ) and females ( $M = 0.40$ ,  $SD = 1.23$ ) was found,  $t(86) = 0.82$ ,  $p = .42$ . This can be attributed to the fact that the standard deviation for males was much greater than that for females: the Levene's test was significant at  $F(86) = 10.59$ ,  $p = .001$ . Attempted EDS appeared to be a much less reliable variable than intended EDS. Number of times attempted was an average of 6 ( $SD = 23.30$ ) for males and 1 ( $SD = 2.35$ ) for females,  $t(87) = 2.02$ ,  $p = .05$ . This comparison also had strongly unequal variances,  $F(87) = 14.59$ ,  $p < .001$ . Half of the males and 68% of the females who responded to this question said they had never tried to be unfaithful during their current or most recent relationship.

1c: Regarding the question whether gay and straight males diverge in action but not in intention, the results were in the expected direction. Gay and straight males were similar in EDS interest (gay males:  $M = 2.86$ ,  $SD = 1.07$ , straight males:  $M = 2.67$ ,  $SD = 0.92$ ),  $t(106) = 0.51$ ,  $p = .61$ , and there was less discrepancy between actual and attempted EDS for gay than for straight males; in fact, the discrepancy was negative for gay males (gay:  $M = -13.50$ ,  $SD = 33.07$ , straight:  $M = 3.74$ ,  $SD = 23.62$ ),  $t(85) = 1.68$ ,  $p = .10$ ). However, this difference was at best marginally significant because there were only 6 gay males who completed this question in the sample.

1d: Regarding the existence of individual differences, as expected, there were large individual differences within the sexes, especially if we consider that the main



question had only 4 response options. Standard deviations for intended EDS were almost a full point for both males and females (males:  $M = 2.69$ ,  $SD = 0.92$ , females:  $M = 3.19$ ,  $SD = 0.91$ ,  $t(254) = -4.34$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Because five t-tests looking for significant differences were used in Hypotheses 1a-d, a Bonferroni adjustment should be applied where each  $p$ -value is divided by the number of tests. This would still render all  $p$ -values that were less than .001 at  $p < .005$ . The  $p$ -value comparing males and females on number of times attempted will become non-significant.

### Hypotheses 2

2a: This hypothesis stated the expectation of a relatively small effect of relationship quality on intended EDS for both genders, with a stronger effect of sexual relationship quality for males and a stronger effect of general/emotional relationship quality for females.

People generally felt “mostly happy” about their relationship for general/emotional ( $M = 1.71$ ,  $SD = 0.74$ ) and for sexual ( $M = 2$ ,  $SD = 0.87$ ) relationship quality on scales from 1 – 4, where 1 equals “very happy” and 4 equals “very unhappy”. There was no interaction between gender and general/emotional relationship quality,  $B = .18$ ,  $t(172) = 1.63$ ,  $p = .11$ , or between gender and sexual relationship quality,  $B = -.16$ ,  $t(168) = -1.68$ ,  $p = .10$ . Gender predicted intended infidelity more than did general relationship quality when in the same model (gender:  $B = .30$ ,  $t(167) = 4.13$ ,  $p < .001$ ; relationship quality:  $B = .17$ ,  $t(167) = 2.01$ ,  $p = .05$ ), and much more than sexual relationship quality, which was not significant,  $B = .12$ ,  $t(167) = 1.36$ ,  $p = .18$ . However, when emotional and sexual relationship quality were entered by themselves, they were significant (emotional:  $B = .18$ ,  $t(176) = 2.38$ ,  $p = .02$ , sexual:  $B = .22$ ,  $t(172) = 2.98$ ,  $p =$

.003). Sexual and general/emotional relationship quality together accounted for 6% of the variance in intended EDS,  $R = .25$ ,  $F(2, 170) = 5.45$ ,  $p = .005$ . Neither were significant by themselves when together in the model (general relationship quality:  $B = .12$ ,  $t(170) = 1.40$ ,  $p = .16$ ; sexual relationship quality:  $B = .15$ ,  $t(170) = 1.74$ ,  $p = .08$ ).

Although there was no significant interaction, independent analyses revealed a pattern opposite of what was expected: for females sexual relationship quality mattered,  $F(3, 88) = 3.79$ ,  $p = .01$ , and for males general/emotional relationship quality mattered,  $F(3, 76) = 4.16$ ,  $p = .009$  for intended EDS (medium effect sizes of  $r = -.34$  and  $r = -.33$ , resp.). For females general/emotional relationship quality was completely non-significant,  $F(3, 92) = 1.58$ ,  $p = .20$ , and for males sexual relationship quality was completely non-significant in its effect on intended EDS,  $F(3, 76) = 0.50$ ,  $p = .70$  (small effect sizes of  $r = -.19$  and  $r = -.12$ , resp.).

2b: This hypothesis predicted a greater female interest in romantic extra-dyadic involvement, and a greater male interest in sexual extra-dyadic involvement (as well as a generally greater interest by both sexes when in a bad than in a good relationship). Because independent and dependent variables were given in the same question, I was not able to run a moderation analysis for this hypothesis. Independent  $t$ -tests revealed that the strongest male-female differences were evident when respondents indicated they were in a good relationship. Females scored close to “definitely not” when asked whether they could still see themselves being sexually involved with someone else (females:  $M = 3.50$ ,  $SD = 0.74$ , males:  $M = 2.99$ ,  $SD = 0.91$ , on a scale where 1 equals “definitely yes” and 4 equals “definitely not”),  $t(247) = 4.82$ ,  $p < .001$ . Females also scored close to “definitely not” when asked whether they could see themselves be romantically involved with

someone else while in a good relationship (female:  $M = 3.43$ ,  $SD = 0.76$ ; male:  $M = 3.03$ ,  $SD = 0.84$ ),  $t(249) = 4.13$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Even when a Bonferroni post-hoc was applied (for 4  $t$ -tests), these  $p$ -values remained significant at the .001 level.

When asked to imagine themselves in a “not so good” relationship, both males and females were, not surprisingly, more likely to see themselves becoming extra-dyadically involved. For sexual extra-dyadic involvement, there was the usual male-female difference (females:  $M = 2.93$ ,  $SD = 0.90$ , males:  $M = 2.51$ ,  $SD = 0.98$ ),  $t(243) = 3.38$ ,  $p = .001$  (with Bonferroni adjustment:  $p = .004$ ). There was no difference between males and females in seeing themselves becoming romantically involved with someone else while in a “not so good” relationship (female:  $M = 2.66$ ,  $SD = 0.94$ , male:  $M = 2.52$ ,  $SD = 0.91$ ),  $t(243) = 1.22$ ,  $p = .22$ .

2c: Regarding the relative prediction power of individual difference variables versus relationship variables, I predicted individual differences (as measured by the SOI and my own composite scale) to be more powerful in predicting intended infidelity. Indeed, the trait of SO predicted 22% of the variance ( $r = .47$ ) in intended EDS by itself,  $F(1, 225) = 62.48$ ,  $p < .001$ . In fact, as in previous studies, SO proved to be one of the most robust predictors of intended EDS,  $B = .47$ ,  $t(225) = 7.90$ ,  $p < .001$ . Comparing the correlations, SO proved to be a significantly stronger predictor of intended EDS than relationship quality,  $z = 2.48$ ,  $p < .01$ . When entered into the model simultaneously, relationship quality (both sexual and emotional) and SO accounted for 28% of the variance in intended EDS,  $R = .53$ ,  $F(3, 160) = 21.20$ ,  $p < .001$ . Partial correlations were  $r = .48$  for SO ( $B = .47$ ,  $t(160) = 6.92$ ,  $p < .001$ ),  $r = .16$  for general/emotional

relationship quality ( $B = .16$ ,  $t(160) = 2.05$ ,  $p = .04$ ), and  $r = .11$  for sexual relationship quality ( $B = .11$ ,  $t(160) = 1.37$ ,  $p = .17$ ).

Relationship quality and SO had little overlapping variance. In a simple hierarchical regression, sexual and emotional relationship quality accounted for 7% of the variance ( $r = .27$ ,  $F(2, 161) = 6.08$ ,  $p = .003$ ), and relationship quality and SO together accounted for 28% of the variance ( $r = .53$ ,  $F\text{-change}(1, 160) = 47.91$ ,  $p < .001$ ). The partial correlation for relationship quality remained virtually the same as its zero-order correlation when SO was added to the model, from  $r = .23$  ( $B = .23$ ,  $t(162) = 3.03$ ,  $p = .003$ ) to  $r = .25$  ( $B = .22$ ,  $t(161) = 3.24$ ,  $p = .001$ ), indicating, not surprisingly, that they are independent constructs.

I used the SOI for comparison because my composite scale of sexual interest items was a less powerful predictor (see Hypothesis 3e). In fact, the zero-order correlation for my composite scale with intended EDS of  $r(244) = .37$  was only marginally greater than that of relationship quality,  $z = 1.39$ ,  $p = .08$ . That means that the strength of the correlation is at least partially dependent on the content phrasing of the predictor. However, when all individual items of the composite scale were entered as predictors rather than one aggregated score, the total correlation with intended EDS was  $R = .50$ ,  $F(7, 238) = 11.43$ ,  $p < .001$ . A factor potentially reducing the prediction power of relationship quality is that its sample size was smaller: it only comprised those currently in a relationship ( $N=178$ ). However, when the effect of SO was measured in a simultaneous model, reducing its sample size to that of relationship quality, its correlation with intended EDS remained the same.

2d: For this hypothesis I expected the effect of relationship quality on intended EDS to become more salient at low levels of SO for both males and females. There was indeed a strong interaction between SO and general relationship quality in predicting intended infidelity,  $B = .30, t = 3.98, p < .001$ . The interaction between sexual relationship quality and SO was much weaker,  $B = .16, t = 2.09, p = .04$ , so subsequent analyses were carried out for general/emotional relationship quality only.

Relationship satisfaction had a strong impact on intended EDS at high levels of SO,  $B = .50, t = 4.92, p < .001$ . At low levels of SO, however, relationship satisfaction had no impact whatsoever,  $B = -.11, t = -1.09, p = .28$  (high and low levels were set at one *SD* above and below the mean). This is exactly opposite of the hypothesized prediction that the effect of relationship quality on intended infidelity would be stronger for those scoring low on the SOI.

### Hypotheses 3

3a: This hypothesis addressed male-female differences in sexual interest. Consistent with previous research, there were strong male-female differences in SOI-score ( $t(130) = 4.21, p < .001$ ), with wider standard deviations for males ( $M = 1.04, SD = 4.11$  on a standardized scale) than for females ( $M = -.85, SD = 1.92$ ). There were strong male-female differences for my composite scale of sexual interest items as well,  $t(242) = -5.41, p < .001$  (males:  $M = 2.52, SD = 0.62$ ; females:  $M = 2.95, SD = 0.63$ , on a scale from 1 = highest to 4 = lowest). Both were in the expected direction, with males indicating greater sexual interest than females. Males also wanted sex significantly more often than females within relationships,  $t(241) = -4.70, p < .001$ , but, surprisingly, they did not significantly want sex more often on a first date than females,  $t(247) = -1.50, p =$

.14. In fact, the overwhelming majority of males did not want sex on a first date. A total of 6 *t*-tests were computed for this hypothesis and for the sexual interest items in hypotheses 3h and 3j (see below). With Bonferroni correction, all significant *p*-values remained below .001.

Breaking down the composite scale of sexual interest items, the largest male-female differences were evident for interest in having a threesome ( $t(202) = 5.36, p < .001$ ), frequency of porn consumption ( $t(178) = 7.62, p < .001$ ) and desire to have sex with attractive people encountered ( $t(208) = 6.01, p < .001$ ). For example, for interest in a threesome, males averaged 2.66 ( $SD = 1.11$ ) and females averaged 3.37 ( $SD = 0.91$ ) on a 4-point scale where 1 indicated highest and 4 lowest interest. Also, confirming previous research, males scored higher for the ability to have sex without love (males:  $M = 2.14$ , females:  $M = 2.52, t(238) = 2.66, p = .008$ ). There were no gender differences for flirting and making sexual jokes. In fact, females reported they flirted as much as males did,  $t(253) = -.56, p = .58$ . All had unequal variances for men and women with wider standard deviations for males than for females, except for ability to have sex without love and importance assigned to sex, which had wider standard deviations for females than for males.

3b: Regarding the expected predictive value of number of one-night stands, lifetime sex-partners and age of first intercourse on intended EDS, in a simultaneous entry with all individual difference, sexual interest and sexual history predictors, number of lifetime partners ( $B = .05, t(167) = 0.74, p = .46$ ) and age at first intercourse ( $B = .02, t(167) = 0.27, p = .79$ ) were entirely non-significant in their effects on intended infidelity. Number of casual sexual encounters remained significant at  $B = .16, t(167) = 2.12, p =$

.04, although this relatively low significance can be partially attributed to the fact that the way the question was phrased might have been unclear. (The question, which was part of the SOI, was phrased as follows, “with how many different partners have you had sex on one and only one occasion?” For example, one person responded, “All of them. I only sleep with one partner at a time.” I had initially included the question, “How many one-night stands have you had,” but it was discarded because of its redundancy with the SOI.)

3c: Contrary to expectations, out of all items on my sexual interest scale, only the desire to have sex with people encountered turned out to be a significant predictor of intended EDS,  $B = .46$ ,  $t(238) = 6.13$ ,  $p < .001$ , when all seven sexual interest items of the composite scale were entered together in a regression model. For females, openness to a threesome and importance assigned to sex approached significance. The composite scale of sexual interest items combined accounted for 25% of the variance in intended EDS ( $R = .50$ ),  $F(7, 131) = 6.25$ ,  $p < .001$ . In a simultaneous entry with all individual difference, sexual interest and sexual history predictors, “I often wish I could have sex with attractive people I meet” remained significant at  $B = .21$ ,  $t(152) = 2.51$ ,  $p = .01$ .

3d: The hypothesis that barking dogs do not bite was largely unsupported. Neither frequency of flirting ( $B = .01$ ,  $t(238) = 0.19$ ,  $p = .85$ ) nor frequency of making sexual jokes ( $B = .10$ ,  $t(238) = 1.50$ ,  $p = .14$ ) predicted intended infidelity significantly. However, when analyzed independently for males and females, results showed that making sexual jokes was strongly related to intended EDS for males,  $B = .29$ ,  $t(97) = 2.80$ ,  $p = .006$ .

3e: I expected high scores on the SOI and composite scale of sexual interest items to predict attempted EDS more than actual EDS (or predict the discrepancy between

attempted and actual EDS, which amounts to the same thing), as well as to predict intended EDS, which cannot be directly compared with actual. Together, the SOI and the composite set of sexual interest items accounted for only 3% ( $R = .17$ ) of the variance in the discrepancy between actual and attempted EDS,  $F(2, 175) = 2.60, p = .08$ , possibly because the discrepancy between actual and attempted infidelity was an unreliable variable: some people indicated large discrepancies while most declared none.

The SOI and composite scale of sexual interest items combined predicted 12% of attempted EDS ( $R = .35, F(2, 175) = 12.37, p < .001$ ), but only the SOI did so significantly,  $B = .33, t(175) = 3.78, p < .001$ . Interestingly, as is the case for intended EDS as well, my composite scale's zero-order correlation with attempted EDS was close to that of the SOI ( $r = .23$  versus  $r = .35$  for the SOI), but when combined into the same model, the correlation for my scale went down to partial  $r(175) = .04$ , while that of the SOI remained strong at partial  $r(175) = .28$ , indicating that, although my scale has predictive value, it does not measure up to the SOI (composite scale:  $B = .04, t(175) = .48, p = .64$ ).

The SOI and my composite scale of sexual interest items did not predict actual EDS (as related to attempted) any less than attempted. They again accounted for 12% of the variance in actual EDS ( $R = .35, F(2, 175) = 12.38, p < .001$ ). Contrary to my prediction, there was no difference between the correlations of these sexual interest measures with attempted and actual infidelity, as both were  $r = .35$ .

Intended EDS ("if you had the opportunity...") clearly proved to be a better variable than attempted EDS ("how many times have you tried..."). Regressing intended EDS on the SOI and composite scale, they combined accounted for 26% ( $R = .51$ ) of the



variance in intended EDS,  $F(2, 214) = 36.64$ . Both were significant predictors (SOI:  $B = .36$ ,  $t(214) = 4.90$ ,  $p < .001$ ; composite scale:  $B = .21$ ,  $t(214) = 2.84$ ,  $p = .005$ ), but again, the SOI proved to be the more robust indicator of sexual interest, because in a simultaneous regression with all individual difference, sexual interest, and sexual history predictors in the model, the predictive value of the SOI remained strong at  $B = .33$ ,  $t(167) = 3.50$ ,  $p = .001$ , while that of my composite scale of sexual interest items went down to  $B = .00$ ,  $t(167) = .02$ ,  $p = .99$ . (This is especially noteworthy because my composite scale's zero-order correlation was  $r = .41$ , but its partial was  $r = .00$ , while the SOI's zero-order was  $r = .52$ , and its partial remained strong at  $r = .26$ .)

3f: This hypothesis addressed the expectation that high sensation seeking and masculinity scores would predict increased interest in EDS for both males and females (and consequently that higher-scoring females would be more similar to males in SO and intended EDS). My own questions, "I am a sensation seeker" and "I am considered a masculine type" together accounted for 4% ( $R = .20$ ) of the variance in intended EDS,  $F(2, 247) = 4.94$ ,  $p = .008$ , but only the masculine type was significant at  $B = .19$ ,  $t(247) = 2.91$ ,  $p = .004$ . The validated scales (BSSS for Sensation Seeking and BSRI for Masculinity) combined also accounted for 4% of the variance ( $R = .20$ ) in intended EDS,  $F(3, 232) = 3.29$ ,  $p = .02$ . The BSRI-M ("masculinity") was significant at  $B = .14$ ,  $t(232) = 2.07$ ,  $p = .04$ , and the BSSS-4 was significant at  $B = .17$ ,  $t(232) = 2.54$ ,  $p = .01$ . In the full hierarchical model with all individual difference predictors, the BSSS-4's partial correlation remained strong at  $r = .30$ ,  $B = .31$ ,  $t(167) = 3.98$ ,  $p < .001$ , probably because it had little overlapping variance with the other predictors.

The BSSS and BSRI-scales combined did not significantly predict intended EDS for females,  $F(3, 128) = 2.15, p = .10$ . Only the BSRI-F (“femininity”) was significant at  $B = .20, t(128) = 2.21, p = .03$ . The BSSS and BSRI strongly predicted SOI-scores for females,  $F(3, 115) = 12.87, p < .001$ , such that higher sensation-seeking and masculinity correlated with higher SOI-scores. Specifically, the BSSS-4 was significant at  $B = .39, t(115) = 4.31, p < .001$ , and the BSRI-F was significant at  $B = -.20, t(115) = -2.41, p = .02$ . The patterns for the questions “I am a sensation seeker” and “I am considered a masculine type” were similar. Sensation seeking was again the strongest predictor for SO for females,  $B = .52, t(116) = 6.00, p < .001$ , but there was no correlation for masculinity in predicting SO, or for masculinity and sensation seeking in predicting intended EDS. For males there was no significant correlation for any of the BSSS and BSRI-scales with intended EDS,  $F(3, 97) = 1.27, p = .29$ , and also no significant correlation for the BSSS and BSRI with SO,  $F(3, 90) = .53, p = .66$ . Regarding my own phrases, the only significant predictor was sensation seeking affecting SO, such that increased sensation seeking correlated with increased SO,  $B = .320, t(94) = 2.81, p = .006$ .

Somewhat surprisingly, there were no male-female differences in masculinity as measured by either the BSRI-M or the BSRI-F. Male-female differences in the BSSS-4 were highly significant, however,  $t(235) = 6.83, p < .001$ . Strangely enough, when using my own phrasing, there was a very strong male-female difference in masculinity,  $t(199) = -8.32, p < .001$ , but no difference in sensation seeking,  $t(250) = -1.50, p = .14$ . Because of the general lack of predictive power of masculinity in predicting SO or intended EDS, there was no point in comparing high-scoring females to males in general in predicting SO and intended EDS.

3g: This hypothesis addressed the expectation that my item “I can have sex without love” would correlate strongly with the sum total of the three attitudinal items on the SOI, potentially allowing it to replace them, thereby simplifying the psychometrics of the questionnaire. It also stated the expectation that my item “I am a sensation seeker” would correlate with the total score on the short form of the BSSS-4, and that my item “I am considered to be a masculine type” would correlate with the total score on the BSRI-M (masculinity scale).

My item, “I can have sex without love” correlated 69% ( $R(246) = .69, p < .001$ ) with the last three items on the SOI, meaning, in my opinion, that the SOI’s wordier items could be replaced with this single item. My item, “I am a sensation seeker” correlated 52% with the established scale of the BSSS-4 ( $R(238) = .52, p < .001$ ), but my item “I am considered a masculine type” correlated only 15% with the BSRI-M,  $R(232) = .15, p = .02$ .

3h: In a direct test of gender differences in casual sex interest, a preference for sex but no relationship was expected to be expressed more often by males and a preference for “no sex unless there is a relationship” by females as an indicator of the “women as gate keepers” paradigm. This item was expected to correlate highly with the SOI and to be the strongest predictor of intended EDS. For this dichotomous question, where 1 indicated a preference for sex but no relationship, and 2 equaled requiring a relationship as a prerequisite for sex, in a simple *t*-test, as expected, males scored closer to 1 and females closer to 2. Males had a mean of 1.40 ( $SD = .49$ ), and females a mean of 1.77 ( $SD = .42$ )  $t(191) = -5.90, p < .001$ . Even with a Bonferroni applied, this *p*-value remained at .001. Somewhat surprisingly, though, 40% of men still answered “I don’t

want sex unless we have a relationship” instead of “I want sex but no relationship” as going through their mind more often. The women were more predictable: 76% said they did not want sex unless they had a relationship.

This item had a strong positive correlation with the SOI, such that those indicating an interest in sex over having a relationship scored higher on the SOI (this was to be expected as the SOI measures the same thing),  $r(211) = .48, p < .001$  ( $F(1, 209) = 64.03, p < .001$ ), and it had a strong positive correlation with intended EDS,  $r(239) = .36, p < .001$ , such that those more frequently interested in sex than a relationship were more likely to indicate a greater interest in EDS ( $F(1, 237) = 36.27, p < .001$ ). In the hierarchical regression with all individual difference items predicting intended infidelity, however, its partial correlation went down to  $r(167) = .05, B = .04, t(167) = .62, p = .54$ , probably because its content overlaps with that of the SOI, and because it is a dichotomous variable.

This item did not turn out to be the strongest predictor of intended EDS as stated in the hypothesis. Open-ness to have sex with someone who is already in a relationship was a stronger predictor (see 3j below), and remained so after all predictors were added to the model.

3i: For this hypothesis, I expected the correlation between gender and interest in EDS to be fully mediated by sexual interest and partially mediated by sensation seeking and masculinity. Since males score higher on sexual interest than females, and since sexual interest predicts infidelity, it would be logical to suspect the effect of gender on intended EDS to be mediated by sexual interest. This was indeed the case. Using the SOI as an indicator of sexual interest, I found that gender predicted SO strongly,  $B = .29$ ,

$t(222) = 4.57, p < .001$ , and gender also predicted intended EDS strongly,  $B = .26, t(254) = 4.34, p < .001$ . However, when both gender and the SOI were entered as predictors, the effect of the mediator, SO, remained strong at  $B = .43, t(221) = 6.98, p < .001$ , while the effect of gender went down to  $B = .12, t(221) = 1.97, p = .05$ . This borders on full mediation, considering that the significance value was exactly  $p = .05$ . The Sobel test gave a value of 3.84, which was significant at  $p < .001$ .

Regarding sensation seeking and masculinity, the BSSS-4 and the BSRI-M (Masculinity) and F (Femininity) were used. Gender predicted sensation seeking as measured with the BSSS-4 at  $B = .41, t(235) = 6.83, p < .001$ , but did not predict masculinity as measured by the BSRI-M,  $B = .04, t(233) = 0.61, p = .55$ , or as measured by the BSRI-F,  $B = -.03, t(234) = -.40, p = .69$ .

There was no mediation for Sensation Seeking as measured by the BSSS-4: the effect of gender on intended EDS remained the same when the BSSS-4 was added to the model,  $B = .26, t(234) = 3.85, p < .001$ , and the BSSS-4 was found to be non-significant in its prediction of intended EDS when added to gender,  $B = .03, t(234) = .40, p = .69$ .

3j: As predicted, males were more willing than females to have sex with someone who is already in a relationship,  $t(251) = 4.81, p < .001$ . This variable was also the strongest predictor of intended EDS,  $B = .54, t(167) = 8.06, p < .001$ . When all individual difference, sexual interest, and sexual history variables were combined in a hierarchical model, its partial  $r$  remained almost the same as its zero-order correlation, while the significance of almost all other variables went down substantially, in most cases to non-significant. Its partial  $r(167)$  was .53, while its zero-order  $r(167)$  was .65,  $p < .001$ , making this one of the most robust predictors of intended infidelity.

It is noteworthy to mention that, when combined into a simultaneous entry (as well as in the final step of a hierarchical model), all individual difference items accounted for 55% of the total variance in intended EDS,  $R = .74$ ,  $F(14, 167) = 14.30$ ,  $p < .001$ . These items consisted of gender, all indicators of sexual interest and sexual history, and all indicators of sensation seeking and masculinity.

## CHAPTER 6

### DISCUSSION

#### General Findings

This thesis consists of three major topics, so I will discuss each under a separate heading. The first covers gender differences in intended EDS (extra-dyadic sex) as well as comparing attempted with actual EDS; the second addresses the effect of relationship quality on intended EDS, including the relative contributions of relationship quality and sexual interest variables, and the effect of relationship quality on intended EDS at different levels of sexual interest. The third covers the effect of individual difference variables on intended EDS, consisting of sexual interest, sensation seeking and masculinity, as well as gender differences in these variables and the way these variables mediate the effect of gender on intended EDS. Lastly, I will discuss some issues I encountered while carrying out the study as well as several limitations of the study.

#### Male-Female Differences in Intended Infidelity

I found the usual gender difference in intended infidelity, with males expressing a significantly greater interest in it than females. However, the SOI (Socio-sexual Orientation Inventory) accounted for a much greater proportion of the variance in intended EDS than did gender, and when all variables were added to the model, the effect of gender completely disappeared. This indicates that there are other factors accounting for the male-female difference in intended infidelity which males and females possess in different degrees. Indeed, the effect of gender on intended infidelity was fully mediated

by SO (socio-sexual orientation), an indicator of sexual interest. Males scored much higher on SO than did females, as they had done in previous research. This means that they are more interested in uncommitted sex with multiple partners, which makes for an obvious prerequisite for an interest in EDS. In other words, it is the males' greater sexual interest that accounts for their greater interest in infidelity. As expected, however, there were large individual differences in interest in infidelity, as there are in sexual interest, and the sexes greatly overlap in both sexual interest and desire for EDS. Clearly, individual difference variables of sexual interest account for a greater proportion of the variance in interest in EDS than gender.

Contrary to expectations, no difference was found between actual and attempted infidelity for males or females. This can be attributed to several factors. First, because of the way the question was phrased, respondents had to dig into their past and try to recall whether incidences of attempted infidelity had actually occurred. The temptation to minimize these instances in order to retain a positive self-image might have been greater than for intended EDS, where the phrasing of the question pertains to the immediate present. The tendency to simply forget instances from the past would of course also be greater. A bias to minimize one's interest in doing something generally considered socially unacceptable can of course also exist for intended EDS, and could potentially differ for males and females, which is one of the greatest limitations inherent in this and any other study on intentions. Although the anonymity of the study most likely has removed such biases, people might not even want to admit to themselves that they would do certain socially unacceptable things, thereby under-estimating their capabilities. A more likely explanation for the lack of difference between discrepancies for males and



females, however, is that attempted EDS was an unreliable variable. There was a much greater variability for males than for females, and most people scored zero while a few gave very large numbers. Number of times attempted still averaged 6 for males and 1 for females; yet at the same time, half of males and 68% of females indicated they had never tried to be unfaithful during their current or most recent relationship.

Difference between gay and straight males in the discrepancy between actual and attempted infidelity was measured to test the hypothesis that gay males have more extra-dyadic partners than straight males because of differential opportunity -- both parties are male -- rather than differential interest. The results were in the expected direction, even though there were only 6 gay males who responded to this question in the sample.

Interest in EDS did not differ between gay and straight males, and the discrepancy for gay males between actual and attempted EDS was actually negative.

#### The Effect of Relationship Quality on Intended EDS

The effect of relationship quality on intended infidelity was slightly smaller than that of gender, and much smaller than that of the SOI. Unlike SO, there was no interaction between relationship quality and gender. However, independent analyses revealed that there was a trend opposite of the one hypothesized: for females only sexual relationship quality was significant in predicting intended EDS, and for males only general/emotional relationship quality was significant. This runs counter to my prediction as well as the literature review, in which, although research findings in this area are often inconsistent or inconclusive, there was a general tendency to note that males were more likely to be unfaithful when they were sexually dissatisfied and females when they were emotionally dissatisfied with their primary relationship. I have no

explanation for this reverse effect, especially since for females emotional relationship quality has appeared to matter more for both their primary and extra-dyadic relationships, and for males sexual relationship quality has appeared to matter more for both in most previous research.

When asked specifically to imagine themselves in either a good or a “not so good” relationship (“bad” seemed to be an inappropriate choice, since many people could not imagine themselves staying in a bad relationship, but the findings can only be expected to be more, not less pronounced in the same direction had I used “bad” relationship), respondents were asked to imagine how open they would be to either a romantic/emotional or a sexual extra-dyadic affair. Of course both males and females were less likely to imagine themselves being unfaithful when in a good than in a bad relationship, and again females were less likely to imagine themselves in any extra-dyadic relationship than males. But females scored as high as males in intention when it came to being romantically involved with an extra-dyadic partner while in a bad relationship, largely confirming my hypothesis (the hypothesis stated they would score higher than males, but nowhere did they score higher; in this particular case, they did not score significantly lower). This was the first study to test interest in sexual versus emotional extra-dyadic involvement, and the results were in the expected direction.

As predicted, sexual interest, as measured by the SOI, was a much stronger predictor of intended infidelity than was relationship quality. Since males score consistently higher on measures of sexual interest than females, it is this gender difference in sexual interest that most likely accounts for differences in intended EDS, especially since the male-female difference in open-ness to romantic extra-dyadic

relations is generally smaller than that of open-ness to sexual extra-dyadic relations. Not surprisingly, sexual interest and relationship quality were independent constructs with little overlapping variance. My own construction, the 7-item composite scale of sexual interest items, was a less powerful predictor of intended EDS than the SOI. A potential factor reducing the prediction power of relationship quality as compared to sexual interest might have been that it had a smaller sample size: it only consisted of those currently in a relationship. However, when the SOI-scores of only those currently in a relationship were analyzed (giving it the same sample size), SOI's prediction power remained virtually the same.

There was a strong interaction between sexual interest as measured by the SOI and general relationship satisfaction, but it was in the opposite direction as hypothesized. For those scoring high on SO, relationship quality had a significant impact on their desire to engage in EDS. For those scoring low, relationship quality had no impact whatsoever. How can we explain these results? We must remember that those scoring low on SO have a general tendency to be less interested in pursuing extra-dyadic relationships. Even when they find themselves in a less than satisfactory relationship, they might keep themselves from cheating because they simply have less interest in it. Those with high levels of SO, on the other hand, may restrain themselves from acting on their inclinations only when they find themselves in a good relationship which they feel fully committed to. In other words, for those who consider themselves in a bad relationship, their socio-sexual inclination might become more salient than for those in a good relationship. This runs counter to my prediction that those scoring high on SO are interested in cheating regardless of the status of their primary relationship.

### Individual Difference Variables Predicting Intended EDS

In line with previous research, males scored higher on all sexual interest variables than females, although surprisingly the males in this sample were not more likely to want sex on a first date than the females (see Table 1). In fact, the majority of males did not want sex on the first date at all. Regarding my composite scale of sexual interest items, interest in having a threesome, frequency of porn consumption, and desire to have sex with strangers obtained the largest male-female differences. The ability to have sex without love also received significantly greater endorsements from males than from females, confirming previous research. Males were more likely to choose sex over having a relationship and females were more likely to choose having a relationship over sex. Males were also significantly more likely to indicate they would be willing to have sex with someone who is already in a relationship, confirming the females-as-gatekeepers paradigm, both for sexual relations and actual infidelity. Because females often don't want sex unless there is a relationship, they are much less likely to opt for an already occupied man who is trying to have an affair, making it more difficult for males than for females to engage in affairs.

Regarding the prediction of intended EDS, only the desire to have sex with people encountered turned out to be a significant predictor out of the seven sexual interest items of my composite scale. In a simultaneous entry with all individual difference, sexual interest and sexual history predictors, this item still remained significant. While a significant predictor on its own, the significance of the composite scale as a whole disappeared when the SOI was added to the model. In a full simultaneous entry regression model (as well as the last box of a hierarchical model, which amounts to the

same thing) with all individual difference predictors, and with the composite scale entered as a whole, only four predictors remained significant: the SOI, the BSSS-4, number of previous one-night stands, and willingness to have sex with someone who is already in a relationship. This latter item proved to be the single strongest predictor of intended EDS. Besides these four items, all other predictors went down to non-significant, probably because the SOI, as one of the most robust predictors of intended infidelity, soaked up the variance from several of the other sexual interest variables which were strongly related to it (see Table 2).

My hypothesis that those who flirt and make sexual jokes are more likely to be unfaithful was largely unsupported. First, women reported flirting and making sexual jokes as much as men did. Of course it is possible that females flirt for different reasons than males: it has often been observed that females flirt to get males' attention or favors, but when the male actually comes on, they back off. However, neither flirting nor making sexual jokes predicted intended EDS, although when analyzed for males and females separately, making sexual jokes did significantly predict intended EDS for males. This indicates that flirting is not related to interest in EDS for males, but making suggestive sexual jokes is. It is difficult to operationalize exactly what people meant by "flirting"; however, as it is generally understood, I still expected it to be related to an interest in EDS, such that those flirting more would be more interested in EDS. I had also expected the propensity to make more sexual jokes to be related to an increased interest in EDS for females.

The measure of attempted infidelity turned out to be a much weaker variable, as indicated by the fact that the SOI and composite scale of sexual interest items were much

better able to predict intended than attempted EDS (although the SOI still significantly predicted attempted EDS). The discrepancy between actual and attempted EDS, as indicated by the inquiry into how many times people had attempted to cheat and how many times they had actually done so, was even less powerful, because some respondents reported very large differences while most declared none. Contrary to my expectations, the sexual interest scales (SOI and composite scale) predicted attempted and actual infidelity about equally. As mentioned at the beginning of the Discussion, the large standard deviations of attempted EDS, as well as the much wider standard deviation for males than for females, may have accounted for this lack of significance. Also, the wording of the intended EDS variable was much more straightforward than that of the attempted one: “If you had the opportunity to have sex with an attractive person while in a committed relationship, and you had the guarantee not to be found out, would you do it?,” making it a more reliable variable.

Comparing the non-sexual individual difference items, sensation seeking as measured by the BSSS-4 (Brief Sensation Seeking Scale) was the strongest predictor of intended EDS. When phrased in my own wording, masculinity appeared to be a stronger predictor, but when using the validated scales, sensation seeking was a stronger predictor, and this remained so after all individual difference variables were accounted for. Interestingly, this is consistent with my finding that when using my own wording, I found significant male-female differences for masculinity but not sensation seeking (as indicated by the phrase, “I am considered a masculine type”), but when using the validated scales, I found significant male-female differences for sensation seeking but not masculinity. This indicates that the BSSS-4 is a strong discriminator, but calls into

question the content validity of the BSRI (Bem Sex Role Inventory) as an accurate indicator of masculinity and femininity.

Sensation seeking as measured by the BSSS-4 was, not surprisingly, also a strong predictor of SO. However, when broken down by gender, there was no correlation for males between either the validated scales or my own predictors of sensation seeking and masculinity with intended EDS or SO, with the exception of sensation seeking, in my own phrasing, predicting SO. Sensation seeking as measured by both the BSSS-4 and in my own phrasing, was a strong predictor of SO but not intended EDS for females, and masculinity (from established scales and own phrasing) was hardly a predictor for females for either intended EDS or SO.

What are we to make of this? I had expected masculinity to be a strong predictor for both SO and intended EDS for both males and females, because I expected that it would be at least in part this masculine trait that accounted for males' elevated interest in EDS. Previous research had also shown that there was a correlation between hyper-masculinity and hyper-sexuality, as well as between more "masculine" women and interest in EDS, but it looks like it is mostly the males' higher SO, rather than their masculine traits, that accounts for their greater interest in EDS. Sensation seeking correlated only for females, and only with SO, meaning it is not a great predictor of intended infidelity.

The SOI consists of seven items, of which the last three are attitudinal and all measure the ability to separate sex from love. Since my single item, "I can have sex without love" correlated strongly with these last three items, and since their mean scores were exactly the same, I believed the SOI could be simplified by replacing its last three

items with “I can have sex without love”, without losing any of its psychometric properties. On the other hand, in the full regression model predicting intended EDS, the significance of “I can have sex without love” disappeared, while that of the SOI remained strong, so caution is advised. Regarding my single-phrase items for sensation seeking and masculinity, “I am a sensation seeker” correlated strongly with the BSSS, but “I am considered a masculine type” did not correlate strongly with the BSRI. Interestingly, however, my sensation-seeking item had less prediction power and my masculinity item had more prediction power than the validated scales.

As predicted, the effect of gender on intended infidelity was fully mediated by sexual interest, as measured by the SOI. This again points to the conclusion that it is the males’ higher level of sexual interest, rather than some other male trait, that accounts for their elevated interest in EDS. There was no mediation for sensation seeking, and a search for mediation could not even be attempted for masculinity because, paradoxically, gender did not predict masculinity (as measured by the BSRI) to begin with.

### Overall Conclusions

In the big picture, my hypotheses were supported. There were the usual male-female differences in sexual interest and intended infidelity, and, as hypothesized, individual difference variables of sexual interest were stronger predictors of intended EDS than relationship satisfaction. Also, the effect of gender on intended EDS was fully mediated by sexual interest, as measured by the SOI. However, some outcomes were contrary to my hypotheses. The effect of relationship satisfaction on intended EDS mattered more at high levels than at low levels of sexual interest (as measured by the SOI), for males general relationship quality mattered more and for females sexual



relationship quality mattered more in predicting intended EDS, attempted EDS did not gather as strong of a male-female difference as intended EDS, and flirting did not at all predict intended EDS.

The strongest predictor of intended EDS in this study was openness to have sex with someone who is already in a relationship. This makes sense because it pertains to the same set of moral values people would have regarding infidelity within their own relationship. A possible positive implication of the stronger prediction power of sexual interest over relationship quality could be that spouses or partners do not have to blame themselves when their significant other cheats on them. It appears to be very much a part of someone's personality whether one has an inclination to cheat or not. This applies to both males and females, since both scoring higher on the SOI had a stronger inclination to be unfaithful. In other words, you have to be "the type". Examples abound throughout history of males in positions of power who did or did not take advantage of opportunities, or even created opportunities, to be unfaithful.

The most surprising outcome was that for females sexual relationship satisfaction had a greater impact on their inclination to be unfaithful, whereas for males general/emotional relationship satisfaction mattered more. I have no explanation for this, as my own experience, as well as virtually all existing research, has pointed in the opposite direction. On the other hand, as is apparent from the literature review, there are a lot of contradicting findings in every area of research pertaining to relationship quality and infidelity. Overall, relationship quality mattered about the same for males and females, whereas I had expected it to matter more for females.

Individual difference variables were also stronger predictors of intended EDS than gender, meaning that, as expected, there is a lot of overlap between the sexes as well as strong individual variability within them (gender's large standard deviations indicated this too). This is so in every area of sex differences, whether it pertains to aggression, sensation seeking, interests or even nurturing capacity. It also appears that males have a larger variability than females, indicating that a subset of males is very much interested in EDS, whereas another subset is not interested at all. In fact, more males endorsed "definitely not" than endorsed "definitely yes" for intended EDS, meaning that we cannot state that the majority of males is polygamous, only that as a whole, males are more polygamous than females (the proportion of females endorsing "definitely not" was two and a half times greater than that of males).

The finding that many males are interested in infidelity but even more are not, coincides with Miller and Fishkin's (1997) and Pedersen et al.'s (2002) finding that over half of males wanted only one lifetime sexual partner. It means yet again that there are a greater number of promiscuously inclined males than females, but not necessarily that the majority of males are promiscuous (Baumeister et al., 2001). This certainly matches well with personal experience. I have known women who have been sexually approached by their friends' husbands in the middle of the night, seduced by their bosses and harassed by their co-workers, but also women whose bosses told them, "I am happily married and planning to stay that way" when they flirted or even when they indicated they would be sexually available. The subset of males who are interested in multiple sex partners and infidelity certainly makes themselves more visible, just as the subset of aggressive males

would appear more noticeable, which can potentially skew our perception of the general trend in that particular direction.

A very odd and not previously encountered phenomenon was that sensation seeking and masculinity had very little effect on sexual interest or intended EDS for males. This may again point to the fact that it is the elevated sexual interest, as measured by my composite scale and the SOI, rather than non-sexual individual difference variables such as sensation seeking or masculinity, which accounts for the male's greater interest in EDS. For females sensation seeking and masculinity mattered only slightly for EDS-inclination but much more for sexual interest (as measured by the SOI). Even more unexpected was that gender did not predict masculinity or femininity as measured by the BSRI-scales, which refer to leadership and nurturing qualities as indicators of masculinity and femininity. Partially responsible for this could be that part of the sample was of Dutch origin, in which culture gender roles have largely disappeared. Females might have made it a point to emphasize their masculine qualities and males their feminine qualities, since androgyny has increasingly been valued for both males and females in Dutch society as an indicator of a well-rounded personality.

The main finding of the thesis (and one consistent with predictions), is that interest in extra-dyadic sex is more a personality variable than an artifact of relationship quality. Basically, those more interested in uncommitted sex are also more likely to have an interest in being sexually unfaithful, although there were interactions between sexual interest and relationship quality. This is the case regardless of gender (although because males are generally more interested in uncommitted sex, they also score higher on interest in EDS). Interestingly, more masculine women were not more likely than less

masculine women to indicate an interest in EDS (although the femininity subscale of the BSRI was significant), meaning it is mostly the SO, rather than the masculinity, which is responsible for most of the male-female differences in intended infidelity.

### Issues and Limitations

The biggest limitation of this and any other study on intentions is that we cannot be a hundred percent certain that respondents answered completely truthfully. They might over- or under-report their inclinations according to how they would like to be perceived based on society's expectations of them. Even though the questionnaire was anonymous, people might have internalized these expectations to such an extent that they affect their responses. An issue that has been raised is that females might under-report and males over-report their sexual actions because they are less socially endorsed for women than for men. In fact, researchers report that this actually happens. It has been found that, even in anonymous surveys, males still often report more lifetime sexual partners than females, which is a logical impossibility (e.g., Brown & Sinclair, 1999; Janus & Janus 1993; Laumann et al., 1994; Oliver & Hyde, 1993; Smith, 1991; Wiederman, 1997b).

In fact, my own study found this as well. Having multiple sex partners is often perceived as an achievement for males but not for females, because it has been easier throughout history for females to acquire sexual partners than for males. This is sometimes called the sexual double-standard or the "stud vs slut" hypothesis (e.g., Crawford & Popp, 2003; "Why Women Are Called Sluts", 2008; England & Bearak, 2014). But although males might feel compelled to brag about their sexual escapades while females might feel embarrassed about them, this tendency should still be removed

by the anonymity of the questionnaire. In fact, in completely anonymous surveys, especially those administered by computers, it is greatly reduced or even absent (e.g., Alexander & Fisher, 2003; Beaussart & Kaufman, 2013; Fisher, 2007; Tourangeau & Smith, 1996), although full discretion is crucial because even the gender of the person administering the surveys (Fisher, 2007) or a simple announcement about internet privacy (Beaussart & Kaufman, 2013) can affect the responses. Alexander and Fisher (2003) found that male-female sex partner reporting discrepancies were greatest under non-anonymous conditions, medium (but not significant) under anonymous conditions, and non-existent under conditions where respondents were made to believe they were hooked up to a lie detector.

Baumeister et al. (2001), in their review of male-female differences in sexuality, suggest that males over-report their sexual partners because of motivated cognition: they wish they could have more, so they like to view themselves as having more. Jonason and Fisher (2009) found that men who tended to associate access to multiple females with prestige, tended to over-report their numbers. Brown and Sinclair (1999) suggest that males simply use different, less precise estimation strategies, such as rate-based additions based on half-decades, and rounding up to even numbers (see also Wiederman, 1997b; Haavio-Mannila & Roos, 2007). Brewer et al. (2000) point out that prostitutes are under-represented in national surveys and student populations, and that when corrected for this under-sampling, the gender difference in reporting disappears (however, see Einon, 1994, for a different opinion). Gay males, as reviewed in the Introduction, also have many more sexual partners than gay females, so if there is a substantial number of gay persons included in the sample, this may account for much of the unequal reporting.

In fact, in my sample, when excluding gay males and gay females, the discrepancy was reduced but still significant. Haavio-Mannila and Roos (2007), in their article on the male-female discrepancy of sex partner reporting, point out that over-reporting only occurs with large numbers. They write, “In this article we first show that the gender difference in the reported number of sexual partners in lifetime is restricted to people with numerous sexual partners only. Men and women with a small number of partners report equivalent numbers of partners” (para. 8). “We hypothesized that those who have had few partners remember the number of partners better than those who have had many. Those with many partners have more difficulty to remember the precise number and would tend to round the number off, with each sex going in the preferred direction” (para. 11).

Indeed, when I did not include the cases with over 50 partners in my sample, the male-female discrepancy completely disappeared, meaning a few promiscuous men likely rounding up their numbers were responsible for much of the male-female difference in reporting. Estimation discrepancy generally disappears when the time frame is reduced to 1 year as well (e.g., Brown & Sinclair, 1999; Tourangeau & Smith, 1996), and there is no gender discrepancy for estimation of duration and frequency of sexual activity (Laumann et al., 1994).

Lastly, it appears that, if anything, females are more likely to under-report than males are to over-report their number of sexual partners and other sexual activities in order to protect their reputation (Alexander & Fisher, 2003; Haavio-Mannila & Roos, 2007). Tourangeau and Smith (1996) compared computer-assisted personal interviewing with computer-assisted self-administered interviewing, and found that males’ and

females' reports were very close in the self-administered condition, while in the personal interviewing condition both genders went about equally in the expected direction, with males exaggerating and females minimizing their number of sexual partners (see Figure 1, p. 294). Wittrock (2004) found that males and females reported similar numbers of sex partners under anonymous conditions, but under non-anonymous conditions, female's reporting greatly reduced while that of males stayed largely the same.

A related issue is that what people indicate their intentions are, may not always match up with their actual actions. Generally, however, there is a large correlation between actual and intended infidelity, especially in those cases where opportunity is available. Data on actions, such as interest in entering a dating contest while in a relationship, the number of married males versus females on dating sites, the much greater number of extra-dyadic liaisons for gay male than for gay female couples, and the much greater rate of males than females agreeing to have sex when approached by an opposite-sex stranger, all point to the fact that people's actions match up with their inclinations.

Could females be holding themselves back in their actions to conform to society's expectations of them? Individual differences point otherwise. Many more females than males indicate simply not being interested in one-night stands or extra-dyadic affairs; however there are some who indicate being very much interested in both. Similarly, there are many men who indicate not being interested in extra-dyadic affairs or one-night stands at all, which would not be expected had they all internalized society's expectations of them more or less equally. In fact, individual differences again proved to be much greater than group differences, as is the case in every area of human behavior. This

indicates that people largely go by their personal inclinations rather than by society's expectations of them. A good example of this is the phenomenon of "tom girls" and feminine boys; even though they were raised to conform to gender stereotypes and exposed to the same role models as their gender-conforming siblings, they nevertheless act counter to expectations. The relative presence of "male" and "female" hormones has been shown to play a large role in this in recent research, as mentioned in the Introduction.

Also, if anything, I believe that people will under-report, not over-report, their intentions when it comes to infidelity, because it is not something generally endorsed by society. In my review of the major studies on human interest in sexual variety, I found that about half of men indicated they wanted no more than one lifetime sexual partner (although the other half wanted a lot); however, in R. D. Clark and Hatfield's (1989) experimental study, 70% of men agreed to have sex that same night when approached by an only moderately attractive stranger of the opposite sex. Also, even if intention and action do not always match up perfectly, I am looking for general tendencies. The fact that respondents were made fully aware that the questionnaire is anonymous should remove most biases in reporting. Responses on the MMPI and many other mental health and personality scales demonstrate tremendous individual differences in reporting which often go completely counter to society's expectations of ideal personality traits, indicating that, when guaranteed anonymity, people generally report truthfully about their assets as well as their flaws.

If males are proud of their sexual conquests, and if this leads them to over-report when reporting large numbers, they will likewise feel embarrassed about any futile



attempts at sexual access, which would result in an under-reporting of their attempted infidelities. If anything, I believe this might have actually happened. If females at all minimized their sexual escapades, then males certainly minimized their failed attempts at gaining sexual access. Nobody likes to admit, even to themselves, that they have tried but failed to win someone over. In the big picture, however, I believe these reporting biases to be relatively small, just as they have been small for most fully anonymous surveys. Although sexual conquest may be looked upon more favorably for men than for women in all cultures, engaging in relational infidelity in Western culture is still unanimously rejected for both males and females, and I therefore expect, if anything, only a tendency at under-estimation, not over-estimation, for both sexes.

Another issue regards the sampling of the study. I have tried to reach as broad a sample as possible by approaching people through different venues and not limiting my study to university students. However, one can still not guarantee a fully representative sample, most importantly because my sample was largely limited to males and females from Western cultures. One of the greatest challenges for any online study is to obtain a fully representative sample: although the number of online-users has increased exponentially in the past decade (Mileham, 2007), there are still people who cannot be reached through this medium, especially in the older age range. However, I do not expect gender differences to be markedly different among non-internet users or among people sampled from different venues. Gender differences are expected to largely hold across different populations; moreover, I have included populations from five different sources. Additionally, however, the types of people willing to spend time on a questionnaire may differ from those who are not. This remains an issue. People who show an interest in

filling out a questionnaire about gender differences in relationships, sexuality and infidelity may also constitute a biased sample. I tried to leave out the word “Infidelity” in my introductory letter, but the Human Subjects Committee required me to include it, so as not to mislead the sample as to what the study was about so they could make an informed decision whether to participate. One indicator that I have achieved a reasonably representative sample is that almost all my replications point in the same direction as previous research results.

There were a few potential problems with regard to the questionnaire items. Questions about attempted and actual infidelity were asked with regard to current or most recent relationship which means I may have lost some valuable information from previous longer relationships. Memory fades over time, and recollection is presumed to be sharpest for the most recent relationship. The main question about intended infidelity, luckily, was independent of current relationship. There are some definitional issues as well, such as what people perceive to be a “committed relationship”. This study does not limit itself to married couples, which means there may be some variation in what people consider a committed relationship. Another operational definition which may cause problems is that of attempted EDS. Although the questionnaire explicitly states “having sex” rather than “cheating” or “infidelity”, people may have different perceptions of what constitutes an attempt (I included any action the respondent intentionally carries out towards the goal of eventually having sexual relations). Intentional EDS was much more clearly operationalized as being willing to take the opportunity to have sex with an attractive person while in a committed relationship when there is no concern about retribution or discovery. Indeed, it appeared to be a much more reliable and predictive

variable. What constitutes “often” or “frequently” might also potentially differ for respondents, but that would not be an issue that is limited to my study. Slightly problematic was that the order of my questions ran from 1 to 4 (or 1 to 5) while that of the established questionnaires ran from 4 to 1 (or 5 to 1). I reverse-scored my items (or corrected the direction of the correlation), but in reporting the results, an ascending order from 1 (“definitely not”) to 4 or 5 (“definitely yes”) might have made more intuitive sense. I also should have probably counterbalanced my response options (although none of the existing questionnaires did), because people may have an overall tendency to choose earlier appearing options.

An issue that remains is that there appears to be a subset of people who will not admit socially undesirable behavior even under anonymous conditions. This would call into question the entire validity of my questionnaire (as well as any other questionnaire on sensitive or confidential information). Brink (1995) found that a fifth of respondents said they would not tell the truth about the number of sexual partners they had even under anonymous conditions. To settle the issue, Ong and Weiss (2000) carried out an experiment in which they allowed students to cheat on a vocabulary test for which a high score would warrant a reward. On a later test, they asked the students who had cheated if they had ever cheated on a test for which they were not supposed to cheat in the past year (the test instructions had stated not to cheat, but there was a dictionary left within the students’ reach). Some students filled out these questionnaires under confidential conditions, others under anonymous conditions. Of those who had cheated, in the confidential condition 25% admitted to it, while under the anonymous condition 74% did. This might be, if anything, an under-estimation, because students were required to give

the last 4 and the last 5 digits of their social security number on the first and second test, respectively. Given that a limited number of students participated in the study, the anonymity guarantee is therefore questionable. Still, it means that most people report honestly, but not all do. This remains a flaw that no anonymous study about sensitive or confidential topics can get around, unless they hook people up to a lie detector. We can therefore only look at the general direction of the results, and have to take into consideration that there will be some variation with regard to accuracy of reporting. I had initially wanted to do an experimental study, but for practical reasons this was virtually impossible. Seal et al.'s (1994) study on interest in entering a dating company while in a relationship lends itself well as a model for an experimental study. Similar models are conceivable. Future research could show participants video-clips of attractive persons of the opposite sex who are available on dating sites and ask whether participants would like to sign up for a date with them, or have participants interact with persons of the opposite sex who imply that they would be sexually available and then give an opportunity to follow up on this, thereby bypassing the issues inherent in self-report. Because males are expected to initiate romantic relationships, however, care should be taken that studies do not rely on direct initiation, but rather on indicating an open-ness to date or have sexual relations outside of the primary relationship. Alternately, one could simply tally how many responses an advertisement of a reasonably attractive person gets who is looking specifically for a discreet relationship with an already married or involved male or female, although in that case the relative contributions of gender, relationship factors and individual differences cannot be fully assessed.

## APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

TABLES

TABLE 1. Gender Differences for the Most Important Sexual Interest Items

Measure	Male		Female		<i>n</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>			
Composite scale of Sexual Interest Items	2.52	0.62	2.95	0.63	242	-5.41	.001
SOI total score	1.04	4.12	-0.85	1.92	130	4.21	.001
Willingness to have sex with occupied person	2.58	0.89	3.12	0.87	251	-4.81	.001
Frequency of sex desired within relationship	1.74	0.64	2.17	0.74	241	-4.70	.001
Desire for sex on first date	3.51	1.10	3.72	1.03	247	-1.50	.14
Preference for sex or relationship	1.40	0.49	1.77	0.42	192	-5.90	.001

TABLE 2. Simultaneous Entry of All Individual Difference Variables Predicting Intended Infidelity

Measure	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i> (167)	<i>p</i>	Zero-order <i>r</i>	Partial <i>r</i>
Gender	-.09	.12	-1.41	.16	-.27	-.11
SOI total	.33	.03	3.50	.001	.52	.26
Sexual interest composite scale total	.001	.11	.02	.99	.41	.001
Preference for sex or relationship	-.04	.13	-.62	.54	-.39	-.05
Frequency of sex desired within relationship	-.04	.07	-.60	.55	-.20	-.05
Desire for sex on first date	-.05	.06	-.82	.42	-.24	-.06
Willingness to have sex with occupied person	-.54	.07	-8.06	.001	-.65	-.53
Age of first intercourse	.02	.02	.27	.79	.09	.02
Number of lifetime sexual partners	.05	.001	.74	.46	.15	.06
Number of one-night stands	-.16	.002	-2.12	.04	-.18	-.16
BSSS-4 total	-.31	.07	-3.98	.001	-.09	-.30
BSSS-2 total	.09	.07	1.28	.20	.09	.10
BSRI-M total	.03	.09	.58	.56	.04	.05
BSRI-F total	-.09	.07	-1.73	.09	-.13	-.13

APPENDIX B  
COPYRIGHT RELEASE FORMS



Rozemarijn van der Steen  
24210 East Fork Road, # 19  
Azusa, CA 91702  
Rozemarijn97@yahoo.com

December 20, 2014

J. A. Simpson  
S 354 Elliott Hall  
75 East River Road  
University of Minnesota  
Minneapolis, MN 55455

Dear Dr. Simpson,

I am completing a thesis at CSU Long Beach for my Master's program in Psychological Research, titled, *Intended Infidelity: Male-Female differences in Intention-Behavior Congruence and the Relative Prediction Power of Gender, Relationship and Individual Difference Variables*. I hereby request your permission to include your validated Socio-sexual Orientation (SOI) scale into my thesis as reported in your study referenced below. Upon acceptance of the thesis, microfilm copies of it may be published and sold on demand by ProQuest Information and Learning Company (PQIL).

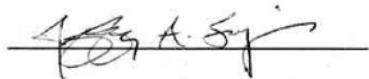
Simpson, J. A., & Gangestad, S. W. (1991). Individual differences in sociosexuality: Evidence for convergent and discriminant validity. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 60(6), 870-883.

If this meets with your approval, please sign the letter where indicated below and return it to me in the enclosed return envelope. If you are not the copyright holder, please be so kind to refer me to the right person, if possible. My sincere thanks for your time.

Sincerely, Rozemarijn van der Steen



PERMISSION GRANTED for the requested above:



Jeffrey A. Simpson

Date: 1-8-15

Rozemarijn van der Steen  
8934 Ben Hur Ave  
Whittier, CA 90605  
Rozemarijn97@yahoo.com

October 22, 2014

Mr. R. Stephenson  
College of Liberal Arts  
Texas A & M University  
4223 TAMU  
College Station, TX 77843

Dear Dr. Stephenson,

I am completing a thesis at CSU Long Beach for my Master's program in Psychological Research, titled, *Intended Infidelity: Male-Female differences in Intention-Behavior Congruence and the Relative Prediction Power of Gender, Relationship and Individual Difference Variables*. I hereby request your permission to include your validated Brief Sensation Seeking Scales (BSSS-2 and BSSS-4) into my thesis as reported in your study referenced below. Upon acceptance of the thesis, microfilm copies of it may be published and sold on demand by ProQuest Information and Learning Company (PQIL).


Stephenson, M. T., Hoyle, R. H., Palmgreen, P., & Slater, M. D. (2003). Brief measures of sensation seeking for screening and large-scale surveys. *Drug and Alcohol Dependence*, 72, 279-286.

If this meets with your approval, please sign the letter where indicated below and return it to me in the enclosed return envelope. If you are not the copyright holder, please be so kind to refer me to the right person, if possible. My sincere thanks for your time.

Sincerely, Rozemarijn van der Steen



PERMISSION GRANTED for the requested above:



Michael  
~~Richard~~ T. Stephenson  
Date: 11/5/14

Good luck!

Rozemarijn van der Steen  
24210 East Fork Road, # 19  
Azusa, CA 91702  
Rozemarijn97@yahoo.com

November 20, 2014

Mind Garden, Inc.  
855 Oak Grove Ave, suite 215  
Menlo Park, CA 94025

Dear Mind Garden administrator,

I am completing a thesis at CSU Long Beach for my Master's program in Psychological Research, and hereby request your permission to include the Short Form of the Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI-M and BSRI-F) into my thesis. If this meets your approval, please sign the letter where indicated below and return it to me in the enclosed return envelope. My sincere thanks,

Rozemarijn van der Steen



*up to 5 items from*

PERMISSION GRANTED for the requested above:



Date: 12/19/14

APPENDIX C  
QUESTIONNAIRE  
“GENDER DIFFERENCES IN SEXUAL ATTITUDES”

## Gender Differences in Sexual Attitudes

Thank you for filling out this questionnaire. For each question, please click on the option that most applies to you, or write in the number. Please be completely honest when filling out this form. This questionnaire is completely anonymous. Your responses cannot be traced back to you. You can keep questions blank if you feel uncomfortable about answering them. If you feel you cannot make your answers truthful to the best of your knowledge, do not click "submit". Please read the Informed Consent form below and click "agree" to take the survey, or "do not agree" to exit.

### Informed Consent Form

#### Purpose of the Study

This questionnaire will ask about your sexual interest, relationship quality, intended and actual infidelity, sensation seeking tendencies and masculinity. I will be looking for the relationship between these constructs, especially the difference between actual and intended infidelity, and the impact of gender, relationship quality, and personality on infidelity.

#### Participation and Withdrawal

Some of the questions are very personal, and may make you feel uncomfortable. Therefore, if you have objections to any of the questions, you may leave them blank. You can still submit the questionnaire even if you skip questions. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and you may quit at any time by exiting the browser. If you exit before you click "submit", no responses will be recorded.

#### Confidentiality

Your responses to this questionnaire are strictly anonymous, and can in no way be traced down to you. You will not be asked to write your name or any other identifying information on the survey. We are not tracking your computer's IP-number and have no interest in identifying you. You can check with SurveyMonkey that the IP-tracking device has been disabled.

#### Procedure

The questionnaire will take about 15 minutes to complete. By clicking on "I agree to take the survey" at the bottom of the page you will be taken to the survey. The main section is followed by two smaller sections on sensation seeking and masculinity that you may skip if you want by leaving them blank and clicking "next" at the bottom of the page. Do not fill out this questionnaire you are under 18 years of age. If you feel you cannot make your responses truthful to the best of your knowledge, do not click "submit" at the end of the questionnaire.

#### Identification of Investigators

I very much appreciate you taking the time to fill out this survey. If you have questions about this study, or would like the results e-mailed to you, please contact me at (818) 4623013 or per e-mail at Rozemarijn97@yahoo.com. You can also contact my supervisor, Dr. K. MacDonald, at (562) 985-8183 or per e-mail at KmacD@csulb.edu. This study was approved by my school's Institutional Review Board. You can contact them at Research@csulb.edu if you have any questions about your participation.

### 1. Please click:

- I agree to take this survey
- I do not agree to take this survey

**2. What is your gender?**

- male  
 female

**3. What is your age? (write number)**

**4. What is your primary sexual orientation?**

- heterosexual  
 homosexual

**5. At what age did you first have sexual intercourse?**

**6. How many sexual partners have you had in your life? (you may give your best estimate)**

**7. Are you currently in a committed relationship? (marriage, dating or living together)**

- yes  
 no

**8. If you had the opportunity to have sex with an attractive person while in a committed relationship, and you had the guarantee not to be found out, would you do it?**

- Definitely yes  
 Probably yes  
 Probably not  
 Definitely not

**9. During your current or most recent relationship, have you ever tried to have sexual relations with someone else? ('trying' includes romancing someone, asking him/her out, asking for his/her number, offering help, chatting him/her up, setting up a meeting or any other action you took in order to get closer to that person with the hope that he or she would eventually have sex with you)**

- yes  
 no

**10. If yes, approximately how many times have you tried during your current or most recent (at least six months long) committed relationship? (write number)**

**11. Of those times, how many times did you actually have sex with the person you pursued? (leave this question blank if you have never tried)**

**12. Approximately how long is/was your most recent (at least six months long) committed relationship? (write number of years. You can add halves, i.e. if around one and half years, you can put 1.5).**

**13. Have you ever had sex with someone else while you were in a committed relationship?**

- yes  
 no

**14. Would you be willing to have sex with someone who is already in a committed relationship?**

- Definitely yes  
 Probably yes  
 Probably not  
 Definitely not

**15. How do you feel about your current relationship? (skip if you are not in one)**

- Very happy  
 Mostly happy  
 Mostly unhappy  
 Very unhappy

**16. How do you feel about the sexual aspect of your current relationship? (skip if you are not in one)**

- Very happy  
 Mostly happy  
 Mostly unhappy  
 Very unhappy

**17. When my relationship is not so good, I can see myself getting sexually involved with someone else, if that person is attractive.**

- Definitely yes  
 Probably yes  
 Probably not  
 Definitely not

**18. When my relationship is not so good, I can see myself getting romantically involved with someone else, if that person is attractive.**

- Definitely yes
- Probably yes
- Probably not
- Definitely not

**19. When my relationship is good, I can still see myself getting sexually involved with someone else, if that person is attractive.**

- Definitely yes
- Probably yes
- Probably not
- Definitely not

**20. When my relationship is good, I can still see myself getting romantically involved with someone else, if that person is attractive.**

- Definitely yes
- Probably yes
- Probably not
- Definitely not

**21. I can have sex without love**

- definitely yes
- probably yes
- probably not
- definitely not

**22. I often visit porn sites**

- definitely yes
- probably yes
- probably not
- definitely not

**23. I am a sensation seeker**

- definitely yes
- probably yes
- probably not
- definitely not



**24. I am considered a masculine type**

- definitely yes
- probably yes
- probably not
- definitely not

**25. I often make sexual jokes**

- definitely yes
- probably yes
- probably not
- definitely not

**26. I flirt a lot**

- definitely yes
- probably yes
- probably not
- definitely not

**27. I often wish I could have sex with attractive people I meet**

- definitely yes
- probably yes
- probably not
- definitely not

**28. I would like to have a threesome**

- definitely yes
- probably yes
- probably not
- definitely not

**29. Sex is very important to me**

- definitely yes
- probably yes
- probably not
- definitely not

**30. Which statement do you find yourself think more often?**

- "I'd like to have sex with that person, but I don't want a serious relationship"
- "I don't want to have sex with that person unless we have a serious relationship"

**31. When you are in a relationship, do you or your partner usually want sex more often?**

- I usually want sex more often
- It is about equal
- My partner usually wants sex more often

**32. Do you normally want sex on the first date (if the person is attractive)?**

- Yes, always
- Yes, usually
- Yes, sometimes
- No, almost never
- No, never

**33. When you have an opportunity to cheat but you don't, it is usually because:**

- I am not interested in a sexual affair with someone else
- I don't want to hurt my partner or compromise my morality
- I don't want to get in trouble with my partner
- I never turn down an opportunity

**34. What is your (primary) ethnicity?**

- Caucasian (Germanic/Anglo/Scandinavian)
- Latin (Hispanic/Italian/Portuguese)
- Slavic (or Greek, Hungarian)
- Middle Eastern (Persian, Arabic, Turkish)
- African or African-American
- Southeast Asian
- East Asian
- Native American or Pacific Islander
- Other or decline to state

## Sociosexual Orientation Inventory (SOI)

**35. With how many different partners have you had sex (sexual intercourse) within the past year? (write number)**

**36. How many different partners do you foresee yourself having sex with during the next five years? (please give a specific, realistic estimate)**

**37. With how many different partners have you had sex on one and only one occasion?**

**38. How often do you fantasize about having sex with someone other than your current dating partner? (choose one)**

- never
- once every two or three months
- once a month
- once every two weeks
- once a week
- a few times each week
- nearly every day
- at least once a day

**39. Sex without love is OK**

1 | strongly disagree      2      3      4      5 | strongly agree

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

1 | strongly disagree      2      3      4      5 | strongly agree

**41. I would have to be closely attached to someone (both emotionally and psychologically) before I could feel comfortable and fully enjoy having sex with him or her.**

1 | strongly disagree      2      3      4      5 | strongly agree

**Brief Sensation Seeking Scales (BSSS) and Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI)**

**42. I like to do frightening things**

	Strongly disagree	2	3	4	Strongly agree
Indicate your agreement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**43. I would like to explore strange places**

	Strongly disagree	2	3	4	Strongly agree
Indicate your level of agreement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**44. I like new and exciting experiences, even if I have to break the rules**

	Strongly disagree	2	3	4	Strongly agree
Indicate your agreement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**45. I prefer friends who are exciting and unpredictable**

	Strongly disagree	2	3	4	Strongly agree
Indicate your agreement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**46. How often do you do dangerous things for fun?**

	Not at all	2	3	4	Very often
rate	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**47. How often do you do exciting things, even if they are dangerous?**

	Not at all	2	3	4	Very often
rate	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**48. Please indicate how well each of these items describe you on a scale from 1 through 5 (1 = never/almost never true, 5 = always/almost always true)**

	1	2	3	4	5
Assertive	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Leadership ability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

There are 8 more similar items for the BSRI-M.

**49. Please indicate how well each of these items describe you on a scale from 1 through 5 (1 = never/almost never true, 5 = always/almost always true).**

	1	2	3	4	5
Understanding	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sympathetic	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

There are 8 more similar items for the BSRI-F.

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