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Emancipatory Sexuality Education: An Exploration of Young Women's Perceptions of Their Sexuality and Sexuality Education Influences

by

Shelley L. Balanko, M. A.

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research through the Department of Psychology in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Windsor

Windsor, Ontario, Canada

2002

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ABSTRACT

This research aimed to: provide young women with emancipatory feminist sex education, explore quantitatively and qualitatively young women's perceptions of their sexuality and sex education influences, and expand our understanding of female sexuality. These purposes were achieved through the administration of a 6-week sexuality education curriculum to two groups of university women (ages 19-24) within a delayed-treatment experimental design with short-term follow-up. The Our Whole Lives (OWL): Sexuality Education Curriculum for Grades 10-12 (Goldfarb & Casparian, 2000) and Adults (Kimball, 2000) were used in this research. Guided by Feminist Standpoint Theory (Hartsock, 1998) and naturalistic inquiry (Guba & Lincoln, 1982), quantitative survey methods and qualitative interviews and observational field notes were the data collection methods. It was hypothesized that at posttest and follow-up participants would exhibit more sexual assertiveness, less acceptance of rape/coercion myths, less acceptance of the sexual double standard, and greater acknowledgement of their sexual desire than at pretest. It was also hypothesized that, at posttest, participants who received sexuality education would differ significantly from those waiting for the education on measures of: sexual assertiveness, endorsement of sexual coercion/rape myths, acceptance of the sexual double standard, and sexual desire. There were several statistically significant results, and the quantitative and qualitative findings converged. First, participants became less interested in being sexual with a partner, but more interested in being sexual with themselves. The consciousness-raising objectives were achieved, and participants became more open to masturbation, sexual diversity, and sexuality and spirituality. Participants emerged more self-reflective, self-aware, and self-accepting. As participants were self-
reflective and self-disclosing during the program, they also began to re-evaluate their sexuality and sometimes re-defined themselves. Generally, participants became more self-focused as a result of their participation. Finally, contrary to expectation, participants’ attitudes toward the sexual double standard were unchanged, and they were not any less concerned with body image issues and reputation concerns. Apparently, young women can experience positive outcomes from short-term sexuality education. Now it is time to advocate for widespread implementation and evaluation of emancipatory sexuality education with a range of contexts and participants.
DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my family. To my parents, Lawrence and Elizabeth Balanko, thank you for your love, support, and high expectations. Your constant faith in my abilities inspired and enabled me to succeed. To my sisters, Cheryl and Shawna, thank you allowing me to benefit from your experiences and for contributing to my interests in sexuality research. Finally, I would like to thank my grandparents for instilling in our family the value of education.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Sexuality. What is it? How is it defined and understood? Is it something personal, social, cultural, or political? Why are there gender differences in the experience of sexuality? The answers to these questions depend upon one’s perspective. Historically, in North America, sexuality has most commonly been conceptualized according to theories of biological determinism rooted in modern positivist epistemology. Our understanding and experience of sexuality has been partly influenced by sexuality education. The origins of sexuality education have also been in biological positivist science. Since the 1960s, sexuality education has focused almost exclusively on the mechanics of reproduction, unwanted pregnancy prevention, and sexually transmitted disease (STD) prevention (Balanko, in press). Typical sexuality education can be construed as sex-neutral or sex-negative, as it has not equally emphasized the pleasurable aspects of sexuality, nor has it presented the full spectrum of behaviors, identities, desires, and attitudes that comprise this very complex phenomenon. From a feminist perspective, the most notable omission in sexuality education has been the ‘discourse of desire,’ namely female sexual subjectivity (Fine, 1988). Although young women have been the primary recipients of sexuality education in our schools, curricula have neglected to address their right to sexual desire and their meanings of sexuality. It is understandable that sexuality education has ignored subjective female sexuality, because the majority of sexuality research, upon which much education is based, has ignored it as well. Research and education grounded in social constructionist theories of sexuality have not completely
neglected female sexual subjectivity. However, the quantity of this literature is modest relative to the literature reflecting biological determinist perspectives.

The aim of this research was to explore female sexual subjectivity and correct this imbalance in sex education and research. The research rationale is grounded in a limited discussion of biological determinist accounts of sexuality, and a more detailed exploration of social constructionist perspectives. This is followed by a brief review of North American sexuality education, feminist critiques of traditional sex education, recommendations for curricular improvements, and research on female sexual subjectivity. After the research rationale is described, the research goals, guiding epistemology, methodology, methods, design, procedure, analyses, and results and conclusions are presented.

Sexuality: Biological Determinism vs. Social Constructionism

Moore and Brown Travis (1999) stated that culture and science are interconnected, and that our scientific frameworks define our standards of normalcy for women and men. Often definitions of gender appropriate sexual behavior reflect political interests and are not specific to the sexuality of men and women. For the purposes of this research sexuality is conceptualized very broadly. Sexuality includes sexual practices, identities, values and desires that are influenced by biology, culture, law, ethnicity, race, and history. It is private, public, political, individual, and institutionalized (Holland, Ramazanoglu, Sharpe, & Thompson, 1998). This conceptualization of sexuality is more inclusive than biological determinist accounts.
Biological determinism

Sociobiology and sexology represent two perspectives on sexuality founded on biological determinism and modern positivism. "Sociobiology is the study of social behavior as determined by biology, and is essentially based on elements of evolutionary theory emphasizing natural selection as a mechanism by which evolution can occur" (Moore & Brown Travis, 1999, p. 44). Sociobiology views sexuality as genetically driven. For example, Buss and Schmitt (1993) proposed a comprehensive theory of human mating, the Sexual Strategies Theory. The theory contends that males and females pursue different sexual strategies depending upon the contexts of either short-term or long-term sexual relationships. The key to this theory is that males’ and females’ sexual strategies have evolved over generations to provide solutions to their differing mating problems. Central to males’ and females’ sexual strategies are Darwin’s theory of sexual selection and Triver’s theory of parental investment (Buss, 1998). In perpetuation of the human species, females are obliged to invest more in the production and rearing of offspring than males. Consequently, females’ motives surrounding sexual relationships focus on obtaining a partner that will contribute the most resources to parenting, and thus, females favor long-term mating strategies. Males, on the other hand, invest comparatively less in parenting to ensure the perpetuation of their genes, and thus, favor short-term mating strategies with as many females as possible (Buss & Schmitt, 1993). The theory predicts that males and females will attend to different cues of mating suitability to achieve their mating strategies. For example, males will be attracted to females that display characteristics associated with fertility such as youth and health. Females will be attracted to males that demonstrate traits associated with security such as availability of
resources and the ability to offer physical protection. The Sexual Strategies Theory offers evolutionary biological justification for the sexual double standard that exists between males and females. It is socially acceptable, if not expected, that men will enjoy numerous sexual encounters with multiple partners. On the other hand, women are expected to have only one long-term partner. The theory consists of several other premises, but a detailed description of each is beyond the scope of this review.

Sexology is the scientific study of sexuality that emphasizes biological and psychological factors in its theories while ignoring the influences of culture, history, and commerce (Irvine, 1990). According to this perspective, sexuality is a universal and natural evolutionary force and sexual desires can be explained by biological factors (Tiefer, 1999). There are gender differences in sexual interests and experiences, but the abilities to desire and achieve orgasm are universal. Sexuality is seen as an aspect of the individual, and early childhood experiences shape one’s sexual attitudes and desires.

Heterosexuality is viewed as the norm. Masters and Johnson’s (1966) classic book, Human Sexual Response, epitomizes the sexological approach to understanding sexuality. Masters and Johnson studied sexuality solely in reference to the anatomy of human response and the physiological variations in reaction patterns. The goal of their work was to gain understanding of sexual response to inform the treatment of sexual inadequacy. Treatment was to be conducted by medical and behavioral personnel.

According to Masters and Johnson (1966), both males and females experience four phases of sexual response: excitement, plateau, orgasm, and resolution. Among men, the pattern of response is essentially the same except for the duration of each phase. Among women, they identified three patterns of sexual response within the four phases. Their
study did not consider homosexuality nor did it address the meanings of sexuality for their participants. This perspective medicalized sexuality and to this day it characterizes most of North American thinking about sexuality (Tiefer, 1999).

There are several negative implications that arise from biological determinist accounts of sexuality. Sociobiological and sexological explanations of sexuality reinforce gender stereotypic myths and limit individual expressions of sexuality (Moore & Brown Travis, 1999). This perspective is especially damaging for women. For example, biological explanations portray male sexuality as active and female sexuality as passive (Segal, 1994). This dynamic precludes women from being sexually agentic and disembodies their desire. Ultimately, biological explanations for gender differences in sexuality lead to three major problems (Morokoff, 1999). First, these explanations provide justification for men’s rape behavior. Rape is justified due to men’s capacity for greater physical strength, and women’s obligation to act as men’s sexual caretakers. Alternatively, women’s inherent seductiveness is to blame for their victimization (Trotman Reid & Bing, 1999). Second, biological models result in problems understanding women’s sexuality. For example, women do not know how to conceptualize their own sexuality, because according to biological models it does not exist within them. Consequently, women often resort to clues in male portrayals of female sexuality present in the mass media and pornography to determine what it means to be sexual (Morokoff, 1999). Finally, women’s sexual functioning can be impaired. Currently, the biological models have relegated women to the role of sexual gatekeeper. As a result, women may be too preoccupied with monitoring their partner’s sexual behavior to become sufficiently focused on their own sexual feelings in order to achieve
orgasm (Barbach, 1975; Morokoff, 1999). In my opinion, there is a theoretical perspective in opposition to biological determinism, and it is more beneficial for women’s sexuality, namely social constructionism.

Social Constructionism

Social constructionism asserts that we actively give meaning to sexuality based on our experiences within our culture, and that while biology is a determining factor, it is not the sole factor. Social constructionism is closely linked with much feminist theory on sexuality (Shibley Hyde & Olliver, 1999). Like biological determinists, feminists believe that there are gender differences in sexuality. However, these differences are not predicated on essential biological sex differences, but are the product of our socially constructed gender. Consequently, differences in men and women’s sexuality reflect differences in gender roles, socialization, and power. Social constructionism allows the politics of sexuality to be considered, because it places our values and ideologies at the center of our understanding of sexuality (Weeks, 1995). White, Bondurant, and Brown Travis (1999) have suggested that social constructionist conceptualizations of sexuality may promote equality and provide understanding of the limits of the traditional modern positivist perspectives. From this view, traditional conceptions of sexuality have been mechanisms of social control. Sexual identities prescribed by gender role socialization have preserved the social order. Social constructionism challenges us to consider the subjectivity of our knowledge, and the underlying social processes and power relations that produced this knowledge (White et al., 1999). In other words, adopting a social constructionist perspective requires one to critically examine the “truths” of biological determinist theories of sexuality and consider sexuality as an avenue for political change.
McCormick (1994) summarized current constructions of sexuality as limitations imposed by society learned in childhood and adolescence. Through learning appropriate gender role behaviors, appropriate sexual behaviors are learned as well. Presently, dominant society teaches us that males initiate and dominate sexuality; females fear sexuality and are responsible for controlling their own and males’ sexual behavior. This socialization also teaches that “real” sex requires male-dominant vaginal-penile intercourse.

Women’s inferiority to men is maintained by numerous social influences; among them are sexual harassment and beauty ideals. Young men and women are socialized to expect that women will be harassed as part of their sexuality (Larkin, 1994). From birth, youth are taught that women are less valuable by confining women to domestic work, devaluing this labor, and keeping women from educational pursuits. Sexual harassment in schools and workplaces serves to remind women that they are infringing upon male territory and that violence is a potential punishment for this transgression. Our social standard of beauty is another mechanism of keeping women in subordination. By inextricably weaving beauty into female sexuality, a woman’s sexuality becomes externalized; something that can be judged by the public (Brown Travis, Meginnis, & Bardari, 1999). A woman’s sexuality is no longer defined by her own pleasure, but by her capacity to attract and give pleasure to men. Narrow social definitions of beauty based on traditional ideals of femininity reinforce gender- and race-based oppression. Equating beauty and sexuality leads to three deleterious outcomes for women: body manipulations (e.g., plastic surgery), health effects (e.g., eating disorders), and a fragmented identity (e.g., sexuality resides outside oneself) (Brown Travis et al., 1999). It is in adolescence
that girls begin to split their subjectivities into two spheres: that which they know themselves and that which is expected of them by society (Brown & Gilligan, 1993; Debold, Tolman, & Brown, 1996). Girls’ desire, what they know within themselves, becomes disembodied, as they recognize that society expects them to be asexual, and punishes them by reputation when they fail to fulfill this expectation (Debold et al., 1996). These essentialist messages about male and female sexuality create the perception that sex between men and women can only be adversarial (Donat & White, 1999; Goldfarb, 1995).

Gender roles, socialization, and power inequality may socially construct sexuality, but how is it reinforced? Holland, Ramazanoglu, Sharpe, and Thompson (1998) have suggested that the ‘male in the head’ is one mechanism that maintains it. The ‘male in the head’ refers to women’s internalization of the male gaze that acts to judge and control femininity. In this way men do not have to be present to monitor women’s behavior to ensure that it complies with prescribed sexuality norms. The ‘male in the head’ allows women to monitor their own behavior and that of other women to ensure that sanctioned female sexuality is perpetuated at all times. Ironically, women become agents of their own oppression.

As described above, there are many negative aspects of the current social constructions of sexuality. However, there is an essentially positive factor in these constructions that is less present in biological determinist accounts of sexuality, that being the potential for change. Proponents of biological determinism can indefinitely support the sexual (and political) status quo by emphasizing “immutable” biological sex differences. However, Bem (1996) has suggested that this emphasis on sex differences is
based on, "the false assumption, which is that biology is a kind of bedrock beyond which social change is not feasible" (p. 12). She pointed out that humans have overcome biological limitations in order to achieve flight and survive infections. Bem (1996) has asserted that it is our androcentric social structures that turn biological sex differences into disadvantages for women. Androcentrism defines "normal" as anything perceived or experienced from the male perspective. Within this system, women’s experiences and perceptions are disadvantaged merely because they are different. Unlike biological determinist views of sexuality, social constructionist approaches consider the impact of context on knowledge, and therefore, are more likely to consider androcentrism as a limiting factor in our understanding of sexuality.

The influences of androcentrism and biological determinism on our understanding of sexuality are clearly visible in educational institutions. Through recognition of the impact of androcentrism, sexuality can be reconstructed to represent the sexual subjectivities of women.

Sexuality Education

Currently, sexuality education is fairly prevalent in North America. Barrett (1994) reported that all provinces and territories in Canada include sexuality education in their education curriculum; however, there has been substantial variation in the content of these programs. Although the extent and quality of sexuality education on a national level has not yet been thoroughly documented, the Sexuality Information and Education Council of Canada (SIECCAN) believes that most Canadian teens get some form of sex education during high school (A. McKay, personal communication, October 18, 2000). This assumption has been supported by the Canadian Guidelines for Sexual Health.
Education which identified access to sexual health education for all as its first principle (Health Canada, 1994). The guidelines stated that schools are essential organizations in providing sexuality education because they have extended contact with almost every young person in Canada. The prevalence of sex education may not be similar in the United States due to the absence of federal government support. The federal government explicitly stated that it should not dictate sexuality education or its content in American schools (SIECUS, 2000). However, the states vary in their mandates that schools should provide sexuality education, STD and HIV/AIDS education, or both. For example, 19 states and the District of Columbia (DC) have required schools to provide sexuality education, but 31 states have not. Thirty-four states and DC have required schools to provide STD and/or HIV/AIDS education, but 16 states have not. Finally, the content of these mandated programs has varied considerably across and within states. Perhaps national implementation of sexuality education in the United States has yet to be realized because of sexuality education’s controversial history.

Dominant Discourses

Moral controversy has always surrounded the development and implementation of sexuality education. Sexuality education has been controversial because it is responsible for the sexual socialization of our youth (McKay, 1998). Consequently, it plays a role in shaping sexual values and behavioral norms that reflect the character of our society. “Although viewed as an instrument of sexual control, sexuality education is in fact an instrument for social control” (Sears, 1992, p. 27). There have been two ideologies in conflict regarding the nature of sexuality education, namely restrictive (traditional) and permissive (progressive) (Carlson, 1992; McKay, 1998). The restrictive ideology has its
origins in biblical oriented sex-negative conceptions of sexuality and espouses moral absolutist principles. Proponents of this ideology support either no sexuality education in the schools or promote abstinence-only programs. The permissive ideology views sexuality as benign or pleasurable, and sees it as contributing to psychological well-being. Rather than believing in moral absolutism, this ideology adopts person-centered sexual ethics such as justice and equality. Supporters of this ideology advocate comprehensive sexuality education. To reconcile the conflict between the two ideologies in North America, the bare-bones approach to sexuality education emerged (McKay, 1998). This approach provides information on biology, reproduction, and virology, and it avoids anything controversial that may offend either ideological camp. These ideological conflicts and influences are readily apparent in the history of sexuality education in North American schools.

Since the 1960s sexuality education has emphasized reproductive biology, unwanted pregnancy prevention, and STD prevention (Balanko, in press). Although sexuality curricula progressed from rudimentary to comprehensive, biological determinist accounts of sexuality have remained the foundation of the majority of programs. Schragg (1989) described four models of sexuality education that can be identified within the history of sexuality education: biological informational, sex informational, sex educational and emancipatory educational. In the 1960s, the primary concern was the appropriateness of offering sexuality education within schools, because some feared it was usurping a parental responsibility. The curriculum emphasized reproductive biology and limited contraceptive information. The 1960s characterize the biological informational model (Schragg, 1989).
In the 1970s, the sex informational model was popular; it involved the transfer of information about sexuality topics such as intercourse, contraception, orgasm, and masturbation (Schragg, 1989). Unfortunately, relational and social factors were not part of this model. However, there was a broadening of topics within sexuality education (e.g., masturbation and sexual enhancement), and the emergence of a sex-positive tone (Balanko, in press).

The sex educational model of the 1980s and 1990s shifted from information transfer alone to promoting self-awareness (Schragg, 1989). In this model relational aspects of sexuality were presented, but only on an intellectual level. Conservatism in the 1980s shifted the emphasis of sexuality education away from sex-positive pursuits to a preoccupation with prevention of teen pregnancy and STD/AIDS transmission (Balanko, in press). At this time, sexuality education became more sophisticated in achieving its prevention objectives by basing programs on sociological and psychological theories of learning and decision-making. Fine (1988) identified the dominant discourses of sexuality education in the 1980s: sexuality as violence, sexuality as victimization, and sexuality as individual morality. She noted that the discourse of desire (female sexual subjectivity) was missing. Fine characterized the dominant discourses as “anti-sex rhetoric which controls the controversies around sex education, SBHCs [School-Based Health Clinics], and AIDS education” (Fine, 1988, p. 49). During the late 1980s and 1990s, feminist scholars and educators criticized traditional models and promoted the emancipatory model of sexuality education. The emancipatory educational model seeks to clarify sexual values and address stereotypic gender roles (Schragg, 1989).
Importantly, social and relational aspects of sexuality are discussed from an emotional perspective.

In the 1990s, sexuality education became viewed as part of holistic health promotion efforts (Balanko, in press). This emphasis spurred the development of comprehensive sexuality education programs. Comprehensive sexuality education involved teaching cognitive and affective knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Sexual diversity and sex equity became included as appropriate topics in some curricula, but the emancipatory model did not gain prominence. The moral controversy surrounding sexuality education has likely precluded extensive implementation of such a model.

**Feminist Critiques**

Emancipatory sexuality education promotes and supports individuals in making free choices (Schragg, 1989). Feminist critiques of traditional models of sexuality education have focused on the oppression of female sexuality. Feminists have been especially critical of sexuality education that perpetuates the sexual double standard that denies women the right to identify and own their sexual desires (Chilman, 1985; Fine, 1988; Myerson, 1987). Several negative outcomes have been linked with perpetuating the sexual double standard. First, sexism in sexuality education and socialization have been identified as factors contributing to unsafe sexual behaviors (Albury, 1990; Chilman, 1985; Cusick, 1987; Lever, 1995; Thompson, 1990). For example, traditional gender role socialization that teaches females passivity does not enable women to negotiate behaviors that require assertiveness such as condom use (Cusick, 1987; Holland et al., 1998). This is compounded by sexism in education that does not promote relationships of equality between men and women that would facilitate women’s attempts at assertive
communications. The ultimate result may be that males’ resistance to condom use may not be opposition to condoms, but resistance to taking directives from “inferior” females (Lever, 1995). Often there are unnecessary and harmful results of unsuccessful condom negotiation such as unwanted pregnancy or STD infection. Second, sexual scripts, accommodation (female) and entitlement (male), lead women to think of themselves as sexual objects, and allow men to pay less attention to refusals (Cairns, 1993). Sexism and socialization have also taught women to expect to be overpowered by men’s intense sexual desires (Willig, 1998). Consequently, sexual scripts and women’s expectation of overpowering male sexuality encourage women to expect coercive sex as normative and to engage in sexual activity without contraception that requires advance planning. Third, sexuality education has also socialized women to monitor their sexuality and restrict their desires to avoid obtaining a bad reputation (Lees, 1994; Tolman, 1994b). In other words, good girls do not want sex, but a good boy should. In summary, the biological determinist approach “can easily lead to a view in which the ‘laws of nature’ neatly coincide with political agenda” (Whatley, 1989, p. 29). In addition to criticisms, feminists have put forth suggestions to improve sexuality education.

Curriculum Recommendations

McCormick (1994) described a more woman-affirming model of sexuality. Such a model would enable women to enjoy sexuality on their own terms and not feel pressured to conform to male models of sexuality that predominate today. In her view, our popular, but limited, conceptualization of sexuality hurts both men and women. “A feminist vision of sexuality considers whole people, not just their genitals. Intellectual stimulation, the exchange of self-disclosures, and whole body sensuality may feel just as
‘sexy’ as orgasms’ (McCormick, 1994, p. 186). This reconstruction of sexuality would free both men and women from the stresses of performance and gender role expectancies. Feminist conceptions of sexuality would encourage women to be subjects and actors in their own sexuality. A woman-affirming model of sexuality requires safety from exploitation, violence, unwanted pregnancy, and STDs. Additionally, feminist sexuality celebrates diversity in all aspects. “The only rule is not to hurt someone else, not to exploit or coerce another person sexually. Women’s sexuality belongs to all women. There is no politically correct way of being sexual. There is no scientifically proven, ‘normal’ way of being sensual” (McCormick, 1994, p. 214). To reiterate, a woman-affirming model of sexuality focuses on ameliorating female sexuality, but it would have positive outcomes for both women and men.

On the whole, sexuality education needs to become sex equitable in order to be emancipatory (Myerson, 1987; Nettles & Scott-Jones, 1987; Whatley, 1987). Numerous educators and scholars have been proponents of teaching young women to recognize their desire and pleasure, broadening the definition of “sex” to include activities other than intercourse, challenging violence against women, and challenging heterosexism (Cairns, 1993; Hacker, 1989; Haywood & Mac an Ghaill, 1995; Lees, 1994; Lenskyj, 1990; McCormick, 1994; Whatley, 1987). Some even suggested that women need erotic education; how to talk erotically, explore bodies, masturbate, orgasm, and bring another person to orgasm (Segal, 1994; Thompson, 1990). These objectives could be achieved through replacing sexuality education’s emphasis on biologically determined sex roles with a focus on socially constructed gender roles (Lenskyj, 1990; Whatley, 1987).
Furthermore, sexuality education needs a holistic approach that considers the historical, social, and personal dimensions of sexuality (Brick, 1991).

According to Hacker (1989), sex equitable education would also encourage men to be involved in contraceptive decisions and teach men not to dehumanize women by viewing them as sexual objects. In addition, women would be taught assertiveness skills to say “yes” to wanted sexual activity and “no” to unwanted activity, and all participants would be assisted in developing self-esteem.

Incorporating sexual diversity into sexuality education has been deemed an important part of sex equitable emancipatory sexuality education. Specifically, addressing homophobia and heterosexism (Baker, 1993; Serdahley & Ziemba, 1984) as well as cultural diversity (Nettles & Scott-Jones, 1987; Ward & Taylor, 1991) is essential, because traditional programs have been based on models of white middle class males. Moreover, McKay (1998) asserted that sexuality education should not discuss the morality of homosexuality, but should emphasize the rights of gay men, lesbian women, and bisexual individuals to be treated with democratic values (e.g., justice, equality). Whatley (1992) suggested that a major barrier to implementing these changes to sexuality education is educators’ fears. Educators avoid teaching controversial sexuality topics, those relevant to students’ lives, because they fear reprisal from conservative parents and religious groups. Educators need to be supported by the educational system and larger community in providing meaningful sexuality education.

Educators’ pedagogical practices inform emancipatory feminist sexuality education (McCormick, 1997). Students are given a voice, political and social contexts for understanding sexuality are provided, unique experiences are emphasized in place of
standardized norms, and it is acknowledged that individuals belong to multiple groups and have many identities that shape their sexuality. Furthermore, this type of sexuality education would encourage students to teach and teachers to learn, both emotionally and intellectually. Feminist sexuality education would be critical of positivist sexuality research by emphasizing that all knowledge fulfills ideological and political purposes. Finally, effective feminist sexuality education would present information that is age and experience specific, use interactive learning, recognize peer and social influences to engage in sexual behavior, and have students arrive at their own conclusions about sexual behavior after being presented with its potential positive and negative outcomes (Steinberg, 1995).

In addition to the preceding topics and pedagogical concerns, the values, ethics, and ideology of an emancipatory sexuality curriculum are critical to improving upon the shortcomings of traditional approaches. It is important to note that underlying any feminist sexuality education effort are the values of egalitarianism, justice, self-determination, and responsibility (Bubolz & Mckenry, 1993). The ethic of sexual pragmatism should also guide emancipatory education (Seidman, 1992). Sexual pragmatism requires both consent and responsibility for sexual actions to be considered ethical. Consent implies that both parties freely choose their actions, and responsibility requires that all parties act with the others' best interests in mind.

A social constructionist perspective on emancipatory sexuality education acknowledges ideological diversity, and advocates ideological pluralism (McKay, 1998). Sexual diversity and ideological diversity must be accepted and it must be emphasized that individuals need the freedom to make their own sexual choices. The principle of
democracy can aid a social constructionist view of sexuality education. Democracy is based on the right of all persons to have freedom of belief. Democratic sexuality education does not impose one sexual ideology over another. Ideological pluralism in sexuality education does not mean relinquishing one’s own beliefs or accepting another’s beliefs. It merely requires giving all an equal opportunity to express their beliefs.

A democratic philosophy of sexuality education represents a conscious effort to disrupt the status quo in teaching about sexuality in the schools. It is a philosophy aimed at teaching young people about sexuality in a way that is consistent with societal respect for the different sexual ideologies that co-exist in our culture and that is consistent with the basic values of society (McKay, 1998, p. 187).

In addition to ideological pluralism, an emancipatory sexuality education curriculum should be based on the value of moral pluralism (Weeks, 1986). In this way, it is not the sexual acts themselves that determine whether or not they are appropriate, but the context and meaning of the acts for the participants that determine appropriateness. Moral pluralism is another aspect of accepting sexual diversity.

Overall, recent proposals for sexuality education reform have concurred that we must promote discussion of competing sexual ideologies and controversies within an environment that acknowledges the role of power in the social construction of sexuality (Carlson, 1992; McKay, 1998; Phillips & Fine, 1992; Sears, 1992). The preceding curriculum recommendations have been anticipated to effect several positive outcomes.

**Anticipated Outcomes**

Emancipatory sexuality education that focuses on assertiveness skills has the potential to help women achieve greater sexual pleasure and relationship satisfaction.
Assertiveness training may also lead to improved safer sex behaviors such as condom use and non-penetrative sex, and it may promote more satisfying egalitarian relationships between women and men (Morokoff, 1999). Highlighting the importance of gender roles, socialization, and power inequity could affect six beneficial outcomes. First, it may establish a new culture for women’s sexuality such that biological explanations and dominant/submissive sexual scripts would become obsolete (Cairns, 1993). Second, women’s expectations and acceptance of coercive sex would be diminished (Willig, 1998). Third, this emphasis would change the way rape is commonly understood by acknowledging that rape is about power and control; not consent, because consent requires equality between parties. Fourth, by demonstrating how beauty ideals objectify women and keep them oppressed, women’s attention could be redirected to opportunities and behaviors, such as pursuing an education, that could bring them true power and security (Brown Travis et. al, 1999). Fifth, women could be freed from reputation concerns and enjoy the full expression of their sexual desire (Lees, 1994). Interestingly, evaluation research has revealed that an emancipatory program can also promote self-esteem, and give women confidence to discuss sexual matters such as contraception with their partners (Diaz & Moore, 1996). Sixth, women could come to value diversity more, and they could become more self-reflexive about their sexuality (Fonow & Marty, 1992). In summary, 

Feminism can change sexuality to make sex an affirmative choice for women, so that sex, rape, and dating will no longer be defined by men, that definitions of “cheap” will not be defined by men, that saying no to sex for any reason is valid, and thus saying yes becomes meaningful (Steinberg, 1995, p. 73).
It is possible that feminist emancipatory sexuality education may have some negative outcomes for participants. As women become aware of the social mechanisms that have inhibited their sexual expression they may experience feelings of anger. However, anger is not necessarily a negative emotion. Anger can be a mobilizing energy that aids women in personal and social change. Given that most people are socialized within the dominant discourses of sexuality, participants of feminist sexuality education may experience resistance from significant others in their lives. For instance, a traditionally-minded male partner may reject a woman’s newly found sexual assertiveness and that could result in relationship strife. Relationships with female friends may be negatively affected as well, if a participants’ sexual values change too substantially from her peers’ values. Whatever the negative effects, it is my opinion that these would be outweighed by the potential positive outcomes, both personally and socially. In fact, research has shown that exposure to feminist education such as an undergraduate women’s studies course, results in more positive outcomes than negative outcomes for students’ personal lives, and these positive effects persist at least 9 months after the educational exposure (Stake & Rose, 1994). Consequently, considerable concern over potential negative outcomes of feminist sexuality education may be unwarranted.

From feminist critiques of traditional sexuality education, suggestions for curriculum improvement, and potential positive effects, it is clear that female sexual subjectivity is an important topic. Through emancipatory sexuality education, women gain the opportunity to learn about sexual subjectivity and explore their sexuality. Research is another avenue by which women can explore their sexual subjectivity.
Female Sexual Subjectivity

Feminist research into women’s experiences of their sexuality emerged out of the realization that female sexuality had been constructed without the element of subjectivity. It was recognized that researchers, therapists, and educators might have difficulty hearing about women’s sexual desires. Because women and girls have internalized the missing discourse of desire, it may be hard for them to speak of it (Tolman, 1991). Consequently, researchers were urged to listen very closely. Research into female sexual subjectivity challenged modern positivist research methods and conclusions regarding female sexuality. Daniluk (1993) explored the meaning of sexuality for ten women using qualitative group interview methods. Their narratives were broadly categorized as experiential (events that directly shaped individual experience) and nonexperiential (institutional/structural influences on sexuality). Experiential forces included sexual expression, reproduction, body image, and intimate relationships. Medicine, religion, sexual violence, and the media were categorized as nonexperiential influences by Daniluk. Overall, women’s experiences of sexuality were characterized by shame and self-blame. The women also expressed the knowledge that to be female is to be disadvantaged in our society. All of the participants experienced incongruity between their own sexual experiences and societal expectations of female sexuality. Notably, the women had difficulty communicating their experiences, because they felt they did not have the language to do so. These findings are particularly interesting considering the sample consisted of “privileged” well-educated women of White, Euro/American heritage who were psychologically healthy and were successfully pursuing artistic, educational, and career objectives.
Tolman (1994a, 1994b, 1996) listened closely to how urban and suburban adolescent girls experienced sexuality. Using qualitative interview methods, Tolman discovered three voices of sexuality: the erotic voice, the voice of the body, and a response voice (1994a). The erotic voice expressed the feeling of sexual desire, the voice of the body communicated girls’ bodily sensations experienced as desire, and the voice of response conveyed how they responded to their embodied experiences of desire. Conflict or confusion accompanied their experiences of desire (1994b). The conflict was between their embodied feelings of desire and their knowledge of how these desires would be perceived by society. This conflict led to feelings of fear. The girls responded to their fear by denying their desires and trying to silence their bodies by ignoring the sensations. They further silenced themselves by not discussing their sexual feelings with peers or older women. Tolman (1996) discovered differences in the experience of sexuality between urban and suburban girls. All the girls had an erotic voice. However, in describing their desire, the themes of urban girls’ experiences included caution, conflict, and self-control. On the other hand, suburban girls’ experiences were characterized more by sexual curiosity and a struggle to stay connected to their bodies. Suburban girls also described very romantic ideas of sexuality with an unconscious awareness of the potential dangers of expressing their sexuality.

Thompson (1990) focused her exploration of girls’ sexuality by eliciting accounts of their first intercourse experience. Two themes of first intercourse emerged: something that “just happened” and something pleasurable. First intercourse that “just happened” was experienced as painful, occurring quickly, and/or was boring. Pain was attributed to their own bodies and not to the source of the coercion, their partners. The girls were in
denial of this experience, of their own desire, and of their identity as sexual beings. Typically, contraception was not utilized until after this first “surprise” experience. In contrast, girls who experienced first intercourse as pleasurable identified themselves as sexual beings. They began to see themselves as sexual through their masturbation experiences. These girls talked openly with their mothers about sex, and learned through these discussions that women can be sexual subjects. These girls recognized that their first intercourse experience may not have been completely fulfilling, but they were planning for better sex and felt they had a right to communicate their desires to their partners. Unfortunately, most girls interviewed experienced the first “just happened” narrative rather than the pleasure narrative. Thompson concluded that sexuality education should include masturbation education and encourage communication about sexuality among women and between partners.

In another study of female sexual subjectivity, Larkin (1994) discovered that sexual harassment was integral to high school girls’ experiences of their sexuality. Sadly, girls did not initially identify the demeaning and degrading treatment as harassment. It was not perceived as harassment, because the girls viewed their experiences as normal. They experienced harassment commonly in environments such as at school, at work, on the bus, and over the phone. These harassing experiences were a progression of the treatment they received as children in elementary schools. As these girls developed they consistently received messages that they are devalued and inferior because they are female. Notably, as the participants in Larkin’s study discussed their experiences of sexuality, their definitions of harassing behavior became broader and they could identify more of their own experiences as harassment. Larkin concluded that educational
environments should address harassment, because it prevents young women from pursuing an education that is necessary for success. It is my opinion that in addition to deterring women from pursuing education, the ever-present harassment may impede the full expression of girls’ developing sexuality. Young girls probably face the risk that sexual expression further “legitimates” them as targets of harassment. Consequently, sexual harassment not only constricts educational development, but likely sexual development as well.

Recently, Tolman (1999) reviewed the literature on female sexual subjectivity. She noted that traditional research on adolescent girls’ sexuality has viewed it as a problem that needs to be controlled. This problem focus led to research and education on improving contraceptive use in order to prevent unwanted pregnancy and STD transmission. These efforts have focused on sexual decision-making from a cognitive-behavioral paradigm. Tolman recognized that this research has not considered relational aspects of girls’ sexuality. Feminist research, on the other hand, goes beyond concerns with decision-making to include an analysis of the broader contexts within which girls develop sexually. Moreover, she suggested that future feminist research consider the interaction among girls’ sexual identity, body, psyche, and relationships to gain better understanding of female adolescent sexuality. Specifically, sexuality should be explored regarding its role in increasing intimacy with a partner, achieving a sense of well-being through connecting with one’s own body, and creating a sense of pleasure and agency in relationships. Welsh, Rostosky, and Kawaguchi (1999) concur with Tolman; they asserted that it is particularly important to study adolescent girls’ developing sexuality. They suggested a research framework that considers female adolescent sexuality a
normative developmental process, emphasizes the meaning of girls’ subjective experiences, and accounts for contextual and personal variables. In addition to understanding girls’ sexual subjectivity, Wyatt and Riederle (1994) identified several myths surrounding women’s sexuality that need to be addressed in order to accurately understand women’s sexual decision-making and functioning. For example, these myths presume women have enough sexual knowledge to understand their sexual needs, women know how to communicate about sex, if a woman is sexually active it is because she wants to be, if a woman is sexually active she enjoys sex, and women know how to protect themselves from the dangers of sex such as STD infection and unwanted pregnancy (Wyatt & Riederle, 1994). Research about women’s subjective experiences of their sexuality will counter these myths. With a more accurate understanding of female sexuality, sexual health intervention and education programs can be developed to be more appropriate and effective (Wyatt & Riederle, 1994). Ultimately, the goal of feminist research on female sexual subjectivity is to understand and promote girls’ and women’s sexual agency. The literature describing female sexual subjectivity illustrates that it is a burgeoning area with many avenues yet to pursue.

Research Goals, Epistemology, Methodology, and Hypotheses

Research Goals

The necessity of empowering women through emancipatory sexuality education and researching women’s perceptions of their sexuality and sexuality education experiences is made apparent by the historical neglect of the discourse of female desire in sexuality education and research. Furthermore, despite recent efforts to research female sexual subjectivity, relatively little is known about this complex phenomenon.
Consequently, this research had three goals. First, the project provided young women with feminist oriented emancipatory sexuality education that included consciousness-raising. Although both males and females can benefit from emancipatory sexuality education, the literature reviewed indicated that it is females’ subjective sexuality that has been neglected in traditional sexuality education and research. Consequently, participants were restricted to female students, ages 18-24, attending the University of Windsor. Young women of this age range are experiencing a time of biological, cognitive, psychological, social, and sexual development (Petersen, Leffert, & Graham, 1995). This developmental period involves the transition from peer-dominated interactions to adult life roles and relationships. It was anticipated that these young women have already received some form of sexuality education; however, it is unlikely that they received feminist emancipatory sexuality education because it has not been the dominant model. As women of this age are still grappling with sexual development issues, they could benefit from participating in a sexuality education program and research paradigm. Second, the research explored, qualitatively and quantitatively, young women’s perceptions of their sexuality and the influences of a sexuality education program on these perceptions. The third aim of the research was to increase both the participants’ and the academic community’s understanding of female sexuality.

In consideration of the research objectives identified above, it is important to understand the underlying epistemology and methodology that guided the development of this research. Epistemology refers to a theory of knowledge (Eichler, 1997; Henderson, 1995). Methodology is a theory and analysis of how research should proceed; it informs the choice of research methods.
Epistemology

White, et al. (1999) described the distinguishing characteristics of modernist and postmodern paradigms, and outlined three feminist epistemologies. First, feminist empiricism acknowledges an objective reality and argues that the scientific method can be used toward feminist goals. It maintains the androcentric biases of the scientific method must be challenged by pointing out sexism in research. Accordingly, all research must be examined for biases and subjectivities. Second, standpoint epistemology also acknowledges an objective reality, but all research reflects the perspective of the researcher as well as the participants. Standpoint epistemology asserts that researchers and participants from oppressed groups understand better than others their own and their oppressor’s position. Consequently, these researchers and participants have a uniquely valuable perspective. Third, postmodernism does not recognize an objective reality. It allows for multiple perspectives and multiple methods, but analysis of language and its power predominates. It emphasizes the deconstruction of phenomena to eliminate androcentric biases.

Feminist Standpoint Theory. Feminist Standpoint Theory (FST) represents the middle ground between the essentialism of modern positivism and the relativism of postmodernism (Holmwood, 1995). Unlike postmodernism, FST acknowledges the important role of social theory in representing reality. According to FST, social theory is grounded in the particular perspective of the oppressed group being studied (Holmwood, 1995). FST is an improvement over feminist empiricism because it brings women’s ways of knowing into science (Hundleby, 1997). It is an explicitly political epistemology. In her original 1983 article, Hartsock describes the feminist standpoint as akin to Marx’s
standpoint of the proletariat (cited in Hartsock, 1998). In the same way that the working
class is in a better position to understand and critique the ruling class, she suggested that
women’s lives create a privileged vantage point from which to understand and critique
male supremacy. She argued that the basis of the feminist standpoint is women’s material
life (work) and development. The sexual division of labor and differences in development
structure men and women’s lives in opposing ways. Because the lives of men and women
are structured in opposition, so too are their perspectives and understandings. The
perspective of the dominant group, males, is not necessarily false, but it is limited and
harmful to the oppressed. The privileged understanding of the oppressed group, women,
does not simply exist, but is achieved through the systematic analysis of their oppression.
The achievement of a standpoint can be politically liberating because it reveals the nature
of relations between people and inspires the oppressed to work against unfair treatment.

The original FST has been criticized for material essentialism and for ignoring the
diversity in women’s experience in suggesting that there is but one feminist standpoint
(Hundleby, 1997). These criticisms have been addressed by Hartsock’s (1998) later work
that acknowledges multiple standpoints that are not based on material essentialism.
Differences between men and women and among women that are not work-based (e.g.,
race, ethnicity) are legitimate bases for standpoints. Because a person may be a member
of more than one oppressed group (e.g., a black woman), individuals can achieve
multiple standpoints.

FST recognizes that the perspective of the researcher is as important as that of the
participants, and thus, it requires strong-objectivity (Hundleby, 1997). Strong-objectivity
compels the researcher to be self-reflexive. Consequently, in the present study I have
considered my own historical and material influences on understanding and interpreting participants’ experiences.

**Consciousness-raising.** Critical to the achievement of a standpoint is consciousness-raising (CR) (New, 1998). Mackinnon (1982) stated that CR is central to feminism. CR is the process by which individuals realize that others share their private concerns, and that these are in fact public concerns. “Through consciousness-raising, women grasp the collective reality of women’s condition from within the perspective of that experience, not from outside it” (Mackinnon, 1982, p. 536). CR involves more than just talking about experiences within a group setting, it involves the movement toward social action (Ruth, 1973). CR is the best example of how the personal is made political (Mackinnon, 1982; Tobach, 1994). Through CR women recognize

Male power is real; it is just not what it claims to be, namely, the only reality.

Male power is a myth that makes itself true. What it is to raise consciousness is to confront male power in this duality: as total on one side and a delusion on the other. In consciousness raising, women learn they have *learned* that men are everything, women their negation, but that the sexes are equal (Mackinnon, 1982, p. 542).

Sharing within a group is essential to CR. Walker (1974, as cited in Baker & Snodgrass, 1979) outlined the fundamental rules of CR. Everyone is as open and honest as possible. Confidentiality is observed. No one is permitted to invalidate another’s experience. Equality among all group members is assumed, and each person has an equal opportunity and amount of time to speak. CR groups typically consist of five to twelve members. Members meet to discuss their personal experiences with a particular topic.
Butler and Wintram (1991) suggested that participation in a women’s group can overcome some of the psychological effects of being female in our society. Common psychological effects of being regarded as inferior include fear, isolation, and loneliness. There are several central beliefs to feminist women’s groups (Butler & Wintram, 1991). First, women’s groups can reduce women’s invisibility to one another which can decrease participants’ feelings of isolation and loneliness. Second, women’s groups enable the personal to become political which can increase participants’ understanding of women’s public oppression as well as provide individual insights. Third, group work can raise awareness of the oppression of women. Fourth, the psychological effects of oppression such as low self-image and low self-esteem become viewed as public problems, not just individual concerns. Fifth, women’s groups can deconstruct female oppression by helping women create their own worldviews. Finally, women’s groups can assist the empowerment of women by building alliances among women and encouraging the celebration of womanhood in the face of oppression. Obviously, the group experience is important to the psychological, social, and political process of CR.

Recently, CR has also been proposed as useful in teaching and research (Cheek & Rudge, 1994; Vinton & Nelson-Gardell, 1993; ). Vinton and Nelson-Gardell (1993) illustrated that using examples of women’s oppression from other countries is an excellent way of raising consciousness when teaching North American women about male-domination. Highlighting our similarities to the oppression in other countries enables North American female students to see their oppression that otherwise seems invisible. Cheek and Rudge (1994) asserted that through CR awareness is elicited which leads to increased knowledge, and knowledge ultimately leads to power. CR in education
allows women to see how educational institutions perpetuate the dominant discourse of male supremacy, and helps them see their personal role in this oppression. CR in participatory research is a means of achieving emancipation for women (Henderson, 1995). The goal of emancipatory education and research is social change. Emancipatory education and research sees knowledge as socially constructed. Emancipation is possible when participants experience enlightenment that leads to feelings of empowerment necessary to effect change. CR can be emancipatory in that it is both enlightening and empowering when women understand that they shape and are shaped by their reality. “Consciousness raising in participatory research is the meeting ground of theory and practice; it is both the method of achieving a goal and the goal itself” (Henderson, 1995, p. 67). Evidently, epistemology and research methodology are importantly interrelated.

Methodology

Naturalistic inquiry. Naturalistic inquiry is a research methodology that assumes multiple views of reality, and recognizes that the observer and the subject are mutually influencing (Guba & Lincoln, 1982). As such, it is compatible with FST epistemology. The naturalistic paradigm uses mostly qualitative methods, especially unstructured interviews. However, quantitative techniques are used when they are appropriate to the research endeavor. This methodology views theory as grounded in data, and generalizability is not the primary goal. Generalizations are bound by the research contexts such as time and place, and hence, are temporary. Thus, naturalistic inquiry places greater value on achieving understanding than generalizability. Naturalistic methodology uses natural settings, emerging designs, variable rather than controlled treatments, analyzes patterns rather than variables, and invites context into the research. It
is especially well suited to educational evaluation environments. The naturalistic method seeks to make the researcher, as the primary research instrument, more sensitive to people and environments. Effective researchers are responsive to the interactive process between the participants and the environment. The researcher is adaptable, changing the mode of data collection as relevancy of data changes. Naturalistic inquirers also employ a holistic view of the research, appreciating the entire context. The researcher becomes more knowledgeable as the research progresses, consciously and unconsciously. In naturalistic inquiry the observer develops the ability to process data immediately, and capitalize on opportunities to clarify or summarize a participant’s experience. Finally, the researcher as instrument can develop richer understandings of phenomena, because atypical responses can be pursued and explored. Threats to the effectiveness of naturalistic inquiry reside in an unreliable research instrument. A researcher may be unreliable due to selective perception, misinterpretation, or oversimplification.

Like research conducted under the scientific paradigm, naturalistic inquiries must demonstrate the authenticity of the information gathered and conclusions drawn. Tests of rigor within naturalistic inquiry include credibility, fittingness, auditability, and confirmability. In terms of scientific criteria of adequacy, these tests correspond to internal validity, external validity, reliability, and objectivity, respectively (Guba & Lincoln, 1982).

Credibility, or the truth value of the research, is established by several means. Close and prolonged engagement in the research environment, peer debriefing, objectivity self-checks, sensitivity to biases, careful recording of data, data collection triangulation, and repeated observations of a single perspective improve the likelihood of
credible findings. Periodic member checks throughout the course of the research also add to credibility. Determining the applicability of research findings to other contexts is termed fittingness. Thick description of the research process allows judgments about the “fittingness” of research conclusions to other settings, times, participants, etc. The responsibility of establishing fittingness lies not with the researcher, but with the consumer of the research. Auditability refers to the consistency of research findings. In naturalistic inquiry, consistency is established through triangulation of research methods, stepwise replication, or an audit. An audit involves an independent researcher assessing the competency of the research process. Consequently, the process must be described in great detail in order to enable competency judgments. The neutrality of the data is judged by its confirmability. This questions the factual nature of the data. Responsibility for establishing confirmability is shifted from the researcher to the data itself, contrary to the requirement of positivist objectivity. Naturalistic inquiry can be deemed equally rigorous as the scientific method, but it is imperative that each methodology be judged according to its own criteria of rigor, and not the others’.

Naturalistic inquiry is well suited to research stemming from FST epistemology as they share a common view of reality. It is also appropriate for use in educational settings. Naturalistic inquiry values qualitative research methods, but it does not preclude the use of quantitative methods. Indeed, it encourages triangulation of research methods to improve research credibility and auditability. In summary, naturalistic inquiry is a useful methodology for this research, because the research is grounded in FST epistemology, occurs in a natural educational environment, and employs qualitative and quantitative methods. The researcher as the primary instrument of investigation exhibited
enhanced theoretical sensitivity, because as a woman I share the standpoint of the participants. Consequently, the researcher is a suitable match to the epistemology and methodology guiding the investigation. Self-reflexivity was practiced during the research process in order to maintain the strong-objectivity that is required of FST researchers.

**Research methods.** This research was feminist. Feminist research is not value-neutral; its aim is improving the status of women (Eichler, 1997). Traditionally, feminist research has been research on women, by women, and for women (Stanely & Wise, 1990). It emphasizes the social construction of gender in the development and execution of the research with the purpose of affecting social change (Lather, 1992). Early feminist research was often associated with qualitative methods (Eichler, 1997; Henwood & Pidgeon, 1995). However, it has been suggested that all research methods, quantitative and qualitative, can be feminist provided that they are employed within feminist frameworks and values (Eichler, 1997; Kelly, Burton, & Regan, 1994; Maynard, 1994; Reinharz, 1992). Since the 1980s, the debate about what defines feminist research has shifted from method to epistemology (Kelly et al., 1994), and these epistemological debates have pointed to the supremacy of qualitative methods for capturing participants’ standpoints and subjective realities (Maynard, 1994).

In the traditions of FST and naturalistic inquiry, and because the research goals were exploratory, the primary method of data collection was qualitative semi-structured interviews. In the assessment of change resulting from sexuality education, it has been observed that qualitative methods are able to detect subtle variations that quantitative methods cannot detect (Geasler, Croteau, Heineman, & Edlund, 1995). Furthermore, qualitative assessment can reveal changes in participants that they do not acknowledge
themselves. Semi-structured field notes and quantitative survey methods supplemented the qualitative interview data. The triangulation of methods contributed to increased confidence in the veracity of the findings. Particular care was made to develop and design the research in a feminist manner, and within the guiding principles of FST, CR, and naturalistic inquiry. Although naturalistic inquiry endorses emergent research designs, the research design for the current study was determined a priori and remained consistent throughout the investigation.

**Research design.** The research design was an in-depth qualitative exploration of female sexual subjectivity within a delayed treatment experimental design with short-term follow-up (see Figure 1). This design was chosen among other alternatives because it withstands most threats to internal validity/credibility. The qualitative emphasis was selected to bring women’s voices to the topic of sexuality. The delayed-treatment feature enables more women to benefit from the sex education program than a no-treatment control group design would allow. Furthermore, the delayed treatment control group can increase the treatment group sample size to improve the likelihood of detecting statistically significant within-subject effects. Appendix A outlines the research design in greater detail and provides its rationale.

**Summary of Research Goals and Hypotheses**

To reiterate, the research aimed to provide young women with feminist oriented emancipatory sexuality education, explore young women’s perceptions of their sexuality and the influences of the sexuality education program on these perceptions, and increase both the participants’ and the academic community’s understanding of female sexuality.
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**Figure 1.** Research design. PT=pretest, PST=posttest, I=interview, E=education, F=follow-up
These objectives were achieved through an investigation guided by feminist standpoint theory and naturalistic inquiry that utilized quantitative and qualitative research methods within a delayed treatment experimental design with short-term follow-up. Given that the research goals were exploratory, any hypotheses were general and tentative. By and large, it was expected that the outcomes would involve greater awareness of sexuality issues and of self. Specific hypotheses founded on the individual topics within the sexuality education program were impossible because participants selected the topics at the time of study. The literature reviewed above outlined several anticipated outcomes of emancipatory sexuality education. Based on this literature, potential sexuality education topics, and what constructs could be expected to be affected by short-term education several results were expected:

(1) It was predicted that participants would exhibit more sexual assertiveness at posttest and follow-up than at pretest.

(2) With regard to acceptance of sexual coercion and rape myths, participants would exhibit less endorsement at posttest and follow-up than at pretest.

(3) It was predicted that participants would show less acceptance of the sexual double standard at posttest and follow-up than at pretest.

(4) At posttest and follow-up, participants would acknowledge their sexual desire more than at pretest.

(5) Finally, it was hypothesized that at posttest participants who received sexuality education would differ significantly from those waiting for the education on measures of: sexual assertiveness, endorsement of sexual coercion/rape myths, acceptance of the sexual double standard, and sexual desire.
CHAPTER II

METHOD

Participants

Fifty-three women expressed interest in participating in the sexuality education program by leaving their name and telephone number on recruitment sign-up sheets, or contacting the researcher by telephone. All of these women were contacted by telephone to confirm their participation. Due to scheduling conflicts, 11 women were unable to commit to the research, leaving 42 confirmed participants. However, only 26 women arrived to participate when they were randomly assigned to workshop groups. Twelve women were assigned to Group 1, and 14 women were assigned to Group 2. Group 2 was assigned more participants, because it started the workshop series 6 weeks after Group 1, and thus, greater attrition was expected in Group 2 due to the delayed start. As expected, 6 weeks later, only 12 Group 2 participants arrived to commence the workshop series.

At the workshop series end, there were 23 participants (Group 1: n = 11, Group 2: n = 12). However, two participants from Group 2 were excluded from the analyses. One woman missed more than one educational session, and the other woman did not attend the closing session to complete the posttest measures and she was not sent the follow-up measures. There was 100% response to the follow-up survey. Consequently, the final sample, on which all of the analyses are based, consisted of 21 women who were 19-24 years of age (M = 20.76, SD = 1.70). This sample was predominantly heterosexual, but diverse in terms of ethnicity and relationship status. Table 1 details participants' sexual orientation, ethnicity, and relationship status.
Table 1

Participants' Sexual Orientation, Ethnicity, and Relationship Status (N = 21).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sexual Orientation</th>
<th>Number of Participants (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lesbian</td>
<td>1 (4.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heterosexual</td>
<td>19 (90.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Sure</td>
<td>1 (4.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White/European/Caucasian</td>
<td>11 (52.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black/African/Caribbean</td>
<td>5 (23.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Asian/Chinese/Japanese</td>
<td>1 (4.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Asian/Indian/Pakistani</td>
<td>1 (4.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>3 (14.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship Status</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In a sexual relationship</td>
<td>10 (47.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beginning a relationship that may become sexual</td>
<td>3 (14.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nearing the end of a sexual relationship</td>
<td>1 (4.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeking a sexual relationship</td>
<td>1 (4.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither in nor interested in a sexual relationship</td>
<td>3 (14.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>3 (14.3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note.  
<sup>a</sup>Other ethnicities included: Arabic, Black/White, and White/Filipino.  
<sup>b</sup>Other relationship statuses included: just having sex, casual, and in a long term relationship that was sexual but is not now.
Participants were also diverse in terms of their religious affiliation and the importance of their religion to them. Sixty-six percent (n = 14) of the total sample stated that they had a religious affiliation. Seven (33.3%) were Catholic, 2 (9.5%) were Seventh Day Adventists, and there was one (4.8%) woman from each of the following religions: Anglican, Baptist, Christian, Druze, and Presbyterian. Among those who identified a religious affiliation, the importance of this affiliation ranged from “1 = not very important” to “5 = very important” (M = 2.93, SD = 1.21). On average, participants felt that their religious affiliation was only “somewhat important” to them.

In compensation for each sexuality education session attended and each quantitative survey completed, participants’ names were entered into a lottery for $200 drawn at the completion of the study. There were two $200 lotteries, one for each group of participants. The draws were made once all follow-up surveys were returned, and the winners were notified by e-mail and were mailed their prize. Eleven participants were randomly selected for interviews and these individuals were compensated $10 per interview.

Materials

Sexuality education curriculum. The curriculum used in this research was an adapted version of the Our Whole Lives (OWL): Sexuality Education for Grades 10-12 (Goldfarb & Casparian, 2000) and the OWL: Sexuality Education for Adults (Kimball, 2000)¹. The OWL curricula were developed by the Unitarian Universalist Association². The curricula were developed after extensive sexuality education needs assessment. They were field-tested and refined to become more leader-friendly and more interesting for

¹ I would like to thank Dr. Eleanor Maticka-Tyndale for pointing me in the direction of this curriculum.
participants (Goldfarb & Casparian, 2000; Kimball, 2000). There are five curricula that address the sexuality education/developmental needs of the following grades/groups: K-1, 4-6, 7-9, 10-12, and adults. The curricula were released for general use in the Spring and Summer of 2000, and thus, have yet to be widely implemented or researched (S. Gibb, Outreach Coordinator, Sexuality Education Task Force, Unitarian Universalist Association, personal communication, July 6, 2000).

The curricula are based on the values of self-worth, sexual health, responsibility, justice, and inclusivity (Goldfarb & Casparian, 2000; Kimball, 2000). The overarching goals of the OWL series are to provide sex-positive and comprehensive sexuality education that imparts knowledge, values, and skills necessary for healthy and responsible sex lives (Goldfarb & Casparian, 2000). It is designed to provide age-appropriate sexuality education that will help participants communicate better about sexuality, use available sexuality resources, engage in safer sexual practices, achieve understanding of healthy relationships and sexual behaviors, and become more tolerant and just (Kimball, 2000). The series also aims to help participants accept, understand, and affirm their own sexuality. The OWL curricula values, assumptions, goals, and topics clearly indicate that it is an emancipatory sexuality education program that is consistent with the feminist recommendations for sexuality education described in this document.

OWL: Sexuality Education for Grades 10-12 is based on certain assumptions about adolescents and about human sexuality (Goldfarb & Casparian, 2000). Specifically, adolescents have the right to: ask any questions about sexuality, receive complete and accurate answers, explore any sexuality issues of interest, be supported in their sexual

2 The curricula can be obtained from the Unitarian Universalist Association, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, MA 02108-2800, http://www.uua.org
decision-making, express their sexuality healthily, and be treated with respect. The curriculum assumes that: everyone is sexual; sexuality is good; humans are sexual from birth to death; it is natural to express sexuality in a variety of ways; sexual behavior is motivated by a number of reasons such as pleasure, to express love, for intimacy, to procreate, for fun, and for relaxation; sexuality is damaged by violence, exploitation, alienation, dishonesty, power abuse, and objectifying people.

OWL: Sexuality Education for Grades 10-12 has several specific goals. The curriculum is designed to help adolescents: affirm and respect themselves as sexual persons; become comfortable and skilled in discussing sexuality with a range of others; explore, develop, and articulate values and feelings about their own and others’ sexuality; identify their values and live by them; develop a sexual morality that rejects double standards, stereotypes, biases, exploitation, dishonesty, and abuse; acquire the knowledge and skills to form and maintain relationships that are consensual, mutually pleasurable, nonexploitative, safe, respectful, and caring; acquire the knowledge and skills to avoid unwanted pregnancy and STDs; express and enjoy sexuality throughout their lifespan; assess the impact of cultural, familial, religious, societal, and media messages on sexuality.

OWL: Sexuality Education for Grades 10-12 sessions consist of the following topics: learning about our bodies; taking care of our sexual selves; making safer choices; exploring our sexual development; becoming a parent; expressions of sexuality; communication; intimacy, masturbation, and lovemaking; recognizing unhealthy relationships; reproductive rights; power and control; equality (Goldfarb & Casparian, 2000).
The OWL: Sexuality Education for Adults has the same general goals for
sexuality education as the OWL: Sexuality Education for Grades 10-12. The topics of the
adult curriculum include: sexuality and values; sexuality and communication; sexuality
and spirituality; discovering the sexual self; experiencing the sexual other; sexual
attraction and early relationships; sexuality and committed relationships; sexual diversity;
sexuality and family; sexuality and aging; sexual health (Kimball, 2000).

There is some topic overlap between the two curricula, but the activities for each
differ. It is suggested that activities from each curriculum be combined to customize a
program that fits the needs of a particular participant group (Kimball, 2000). Both OWL:
Sexuality Education for Grades 10-12 and OWL: Sexuality Education for Adults have 12
educational sessions in addition to opening and closing sessions. Each educational
session is 2.5 hours in duration. OWL activities involve lecture, discussion, panel
presentations, and interactive exercises. These activities require two facilitators. The
primary facilitator was a woman with a Ph. D. in psychology who has substantial
teaching and research experience regarding sexuality. I acted as co-facilitator and
researcher. An adapted OWL questionnaire assessed participants’ histories and learning
needs/interests to determine the particular topics provided to both groups.

Based on these questionnaire responses and knowledge of the sexuality literature,
the facilitators selected exercises from the two OWL curricula described to customize the
program. Both groups received the same curriculum. Although some of the curriculum
activities specifically included discussing the influence of gender on sexuality, the
facilitators ensured that the last 10 minutes of each educational session was devoted to
consciousness-raising surrounding gender equity and that session’s sexuality topic.
Sexuality education program agenda and facilitation. Based on participants’ responses to the learning needs/interests survey and the research time constraints, a sexuality education program that addressed the four most frequently identified learning interests was developed. Participants were most interested in exploring: sexual attraction, alternatives to intercourse, love, and spirituality and sexuality. In the first session we introduced ourselves to one another, and reviewed the OWL program values and goals as described above. The ground rules for participation were also discussed in the first session.

The second session addressed the language of sexuality and sexual attraction. We brainstormed terms for sexual acts and sexualized body parts. These language lists were processed for their emotional impact and implicit meanings about gender differences. Sexual attraction was explored through an attractiveness rating exercise. Participants were asked to view a variety of magazine pictures of models and photographs of “real” people (male and female), and were instructed to select the most sexually attractive male and female. A discussion of cultural messages of attractiveness, beauty ideals, and commercialism followed. In this session participants also rated various parts of their own bodies as positive, negative, or neutral, and they were asked to share one of each rating with the group. This exercise was processed by discussing how it felt to do the ratings and share the ratings, how the ratings were decided upon (own vs. others’ ideas), and why some body parts are considered neutral. Next, we discussed non-physical elements of sexual attraction such as competence, reciprocal liking, similarity, familiarity, and proximity. This session ended with a discussion of the social and political implications of sexual attractiveness and ways in which we can change the status quo.
Masturbation and alternatives to intercourse were the topics of the third session. First, participants played a game regarding the myths and facts of masturbation that was followed by a discussion of childhood and cultural messages about masturbation, and gender differences in these messages. Two brainstorming activities ensued in which participants: (1) thought of questions about sexuality that they would like answered by their intimate partners, and (2) what activities commonly are overlooked when we speak of "having sex." Finally, participants brainstormed reasons for having sex, positive and negative consequences of sexual activity, and ways to increase the positive consequences and minimize the negative consequences.

In session four, love was discussed. A brainstorming exercise was used to encourage participants to think about what love means to them, and Robert Sternberg’s (1986) triangular theory of love was presented in a brief lecture. Another brainstorming exercise asked participants to suggest ways to sustain committed relationships, and also suggest reasons why some relationships should end. This was followed by a discussion of how to end relationships effectively. Participants also wrote personal ads indicating what features of a relationship, or partner, that they were both seeking and hoping to avoid. These personal ads were shared in the group.

Session five explored the relationship between spirituality and sexuality. First, participants were asked to quietly reflect on moments of personal spirituality. Next, in two smaller groups, participants collaborated on creating two collages using magazine clippings to represent spirituality and sexuality. Each smaller group explained their collages to the other group. These explanations were followed by a discussion of the similarities and linkages between the spirituality and sexuality collages and concepts.
Finally, participants reflected on and shared how they could incorporate spirituality into their sexual lives, if so desired. It should be noted that participants defined spirituality very broadly to include such things as feelings of oneness with nature, intense emotional experiences, as well as formal religion.

The last session was the program closing. Participants brought mementos to share with other group members. Mementos were selected to convey something significant about the sexuality education program experience. Participants traded mementos and explained each object’s significance to one another. This was followed by an exercise in which participants anonymously wrote affirmative notes to one another about their positive contributions to the educational experience. Finally, participants shared their most significant learning experiences, and revealed what they would miss most about the program.

In addition to the topics outlined above, each session was opened with “check-in” time. This permitted participants to raise issues or ask questions about previous sessions, or share relevant happenings that occurred during the week. It is important to note that both groups received the same sexuality education agenda, with three exceptions. During session four, Group 1 participants did not discuss sustaining committed relationships, because the mood of the group was very anti-relationship that evening. This topic was omitted and the next exercise regarding the termination of relationships was better received. Also for Group 1, during the closing session, there was insufficient time to both share mementos and write each other notes of positive affirmation. The group voted to forgo sharing mementos in favour of writing the positive affirmations. A final difference
in the delivery of the program occurred for Group 2. Spring Break occurred between the introductory session for Group 2 and their first educational session.

As important as what topics were addressed, is how these topics were presented. The primary facilitator and I lead the groups through the curriculum upholding the OWL program values described above. We attempted to provide an open and safe environment in which any form of sexuality could be discussed respectfully. The primary facilitator identifies her own views on sexuality as occupying space somewhere in the middle of the radical and libertarian poles of the feminist sexuality continuum. Ultimately, she believes that choice in sexuality is important, but acknowledges that the freedom of women’s sexual choices is limited by social contexts. The primary facilitator’s research interests have concerned women, power, and heterosex. She has explored whether there is anything empowering for women in heterosexual relationships. Specifically, how and when do women experience power, and what is experienced as powerful. I identify as a liberal feminist and I view sexual autonomy and sexual diversity as of paramount importance. Greater detail about my personal perspective on sexuality is provided under the heading Qualitative Analysis later in this document. Generally speaking, the primary facilitator and I share similar sexual philosophies and share similar approaches to group facilitation.

We presented both liberal and radical feminist views of sexuality to participants. However, radical perspectives were presented once participants were receptive to those views. We tried to be sensitive to participants’ willingness to engage in critical feminist discussions in order to guard against knee-jerk resistance. The primary facilitator also has a background in experiential psychotherapy, and thus, was very process focused when
conducting the groups. Our goal in facilitation was to indicate that there is no one way of viewing, discussing, or practicing sexuality. Consequently, when discussions were taking an overly romanticized tone we would mention that bondage, anal sex, S/M, etc. were acceptable forms of sexual expression for some people. Our aim was not to alienate participants who wanted to speak of non-traditional sexualities. Also, when discussions were heterosexist we challenged participants to think whether the same points of view would be relevant to gay, lesbian, or bisexual experiences. Participants seemed to have faith in our model of diversity acceptance, because they appeared comfortable sharing a variety of views that were not aligned with the facilitators’ own views on sexuality. Furthermore, participants shared views that were contrary to those of their fellow participants. We tried to support differences in opinion during discussions by giving all participants equal opportunity to express themselves freely, and by asking for dissenting opinions when only one point of view had been expressed. Overall, our approach to facilitation emphasized modeling the OWL values and presenting both radical and liberal feminist perspectives on sexuality.

Qualitative interview schedules. The purpose of the interviews was to explore, in depth, the participants’ perceptions of their sexuality in order to increase understanding of female sexuality. The interview schedules guided the interview, not dictated it (Smith, 1995). The questions were often not asked exactly as worded, raised in the order presented in the schedule, and not all questions were posed in every interview. Of primary interest was what the participants deemed important in discussing their sexuality. However, some questions, based on the literature review, were used as probes to assist the interviews. There were two interview schedules. The first was designed to elicit
responses about participants’ perceptions of their sexuality. The second contained questions about the influences of the sexuality education program on participants’ perceptions of their sexuality. The second interview schedule also included questions about the sexuality education program and the impact of the research on the participants.

For the first set of interviews (see Appendix B), participants were asked to briefly describe themselves, their family life, or any significant life event to contextualize their sexual experiences. After I became acquainted with an interviewee a very broad question, “How would you describe your sexuality?” was posed. The participants were free to direct the discussion as they wished. I probed the participants to elaborate on their spontaneously generated discussion topics. As the interviews proceeded, if not already discussed, the participants were encouraged to discuss their sexuality as it related to: desire, sexual expression, pleasure, mind/body connectedness, body image, sexual agency, safe sex behaviors, reputation, intimate relationships, sexual violence (harassment/coercion/rape), and social influences (education, the media, and medicine). These topics were identified in the literature on sexuality education and female sexual subjectivity as germane to women’s sexual experiences.

The second interview schedule addressed the above issues, but in relation to how the participants’ perceptions of their sexuality were influenced by the sexuality education program (see Appendix C). Again, a very broad question was asked, “Since participating in the sexuality education program, how would you describe your sexuality?” to begin the second set of interviews. In an effort to evaluate the OWL curricula, participants were asked to comment on their experiences with the OWL exercises. Participants were asked about the OWL general goals. Specifically, participants were asked to discuss how they
perceive their acceptance of their own sexuality, and ability to communicate about sexuality. Participants were also asked about how the program affected their understanding of healthy relationships and sexual behaviors, and how it affected their tolerance for sexual diversity. Finally, I inquired about participants’ experiences with the research process. In particular, participants’ experiences of power within the research were addressed.

**Semi-structured field notes.** The primary facilitator and I (as researcher and co-facilitator) made semi-structured field notes at the conclusion of each sexuality education session. We recorded feelings that were expressed during the sessions as well as patterns of group dynamics. In order to follow naturalistic methodology, the observations were more unstructured than structured (Guba & Lincoln, 1982). Efforts were made to observe recurring patterns in the groups’ behavior, irregularities in the interactions, and the absence of the expected (e.g., disagreements, growing group cohesion, etc.). Although the participants were aware that we would be observing them, no notes were taken in their presence. Notes were taken immediately after participants left each session so the information recorded was less likely to be contaminated by memory loss. Differences and similarities between my notes and the primary facilitator’s notes were considered in the qualitative analysis.

**Quantitative survey measures.** Participants completed a learning needs/preferences questionnaire to determine the sexuality education topics to be addressed (see Appendix D). This questionnaire has 16 items and assessed participants’ relationship status, sexual orientation, personal ratings of their sexuality, reasons for participating in the program, prior sexuality education, gender identity, comfort with
others’ sexual orientation, beliefs about sexuality across the lifespan, beliefs pertaining to graphic sexual materials, subjects/issues of learning interest, comfort with discussing personal experiences, and feelings about participating in the education program. Participants needed about 5 minutes to answer this questionnaire.

Four scales and basic demographic questions comprised the quantitative survey measures (see Appendix E). The Hurlbert Index of Sexual Assertiveness (HISA) addressed Hypothesis 1. The HISA consists of 25 items that measure the degree of sexual assertiveness that one has in sexual relationships (Hurlbert, 1991). The scale required about 5 minutes to complete. Responses are scored on 5-point Likert-type scale (0 = all of the time to 4 = never). Scores on the scale range from 0 to 100 with higher scores indicating greater assertiveness. Each item score is summed to create the total scale score. The HISA has good internal consistency (α = .92) when validated with a nonclinical sample of married women (Hurlbert, 1991). Pierce and Hurlbert (1999) assessed the HISA for test-retest reliability. They found test-retest correlation coefficients of .83 for a clinical group (men and women receiving marital therapy), .88 for a non-clinical group (male and female nurses), and .85 for the total sample when the HISA was administered four weeks apart. Finally, there is evidence of discriminant validity as women differing in severity of depression respond differently on the HISA (McVey, 1997). The HISA has adequate psychometric properties and was appropriate for research with women.

The Revised Attitudes Toward Sexuality Inventory (RATSI) (Patton & Mannison, 1995 as cited in Patton & Mannison, 1998) addressed Hypothesis 2. The RATSI has 40 items that reflect various issues in sexuality including: masturbation, childhood sexuality, sexuality and the aging, sexual coercion/assault, homosexuality, abortion, contraception,
and attitudes toward women. Responses are scored on a 6-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly agree to 6 = strongly disagree). The measure required approximately 5-10 minutes to complete. The RATSI consists of three reliable factors. For the purposes of this research, only factor 1 was utilized. Factor 1 (items 2, 5, 6, 13, 17, 18, 25, 27, 29, 33, 37, 38) reflects attitudes toward sexual coercion/assault. Higher scores on factor 1 indicate greater endorsement of sexual coercion. The RATSI is psychometrically adequate; the internal consistency for the whole scale is .85, and the alpha for factor 1 is .85. The scale’s validity was established by demonstrating pretest-posttest differences in scores following exposure to sexuality education. The scale also discriminates consistently between the genders in response to factor 1. This scale was appropriate for use with this population, because the initial scale was developed to assess differences in sexuality attitudes following a university sexuality course. Its use in this research was in a similar context.

Hypothesis 3 was tested by the Sexual Double Standard Scale (SDS) (Muehlenhard & Quackenbush, 1998). It is a 26-item scale that assesses the extent to which participants endorse the traditional sexual double standard. The items are scored on a 4-point Likert-type scale (0 = disagree strongly to 3 = agree strongly). The SDS consists of 6 individual items and 20 items in parallel pairs, assessing the same behavior for women and for men. Approximately 5 minutes were required to complete the SDS. Scores can range from 48 indicating acceptance of the traditional double standard, to 0 which indicates equal sexual freedom for men and women, to −30 indicating acceptance of greater sexual freedom for women than for men. Scores are calculated in an unusual manner by summing the response to the 6 individual items with the difference scores of
the parallel pairs (e.g., #1+#15+#19+#4r+#5r+#8r+[#2-#24]+[#12-#3]+[#10-#6]+[#17-#7]+[#9-#22]+[#11-#26]+[#13-#18]+[#25-#14]+[#16-#21]+[#20-#23]). Based on university women's responses about their own attitudes toward the double standard, the alpha is .73. The validity of the SDS has been established, because it discriminates between patterns of condom use in women based on their perceptions of their partner's acceptance of the sexual double standard. It has also been shown to be significantly related to attitudes toward traditional gender roles. Because the SDS has been validated with university students, it was acceptable for use in this study.

Hypothesis 4 was tested with the Sexual Desire Inventory (SDI) that measures interest in sexual activity both with a partner (dyadic desire) and by oneself (solitary desire) (Spector, Carey, & Steinberg, 1998). The SDI has 14 items and took about 5 minutes to complete. Eight items are scored on a 9-point Likert-type strength scale. The scale descriptors vary, but 0 indicates least strength of desire and 8 indicates most strength. Three items assess frequency of desire (items 1, 2, and 10). These items are scored by selecting one of the eight response options. The dyadic desire score requires items 1-8 to be summed. Items 10-12 are summed to determine the solitary desire score. Items 9, 13, and 14 are not included in the subscale scores because they do not assess strength of desire like the other items (Spector, Carey, & Steinberg, 1996). Items 9 and 13 ask respondents to compare their desire to that of others their age, and item 14 asks how long a respondent could go without sexual activity comfortably. The internal consistency of the SDI is strong (α = .86 for the dyadic score and α = .96 for the solitary score). Factor validity for the scale has been demonstrated, as has concurrent validity. The solitary desire scale correlated highly with solitary sexual activity, and the dyadic
desire scale correlated highly with dyadic sexual behavior. The scale also demonstrates consistent gender differences. Furthermore, dyadic desire is positively related to sexual satisfaction, dyadic adjustment, sexual daydreams, and sexual arousal among women. This scale has been validated with university student samples and community samples. Consequently, it was appropriate for use in this study. Hypothesis 5 was tested by all of the preceding measures.

Finally, a demographic questionnaire was included. Participants’ age, relationship status, sexual orientation, ethnicity, and religious affiliation were obtained. The measures were randomly ordered within the survey in order to eliminate order effects.

**Procedure**

Participant recruitment involved depositing 800 information flyers into residence mailboxes and posting 20 information notices around the University of Windsor campus. The flyers had the researcher’s telephone number for participants to call if they were interested in volunteering, and the posters had the researcher’s telephone number on tear-off tabs. The recruitment flyers and posters indicated that limited spaces were available to participate in a free sexuality education workshop series and research project. The time commitment required, 6 weeks (2.5 hours/week), was specified and it was indicated that participants would be entered into a lottery to win $200. Additionally, the researcher recruited participants through 7 classroom (women’s studies and nursing) visits. The same information provided on the flyers and posters was included in the recruitment speech. A sign-up sheet requesting names and telephone numbers was circulated for those who were interested in participating.
All women who volunteered to participate were contacted by telephone and instructed to meet the facilitators at a campus meeting room for an introductory session. Upon arrival, participants were presented with a consent form that outlined the purposes of the research, sexuality education program, the voluntary nature of their participation, terms of confidentiality, and assurances that the research conformed to the Department of Psychology ethical guidelines (see Appendix F). The consent form explained that participants’ names, addresses, and telephone numbers were necessary in order to contact them for interviews and to mail follow-up survey measures. Participants were asked to put their student identification number on their survey materials. Participants read and signed the consent form. Once signed consent forms were obtained, all participants were given a quantitative measures survey package and a short questionnaire about their sex education history and learning needs/preferences. Responses to the learning needs/preferences questionnaire determined the sexuality education topics offered. The surveys required approximately 20-30 minutes to complete. Participants remitted completed surveys in sealed envelopes. When all surveys were collected, participants were informed whether they had been randomly assigned to Group 1 or Group 2. The groups were instructed that Group 1 participants would commence sexuality education during the next week, and Group 2 would start the same program in five weeks. Group 2 participants were excused, and a one-hour introductory session for the sexuality education program followed for Group 1 participants. During the introductory session, participants agreed to the group ground rules by signing a ground rules statement (see Appendix G). The ground rules included confidentiality, the right to pass, no killer statements (e.g., put-downs), openness, respect for diversity, the use of “I” statements, no
direct questions about personal experiences, and the right to call one another on the ground rules.

As previously described, the sexuality education program consisted of one 2.5-hour session per week for six consecutive weeks (1 introductory/pretest session, 4 educational sessions, 1 closing/posttest session). Between the introductory session and the first week of sexuality education, six members of Group 1 were randomly selected for interviews. Each of the six participated in a semi-structured interview about their perceptions of their sexuality. The researcher contacted these participants at the end of the introductory session to arrange an interview date and time. Participants were given another consent form to read and sign before being interviewed (see Appendix H). The interviews took place in a quiet and comfortable research room in the Department of Psychology. The interviews were approximately 1.5 hours in duration. They were audiotaped and transcribed verbatim into a word processing file. All interviews were completed before the first sexuality education session. At the completion of the sexuality education program, Group 1 completed the quantitative posttest measures after the sexuality education closing session. The closing session was audiotaped to capture participants’ thoughts and feelings about the group’s closure. Group 1 participants were also asked to provide the researcher with an e-mail address and a mailing address at which they would be able to be contacted in three months. If participants were unsure of their summer residence plans, they were asked to provide the address of some one who would forward the mailed survey. At this time, Group 2 also completed these measures to provide pretest 2 data. The Group 2 participants received the introductory session of the sexuality education program after completing the quantitative measures. During the last
week of sexuality education for Group 1, five interview participants were re-interviewed. Only five were re-interviewed, because one participant left the research study after her first interview. Again, they were asked about their perceptions of their sexuality in relation to the impact of the sexuality education and the research process on these perceptions. At the end of this interview, participants selected their own pseudonym for use in reporting the results. Three months after completing the sexuality education program, all Group 1 participants were mailed the quantitative measures to obtain follow-up data. The follow-up questionnaires were returned by mail to the researcher in a stamped self-addressed envelope.

The process described above was repeated for Group 2 including interviewing six randomly selected participants during the first week and last week of the sexuality education program. Like Group 1, Group 2 participants completed posttest quantitative measures at the conclusion of the sexuality education program after their sexuality education closing session, and they were asked to provide contact information that would be accurate in three months. The Group 2 closing session was audiotaped as well to capture the participants' thoughts and feelings about the group's closure, however, this data was lost due to problems with the recording device. Group 2 participants were also mailed the quantitative measures three months after completing the program to provide follow-up data. In order to minimize the loss of follow-up data, all participants (Groups 1 and 2) who did not return completed questionnaires were sent two reminder e-mail messages. If participants did not receive the follow-up questionnaires or misplaced them, a replacement package was sent.
It is important to note the sexuality education and research took place in campus residence meeting rooms. Unfortunately, the same room was not available for the duration of either of the 6-week programs. Consequently, the constant change in meeting rooms may have affected the groups’ ability to cohere and feel comfortable with each other in their surroundings.

The sexuality education program and research addressed sensitive topics. Consequently, all participants were given a list of support services (local community, telephone, and internet) at the beginning of the program/research. For example, the referred agencies included the campus Health Services, Womyn’s Centre, Campus Ministry, Student Counselling Services, Out on Campus (a group for lesbian, gay and bisexual students), and community resources (e.g., Planned Parenthood) (see Appendix I). If a participant appeared to be distressed or asked the facilitators for assistance with a personal problem, she would have been referred to an appropriate agency. Fortunately, none of the participants exhibited any signs of distress and no referrals were made.
CHAPTER III
RESULTS

In this chapter, first, participants’ responses to the Participant Survey (see Appendix D) are presented in order to contextualize the quantitative and qualitative findings. Second, quantitative analysis and results of the hypothesis tests are presented. Third, the analysis of the qualitative interviews and field notes and the resultant findings are described. Chapter IV includes an integrated discussion of both sets of findings.

Participant Survey Responses

In addition to participants’ demographic characteristics, it is important to understand participants’ attitudes toward sexuality, previous sex education experiences, and how participants felt about the sex education program before they began the workshop series\(^3\). This information provides a foundation for understanding the quantitative and qualitative outcomes arising from the sexuality education program.

On a 10-point Likert-type scale, participants considered themselves to be more sexually adventurous than timid (0 = sexually timid to 10 = sexually adventurous, \(M = 7.23, SD = 2.08\), range: 2 - 10). Participants also felt that, historically, their sexuality had been more satisfactory than disappointing (0 = disappointing to 10 = awesome, \(M = 7.12, SD = 1.86\), range: 4 - 10). When rating their comfort with others whose sexual orientation differs from their own (0 = uneasy with people whose sexual orientation is different than mine to 10 = completely comfortable with people no matter what their orientation is), participants were more comfortable than uneasy (\(M = 8.81, SD = 1.63\), range: 3 - 10).

\(^3\) Because I failed to match participants’ identification numbers with the Participant Survey (Appendix D) data, the following descriptive information is based on the initial number of participants (\(N = 26\)). It includes data from participants who dropped out of the study as well as information from participants whose data was excluded from the main analyses due to missing two or more educational sessions.
They expressed mixed views of whether sexuality is a more positive than negative force in contemporary society (0 = negative to 10 = positive, M = 5.56, SD = 2.06, range: 2 - 10). Furthermore, the majority of participants felt that sexually explicit materials should only be available to adults (n = 21, 80.8%), rather than available to all (n = 3, 11.5%) or available to no one (n = 2, 7.7%). Regarding high school youths’ sexuality, many participants felt youth should be instructed about alternatives to intercourse (n = 12, 46.2%), and several others felt youth should refrain from intercourse (n = 7, 26.9%), or should be free to have any sort of sex as long as they are in love and using safer sex techniques (n = 5, 19.2%).

Most participants had had some form of sexuality education prior to participating in this research. The majority had elementary school sex education (n = 14, 53.8%) and high school sex education (n = 15, 57.7%) experiences, and a minority had participated in college sex education courses (n = 5, 19.2%), sex education in a religious setting (n = 5, 19.2%), or another type of sex education program (n = 3, 11.5%). Notably, five women (19.2%) had no previous sex education experience.

On average, participants were looking forward to the sex education program with greater feelings of excitement than fear (0 = fear to 10 = excitement, M = 7.69, SD = 2.04, range: 4 - 10). The women selected several reasons for wanting to participate in the sexuality education program such as curiosity (n = 16, 61.5%), interests/concerns about themselves (n = 10, 38.5%), a desire to celebrate sexuality (n = 9, 34.6%), to learn about our society and culture (n = 7, 26.9%), and interests/concerns about others (n = 2, 7.7%). Other reasons (n = 4, 15.4 %) for participating included: to make friends, to educate themselves, to participate and learn about women and their sexuality, and because the
program seemed interesting. Participants were equally interested in learning about personal sexual issues and societal sexual issues (0 = personal sexual issues to 10 = societal sexual issues, $M = 4.96$, $SD = 1.56$, range: 2 - 9), and felt fairly comfortable with discussing personal sexual experience (0 = uncomfortable to 10 = comfortable, $M = 7.24$, $SD = 2.60$, range: 2 - 10).

Overall, before beginning the sex education program, participants reported that they were sexually adventurous, comfortable with sexual diversity, and were comfortable discussing sexuality. However, participants expressed relatively conservative attitudes toward high school youths’ sexuality and the availability of sexually explicit materials. These women had satisfactory sexual histories, and the majority had some sex education in the past. The main motivation for participation was curiosity, and participants were excited about the sex education program.

**Quantitative Analysis**

The data were analyzed using the SPSS statistical package for Windows Release 9.0.0 (SPSS Inc., 1998). Quantitative analysis included descriptive and inferential statistics. Before the analyses were conducted, the data were screened and cleaned for outliers, missing data, and violations of the assumptions of the inferential tests. Missing data was minimal and scattered randomly among participants and across scale/subscale items. Due to the small sample size, cases with missing data were not deleted. Instead, scale/subscale scores were calculated with a weighting to allow for missing data. Scale/subscale scores that consisted of greater than 10 items tolerated a maximum of two missing values, and no missing values were accepted for scale/subscales that were comprised of 10 or fewer items. One participant exhibited substantial missing data on one
scale, the HISA, across all measurement times and this case was excluded from the analyses pertaining to this scale. Furthermore, in order to be included in the analyses, participants could not have missed more than one of the sexuality education sessions.

**Reliability of Scales**

Reliability analyses were performed on the HISA, RATSI factor 1, SDS, and SDI (Dyadic and Solitary subscales) for each measurement period. In order to obtain acceptable internal consistency for the scales/subscales across all measurement periods some item deletions were necessary. RATSI factor 1 and the SDS were modified. Deletions were based on corrected item total correlations and the items’ meaningfulness to the scale/subscale. Prior to item deletions the alpha values for RATSI factor 1 were pretest = .60, pretest 2 = .81, posttest = .68, and follow-up = .70. Prior to item deletions the alpha values for the SDS were pretest = .62, pretest 2 = .59, posttest = .77, and follow-up = .72. Note that the reliability for the SDS was calculated in the usual manner with item scores, because the unconventional approach of the scale’s authors that used difference scores yielded very low reliabilities. Consequently, item scores rather than difference scores were utilized when conducting all further analyses for the SDS. Table 2 demonstrates that, once the deletions were made, all scales/subscales had moderate to high internal consistency as indicated by Cronbach alpha values. Items 2 and 17 were deleted from the RATSI factor 1 subscale, and items 5, 14, and 25 were deleted from the SDS. Table 3 provides the means, standard deviations, and possible minimum and
### Table 2

Reliability Estimates (Cronbach's Alpha) for the HISA, RATSI, SDS, and SDI

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale/Subsale</th>
<th>Pretest (n)</th>
<th>Pretest 2 (n)</th>
<th>Posttest (n)</th>
<th>Follow-Up (n)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HISA</td>
<td>.87 (20)</td>
<td>.88 (9)</td>
<td>.91 (18)</td>
<td>.88 (18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RATSI factor 1</td>
<td>.73 (20)</td>
<td>.83 (9)</td>
<td>.73 (21)</td>
<td>.75 (21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDS</td>
<td>.71 (18)</td>
<td>.81 (5)</td>
<td>.81 (20)</td>
<td>.75 (18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDI Dyadic</td>
<td>.84 (21)</td>
<td>.80 (9)</td>
<td>.84 (20)</td>
<td>.82 (20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDI Solitary</td>
<td>.93 (20)</td>
<td>.94 (10)</td>
<td>.93 (21)</td>
<td>.85 (21)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3

Means, Standard Deviations, and Minimum and Maximum Score Values for the HISA, RATSI, SDS, and SDI Scales/Subscales at Each Measurement Point

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale/Subscale (Min. to Max.)</th>
<th>Pretest</th>
<th>Pretest 2</th>
<th>Posttest</th>
<th>Follow-Up</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M (n) SD</td>
<td>M (n) SD</td>
<td>M (n) SD</td>
<td>M (n) SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HISA (0 to 100)</td>
<td>70.60 (20) 13.15</td>
<td>66.56 (9) 13.45</td>
<td>73.44 (18) 14.23</td>
<td>76.78 (18) 12.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RATSI factor 1 (10 to 60)</td>
<td>14.40 (20) 4.73</td>
<td>16.78 (9) 7.22</td>
<td>14.05 (21) 4.61</td>
<td>14.62 (21) 4.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDS (0 to 69)</td>
<td>19.44 (18) 7.27</td>
<td>17.20 (5) 9.65</td>
<td>20.10 (20) 8.45</td>
<td>20.67 (18) 7.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDI Dyadic (0 to 62)</td>
<td>41.57 (21) 10.19</td>
<td>44.00 (9) 7.83</td>
<td>42.60 (20) 8.67</td>
<td>38.65 (20) 10.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDI Solitary (0 to 23)</td>
<td>7.55 (20) 7.03</td>
<td>7.00 (10) 6.60</td>
<td>9.52 (21) 7.15</td>
<td>9.05 (21) 6.15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. The means and standard deviations reported in this table were obtained from the reliability analyses. These values differ from those reported in the text for the tests of hypotheses, because they are based on different numbers of cases.
maximum values for each scale/subscale across measurement points.

Examination of the scale scores revealed that all scales/subscales had appropriate scale ranges and means, and no outliers were identified. Inspection of the skewness and kurtosis values revealed that while the distributions were not normal, they were within the expected range for a sample of this size.

Quantitative Findings

The inferential statistics included mixed analyses of variance (ANOVA), repeated measures ANOVA, and orthogonal comparisons with the HISA, RATSI factor 1, SDS, and SDI (Dyadic and Solitary subscales) as dependent variable measures to address hypotheses 1-4. Hypothesis 5 was tested by analyses of covariance (ANCOVA) with the preceding scales/subscales as dependent variables. After the tests for within group and between group effects were conducted, strength of the effects was determined by calculating Cohen’s d.

Tests of Group Differences

For hypotheses 1-4, a mixed ANOVA (Group x Measurement Period: pretest, posttest, follow-up) was conducted first to establish equivalency of Groups 1 and 2. In the mixed ANOVA, the pretest scores consisted of pretest (Group 1) and pretest 2 (Group 2) to ensure that the same temporal sequence was being evaluated. The groups did not significantly differ on any of the dependent variable measures (HISA: $F(1, 18) = 2.10, p = ns$, RATSI factor 1: $F(1, 19) = 1.62, p = ns$, SDS: $F(1, 19) = .016, p = ns$, SDI Dyadic: $F(1, 19) = .725, p = ns$, SDI Solitary: $F(1, 19) = .248, p = ns$). Consequently, the groups were collapsed to form a total sample for the orthogonal comparisons.
Once Group 1 and Group 2 equivalency was established for each dependent variable and the groups were collapsed, a repeated measures ANOVA was conducted. In order to decrease the probability of making a Type-I error, the mean square error (MSE) term was retained from this analysis and used in the hand-calculated orthogonal comparisons between: 1) pretest and posttest, 2) pretest and follow-up, and 3) posttest and follow-up. To confirm the hypotheses, significant findings were anticipated for the first and second orthogonal comparisons, and non-significant findings were anticipated for the third comparison.

Tests of Hypotheses

It is important to note that in all the within-subject analyses, the pretest scores consisted of pretest (Group 1) and pretest 2 (Group 2) scores to ensure that the same temporal sequence was being evaluated. Hypothesis 1 predicted that participants would exhibit more sexual assertiveness at posttest and follow-up than at pretest. This hypothesis was not supported by the data obtained with the HISA. Participants’ mean assertiveness scores stayed constant from pretest (\(M = 71.30, SD = 13.29\)) to posttest (\(M = 73.65, SD = 13.98, F(1, 19) = 1.46, p = ns\)), constant from pretest to follow-up (\(M = 73.20, SD = 16.06, F(1, 19) = .954, p = ns\)), and there were no differences between posttest and follow-up, \(F(1, 19) = .053, p = ns\) (see Figure 2). Women began the program quite sexually assertive and did not change over the course of the research.

Hypothesis 2 was also not supported. Participants’ mean acceptance of coercion/rape myths scores remained constant from pretest (\(M = 15.38, SD = 5.58\)) to posttest (\(M = 14.05, SD = 4.61, F(1, 20) = 2.71, p = ns\)), constant from pretest to follow-up (\(M = 14.61, SD = 5.30, F(1, 20) = .884, p = ns\)), and there was no significant change
Note. No significant differences among means.

Figure 2. Mean HISA scores at pretest, posttest, and follow-up.
between posttest and follow-up, $F(1, 20) = .50, p = ns$ (see Figure 3). As measured by RATSI factor 1, women began the sex education program not very accepting of rape/coercion myths, and did not change their acceptance of sexual coercion/rape myths throughout the research.

Hypothesis 3 predicted that participants would show less acceptance of the sexual double standard, as measured by the SDS, at posttest and follow-up than at pretest. This hypothesis was not supported by the data. Participants’ mean sexual double standard scores stayed constant from pretest ($M = 20.05, SD = 8.47$) to posttest ($M = 20.00, SD = 8.25, F(1, 19) = .148, p = ns$), constant from pretest to follow-up ($M = 19.67, SD = 8.10, F(1, 19) = .095, p = ns$), and there were no significant differences between posttest and follow-up, $F(1, 19) = .072, p = ns$ (see Figure 4). Across all measurement periods, participants scored below the mid-point of possible scale scores, indicating relatively low endorsement of sexual freedom for men and women. Women were unchanged in their belief in sexual freedom for men and women after participating in the sex education program.

Hypothesis 4 was partially supported by the data. It was predicted that at posttest and follow-up, participants would acknowledge their sexual desire more than at pretest. According to the SDI Dyadic subscale this hypothesis was not supported because participants’ mean dyadic desire scores remained constant from pretest ($M = 41.86, SD = 12.15$) to posttest ($M = 40.57, SD = 12.56, F(1, 20) = 1.23, p = ns$), but decreased significantly from pretest to follow-up ($M = 38.76, SD = 9.91, F(1, 20) = 7.137, p < .05, d = .60$). There was no significant difference between posttest and follow-up, $F(1, 20) = 2.44, p = ns$ (see Figure 5). Initially, participants exhibited quite a strong desire to be
Note. No significant differences among means.

Figure 3. Mean RATSI factor 1 scores at pretest, posttest, and follow-up.
Note. No significant differences among means.

Figure 4. Mean SDS scores at pretest, posttest, and follow-up.
Figure 5. Mean SDI Dyadic scores at pretest, posttest, and follow-up.
sexual with a partner, but the strength of this desire diminished three months after having participated in the sex education program. However, participants did experience a significant increase in their desire to be sexual with themselves, as measured by the SDI Solitary subscale. Although, it is important to mention that this desire was relatively low when considering the possible range of scales scores. Participants’ mean solitary desire scores increased from pretest \( (M = 7.52, SD = 6.62) \) to posttest \( (M = 9.52, SD = 7.15, F(1, 20) = 7.46, p < .025, \eta^2 = .61) \), but there was no significant change between pretest and follow-up \( (M = 9.05, SD = 6.15, F(1, 20) = 4.33, p = \text{ns}) \), and no significant difference from posttest to follow-up, \( F(1, 20) = .423, p = \text{ns} \) (see Figure 6).

Consequently, Hypothesis 4 was partially supported. Women desired being sexual with a partner less, three months after the program’s completion, and desired being sexual with themselves more immediately after participating in the sex education program. Both findings have moderate effect sizes.

To demonstrate that the sex education program was responsible for observed effects, hypothesis 5 predicted that at posttest participants who received sexuality education would differ significantly from those waiting for the education on measures of sexual assertiveness (HISA), endorsement of sexual coercion/rape myths (RATSI factor 1), acceptance of the sexual double standard (SDS), and sexual desire (SDI Dyadic and Solitary subscales). To address hypothesis 5, an analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was conducted for each of the dependent variables with pretest (Group 1 and Group 2) designated as the covariate and the dependent variable designated by posttest (Group 1) scores and pretest 2 (Group 2) scores. Pretest was deemed a suitable covariate by conducting t-tests between Groups 1 and 2 on each dependent variable at this
Figure 6. Mean SDI Solitary scores at pretest, posttest, and follow-up.
measurement point, and by inspecting homogeneity of slope via a custom ANOVA. If the groups did not differ significantly on the t-tests, and the interaction between Group and the dependent variable was non-significant in the ANOVA, pretest was judged a suitable covariate. ANCOVAs were then conducted.

This hypothesis was supported only for measures of acceptance of sexual coercion/rape myths and solitary sexual desire. Participants who received sexuality education ($M = 12.90$, $SD = 4.01$) were significantly less accepting of sexual coercion/rape myths than participants who were waiting to receive the sex education program ($M = 16.90$, $SD = 6.82$, $F(1, 18) = 4.94$, $p < .05$, $d = 1.05$). In addition, participants who received sexuality education ($M = 10.82$, $SD = 7.10$) reported significantly more desire to be sexual with themselves than participants who were waiting to receive the sex education program ($M = 7.00$, $SD = 6.60$, $F(1, 18) = 5.21$, $p < .05$, $d = 1.08$). There were no significant differences between participants who received the sex education program and those waiting to receive the education on measures of sexual assertiveness ($M_1 = 77.73$, $SD_1 = 13.60$, $M_2 = 66.56$, $SD_2 = 13.45$, $F(1, 17) = .325$, $p = \text{ns}$), acceptance of the double standard ($M_1 = 20.64$, $SD_1 = 7.53$, $M_2 = 21.20$, $SD_2 = 10.11$, $F(1, 17) = .035$, $p = \text{ns}$), and desire to be sexual with a partner ($M_1 = 42.18$, $SD_1 = 9.34$, $M_2 = 39.60$, $SD_2 = 15.75$, $F(1, 18) = .730$, $p = \text{ns}$). Women who participated in sex education were less accepting of sexual coercion/rape myths and expressed more desire to be sexual with themselves than women who were waiting to participate in sex education, and these were large effects.

To summarize the quantitative findings, participants experienced several significant changes in their sexuality. Specifically, in comparison to participants who
were waiting to receive the sex education program, those who experienced the emancipatory sex education were less accepting of sexual coercion/rape myths, and they expressed more desire to be sexual with themselves. Regarding changes that occurred during the course of participation, on average these women showed less desire to be sexual with a partner but more desire to be sexual with themselves, and were unchanged in their sexual assertiveness, acceptance of rape/coercion myths, and endorsement of equal sexual freedom for men and women. Furthermore, the sizes of the between and within subject effects were moderate to large.

Qualitative Analysis

Following the procedure of naturalistic inquiry, the qualitative data analysis occurred first within each interview, and then across interviews (Guba & Lincoln, 1982). Although the pre-program interviews were analyzed for how participants generally perceived their sexuality, emphasis was placed on participants’ post-program interview transcripts. These transcripts were analyzed for evidence of changes in the participants’ sexuality due to the influences of the sexuality education program. The pre-program transcripts provided verification for participants’ self-described changes.

This process was assisted by adapted grounded theory analysis techniques (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Grounded theory analysis techniques helped me stay close to the data and they improved the confirmability of the findings because they offered explicit step-by-step instructions for data analysis. The goal of this research was not to develop a fully-fledged grounded theory of female sexual subjectivity, but to increase understanding of the phenomenon and provide avenues for future research and theory development. The grounded theory method of data collection and theory induction was
not followed in this study. As such, the iterative process between data collection and analysis and theoretical sampling did not occur. However, I did engage in reflexivity and made efforts to enhance my theoretical sensitivity. Reflexivity required me to acknowledge the epistemology, methodology, and decision-making process that influenced the research conclusions (Holland & Ramazanoglu, 1994). In addition, the analysis was shaped by my own theoretical knowledge of female sexuality and my personal experiences of sexuality, feminism, and sex education.

To contextualize my personal influences on the research, I am heterosexual, single, Caucasian, in my late twenties, sexually active, academic, and non-religious. I had sex education experiences in elementary, junior high, and high school all of which followed the sex informational model (Schragg, 1989). I also participated in a one-semester undergraduate course in human sexuality that followed the sex educational model (Schragg, 1989). Graduate study in the area of anti-gay violence sensitized me to sexual diversity. The present research project, with its roots in feminism, heightened my attention to the influences of society and power in sexuality. My personal experiences have included sexual exploitation and sexual empowerment. Philosophically and in practice, I adhere to a liberal feminist view of sexuality that embraces sexual autonomy and sexual diversity (McCormick, 1994). I believe that the rejection of traditional sexual scripts and gender role stereotypes will bring greater sexual autonomy and pleasure for both women and men. Sexuality should be a holistic experience that extends beyond the physical (i.e., genital) to include intellectual, relational, and spiritual aspects. I also feel that sexuality should not be regarded as an entirely goal-directed activity with orgasm as the main objective. All things sexual should be esteemed equally with orgasm. The
recognition and celebration of women’s sexual desire is of paramount importance to me, and I think women should be encouraged to find a language to discuss it. Also, I believe masturbation should be promoted as an empowering experience for women to have sexual pleasure solely for themselves. Finally, I think sexuality should be free from inequality, exploitation, and abuse. Overall, I believe in the ethic of sexual pragmatism as described by Seidman (1992). According to sexual pragmatism, in order for sexual acts to be ethical the parties involved must be able to consent and must act with responsibility. When both parties can freely choose their actions unrestricted by power differentials, consent can be granted. When both parties act with the others’ best interests for health, safety, respect, and dignity in mind, then responsibility exists.

Throughout the design, implementation, analysis, and writing of this research I have been aware of how my personal characteristics have influenced the research process and outcomes. For example, when conducting the workshops, I began to dislike some participants. I questioned the origins of this reaction. I realized that it was not dislike, but frustration that I was feeling toward a few participants who had very romanticized ideas of sexuality and who were very committed to their traditional relationships. I felt a very strong urge to force a feminist consciousness on these women. It would have been unacceptable to impose my values on the participants, because as co-facilitator I had a responsibility to be respectful of their values while exposing them to other ideas about sexuality. As a result, I consciously tried to be equally reinforcing of all participants’ contributions whether they agreed with, or differed, from my own beliefs. During the qualitative analysis I reminded myself that my personal standards of sexual empowerment were not the benchmarks of sexual empowerment for all women. For some
women focusing on improving the quality of a romantic relationship may have been a more empowering experience than acting on desires for casual sexual interactions. Consequently, I broadened my definition of what I considered positive change in women’s sexuality. In reporting the findings I periodically asked myself whether the integrity of participants’ experiences was being maintained, or if I was omitting information because it did not fit neatly with my initial analysis of their experiences. Thus, I tried to select quotations that would acknowledge the diversity and complexity of participants’ experiences. Because I tried to be self-aware, I feel that I have a more thorough understanding of participants’ experiences than if I did not consider my biases in facilitating the workshops, conducting the interviews, analyzing the transcripts, and reporting the findings. I believe that no research is free from the researcher’s personal influences, and it is important to acknowledge these influences and consider their impact when assessing the work. Hence, I encourage the reader to add my characteristics to the research context when evaluating this study.

Data analysis involved open coding, axial coding, and selective coding of the interview transcripts. My field notes and the primary facilitator’s field notes informed the data coding process. Open coding and axial coding were my first steps in data analysis. This involved analyzing segments of participants’ speech within each interview transcript. Participants’ speech between my questions/probes were designated as segments. Also, when participants changed topics within one response, a new segment was identified. Open coding was the process of examining, comparing, conceptualizing and categorizing data, and axial coding involved tracking relationships between categories, and between categories and subcategories (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). I
engaged in these coding processes both sequentially and simultaneously during the analysis. Selective coding was the last phase of data analysis in this study. This was the process of identifying the core categories of the data, relating it to all other categories, and searching the data for recurrences of the identified relationships to validate them (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). I used qualitative data analysis software, ATLAS/ti (Muhr, 1997), to facilitate the analysis. This software maintained records of my codes and their definitions. It also helped me search transcripts for major codes when I was selective coding, and it organized coding memos.

Memos are written notes of the analysis (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). They contained notes about code definitions, thoughts on emerging concepts, reflections on my theoretical sensitivity, or directions to myself for future analyses. Memo writing helped me to identify patterns in the data and elaborate on initial codings of the data.

In summary, during the qualitative analysis, first, I open and axial coded the pre- and post-program interview transcripts. I verified participants’ self-described changes by comparing post-program interview statements with pre-program interview statements. Second, I searched the post-program interview transcripts for commonalities among participants to identify the major themes of change, patterns of change, contextual factors, and change limitations. Third, during selective coding, the major findings were validated by searching for repeated occurrences across interview transcripts. Finally, throughout this process, I continuously wrote memos to define codes, elaborate on relationships among codes, and record my perceptions of the coding process.
Qualitative Findings

The qualitative analysis resulted in a wide array of conceptual categories (see Appendix J for a complete list of categories) that emerged from participants' general conceptualizations of their sexuality and their descriptions of their experiences of the sexuality education program. According to the purposes of this research, the findings presented here are limited to the major themes of change participants experienced as a result of the sex education program, mechanisms of the change process, the change context, and limitations of change. Illustrative quotes are provided to explain the themes. I have provided quotes from all interviewees. However, some participants were more communicative than others, and thus, I have chosen to rely more heavily on the transcripts of seven of the eleven interviewees. The major themes of change included consciousness-raising, assertiveness, openness, self-reflection, self-awareness, and self-acceptance.

Consciousness-Raising

The first aim of this research was to provide emancipatory sexuality education with consciousness-raising objectives. The interview transcripts and observational field notes revealed that this goal was achieved for the majority of participants, because eight of the eleven interviewees experienced consciousness-raising. Theoretically, consciousness-raising is a two-part experience. First, through sharing their private concerns in a group setting, women come to realize that these are indeed public concerns. Second, this realization mobilizes women toward social action. Regarding the first part of the CR experience, the participants in this research felt much less alienated from other women through discussing personal experiences and recognizing that others felt very
similarly, or had like experiences. The realization of shared experiences among a group of seemingly dissimilar others gave participants a feeling of “normalcy” and connectedness. For instance, Dawn said,

Just knowing that I’m not alone in some of the things that I think. That’s helped a lot. And seeing other people’s experiences especially with the flirting thing, that helped a lot too. Just like everyone does it sort of thing. I’m not alone. I’m not weird.

Chantelle also realized that she was not alone in her thoughts when she explained, “it’s not like I’m the only one, and there’s others out there, you know, wanting to say something but they just don’t say it.” The second component of CR was achieved through women’s mobilization for personal change, as individual change is a first step toward social change. Participant’s changes were idiosyncratic, but all eight experienced some sort of change ranging from the intrapersonal such as greater self-reflection to the interpersonal such as greater assertiveness in sexual decision-making. These personal changes will be discussed in greater detail as the major themes of change are presented. However it is notable that one participant, Sue, verbalized the impact of the program on her perception of the possibility for social changes regarding the media’s influence on body image:

I still feel there is a lot of exploitation in the magazines and all that social, you know, place. But that's obviously not going to change in the 6 weeks or whatever, because it takes a mass of people to change something like that. But I, I don't know, feeling that other people in the group feel the same way that maybe there's a chance that something could be done about that. Like we could, you know, even
if it's just your own kids or our own family and people that we know, that we could change it so people don't feel that that's what they have to be like. Evidently, the sexuality education program raised participants' awareness that their personal concerns are really public concerns and it spawned personal changes in their sexuality that may lead to future social changes. Importantly, participants experienced empathy and support, and felt comforted and strengthened by the CR experience.

**Assertiveness**

Another major theme of change concerned assertiveness. This theme of change was present in five of the eleven interviewees. Participants became more assertive in their verbal communications about sexuality, in seeking sexual pleasure, and in avoiding unwanted sexual activity. All participants interviewed expressed that they felt much more comfortable discussing sexuality with others because of their participation in the sexuality education program. For example, Gabriella was once extremely reluctant to discuss sexual matters, but during her last interview she described being more at ease during discussions of sexuality:

> With friends and stuff, I find that I can talk about it more, maybe because I’ve learned more about it. And I’ve learned, yeah it’s okay to talk about, and um there’s no need for it to be so hush hush and stuff.

Mabel, too, felt the sex education program helped her be more assertive when talking about sexuality. She said, “it’s been the best thing coming to the workshops and I think it has changed me, or my sexuality, in that um I think I’m a little more free to talk about stuff now.” In addition to being more assertive in discussing sexuality generally, some participants became more assertive in communicating with sexual partners about their
needs for pleasure. During her second interview Melina said, “I think I've been initiating it more since. It’s something I just thought of right now, especially in the last little while.” Sue described the change in her sexual communication with her boyfriend as follows:

Now I’m just accepting of the fact that I can be assertive about it. I can, you know, I can say what I want, when I want it, how I want it. Whereas before it was just kind of like I’ll take whatever you’re going to give me, kind of thing.

On the other hand, Sue also experienced the ability to be more assertive in communicating about sexual activity that she did not want. When asked to elaborate on her assertiveness, Sue said, “I don't know, uh, just being able to tell him no.” Dawn demonstrated her recent resistance to her boyfriend’s advances when she said,

Like he wants it all the time, and I’m just like no I can’t. I can’t, I can’t because it’s just not the same. It’s like okay fine whatever. I’ll just lay there and you just do whatever. Because I can’t do that anymore, because there’s too much stress in my life, so we’ve agreed that it’s okay not to do it as often anymore.

The sex education program helped participants feel more assertive about their sexuality, and behave more assertively in some instances. In addition to being more assertive, participants experienced greater openness toward sexuality.

Openness

Greater openness to a variety of sexual practices and relationships was evident in all interviewees. For some participants this openness only extended to the sexual lives of other people. However, other participants also became more open to different sexual practices and relationship styles for the future of their own sexuality. There were three
areas in which participants expressed greater openness: masturbation, spirituality, and sexual diversity.

First, the topic of masturbation was very surprising to participants. They reported feeling shocked that we discussed masturbation at all, and especially in relation to women. Moreover, they found it surprising that women could speak so frankly about masturbation. Participants were acutely aware of the sexual double standard pertaining to masturbation, and many interviewees claimed that they did not masturbate, and some of those that admitted masturbating felt uncomfortable with the practice. The masturbation topic represented an important gain in knowledge. Participants learned that many women do, in fact, masturbate and how. At the program’s end, eight interviewees expressed greater openness to discussing masturbation and trying masturbation. For instance, Jade said,

Maybe I should try it and see how I feel about it. If I don’t like it, then hey I’ll stop. But if I do like it and I don’t need a man to please me, or I don’t need to you know, I don’t need someone to pleasure me, I can just do it myself. And that’s even better because I know myself, and I don’t have to worry because I won’t get HIV or AIDS or anything like that.

Masturbation came to be regarded as something that may provide pleasure that has been missing due to the absence of a partner, or the inability to achieve orgasm with a partner. Also, from Jade’s comment, it is apparent that masturbation was viewed as a safe-sex alternative. Although participants were more open to discussing and/or trying masturbation, its practice was still regarded as something necessary to conceal from
family and some friends for fear of negative reactions or participants’ own embarrassment. Mable confessed,

I can discuss it [masturbation], but again, with the people in Windsor, with my friends. It will never go back to my parents. Like I don’t even know what I’m going to do when I go home, how am I going to bring the thing [her vibrator] home?

Second, participants’ sense of increased openness extended to spirituality and sexuality; either acknowledging that spirituality was a part of their sexuality, or the desire to make spirituality a part of their sexual lives. This theme was evidenced by six interviewees. Participants defined spirituality for themselves as including religion, intense emotional experiences, or feelings of connection with nature. For example, Dawn came to recognize that spirituality, as intense emotions, has always been essential to her sexuality:

I never really considered spirituality to be a part of my sexuality, but after we had the little presentation on spirituality and sexuality it really made me realize that, okay, all along spirituality has been a part of my sexuality, but I just understood spirituality as religion and I could never see a connection, religion and sex, I could never see that.

Like Dawn, Ellie recognized that spirituality once was a part of her sexuality, but she demonstrated a desire to make it so again. For instance she said,

Spirituality, openness to spirituality, openness to sexuality, ah no barriers to communication, a deeper connection all over. You know, like I feel like, I feel
like when I achieve it, it will be more than just what I’m looking for. It will be something I’ve lost and I will have found it, you know.

Interestingly, it was much easier for participants to see how sexuality could be a spiritual experience, and it was much more difficult to consider how spirituality is sexual or could be made sexual, if so desired.

Finally, eight participants experienced greater openness toward sexual diversity. This included being more open to how different cultures or religions regard sexuality, different relationship types (e.g., casual dating, committed, purely sexual), sexual practices (e.g., anal sex, bondage), and sexual orientations. Essentially, participants left the sexuality education program with a broader perspective of sexuality. First, Gabriella became more open to sexual expression in relationships outside serious commitment:

What they do is their sort of business and stuff and I’m not going to judge anybody by it, and that’s what I used to do before. When I knew somebody was sexually active doing this and that, I was like, ‘Whoa! That’s not really for me and I don’t think you should be doing it type of thing.’ But now it’s just like, ‘Okay you can do what you want and I’m not going to judge you for it.’

Natasha became more open to accepting lesbians from her exposure to lesbian relationships during the sexuality education program. Natasha explained her openness as resulting from greater understanding:

I believe there [were] one or two lesbians in the group? And they’d just talk about their relationships and I’d be like, ‘Wow that’s very much like a hetero relationship.’ So it’s like they’re different, but they’re just the same essentially. Because it’s like everyone still wants the same stuff, they still want love, caring,
nurturing, the physical raw sex, whatever the case may be, but then they still want
to be treated as human. And I’m like just because they’re with somebody of the
same sex doesn’t make you any less human.

These statements illustrate that through exposure to dissimilar others’ sexuality,
participants became more open to a variety of sexual behaviors and relationships.

Ultimately, participants emerged with an expanded definition of acceptable
sexuality, and Sue demonstrated this best when she explained:

Like if you’re comfortable with it, then that’s healthy for you, and if you’re not,
then it’s unhealthy kind of thing... like people say, ‘You can’t do that because
you know that’s not healthy, you know, bondage is not good or something.’ And
somebody says, ‘Well you know I like it,’ or whatever. And then it’s kind of like
well you can’t really put a negative on it then, if it’s something that you enjoy and
it’s something that’s not really hurting you but you’re getting enjoyment out of it.
So it can be healthy in that aspect I guess. Just there’s a broad range in sexual
experiences and the way that people feel about them. It’s really just kind of
allowed me to, that there’s not really any boundaries about what’s healthy or not,
it depends upon the individual.

Participants recognized the wide variety of individual differences in sexuality, and began
to suspend judgment about sexuality that was beyond their own values and preferences.

Self-Reflection

Participants became more self-reflective through participation in the sexuality
education program, as this theme was present in all eleven interviewees. In addition to
participating in the sessions, participants reflected on each of the sexuality education
topics on their own time. Self-reflection is the process of asking oneself, ‘What do I think, feel, or believe, and why?’ Participants reported thinking about sexual attractiveness, body image, masturbation, the sexual double standard, sexual diversity, spirituality, relationships, emotions, and values. For example, Jade reflected on the nature of her feelings in her present relationship when she queried, “Like okay, ‘Am I really in love, Am I really not in love? Am I infatuated?’ Maybe. Well, I was infatuated when I first um met this guy.” After reflecting on the spirituality and sexuality session, Ellie came to realize that connecting the two concepts makes her feel vulnerable:

So you know, like last night I was thinking to myself, ‘Why can’t I connect, why can’t I make spirituality sexual for myself?’ And I realized that it was because spirituality is a very individual thing, as Julie [the facilitator] said. And so you’re always by yourself, sort of opening your soul up. To open yourself up, and to share that with somebody else is a big risk and vulnerability which I don’t like to do.

The reflection that occurred during and after the workshop sessions often resulted in changes in participants’ self-awareness.

**Self-Awareness**

The sex education program helped participants gain greater self-awareness of their sexual-self identity and values, sexual expressions and desires, and their relationships. The self-awareness theme was exhibited by seven interviewees. Self-awareness means clearly recognizing and understanding what one thinks, feels, and believes. For instance, Jade felt the sex education program made her more aware of her options for sexual expression. She said,
I guess being more aware of myself when it comes to loving someone, and
masturbating, and putting sexuality and spirituality together. It [the workshop]
just made me feel more, I guess it made myself more aware of it.

Mabel revealed her expanded self-awareness of physical desire in the following:
I’m more aware of things that I’m feeling, like when I’m feeling something, when
I want to do something, I’m kind of like a little more aware of it. Not that I wasn’t
aware before, but it was always something I kind of shunned. And now it’s just
like, ‘Mmm he wants to dance with you, just dance back!’ And so you know, the
mind/body thing, I think I’m just more aware of what my body might be
gravitating towards. Whereas before it was always like my mind was, my mind
controlled my body. Now my mind kind of like works with my body.

This quotation illustrates another aspect of change that evolved out of greater self-
awareness, namely, acceptance of themselves and their sexuality.

**Self-Acceptance**

There were two facets to sexual self-acceptance: body image and sexual-self
identity. Body image acceptance was not strongly affected by the sex education program,
and this will be discussed later in the section on program limitations. However,
acceptance of one’s identity as a sexual person was affected by the program, and six
interviewees demonstrated this theme. Self-acceptance is the ability to say to oneself,
‘This is what I think, feel, and believe, and I am okay with that.’ Some participants
entered the program feeling de-sexualized or uncomfortable with their sexual feelings
and behaviors. Due to sexual victimization experiences, Kathleen felt very de-sexualized
when she entered the program, but was making efforts to become more accepting of herself as a sexual woman:

[I’m] not active with that sexuality, but it’s more positive and it’s more of um trying to be sexual….sometimes I feel sexual but there’s always a cap, depending on what’s happening, that goes on it.

Melina, a moderately religious woman, was uncomfortable about her sexual (non-intercourse) behavior before marriage, but at the program end she claimed,

It’s like I wouldn’t say it makes you take charge of it, but it sort of like own it more instead of like push it away from you. You know, it’s a part of you, it’s something, not something to shun. You know, sexuality is a part of you and I’m accepting it more as a part of myself instead of trying to separate it.

Melina’s acceptance of her sexual-self identity included acknowledging herself as a sexual being. Acceptance of one’s sexual-self identity also included accepting one’s sexual expression (e.g., masturbation, flirting, casual sex, desires). Sue described the impact of the sex education program on her self-acceptance:

I think that the most important thing that I got out of it was just to be comfortable with myself. This is who I am, you know this is the way I am, and accept that. Be comfortable with it.

In summary, the major themes of change that participants experienced included: consciousness-raising, assertiveness, openness, self-reflection, self-awareness, and self-acceptance. Ultimately, these themes converged. In all participants, despite idiosyncratic differences in how this change was manifested, there was an increased positive self-
focus. In the next section I propose a model of change that describes participants’ shift from other- to self-focus.

**The Other- to Self-Focus Change Model**

The sex education program facilitated participants’ movement from an other- to self-focus in at least one area of their sexuality. I define an other-focus as one in which women emphasize other people’s wants and needs, and are especially concerned with societal expectations or prescriptions for women’s sexual identities and behaviors. A self-focus is one in which women are attuned to themselves: their bodies, thoughts, feelings, needs and desires, and engage in self-definition of acceptable sexual identities and behaviors. Of the 11 participants interviewed, 9 experienced a shift from other- to self-focus. These participants manifested this model in two different patterns depending on their orientation upon entering the sex education program. The first pattern of change I termed the **closed to open shift**. Six interviewees demonstrated this pattern. Before the sex education program, these women concealed their sexuality from themselves and others, and were closed in terms of their sexual expressiveness (e.g., verbal communication, flirting, etc.). More specifically, these women were uncomfortable thinking of themselves as sexual beings, felt that sexual expressiveness was something reserved for committed relationships, and believed sexuality was not something to be freely discussed. These women focused on others’ (e.g., society, family, partners) definitions of female sexuality and exemplified the traditional stereotype of the silent and/or submissive “good girl.” At the end of the program, these women were more open to their own sexual identity, were attempting to be more sexually expressive verbally and physically, and were less restrictive about the types of relationships in which sexual
expression is appropriate. Dawn, Mabel, Melina, Gabriella, Kathleen, and Jade exemplified this pattern. The following describes Mabel's closed to open shift:

Whereas the last couple of years, like after I broke up with my boyfriend, it's kind of like it's something that I just haven't thought about. Where I've never thought about sexuality, it's been dormant, like you know, it just hasn't been thought about for God knows how long. So that's why the workshop is like you know an A+ because it's just, it's put me back in the gear of thinking about that and I think it almost gives me more energy to like, not pursue someone, but pursue the idea of someone. Whereas before it was like no, nothing happens until I get the right person and I don't think about it. And now it's like, oh well, you know it's not so much 'down there' anymore.

Melina's closed to open shift, in terms of verbally communicating about sexuality, was revealed when she said,

Well, I don't know, like shouting out, shouting out genital names and stuff, it's not like, it's um, it's not something I ever pictured myself doing, in a room full of girls. It's not something like negative at all, it was just so, it was like it was cool. It was like, it's what guys do, girls aren't supposed to do that kind of thing, so it was kind of like, we can do it too, kind of thing.

Ellie, Sue, and Chantelle demonstrated an opposite pattern of other- to self-focus change. These women entered the sex education program very sexually expressive, verbally and physically, with an emphasis on attracting and pleasing partners. From the way they spoke about it, I understood them to be using their sexuality to gratify others. By the end of the program, these women were still verbally and physically expressive,
but the target of this sexual expression shifted from others to themselves. I viewed this as
**self-gratification**, and thus, I termed this pattern the **other-gratification to self-gratification shift**. Ellie demonstrated this type of self-focus when she said:

> Maybe I don’t need to be sexual towards other people, like maybe my sexuality
doesn’t need to reflect on other people. It may be it just needs to be my own
personal file, my own personal thing.

Sue described her **other-gratification to self-gratification shift** as follows:

> I don’t want to say that I have an I don’t care attitude, but it’s more like I’m
thinking more of myself now than him. So I’m putting myself a little bit first than
him. Because now I want to get something out of it, not just him.

The remaining two interviewees, Mary and Natasha, entered the program self-focused and they maintained this focus. These women mainly benefited from the sex education program by recognizing that they weren’t alone in their feelings and gaining knowledge from others’ experiences. Mary explained the program’s impact on her sexuality as:

> I think it’s still the same. Like in terms of practice, I think it’s pretty much the
same, but there’s a lot of things that I’ve thought about I guess in more, in more
depth. And I think hearing it from other people, and how they see things was like,
‘Oh! You know, that’s interesting, you know.’

Natasha felt the impact of the sex education program on her was minimal because:

> I guess it’s just on the whole I was willing to try new things and experience new
things. So I was never closed-minded towards things. So there wasn’t a whole lot
to bring to it, because I was already... If I hadn’t already done it, I was willing to try it, so it was like there wasn’t that much left to do.

Apparently, Natasha was already self-focused in her openness to experimentation and sexual expressiveness when she began the sex education program, and felt that there was not much room for positive change.

In summary, the sex education program helped women shift the focus of their sexuality from others’ wants, needs, expectations, and definitions of women’s sexuality to their own wants, needs, and self-definitions. However, participants arrived at greater self-focus through two opposing patterns. The majority of interviewees entered the program closed-off from their sexuality and limiting of its expression, but by the program’s end these women were more open to their sexual selves and willing to express this more freely. On the other hand, initially, there were a few participants who were very expressive and who emphasized gratifying others with their sexuality. The program led these women to be equally expressive, but emphasizing goals of self-pleasure and self-gratification.

Thus far, I have presented the major themes of change and a change model with two patterns of manifestation. The next sections describe how these changes took place by identifying mechanisms of the change process, and describing contextual elements that facilitated this process. In the second last section of this chapter I will identify the limitations of the sex education program.

The Change Process

Participants experienced a variety of changes in their sexuality as a result of the sex education program. Implicitly, it appeared that changes in participants’ sexuality
were arrived at through four processes: self-reflection, self-disclosure, re-evaluation, and re-definition of self. It is important to note that self-reflection is both an end in itself (i.e., a major theme of change described above), and a process that led to other changes.

Self-reflection helped participants gain awareness of their thoughts and feelings toward a variety of sexuality topics. All interviewees expressed being self-reflective due to the sex education program. Dawn said that being asked questions about her attitudes or beliefs made her self-reflective and often she gained greater self-awareness through the process:

Like it’s something that maybe I don’t realize I think. But then if you ask me a question about something I’ll be like, ‘Hmm, you know, I do agree with that, or I do think that, and this is why.’ So it kind of helps me understand myself a little more.

Mabel developed a greater understanding of her role in the perpetuation of the sexual double standard from reflecting on a conversation that occurred during one session:

I went home and I thought that being the good girl isn’t exactly good. So that’s where I’m at with that. And then I just started thinking about, like why, what’s wrong with the ideas that... I disavow in my studies, like you know, you don’t do this or don’t do that and all this patriarchal crap, and that’s what I’ve been reinforcing anyways through my sexuality.

Mabel recognized incongruency within herself, because she identifies as a feminist scholar, but realized that her sexual identity as “good girl” was supporting the patriarchal beliefs that she criticizes in her studies. At the program end, she was struggling with how to reconcile these two seemingly incompatible sides of herself, and she was moving
toward greater openness in her sexual expression and re-defining what it means to be a “good girl.”

In addition to self-reflection, the act of disclosing one’s personal thoughts, feelings, and experiences facilitated changes in participants’ sexuality. Self-disclosures in the group setting and during the interviews provided participants with greater self-confidence. Self-disclosure was an important process for four interviewees. For example, Jade said that her self-disclosures gave her more confidence in discussing sexuality:

Like since I’ve been in this workshop it’s um, …, it made me feel more comfortable talking about it, and like being confident and being comfortable talking about it. It just gave me a little opportunity, or chance, to talk about my sexuality to others.

For others, self-awareness was gained through self-disclosures. Ellie captured this process when she said:

I was afraid to share my experience in love, or I was afraid to, you know, to write my personals ad, but … I felt that by making myself available to them or to the group, I made myself available to me also.

While not always the most comfortable experience for participants, self-disclosure helped participants to benefit from the sex education program. Reflecting on and disclosing their thoughts and feelings led participants to re-evaluate some of their values and opinions in light of their experiences in the sex education program.

Re-evaluation of values and opinions was a germane experience for eight interviewees. For example, Gabriella had very stringent ideas about appropriate sexual relationships, and her experiences in the sex education program helped her re-evaluate
these beliefs. By the end of the program, Gabriella came to realize that all sexual relationships need not be restricted to seriously committed relationships alone:

Sex doesn’t always have to be this idealistic thing that I’ve set it out to be, and it’s healthy in any relationship, well not any, but you know, in most relationships it’s just something that happens, and I’ve just kind of been more aware of that now. But before it was just like no, no, no. See it’s this way, or no way! And now it’s just kind of like well maybe, but it will be a big maybe.

This slight change in values really only extended to others’ sexuality and not her own, as she still maintained that a committed love relationship was necessary for her to engage in sexual intercourse. Interestingly, at the end of the program, Gabriella was just starting to allow herself to engage in other sexual behaviors (e.g., kissing, petting) with partners with whom she was not in a committed relationship. Ellie, on the other hand, re-evaluated her own sexual behaviors in light of her sex education program experiences:

Basically, you know, I just thought to myself that I was going to have my own little sexual revolution to spite my ex-boyfriend, and to, you know, release my inner sexual self. But I think that the influence of the group has had an impact in so far as that it made me realize that I don’t really need to be rambunctious and there’s a lot more to sexuality than just play. There’s a lot more to sexuality than just the game, basically.

Sometimes the process of re-evaluating one’s thoughts and feelings required a re-definition of the self to incorporate the new changes in attitudes or beliefs. Re-definition of the self was part of the change experience for four interviewees. For example, Kathleen entered the program feeling very negatively about having a sexual-self identity.
Essentially, she had de-sexualized herself because being a sexual woman was not empowering based on her experiences with Catholicism and an abusive relationship. At the end of the program, Kathleen had re-evaluated her position on sexuality and relationships and was attempting to redefine herself, positively, as a sexual person:

Looking at the myths of women and how they're supposed to act and all of that. And seeing that in myself and stuff like that, it makes me think, 'No I don't have to be like this.' It gives me a more open mind and more choices so that's what I got out of it, trying to get more sexual just like as a being, and not having the negative connotations to being that sexual person.

On the other hand, re-evaluating one’s beliefs about sexuality sometimes resulted in a reassertion of one’s self-defined sexuality. For example, Gabriella said,

I know this is probably going to contradict what I just said, but like, what I've been brought up to believe is what I've been brought up to believe. Like it's always been there, I've always thought it, and ah I just, it's just something that I hold to me, like it gives me something to look back on and say, Okay this is how I'm going to live my life sort of thing. And so, although this has just made me more open to other things, I still stick with what I believe.

Self-reflection, self-disclosure, and re-evaluation of one’s beliefs, practices, and relationships sometimes resulted in a re-definition of the self. According to the participants, these processes led to substantial changes in their sexuality. These four processes were facilitated by several aspects of the group experience. The change process was enabled by: listening to others’ experiences, being exposed to others’ candor,
bonding through the discovery of shared experiences, and feeling empathy and support for other women and from other women.

All interviewees expressed that hearing about others’ experiences had an influence on their perceptions of their own sexuality. Chantelle felt that hearing about others’ experiences with sexuality, specifically Gabriella’s, forced her to reflect on her own. Gabriella’s sexual history consisted of one sexual partner with whom she was involved in a long-term romantic relationship which was very different from Chantelle’s experiences with several casual partners. Chantelle commented,

I just know how her [Gabriella’s] past was and whatnot, and it’s like I wonder if, you know if that’s how it was for me, if things would be better now. Like I don’t know, I don’t think anything’s really changed it [my sexuality], it’s still the same. But like other people’s experiences and whatnot have made me think about my own.

The disparity between her experiences and Gabriella’s experiences also encouraged Chantelle to re-evaluate the nature of her experiences and how they may have negatively influenced her conceptualization of sexuality. Exposure to other’s experiences helped Chantelle move from other-gratification to self-gratification in her sexuality. Although Natasha did not change substantially due to the sex education program, exposure to others’ experiences made her rethink her own views on sexuality:

I think just the things that people said, because you don’t normally look at things from other people’s perspectives. Because it’s like you can only look at things through your own eyes. And so I’d be like, ‘Wow, I would never have done that that way,’ or ‘That’s kind of cool how she did that,’ or you know, ‘I would never
have thought of that.’ And so I guess just learning about other people’s experiences made me think of things differently.

The candor, or openness, of other group members encouraged participants to self-disclose. This was an important sex education program element for four interviewees. For example, Sue felt braver in her self-disclosures after hearing what others shared:

Some people that I had perceived as being shy and quiet also were contributing, so it was like, ‘Well you know, if they can do it, I can do it, kind of thing.’ So I think that might have helped. And that it was, what people came up with stuff that I was like, ‘Well I’d never share that!’ But you know they did, so it was like, ‘Well you know, it’s a comfortable setting and they’re not worried about it so why should I?’

Similarly, Dawn felt sharing in the group became easier when she explained:

Starting to get to know people. I’m sorry, like even listening to what other people were saying or questions other people were posing. It’s like okay I can say things like this too now, and people aren’t going to stare at me.

Becoming more familiar with the group members and hearing other participants be candid about sexual topics helped Dawn self-disclose.

Recognizing shared experiences among group members also helped participants become self-disclosing and feel more connected to each other. This sentiment was expressed by all interviewees. Melina admitted that she felt uncomfortable talking about sexuality with women, because she felt that she would be judged. But at the program’s end she felt more comfortable self-disclosing because she said, “a lot of girls have the same sort of experiences. I would probably feel like more comfortable opening up about
that kind of thing than I was before.” Natasha felt a sense of comic relief that others had similar experiences to her own:

Like it was just humorous to know that other people have similar feelings and have gone through similar if not worse situations than me in terms of masturbating, or anything really. So I just thought it was kind of cute.

Participants bonded over their commonalities, and this caused the groups to cohere.

Another factor that helped the participants bond was feeling empathy for and from other women.

Empathy and support were important to the change process for six interviewees.

Feeling connected to other group members committed participants to the sex education program and it helped them with the process of change by making them feel comfortable.

For instance, Melina said,

Um, I wasn't really that talkative, I don't know, I tend to listen more. But um it was good, it was nice to ah, you know, if you say something, people nod their head. Like you know, they know what you mean, they've experienced the same thing, and I don't know, it was kind of a nice feeling.

Sue explained her sense of feeling supported by the group in the following:

It was like a release. You know, you talk to other people, it's one thing to talk to somebody you know, and it's another thing to talk to somebody who you don't know at all and to, you know, just to talk about it and them not judge you. Like, even if they are you can't tell, because everybody shares and it's, it's like a mutual understanding. And it's just like I feel better now that I told everybody! And then somebody's like, ‘Yeah you know that happened to me,’ and then it's like, ‘Oh
wow great!' You know, it makes you feel even better when somebody has
something, that's close or to reciprocate, you know, of what you're saying.
Clearly, feeling that other participants empathized with her enabled Sue to self-disclose
comfortably and enjoy her sex education program experiences. However, Mary had a less
supportive experience involving others’ attempts at empathizing with her body image
issues. Mary confided:

Um, you know what, a lot of the people in the group, to be honest with you, will
never understand where I'm coming from. Like no matter how, like I know all
women have their insecurities and all women think they're fat at some point
or another, but it's different when you actually are, you know what I mean. And
no matter how much they try, I'm not minimizing their feelings, but for this
aspect, no matter how much they try they will never know how I feel.

Although empathy from group members was a comforting and supportive experience for
most, it was not experienced that way for everyone, particularly when they appeared to be
alone in exhibiting a specific characteristic or point of view.

To review, the change process toward self-focus involved self-reflection, self-
disclosure, re-evaluation of beliefs, practices and relationships, and a re-definition of self.
Being exposed to others’ experiences with sexuality, and the openness of other
participants facilitated the process of change. Additionally, participants’ change process
was enabled through recognizing that they shared common experiences, and through
feeling empathy and support. Together, these experiences seemed to allow participants to
become open to exploring, in greater depth, their own perspectives on sexuality and
contrasting these with new and different perspectives presented in the group. Perhaps, the
sustained and critical self-examination necessitated a shift from an other-focus to self-focus. Although self-examination played a large role in the program’s effects, it is important not to ignore the influence of the context of the sex education program.

Contextual factors contributed to the change process either as inhibitors or facilitators.

The Change Context

Six contextual factors seemed to be important to the change process including a safe environment, being with strangers, group diversity, engaging exercises, outside influences, and the research process. First, a safe environment was one in which participants felt comfortable self-disclosing because they were ensured of confidentiality and freedom from judgment. Seven interviewees identified this as an important part of their sex education experience. The sex education program provided a safe environment through the establishment of participation ground rules. Ellie’s comments illustrate how the ground rules affected her comfort in the program:

I think it was the ground rules. Confidentiality, you know, knowing that I go home and my friends were like, ‘How was it?’ And it was just like, ‘Good.’ You know, and knowing that Mary and Jane go home and if anybody asks them how it was, and they're like, ‘Oh good.’ You know, knowing that they do that, and that I do that, made me feel a lot more comfortable. The ground rules really put like a shield over it for me, and made me like a big dome that I could just walk into and float around in for as long as I wanted… to me it was a completely safe space.

You know, like I could have blurted out my deepest secret and I don't think that I would have been judged or anything.
Mary felt the same way as Ellie. She said, "Just the whole aura of the group, it was very accepting and comfortable."

A second contextual factor that contributed to participants' comfort in self-disclosing was the presence of strangers. Participants felt freer to contribute to the sex education program exercises and discussions because they were not inhibited by others' expectations of them. The importance of the group being comprised of strangers was mentioned by six interviewees. Not being friends with other group members ensured that what went on in the program sessions would not influence their personal lives unless participants wanted it to. Furthermore, because participants were not personally invested in their relationships with one another, they were less concerned with being judged by each other. For example, Natasha said,

Yeah, we were a group of people that we didn't know really, but I guess because of the topic we all felt bonded in that sense, and so it was easier to talk to these people than it would be to people that you knew maybe.

In this sense, being free from one's usual social network was a liberating experience. However, it is important to note that there were participants who were friends prior to participating in the sex education program. In Group 1, there were two pairs of friends, but these pre-existing relationships did not appear to hinder the women's participation. However, in Group 2, there was a triad of friends in which two of the women ceased being friends with the other woman just one week after the program began. All three women felt that being in the presence of strangers would have made participation easier. For example, one of these women said, "Well, I probably would have been more open...I probably would have came out with more stuff, maybe, if she wasn’t there." Therefore,
while the presence of strangers wasn’t necessary for free participation for a few participants, it was helpful for some, and certainly necessary for others. Participants also appreciated that, in addition to being unfamiliar, other participants were also dissimilar in terms of their demographic characteristics and sexual experiences.

Third, group diversity was key to demonstrating variety in sexuality. Eight interviewees mentioned this as an important element of the change context. Kathleen admitted diversity in group members’ expressiveness was beneficial when she said,

Certain women in the group are more expressive right, about certain things about their sexuality. And I think when you look at women like that it’s a great thing to see, because they’re obviously very comfortable with themselves. And I think that’s good for women to see that, to realize that all women...don’t feel that they have to hide it or whatever.

Sue felt that a multitude of viewpoints and experiences was central to expanding her understanding of sexuality:

It wasn't like everybody in the group was the same. They weren't the same, they were so diverse that you could pick up on each person's view and combine them into one big view, I guess. I think it would be good for everybody and anybody, like it's not for one type of person or another, because in order to get the most out of it I think you'd have to have a lot of diversity in order to hear the different groups and maybe to open your mind up to other views and sexual experiences that you might not have had. But you find out about it, and now you know that you don't want that, or you want that, or something like that, I guess.
Group diversity allowed participants to become more open to variety in sexual expressions and relationships. Participants also commented that it was interesting to see that similarities existed among them even though they had such different cultural, religious, or relationship experiences. These differences enhanced the consciousness-raising experience by emphasizing that private concerns are truly public concerns that may cross boundaries of culture, religion, and relationship experience.

Fourth, engaging exercises were critical in promoting participation and self-reflection, and in creating group cohesion. Nine participants identified the exercises as having an impact on their sex education experience. For example, Natasha viewed the exercises as a good means of promoting participation:

I found they were ways to break the ice, because I find at the beginning of each session it was like, okay, everyone's sitting around going, 'Let's see when are we going to start? How are we going to do this?'

Kathleen related her enjoyment of the exercises and expressed that they were effective when she said,

I thought all of them were good. I'm trying to think, yeah, like they were all good and interesting to do and a good way for all the women to get together. And like the one that we just did with the spirituality, because you got to know your little group well. And that was cool, because then we'd all start talking and it was more of a, because when you first get in if you don't know anybody it's a weird situation, but then you get more comfortable with each other in that little group so I thought that was really good. Because we were all looking at the magazines, and
like, 'Oh!' You know, so I thought that was really good that we could communicate like that.

The exercises facilitated change by prompting self-reflection and self-disclosure in a comfortable and interactive way.

Fifth, participants’ experiences outside the sex education program also assisted the change process. For instance, participants’ relationship experiences, university courses, and friends’ experiences were springboards for self-reflection, re-evaluation, and re-definition of the self. These outside experiences were identified by nine interviewees as having an impact on their perceptions of their sexuality. Dawn’s relationship with her boyfriend was very significant to her experiences in the sex education program. Dawn’s boyfriend was critical of her manner of dress and the fact that she had many male friends. Dawn confronted his jealous behavior, and asserted her right to dress fashionably and have male friends. Dawn explained her boyfriend’s reaction as follows:

He's not complaining as much about my clothes, and he actually when he was down here he kind of started to become a little bit of friends with some of the guys that I hang around so that's nice. And every once in a while I'll hear him say, 'You know, I really like that Jeff guy, he's really nice to you.' So it's kind of nice.

Her boyfriend’s receptivity to Dawn’s attempts at assertiveness reinforced her behavior which contributed to her other- to self-focus shift. Also, Sue’s new willingness to discuss masturbation was reinforced by her friend’s reaction to their conversation:

That [masturbation] was not something that I could talk to my friend about, because it was really personal. But being in the group and talking about it gave me a little bit more comfort and ability to talk about it with her. And when she
said, ‘Oh that would be great! I want to know too!’ And then it was like, ‘[Sigh!]’

It felt like, you know, we’re on the same wavelength.

It appears that significant others’ responses to participants’ new ideas or behaviors contributed to the women’s changes.

Finally, the research process helped some participants change. The impact of the research process was identified by five interviewees as an important aspect of their sex education program experience. Often the experience of explaining themselves in the interview helped the women confront their confusion or achieve clarity in their actions and beliefs. For instance Ellie confessed,

This experience, the interviewing experience, I think through this experience I have learned a lot more about myself. Like, just like the change that I've gone through from the top, from like the first interview to this interview, you know. Like I remember sitting here and being like, ‘Yeah I just want to play the game, you know, like whatever! You know, I'm not a piece of meat, they're pieces of meat, blah blah blah. You know it's a meat market, I don't like it, but you know.’ Like completely contradicting myself, realizing that I was so confused.

Chantelle felt that she benefited the most from the interview experience because it encouraged her to be self-reflective. In her last interview she said,

The interview was the best thing for me. Because it got me thinking, yeah, it got me thinking. {About?} Just stuff in my life and whatnot, and yeah. It got me thinking.

However, Chantelle also felt her responses to the quantitative survey items helped her achieve new levels of self-awareness. For instance, she said, “like when I was filling out
the surveys and reading some of the questions I was like, Hmmm I never actually thought about this before. But ah, ‘Yeah.’”

There were several contextual factors that contributed to the change process for participants in this sex education program. A safe environment, the group being comprised mostly of strangers, and engaging exercises were crucial to participants’ ability to self-disclose and bond as a group. Diversity in the groups’ composition exposed participants to variety in sexual expression and relationships helping them become more open and accepting of alternatives. Diversity also enhanced the consciousness-raising experience by helping participants to feel less alienated from a broad range of women. Finally, experiences outside of the sex education program, including the research activities, helped participants re-evaluate their sexuality and become more self-aware. Despite the fact that many substantial changes in participants’ sexuality were observed, the sex education program was limited in its effectiveness for certain issues and types of participants.

Program Limitations

The sex education program used in this research was less effective for two issues: body image and reputation concerns, and for certain participants: those who entered the program very self-focused and self-aware, and those that had pre-existing trust issues with other group members.

Resilient issues. The short-term delivery of this sex education program did not substantially effect participants’ sense of their body image or their reputation concerns. First, participants seemed to be struggling with accepting their bodies before and after the
program. Almost all (ten) of the participants interviewed were unhappy with at least one aspect of their bodies, and expressed partial self-acceptance. For example, Sue said,

For the most part it's my body and I like it. It's what I have for the rest of my life. It's just a matter of maintenance I guess. Making sure that it is kept up kind of thing, and I'm lazy in that aspect. So I will feel bad about my body, but then when I think about it, it's like well I could do something to fix that, I just don't.

Body acceptance was partial because it was only out of an inability to change the body (without resorting to surgery or strict dieting/exercising) that acceptance was tentatively granted.

Participants' body image was often the seat of their insecurity. They feared negative reactions from partners or potential partners for being too fat or not having large enough breasts, but not one woman said that she feared rejection because of an internal characteristic such as her personality, intelligence, or lack of communication skills. Body image was a direct source of self-esteem, and it was also tied to a woman's sense of being sexual. During her first interview Dawn said,

Since I've got into university this year I've gained like 10 pounds so that's really really been bothering me, and my New Year's resolution is to lose the weight I gained so I've been working on that. The more I go to the gym, and the more I eat right it makes me feel a lot better about myself, like I'm desirable.

In her second interview Dawn still equated her body image with her sexual identity:

I do realize that all people like of different shapes can be sexual, but just for me alone, I feel not very sexual when I'm overweight, when I am what I was like before.
Self-esteem is difficult to change, and thus, this short-term program that did not directly target self-esteem seemed ineffective for such a resilient issue. But, it is possible that some aspects of self-esteem such as sexual self-esteem may have improved while other types, for instance body-esteem or global self-esteem, remained unchanged. Regrettably, I can only speculate as no quantitative data pertaining to self-esteem was collected, and I did not probe for variations in participants’ sense of self-esteem during the qualitative interviews.

It was evident that participants’ expectations for their bodies were derived from media representations of women. Melina revealed that her body image ideals came from television when she said, “Well, you know, you always see skinny people around on TV, you don’t see a lot of normal sized people so maybe you feel like you should look like them, yeah.” Among this sample of women, societal messages about women’s bodies were often perceived to be the root of body image dissatisfaction.

Second, the sex education program was less effective in altering participants’ reputation concerns. At the beginning of the program, all participants were aware of the sexual double standard and felt that the label “slut” was extremely undesirable. Participants’ reputations were linked to their self-esteem and their identity as a good or bad person. The participants in this research felt that their sexual reputation was of importance to themselves, their friends, their families, their partners, and to greater society. Consequently, all of a woman’s social relationships are affected by her sexual reputation. A “slut” reputation was viewed as a form of punishment, and many participants feared this judgment especially if it was undeserved. For instance, Jade said,
It kind of upsets me sometimes, because they would be calling you a slut because you have sex too much, but...you don’t necessarily have to be a slut when you like having sex with the same person. I guess you can call someone a slut when they’ve been together with so many guys in such little time, you know what I mean? But I shouldn’t be called a slut, but I better prepare myself because they’re going to be calling me a slut.

With whom a woman is sexually expressive, with how many people she is sexually expressive, how she dresses, her relationship status, and how much and what she discloses about her sexuality determine a woman’s sexual reputation. Some women felt that they could control their sexual reputation by monitoring and controlling their behavior. Other women felt that attempts at control were futile, because reputations can be based on unfounded rumors. Participants emerged from the sex education program unchanged in their reputation concerns, and some participants still made judgments of other women based on the sexual double standard. Sue claimed that she was guilty of making reputation assumptions even though she felt it was wrong:

I still stare at people when they walk down the street and they’ve got their boobs hanging out and their skirt around their waist, that you know they’re a little easy. But I think it’s hard not to think like that especially with society. I try not to, but it’s still something that pops into your head right away. And it’s like, ‘Oh don’t be like that, it’s not right.’

Most participants were struggling for a self-focus in this respect, but the ubiquity of the sexual double standard made reputation concerns practically inescapable among this sample of women.
Participant characteristics. For certain participants: those who were very self-focused and self-aware and those that had pre-existing trust issues with other group members, the sex education program was less effective. Mary and Natasha did not demonstrate either pattern of behavior in the shift from other- to self-focus, because these women began the program self-focused. However, they still benefited from the sex education program. For example, Natasha explained,

I really don’t think it’s changed that much. I feel I was open before and I’m still open, willing to try new things. I think if anything I’ve learned stuff like the website I believe, clitoris.com. I went to it and I was like, ‘Oh my gosh, this is really interesting.’ Like I feel I know a lot about sex, but there was still stuff that I was just like, ‘Oh okay!’...So there was like facts and stuff that I learned about how other women deal with their sexuality was kind of interesting. So overall I think I’ve learned stuff, but I feel I’m pretty much the same.

Apparently, Natasha’s program benefits were primarily informational. For Natasha and Mary, the sex education activities reinforced their current self-focus rather than promoted any changes. Although the program may not have been maximally effective for these women, they felt it was a worthwhile and enjoyable experience. Furthermore, I believe that exposure to these types of women and their openness was valuable for the other participants.

As previously mentioned, in both groups, some participants were already friends or acquaintances. These pre-existing relationships were not problematic for some participants, but for others it was a barrier to participation. As already indicated in the section on contextual factors, the presence of strangers made the process of self-
disclosure easier. This was especially true when participants had reason to mistrust one another due to circumstances outside the sex education program, as was the case for the triad of friends in Group 2. One of these women felt that the presence of the other two women, who became her ex-friends during the course of the program, limited her participation:

...sometimes I'd feel weird opening my mouth because those two other women that I don't, you know, I don't socialize with are there, and if I say something stupid, obviously they're going to be like, 'What's she saying?'...If those two other girls were not there then I would be more open and I would say more about it.

The other two women felt similarly, and commented that their participation was also restricted.

To summarize, this short-term sex education program was effective in producing some changes in women’s perceptions of their sexuality. However, the program’s effectiveness was limited regarding body image issues and reputation concerns. The program also had reduced effectiveness for certain types of participants: highly self-focused and self-aware women, and participants who had pre-existing relationships with one another that were not positive.

The qualitative findings revealed that participants’ sexuality became more self-focused as they experienced consciousness-raising, increased assertiveness, greater openness, and more self-reflection, self-awareness, and self-acceptance. Through reflection and disclosure, they re-evaluated their thoughts and feelings about sexuality and relationships. These processes sometimes resulted in a re-definition of themselves.
Several contextual variables were integral to participants' change process. These qualitative findings symbolize layers of participants' experiences of their sexuality and the sexuality education program. Appendix K includes four transparencies that illustrate each of these layers of experience. Viewing the transparencies layered on top of each other provides an image of participants' total experience. The total experience involved achieving greater openness to, and awareness of, issues of self and sexuality. The first transparency represents the two patterns of change of the other- to self-focus change model. The second transparency presents participants' six major themes of change. The third transparency illustrates the four major processes of change, as well as four factors that supported these change processes. The final transparency depicts the six contextual factors that were important to participants' change experiences.

It is important to note that some participants identified the research process, specifically the interviews, as a contextual factor that contributed to their change process. It is possible that the interviews were responsible for the observed quantitative effects, and the absence of such one-on-one interactions was another program limitation. Thus, additional post hoc analyses were conducted to determine the influences of being interviewed.

**Additional Quantitative Analyses**

To determine the equivalence of participants who were interviewed and those who were not interviewed, a mixed ANOVA (Interview Status x Measurement Period: pretest, posttest, follow-up) was conducted. In the mixed ANOVA, the dependent variable pretest scores consisted of pretest (Group 1) and pretest 2 (Group 2) to ensure that the same temporal sequence was being evaluated. Participants who were interviewed
and those who were not interviewed did not significantly differ on any of the dependent variable measures (HISA: F(1, 18) = 3.35, p = ns, RATSI factor 1: F(1, 19) = .350, p = ns, SDS: F(1, 19) = .003, p = ns, SDI Dyadic: F(1, 19) = .421, p = ns, SDI Solitary: F(1, 19) = 1.09, p = ns). The interview experience did not affect changes in sexual assertiveness, acceptance of coercion/rape myths, acceptance of the sexual double standard, or sexual desire. Consequently, the observed within participant changes cannot be attributed just to the interview experience.

Despite the substantial quantitative and qualitative changes observed in almost all participants, this sex education program had limited effectiveness for certain issues and types of participants. In the final chapter I integrate the quantitative and qualitative findings, discuss the findings’ contributions to the research literature, and review the research’s strengths and limitations.
CHAPTER IV
DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this research was three-fold. First, the aim was to provide young women with emancipatory feminist sex education. The second goal was to explore quantitatively and qualitatively young women’s perceptions of their sexuality and sex education influences. Third, the research endeavored to increase understanding of female sexuality for myself, the participants, and the academic community. These purposes were achieved through the administration of a 6-week sexuality education curriculum to two groups of women within a delayed-treatment experimental design with short-term follow-up. Before proceeding with a discussion of the quantitative and qualitative results, the influence of the researcher on the findings warrants comment. Throughout the research I kept process notes to monitor my own reactions to the participants and their reactions to the research process and me.

Personal Perspectives on Process

Again, I would like to highlight that my experiences, past and present, and personal characteristics (e.g. feminist, late 20s, Caucasian, heterosexual, academic, sexually active, non-religious, single) were a part of this analysis. The nature of the project reveals my liberal feminist orientation, activist approach to women’s sexuality, and hopes that this project would produce emancipatory changes in the participants’ sexuality. When reflecting on my experiences with the process I am struck by how surprised I was by what, and how much, participants took from this experience. During the first meetings with each group, I feared that participants would not engage with the program and each other and would think the exercises were “stupid.” I mistook their
initial shyness and discomfort as disinterest and uninvolvment. Further into the program I was disappointed by how some women became more traditional or reserved in their sexuality, and this reveals my personal bias toward sexual expressiveness and my own desire for freedom from the traditional sexual double standard. Finally, given my conservative expectations for participants’ enjoyment of the experience, I was shocked by how appreciative these women were to have the opportunity to meet with other women, speak to other women, listen to other women, and learn about themselves and women in general. For example, I was overwhelmed when Ellie told me what she thought of the sex education program:

I think it’s cool. I think it gave me the opportunity to meet some really really cool girls. Absolutely. And, you know, I don't plan to lose touch with anyone any time soon. I think it was absolutely an enriching experience. I absolutely appreciated it, you know, like I'm so glad that I was able to do it. I'm absolutely thankful. I don't know where I would be if I hadn't done it. I really don't know where I would be if I hadn't done it.

To me, these words signify what the sex education experience was like, as a whole, for the participants. As a result, both my global understanding of the women’s experiences and participants’ specific comments contributed to the findings reported herein.

Importantly, one factor that did not influence the qualitative analysis was the quantitative results. As there was a 3-month delay between the collection of the final qualitative data and follow-up quantitative data, I was able to complete the qualitative analysis prior to conducting any quantitative analyses. The convergence of the findings
was a surprising outcome. Consequently, I have confidence in the validity of the findings and conclusions.

**Discussion of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings**

The quantitative and qualitative findings converge on some points, and they confirm some of the expectations that researchers have had for the outcomes of social constructionist sex education. In review, the consciousness-raising objectives were achieved. Participants emerged more self-reflective, more self-aware, and more self-accepting. As participants were self-reflective and self-disclosing during the sex education program, they also began to re-evaluate their sexuality and sometimes re-defined themselves. They became more open to masturbation, sexual diversity, and spirituality and sexuality. Participants also became less interested in being sexual with a partner but more interested in being sexual with themselves, and they became more assertive. Generally, I found that participants were more self-focused as a result of their participation in the sex education program. However, contrary to expectation, participants’ attitudes toward the sexual double standard and rape/coercion myths were unchanged, and they were not any less concerned with body image issues and reputation concerns. In combination, the findings reveal that participants became more aware of, and open to, issues of sexuality and self. Although participants’ changes were largely emotional, it is important not to minimize the information that participants gained. Participants acquired greater knowledge of sexual attraction, alternatives to intercourse and masturbation, love, and spirituality and sexuality. In particular, many participants commented that the most surprising aspect of the educational program was what they learned about masturbation.
Participants' consciousness-raising experiences confirm Butler and Wintram's (1991) description of the positive outcomes of group participation. For example, feelings of isolation were diminished as the participants realized that other women had similar feelings and experiences. This realization of shared experiences made private oppression public. Participants also began to build alliances with other women through the unique friendships that they formed with one another over their common interests in learning about sexuality. If not empowered, these women at least emerged with a changed view of sexuality and their world. It seemed as though several aspects of the change process and contextual factors of the sex education program contributed to consciousness-raising and the group experience. Specifically, listening to others' experiences, being exposed to others' candor, bonding through shared experiences, and feeling empathy and support for other women and from other women in the group were important factors. Being in a safe environment with a diverse group of women also enhanced the consciousness-raising experience. McCormick (1997) suggested that feminist pedagogy is an important aspect in affecting change through sexuality education. The importance of process and contextual factors in this research indicates that, indeed, interactive, egalitarian, and process focused teaching is essential for promoting both emotional and intellectual learning. This research also confirms that a social constructionist approach to sexuality education is critical for positive changes to be actualized (Cairns, 1993; Fonow & Marty, 1992).

In this research, emotional and intellectual learning was partly affected through self-reflection. Self-reflection emerged as a major theme of change in this research, as well as an important process of change for participants. Fonow and Marty (1992) asserted
that participation in sex education founded on social constructionist accounts of sexuality encourages self-reflexivity in participants, because a social constructionist stance challenges students to examine biological "truths" in light of historical and political contexts. This external analysis then encourages individuals to engage in an internal assessment to determine how one's own sexual history, experiences, and insecurities are influenced by culture, race, religion, and education. Fonow and Marty (1992) also suggested that in addition to promoting self-reflection, social constructionist sexuality education promotes acceptance of diversity. Specifically, in order for college students to be accepting of different sexual identities, they need to deconstruct the stereotypes associated with heterosexuality and homosexuality. Deconstruction of rigid sexual categories helps students identify with the diversity of humanity and become more open to a variety of sexual identities and expressions. The present research and sexuality education were from social constructionist perspectives, and participants did, in fact, become more open to sexual diversity. Through the change processes of self-reflection, self-disclosure, re-evaluation of beliefs and practices, and self re-definition, participants in this research became more self-aware and self-accepting, and more accepting of diversity in sexual identities, relationships, and expressions.

While the women in this research became more accepting of many things, they did not become more or less accepting of rape/coercion myths. The women in this research entered the sex education program not very accepting of these myths, and maintained these attitudes throughout the research. Sexual scripts based on gender role stereotypes only permit women to see themselves as sexual objects and not sexual subjects (Cairns, 1993). These stereotypes promote the sexual scripts of accommodation
(female) and entitlement (male) that often lead to coercive sexual experiences. Cairns (1993) suggested that social constructionist sex education can dismantle these sexual scripts. A critical analysis of gender role stereotypes is essential for women to see themselves as agentic sexual subjects instead of mere objects, or the "other." As women begin to see themselves as actors in their own sexuality, they can begin to refuse coercive sex. Perhaps the participants in this research had already begun this dismantling process before entering the sexuality education program, and the program needed to further deconstruct these scripts in order to effect a reduction in their acceptance of rape/coercion myths. Seeing the self as subject can not only allow women to refuse unwanted sex, but it also allows us to acknowledge sex that we do desire.

Acknowledging sexuality that we desire is pointless if women do not have the ability to communicate about it. It is interesting to note the participants’ discussions of their desire and sexuality in the interviews were similar to Daniluk’s (1993) findings. Daniluk interviewed a group of women about their sexual experiences. These women often had difficulty expressing themselves, because they seemed to lack the language to do so. Like the participants in Daniluk’s research, my interviewees had difficulty speaking of desire as they searched for the words to describe it. Often just sounds were used to convey their experiences of sexual desire. It is interesting that Daniluk’s sample consisted of women who were older than my participants (average age was 42 years), but both groups of women were well educated. On the one hand, it is surprising that well educated women would have so much difficulty expressing themselves. On the other hand, this difficulty in describing one’s desire is not surprising given Fine’s (1988) research. Fine interviewed high school girls and found that female desire was not
acknowledged in school sex education programs, but desire was definitely a part of her participants’ sexual experiences. Participants in the present study were slightly older than the women in Fine’s research, but it is likely that their lack of language comes from the same source, the missing discourse of desire in school sex education and in society, generally.

Although participants sometimes had difficulties articulating their desires, on quantitative measures they exhibited greater desire to be sexual with themselves but less interest in being sexual with a partner. This finding was not anticipated in the literature review. Interestingly, participants’ decreased desire to be sexual with a partner was significant at follow-up. This could be a sleeper-effect in which the impact of education is delayed until participants have had time to digest and assimilate new and challenging information. Perhaps, my participants’ increased desire to be sexual with themselves reflects their greater assertiveness and self-focus. Morokoff (1999) suggested that a woman’s assertiveness is contingent upon her having an undistorted understanding of her own sexuality. Again, deconstruction of biologically determined expectations of female sexuality and gender role stereotypes is critical to achieving a clear understanding of female sexuality (Morokoff, 1999). Greater assertiveness was a major theme of change in the qualitative findings. Interviewees expressed more assertiveness in their verbal communications about sexuality, in seeking sexual pleasure, and in avoiding unwanted sexual activity. Apparently, participants in this research started to reject the desire-free female sexual stereotype. As sexual stereotypes begin to lose their truth-value, women can come to assert and accept themselves as sexual subjects. No longer being “other” or object, permits both greater assertiveness and a greater self-focus (Cairns, 1993).
The quantitative and qualitative findings mutually affirm the other- to self-focus change model presented in this research. Specifically, the significant decrease in dyadic desire (pretest to follow-up) and concomitant significant increase in solitary desire (pretest to posttest) reveals participants' trend toward making sexuality more about themselves and less about their partners or potential partners. The significant increase in participants' solitary desire is supported by the qualitative findings that interviewees became more open to masturbation, a very self-focused activity. Furthermore, the significant decrease in participants' acceptance of sexual coercion/rape myths corroborates the qualitative finding that participants felt they would be more assertive in resisting unwanted sexual activity. Taken together these findings demonstrate participants' change from other- to self-focus in making their own sexual needs and desires more salient than others' needs and desires.

Interestingly, Gilligan's (1982) conceptualization of women's moral development can inform our understanding of participants' shift from other- to self-focus. Gilligan suggested that, regarding morality, women exhibit an ethic of care and responsibility that is based on the importance of relationships in women's lives. In this way women make moral decisions with the aim of not hurting anyone. This differs from the male model of morality in which the ethic of justice is paramount. Men tend to make decisions based on fairness and individual rights. These differences in approaching moral dilemmas are due to differences in gender identity formation. For males, separation and individuation are key process in identity formation, and for females attachment and intimacy are central. While these characteristics are more often associated with male or female development, they are not exclusive to one or the other gender. According to Gilligan (1982):
The conflict between self and other thus constitutes the central moral problem for women, posing a dilemma whose resolution requires a reconciliation between femininity and adulthood. In the absence of such a reconciliation, the moral problem cannot be resolved. The “good woman” masks assertion in evasion, denying responsibility by claiming only to meet the needs of others, while the “bad woman” forgoes or renounces the commitments that bind her in self-deception and betrayal. It is precisely this dilemma – the power – which the feminine voice struggles to resolve in its effort to reclaim the self and to solve the moral problem in such a way that no one is hurt (p. 70-71).

Perhaps, participants in this study were struggling with the moral dilemma of how to express their sexuality. They seemed to be vacillating between the “good girl” and the “bad girl” definitions of female sexuality while searching for a more satisfying middle ground. For example, despite the shift to greater self-focus, participants seemed to exhibit only two models of female sexual socialization, the traditional female model or the traditional male model. Participants in this research either had difficulty speaking about sexuality, were focused on their partners wants and needs, and seemed like “good girls,” or they enjoyed being explicit when discussing sexuality, were focused on obtaining sexual conquests, and appeared like “bad girls.” Morokoff (1999) suggested that these are the only two models of sexuality that are available to young women. Women’s sexual agency in the absence of other stereotypically male characteristics such as dominance, promiscuity, and insistence may simply not have existed during their gender role socialization. Consequently, the women in this study may not have had any alternative but to vacillate between the two extremes if they found their current model of sexuality
unsatisfactory. A model of female sexual agency without the stereotypically masculine or feminine gender role characteristics needs to be made explicit and modeled so women have a reasonable alternative when trying to define their sexual-self. Although the women in this research appeared to begin challenging traditional gender role stereotypes and they experienced some beneficial outcomes, they were not freed from all stereotype influences.

Unfortunately, the quantitative analyses revealed no significant change in participants’ acceptance of the sexual double standard due to the sex education program. There were problems with the measure in the present study, however. Possibly due to the very small sample size, the Sexual Double Standard Scale (SDS) demonstrated extremely low reliability when the reliability analysis was calculated the suggested way using difference scores. But, reliability of the SDS was adequate when coefficient alpha was calculated using item scores. Consequently, in this research, the sums of all item scores were used for the analyses. Given this revision in the scoring procedure, it is likely the measure did not accurately assess participants’ attitudes toward the sexual double standard, but was more indicative of participants’ attitudes toward sexual freedom, generally. Across all measurement periods, participants scored below the mid-point of possible scale scores (pretest: $M = 21.09$, posttest: $M = 21.27$, follow-up: $M = 20.45$), indicating low endorsement of sexual freedom for both genders. It would have been beneficial to have a measure that more accurately assessed the traditional sexual double standard (i.e., allocating greater sexual freedom to men than to women). Because the qualitative findings suggest that participants strongly maintained the traditional double
standard, the measure, as utilized in this research, may not have been detecting these attitudes.

Although the quantitative measure of participants’ endorsement of the sexual double standard may not have been accurate, from the qualitative data, it seemed the sexual double standard was influencing their personal freedom. I interpreted the ubiquity of the sexual double standard in today’s society as contributing to the resiliency of participants’ body image and reputation concerns. Despite the sex education program’s efforts at addressing body image and reputation concerns, the participants were unaffected. Why did participants’ sexuality not change in these regards? The sex education program did not dismantle the double standard, but merely increased awareness about its pervasiveness.

The sex education program may not have been as effective for body image issues because the body image exercise merely promoted self-awareness of participants’ feelings about their bodies. Before the program began, participants were already very aware of their feelings, because they deal with body image issues on a daily basis. Perhaps a better exercise would have been one that focused on questioning the origins of our body expectations, criticizing media representations of women, and questioning the validity of these expectations. This approach may have merit because participants (e.g., Mabel, Kathleen, and Jade) who were critical of media representations of women’s bodies were less affected by body image concerns, or were actively resisting the pressure to conform to these ideals. For example, Kathleen viewed her self-esteem and enjoyment of sexuality as directly linked to her body acceptance. As illustrated by the following
quote, she was very critical of media messages and worked hard to resist their negative effects:

And now I'm kind of getting more comfortable with my body which totally relates to the dressing. And um, realizing that the perfect image of a body isn't Brittany Spears. Sorry, I just don't like her. But anyways, and I just think that women need to fall out of that whole media thing. And so I think in my brain I'm trying to fight all of those images that I'm supposed to be like, and therefore, I'm going to start dressing how I used to dress like when I was in high school which was whatever I wanted to wear that day.

Body image concerns were entrenched in participants' self-esteem due to pervasive societal messages. To better address the role of body image on women's sexuality, the sex education program needed to move beyond developing self-awareness and work toward externalizing the problem through a critique of our social messages about women's bodies and the "inextricable" link between bodies and our sexuality. In addition, helping women find ways to derive esteem from features other than their physical ones would have been beneficial. To address these issues a longer program such as the original twelve-week OWL curriculum may be necessitated.

Participants' reputation concerns were also unaffected by the sex education program. Both pre- and post-program, participants were concerned about having a bad sexual reputation. Participants' reputation concerns replicate Tolman's (1994a, 1994b, 1996) findings with young urban and suburban girls. Tolman's participants were fearful about how their desires would be perceived by others. Although participants in the current study were a few years older, they expressed the same concerns. Notably, some
participants said that their reputation concerns were even worse when they were in high school. The girls in Tolman’s studies were high school age.

The sexual double standard defines women’s sexual reputations. Again, participants who were critical of the sexual double standard before they began the program were less influenced by reputation concerns (e.g., Kathleen and Natasha). Consequently, the sex education program needed to more critically explore the social origins of the sexual double standard and the validity of these reputation concerns rather than merely raising awareness of this inequality. This appears to be a limitation of the 6-week program delivery; hence a longer program may affect change by allowing for a more critical exploration of these issues. Exercises that focused on self-esteem development apart from sexual reputation may also have been beneficial.

The resilience of body image and reputation concerns and the self-surveillance that these concerns promote provides additional support for notion of the ‘male in the head.’ (Holland et al., 1998). It is as if a patrolman, whose mission is to protect the sexual double standard, lives within the minds of these women. His ever-present voice dictates how women’s bodies should look and behave. His punishment for transgressions is compromised self-worth from feeling unattractive or promiscuous.

In order to overcome these limitations, the sex education program could be even more critical of the social constructions of women’s sexuality and help women escape the ‘male in the head’ and establish self-esteem separate from external judgments of their sexuality. However, an explicitly critical analysis of body image and the sexual double standard may be beyond the scope of a short-term sexuality education program such as the one in this research. A more critical approach may necessitate a long-term program
such as the complete twelve-week OWL curriculum that would span an entire semester or academic year. Alternatively, a series of short successive programs may be more appropriate to guard against participant resistance. For example, the program could be implemented as it was in this research, but presented as an introductory series. This introduction would be followed by a collection of workshop series with each one addressing a particular sex education topic in greater detail. In this way, participants would be primed to discuss sexuality from a feminist perspective and in a group environment. This priming may help participants embrace a much more explicitly critical approach to their sexuality. Resistance may be a real concern given that only seven of the 23 women who participated in this research seemed to express feminist voices upon entering the sex education program. It is my opinion that the majority of the participants in this research would not have been receptive to a more explicitly political presentation of sexuality at the beginning of the project. However, based on the participants’ changes by the program’s end, I feel a more critical analysis of sexuality would have been appropriate at that time. Interestingly, an age effect may have been present. The seven women who entered the sex education program with a feminist voice were among the oldest participants. Perhaps, a feminist consciousness is something that is embraced as women mature or have had more opportunity to be exposed to these ideas. Unfortunately, I did not quantitatively ascertain whether participants had exposure to feminism before participating in this program.

In combination, the quantitative and qualitative findings indicate that the outcomes of this emancipatory sex education program involved greater awareness of self and issues of sexuality. However, there is some inconsistency in the findings. The
quantitative results revealed participants exhibited significantly less dyadic desire three months after the conclusion of the sex education program when compared to pre-program desire. But, no significant differences were observed between participants who had received the sex education program (Group 1) and those waiting for the program (Group 2) on the measure of dyadic desire. Perhaps the reduced power of the statistical test was the reason for these non-significant findings. In the within-subject analyses the power was greater as there were approximately 20 cases in these analyses, but there were only half as many cases in the between-subjects analyses. These inconsistent findings are indicative of one of the limitations of this research.

Limitations, Strengths, and Future Research

Limitations

First, the research was based on a small sample of women. Typically a small sample size can hide statistically significant findings, but in this case some statistically significant findings were detected with moderate to large effect sizes. However, concerns over lack of statistical power are still warranted. Consequently, the research would have been stronger with a larger sample of women achieved by studying many groups of women concurrently.

Second, some readers may view the small sample size as indicative of another research limitation. For those who want to generalize the present findings, the small sample size is problematic. Given that the research was grounded, epistemologically and methodologically, in Feminist Standpoint Theory and naturalistic inquiry, the small sample size was of lesser consequence. A small sample size is appropriate, because in this research, understanding, and not generalizability, was of paramount importance. The
two small groups of women provided much rich information that greatly contributed to our understanding of female sexuality so the research purposes were achieved. However, further research with women with different characteristics and in different contexts is necessary to add even more to our knowledge.

Third, self-selection of participants into the research project was a limitation of this study. It is possible in this kind of recruitment that only those women who were interested in learning about sexuality and felt sufficiently comfortable speaking about sexuality would volunteer. In fact, on survey measures (see Appendix D), participants reported being quite comfortable speaking about sexuality before participating in the sex education program. As such, the understanding gained about women’s sexuality and the sex education program effects would be limited to women with these predispositions. However, much to my surprise many of the participants in this study were actually very uncomfortable discussing sexuality in the group initially, but were sufficiently curious to overcome their personal discomfort to participate. Consequently, self-selection biases may not be as severe as originally feared. It may have been better to randomly select participants from a pool of women representative of the general population, but this was an impossibility in the present situation. Random selection was unfeasible given the large time commitment and difficulties ensuring that selected participants could attend the scheduled evening meetings. Furthermore, attrition would have been a more serious problem under these circumstances. A replication of this research should include random selection of participants, in addition to random assignment of participants to sex education groups. A study of this nature may only be viable within a school setting.
Fourth, while no negative program effects emerged, the sole lesbian participant commented that she felt some participants were homophobic. She reported that even with this situation she was not inhibited, but she suggested that additional lesbians in the group would have made participation more comfortable. The research was definitely limited by its heterosexual emphasis. This research was conducted by a heterosexual researcher, the sex education program was facilitated by two heterosexual women, and the participants were almost exclusively heterosexual. The sex education program content included some discussion of non-heterosexual sexualities, but these topics were not explored in-depth as they were not among the most preferred topics of this sample of women. It is important to note, however, that the OWL sex education curriculum does include complete sessions on gay, lesbian, and bisexual sexualities. A more complete understanding of women's sexuality and the influences of emancipatory sex education would necessarily include lesbian and bisexual perspectives. Encouraging participation from lesbian and bisexual women would be one way of securing these perspectives on female sexuality. However, it is important not to burden these participants with the responsibility of educating other group members. Alternatively, these perspectives could be explored by providing several sessions on non-heterosexual sexualities, and by inviting a panel of lesbian and bisexual guests to these sessions to share their experiences and perspectives.

A fifth limitation of this research was my dual role as co-facilitator and interviewer. It is possible that interviewees purposely expressed changes that would confirm my expectations, because as co-facilitator I knew what issues were presented during the sessions and what changes could then be expected. Employing an interviewer who was independent of the group experience may have strengthened the validity of this
research. Alternatively, this limitation may have been a strength if our extended relationship and interviewees’ resultant comfort with me improved the richness of the data.

The last limitation of the present research was the homogeneity of the sex education program facilitation. As stated above, both facilitators were heterosexual women. Additionally, we are both Caucasian, have similar academic backgrounds in psychology, and similar sexual philosophies. Because the participants benefited from diversity of group membership, it may have been advantageous for the facilitators to model diversity as well. The research would have been stronger had there been several groups led by several different facilitators. While there were some limitations to the present research, this investigation had several strengths worth mention.

**Strengths**

First, the delayed-treatment experimental design with short-term follow-up was a major strength of this research. This design ruled out most threats to internal validity. The exception was testing effects. Because participants completed the same survey materials three (Group 1) or four times (Group 2), previous exposure to the survey materials at pretests may have influenced participants’ responses at posttest and follow-up. However, as most of the threats to internal validity were controlled for by the experimental design, I have confidence that the findings can be attributed to the sex education program.

Second, prolonged contact with participants and triangulation of research methods also give credibility to the research findings. There was ample time during the 6-week program for initial misperceptions to be rectified. Also, the 1.5-hour duration of the interviews gave me time to probe for clarification of participants’ comments, and it gave
participants time to explore any inconsistencies in their reports. Moreover, the convergence of the quantitative survey data and qualitative interview and field observation data lends further support to the veracity of the findings. A lot of rich and in-depth information was obtained in this investigation.

A third strength of the present study was the 100% response rate to the follow-up measures. This is an impressive response rate for a mail survey. It is my opinion that prolonged contact between myself and each participant was responsible for participants’ strong and enduring commitment to the research. The benefit of the short-term follow-up aspect of the research design was that it demonstrated the sex education program effects were enduring for at least three months.

Finally, because this research was grounded in Feminist Standpoint Theory, it brought women’s voices to the topic of female sexuality. Obtaining women’s discourses on female sexuality makes our understanding more complete as it compensates for the limited and often harmful view of sexuality created by the dominant group. The women in this research had the power to determine what happened to them during the research process. Women had the opportunity to communicate what they wanted to learn about sexuality. They chose which of several topics were most interesting and relevant to them, and the program was designed accordingly. Then participants also had the opportunity to say how they wanted to learn about sexuality. For example, the participants contributed to forming the group ground rules, and they chose which exercises they wanted to complete when time did not allow for all items on the agenda to be addressed. Through group discussions and the one-on-one interview experience, participants could discuss what was important to them regarding their sexuality. Specifically, interviewees talked
about how they generally conceptualized their sexuality, and also how they felt about their sexuality after having gone through the sex education experience. This power did not seem illusory. When asked, all interviewees stated that they felt that they could control what happened to them during the sex education sessions and during the research activities. For instance, Natasha said,

Um, I liked knowing that we were more or less in control of the situation. At the beginning we were able to say what is and is not acceptable in the group, what language is and is not acceptable, what you’re willing to talk about. And then you guys would take what we put, like our input, and try to form workshops out of it. And say, ‘Okay they want to talk about masturbating so we’ll have a session masturbating. They want to talk about sex, we’ll have one on sex.’ So it was more or less we controlled what was the input, and you just kind of made it happen. So that was cool.

In the past, research has often silenced women’s voices when investigating female sexuality, and in a small way these experiences and this research will make women’s voices more audible.

**Future Research**

As this study was exploratory and research on women’s subjective sexuality has been scarce, there are many avenues left for future research. A replication of the current study using randomly selected participants would be valuable to determine whether the program is only effective among those who are predisposed to learning about and discussing sexuality. An investigation like this would have to be in a setting (e.g., a school) where ensuring participant attendance would be less problematic.
Investigating barriers to participation in sexuality education programs would be another useful avenue for future research. Great effort was expended to recruit participants, but few women expressed interest in the program, and even fewer committed to the program. It would be helpful to determine whether it was the research component, the time commitment, perceptions that it would be heterosexist, feminist, boring, etc. that prevented more women from expressing interest in, and committing to, the program. Interestingly, once the sex education program began, attrition was not a problem as only one woman out of 23 decided to discontinue her participation. If only obtaining, and not keeping, participants is problematic perhaps conducting the program with intact groups is a solution. But, intact groups may have members with pre-existing trust issues which may be a bigger challenge for a sex education program of this nature.

Future research should evaluate program effectiveness with intact groups. This program relies very heavily on self-disclosure and may not be effective when relationships exist among participants that are not protected by the program ground rules. Ensuring that participants’ personal relationships are sound is a virtual impossibility. But, it is necessary to determine how a sex education program of this nature can be implemented with intact groups that will invariably have members interacting outside of the program proceedings. For decades, the literature on sex education has suggested that this education needs to come early in people’s lives, as early as elementary school, and be a lifespan activity (McNab 1981). Most sex education proponents also believe that it should take place in the schools in addition to parental and/or community sex education (Balanko, in press). Thus, this research is especially important if one is considering implementing the program in school classrooms. Furthermore, conducting evaluations of
the program’s effectiveness with a wide variety of women in terms of their age, socioeconomic status, and sexual orientation would indicate for whom this program is most appropriate.

Investigating the program’s effectiveness using a longer duration is also necessary. When giving feedback, participants indicated that the 2.5 hour sessions should be shortened to 2 hours given their busy lives. But as facilitators, we felt that some topics were not covered in enough depth and some participants echoed this concern. Participants suggested that the number of weeks should be extended to accommodate more topics. Maybe extending the number of weeks would allow for coverage of additional topics, and allow for topics to be covered in greater depth as they could span two or more weeks. As the original OWL curriculum is twelve weeks, determining the optimal number (between 6 and 12) of sessions for women with busy schedules would be advisable.

It may be advantageous to research how facilitator characteristics influence the program’s effectiveness. In this study the facilitators were only 10 – 15 years older than the participants and had very similar backgrounds and lifestyles to the participants. Perhaps some of the power of the program is derived from participants being able to personally identify with the facilitators. Alternatively, the homogeneity of the facilitators may have limited participants’ ability to benefit from the program. For instance, participants who were women of color, lesbian, above average weight, or very religious may not have been able to identify with us. It is important to determine what facilitator characteristics impede and aid beneficial program outcomes.

Finally, as Tolman (1999) suggested, any future investigations of young women’s sexuality should focus more on the relational aspects of their sexuality. In this study,
relationships with partners seemed of paramount importance as they seemed not to discuss sexuality outside of that context. It seemed that participants were primarily concerned with obtaining, maintaining, or dissolving sexual relationships. Therefore, relationship dynamics should be regarded as a key issue in young women’s sexuality. As this research was exploratory, it created more questions than it answered. However, there are some conclusions that can be made from the quantitative and qualitative findings.

Conclusions

The three goals of this research were met. Emancipatory sexuality education with consciousness-raising objectives was provided to young women. The research explored quantitatively and qualitatively young women’s perceptions of their sexuality and the influences of the sexuality education program on these perceptions. Finally, I know it increased my own and the participants’ understanding of female sexuality, and it will increase the academic community’s understanding once published. Our knowledge of female sexuality is enriched by the fact that these findings represent a social constructionist feminist standpoint on sexuality. This perspective enhances the abridged and/or androcentric view of female sexuality that is often the result of research conducted from a positivist and biological determinist stance. In this way, the view of the dominant group becomes less harmful, because it is identified as partial.

In conclusion, positive change is possible with short-term delivery of emancipatory feminist sex education. This program directed women’s attention toward themselves, opened them to communicate about and learn about sexuality, and helped develop assertiveness to maintain a self-focus and get what they want from sexuality whether it is with a partner or themselves. Taken as a whole, the findings indicate that
these young women needed and appreciated the opportunity to learn with and about other women. The implication is that all young women could benefit from an emancipatory feminist sex education approach that encourages them to connect with other women and with themselves. It seems as though young women have yet to cement their ideas about sexuality. They can grow from exposure to a variety of perspectives on sexuality, and the opportunity for self-examination. Beyond this experience, young women need to more critically examine the sexual double standard so they can deconstruct their body image expectations and reputation concerns. However, to do so may require that they are already comfortable discussing sexuality in a group environment and from a feminist perspective. The context of the sex education program seemed to be instrumental in participants’ change process. Hence, it is critical that the context of sex education be changed from the sterile value-free environment to one that is safe, personal, and relational. Maybe given this sex education context, future generations of young women will be able to construct a language for discussing their desire and other aspects of their sexuality. Ultimately, I would advocate emancipatory feminist sexuality education as a positive and fun, if not empowering, experience for all young women.

The challenge now is to implement and evaluate emancipatory sexuality education programs on a widespread basis. Resistance is likely to arise from where it has historically, within ideological conflicts. Those who endorse the restrictive ideology (e.g., right-wing religious fundamentalists) are most likely resist emancipatory sexuality education. However, given the positive outcomes that can be achieved, it is essential that ideological barriers be overcome. The bare bones approach to sexuality has not been an adequate solution to these conflicts. Perhaps, a democratic approach to sexuality will
unite the restrictive and the permissive ideological camps (McKay, 1998). North Americans are fundamentally aligned in our conviction concerning the right of all persons to have freedom of belief. As one ideology would not be imposed over another, abstinence would be given as much discussion as safe-sex behaviors. This approach would necessitate a complete presentation of both sides of the ideological debate. Advocating a democratic approach may seem naïve given the strong resistance of right-wing activist groups and the present conservative political climate. Perhaps appealing to masses of parents is one solution. Research has shown that parents endorse comprehensive sexuality education that includes controversial topics (e.g., sexual orientation and birth control) in the schools (McKay & Pietrusiak, 1998). The voices of many may eventually counteract the vocal minority groups that have been controlling the sexuality education debates thus far. Through espousing moral pluralism, and encouraging young people to make their own decisions after being presented with complete and unbiased information, emancipatory sexuality education may become a widespread reality. It is a time for activists to collaborate with researchers, policy makers, and parents to ensure young women are educated about their right to a healthy and pleasurable sexual future.
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APPENDIX A

Research Design Rationale

The research design was an in-depth qualitative exploration of female sexual subjectivity within a delayed treatment experimental design with short-term follow-up. The design required two pretests for Group 2 to ensure that observed effects were due to the sexuality education, and not due to pre-existing group differences. The research design permitted only four sexuality education sessions to be administered to each group of participants within one 13-week academic term, excluding the first and last weeks of the term and allowing one week of overlap in program delivery. This allowed each group to participate in an opening session, four education sessions, and a closing session (Group 1 closing session and Group 2 opening session occur within the same week). It was not prudent to run the sexuality education program during the first and last weeks of the academic term as students experience considerable upheaval and demands at these times, and thus, attendance likely would have been low. The four educational sessions comprised 10 hours of education. A review of the literature indicates that educational programs of similarly short durations are effective in producing desired outcomes. For instance, Geasler, Croteau, and Edlund (1995) detected attitudinal changes in audience members from a one-shot (approximately 1.5 hours) gay, lesbian, and bisexual speakers panel using qualitative evaluation methods. Also using qualitative methodology, knowledge and attitude changes were evident among participants of a four-hour transgender HIV prevention workshop (Bocking, Robinson, & Rosser, 1998). Education programs of slightly longer durations have successfully documented knowledge and attitude changes using quantitative methods. For instance, participants of an 11-hour training program for family empowerment for consumers of mental health services demonstrated changes in their knowledge and attitudes on survey measures (Heflinger, Bickman, Northrup, & Sonnichsen, 1997). Dunn, Beeley, Hoskins, and Turtle (1990) used questionnaire data to provide support for a 16-hour diabetes education program targeting diabetes knowledge and attitudes. The OWL curricula address knowledge and attitudes, and thus, it was reasonable to assume that this 10-hour program would affect changes that can be detected by both qualitative and quantitative methodologies employed in this research. In addition, long-term (1-2 yrs.) assessment of persistence of attitude changes would be beneficial. Due to the small sample size, it was unlikely that I would have been able to maintain contact with a sufficient number of participants to permit quantitative analyses of follow-up data obtained after a long-term delay. However, it was still meaningful to determine whether attitude changes persisted over a shorter time period. Research on attitude change as a result of educational interventions has demonstrated attitude stability using 1-month (Eagle & Brouard, 1995) and 3-month follow-up (Dunn et al., 1990; Heflinger et al., 1997) measurement times. The present research spanned the entire winter term of the academic year. A 3-month follow-up measurement period occurred in the summer months. At the end of the winter term (posttest) participants were able to provide an address at which they would be able to receive the follow-up measures. Consequently, a 3-month follow-up measurement period was used in this study.
APPENDIX B

Interview Schedule #1

Introduction:
First, I’d like to thank you for agreeing to be interviewed. Also, I’d like you to know that we share control over the interview process. I will be asking you some questions, but I want you to feel free to talk about what’s most important to you as well. You may disclose as much or as little as feels comfortable, and you may decline to answer questions that you do not want to answer. Today’s interview is about your sexuality and it will be audiotaped. Before we start talking about your sexuality, I’d like to get to know a little bit about you, your family life, and any significant life event that you think might be important in helping me understand your experiences.

General:
1. How would you describe your sexuality?
2. Could you tell me about a sexual interaction that you had that would be your best? worst? typical?

Desire:
3. How do you know when you are interested in being sexual?
4. What does your desire feel like?
5. When do you feel like being sexual?
6. In what ways do you express your desire?
7. How do you feel about your desires?

Sexual Expression:
8. How do you show your sexuality?
9. What feelings or thoughts do you have when you are expressing your sexuality?
10. When do you express your sexuality?
11. Who do you show your sexuality to?
12. How do you feel sexual with yourself?

Pleasure:
13. Tell me about your sexual pleasure?
14. How much sexual pleasure do you experience?
15. What is sexually pleasurable?

Mind/Body Connectedness:
16. How are your mind and body part of your sexuality?
17. In what ways do your mind and body influence each other?
18. Where do you locate your sexuality?

Body Image:
19. Describe how your body influences your sexuality.
20. Tell me how you feel about your body when you are being sexual.
21. What do you think about your body (as a whole, as parts)?
Sexual Agency:
22. What do you do when you want to be sexual?
23. How do you get the pleasure you want?
24. How do you respond when you are not interested in being sexual?

Safe Sex Behaviors:
25. What do you do to protect yourself from unwanted pregnancy and STDs?
26. Describe how you feel about protecting yourself (proud, guilty, secure, burdened, free, in control, responsible, awkward, resentful)?
27. What would you like to be different about safe-sex?
28. When is it difficult to protect yourself?

Reputation:
29. In what ways do other people influence your sexuality?
30. How do you feel about other’s opinions of you?
31. How do you control what they think?

Intimate Relationships:
32. In what sorts of relationships do you express your sexuality (friendships: female/male, dating, committed, with family)?
33. How do your relationships influence your sexuality?

Sexual Violence:
34. Describe what is sexually harassing to you
35. How do you respond to unwelcome sexual interest?
36. When have you experienced unwanted sexual activity?

Social Influences:
37. What impact has your educational experiences had on your sexuality?
38. What messages does the mass media (TV, movies, magazines, music) send about your sexuality?
39. How has the medical profession influenced your thoughts and feelings about your sexuality?

Conclusion:
What, if anything, would you like to say about your sexuality that you haven’t had a chance to say?

Thank you very much for speaking with me.

Probes:
Could you explain further?
What did you mean by _____?
Tell me more about _____.

APPENDIX C

Interview Schedule #2

Introduction:

First, I'd like to thank you for agreeing to be interviewed again. Like the first interview, we share control over the interview process. I will be asking you some questions, but I want you to feel free to talk about what's most important to you as well. You may disclose as much or as little as feels comfortable, and you may decline to answer questions that you do not want to answer. Today's interview is about your sexuality and how the sexuality education that you have received has influenced it, if at all. Again, this interview will be audiotaped.

General:
1. Since participating in the sexuality education program, how would you describe your sexuality?
2. Have there been changes in your attitudes and feelings about your sexuality since you’ve taken this course? What are they? Why or why not?

Desire:
3. How do you know when you are interested in being sexual?
4. What does your desire feel like?
5. When do you feel like being sexual?
6. In what ways do you express your desire?
7. How do you feel about your desires?

Sexual Expression:
8. How do you show your sexuality?
9. What feelings or thoughts do you have when you are expressing your sexuality?
10. When do you express your sexuality?
11. Who do you show your sexuality to?
12. How do you feel sexual with yourself?

Pleasure:
13. Tell me about your sexual pleasure?
14. How much sexual pleasure do you experience?
15. What is sexually pleasurable?

Mind/Body Connectedness:
16. How are your mind and body part of your sexuality?
17. In what ways do your mind and body influence each other?
18. Where do you locate your sexuality?
Body Image:
19. Describe how your body influences your sexuality.
20. Tell me how you feel about your body when you are being sexual.
21. What do you think about your body (as a whole, as parts)?

Sexual Agency:
22. What do you do when you want to be sexual?
23. How do you get the pleasure you want?
24. How do you respond when you are not interested in being sexual?

Safe Sex Behaviors:
25. What do you do to protect yourself from unwanted pregnancy and STDs?
26. Describe how you feel about protecting yourself (proud, guilty, secure, burdened, free, in control, responsible, awkward, resentful)?
27. What would you like to be different about safe-sex?
28. When is it difficult to protect yourself?

Reputation:
29. In what ways do other people influence your sexuality?
30. How do you feel about other’s opinions of you?
31. How do you control what they think?

Intimate Relationships:
32. In what sorts of relationships do you express your sexuality (friendships: female/male, dating, committed, with family)?
33. How do your relationships influence your sexuality?

Sexual Violence:
34. Describe what is sexually harassing to you
35. How do you respond to unwelcome sexual interest?
36. When have you experienced unwanted sexual activity?

Social Influences:
37. What impact has your educational experiences had on your sexuality?
38. What messages does the mass media (TV, movies, magazines, music) send about your sexuality?
39. How has the medical profession influenced your thoughts and feelings about your sexuality?

Sexuality Education Experiences:
40. Tell me about your experiences in the sexuality education sessions.
41. What did you think of the exercises?
42. How did you feel participating the group?
43. Describe something unexpected or surprising that you experienced.
Sexuality Education Goals:
44. How accepting are you of your sexuality?
45. What do you think of your ability to communicate about sexuality with others (friends, family, medical professionals, a partner, children, older people)?
46. To what extent do you feel able to utilize available sexuality resources (books, internet, health services, counseling, peer support, community agencies)?
47. Tell me about your ability to practice safe-sex.
48. How has this sexuality education program influenced your understanding of healthy relationships?
49. How has this program affected your tolerance of sexual diversity (celibacy, gay/lesbian/bisexual people, childhood sexuality, sexuality and the aged, sexuality and the disabled)?

Research Experiences:
50. Tell me about your experiences of this research process.
51. Describe anything surprising or unexpected about your experience in the research.
52. How did you feel about your power to control what happened to you in the research?
53. What are your opinions of the research?

Conclusion:
What, if anything, would you like to say about your sexuality, the sexuality education program, or the research that you haven’t had a chance to say?

Thank you very much for speaking with me.

Probes:
Could you explain further?
What did you mean by _____?
Tell me more about _____.
APPENDIX D

Participant Survey

To the Participant: This survey is designed to assist the facilitators in designing the program to meet your needs. It is anonymous and confidential. Please do not identify yourself on it or when you return it, but do feel free to speak directly to the leaders about any questions or concerns you have.

1. I consider myself to be (circle the appropriate number):

   0  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10

   Sexually timid

   Sexually adventurous

2. I am (check one):

   _____ in a sexual relationship
   _____ beginning a relationship that may become sexual
   _____ nearing the end of a relationship that is or was sexual
   _____ seeking/hoping for a possibly sexual relationship
   _____ neither in nor interested in a sexual relationship at this time
   _____ other ___________________________

3. Here’s my rating of sexuality in terms of my own life to date:

   0  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10

   Disappointing

   Awesome

4. Here’s what my own sexual orientation is:

   0  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10

   Gay

   Bisexual

   Straight

5. The following best describes the reasons for my participation in this program:

   _____ interests/concerns about myself
   _____ interests/concerns about my children
   _____ interests/concerns about others
   _____ curiosity
   _____ desire to celebrate sexuality
   _____ learn about our society and culture
   _____ other ___________________________
6. I have previously participated in (check all that apply):

_____ an elementary school sexuality education program
_____ a high school sexuality education course
_____ a college sexuality education course
_____ a sexuality education course in a religious setting
_____ another type of sexuality education program
_____ none of these

7. My gender identity is:

_____ female
_____ male

_____ transgender
_____ other

8. I am:

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Uncasy with people
 Completely comfortable
whose sexual orientation
 is different than mine
 with people no matter what
their orientation is

9. I believe that high school aged youth should:

_____ refrain from intercourse
_____ be instructed about alternative to intercourse
_____ have any sort of sex as long as they are in love and
 using safer sex techniques

10. I believe that graphic sexual materials should be:

_____ available to all
_____ available to nobody
_____ available just to adults

11. I am particularly interested in these subjects (Circle up to five. These will be used
to determine the content of the sessions.):

abuse of sexuality  sexuality education  sexuality in the arts
masturbation  parenting  family
intercourse  alternative to intercourse  sexuality and the law
AIDS/STDs  other sex-related health concerns  sexual minorities
sexual attraction  sexual orientation  oral sex
love  interpersonal relationships  gender identity
pregnancy  sex and aging  gender roles
sexuality and values  sexuality and spirituality  communication
12. I am most interested in:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal sexual issues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Societal sexual issues</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13. Here's how I feel about discussing personal sexual experience:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Uncomfortable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Comfortable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14. I believe that sexuality as a force in contemporary society is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

15. I am looking forward to the program with:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fear</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mixed feelings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | Excitement |

16. Here are some final anonymous hopes/fears/concerns/ideas I wish to share with the leaders before the program begins:
APPENDIX E

Sexuality Survey

This survey consists of two sections. Section I contains questions about your attitudes toward various sexuality issues and your perceptions of your own sexuality. Section II asks you to provide descriptive information about yourself. Please do not put your name on the survey, but please remember to write your student identification number in the space provided so that I can match your questionnaires with the later ones. Thank you.

Section I: Attitudes toward Sexuality

Hurlbert Index of Sexual Assertiveness (HISA)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Item Description</th>
<th>All of the time</th>
<th>Most of the time</th>
<th>Some of the time</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>I feel uncomfortable talking during sex.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>I feel that I am shy when it comes to sex.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>I approach my partner for sex when I desire it.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>I think I am open with my partner about my sexual needs.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>I enjoy sharing my sexual fantasies with my partner.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>I feel uncomfortable talking to my friends about sex.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>I communicate my sexual desires to my partner.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>It is difficult for me to touch myself during sex.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>It is hard for me to say no even when I do not want sex.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>I am reluctant to describe myself as a sexual person.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>I feel uncomfortable telling my partner what feels good.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>I speak up for my sexual feelings.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>I am reluctant to insist that my partner satisfy me.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>I find myself having sex when I do not really want it.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>When a technique does not feel good, I tell my partner.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>I feel comfortable giving sexual praise to my partner.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>It is easy for me to discuss sex with my partner.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>I feel comfortable in initiating sex with my partner.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>I find myself doing sexual things that I do not like.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>Pleasing my partner is more important than my pleasure.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>I feel comfortable telling my partner how to touch me.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>I enjoy masturbating myself to orgasm.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>If something feels good, I insist on doing it again.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>It is hard for me to be honest about my sexual feelings.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>I try to avoid discussing the subject of sex.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Revised Attitudes Toward Sexuality Inventory (RATSI)

This page and the next asks you about your attitudes toward a number of sexual issues. Please offer your frank opinion by circling one of the following options:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Mildly Agree</th>
<th>Mildly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Some girls will only respond sexually if a little force is used.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Women falsely report rape in order to call attention to themselves.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Engaging in sex, e.g., for athletes, does not affect their energy and concentration.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>A woman’s decision to have an abortion is a good enough reason to have one.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>A girl will often pretend she doesn’t want intercourse because she doesn’t want to seem loose, but she’s really hoping the guy will force her.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>In the majority of rapes, the woman already has a bad reputation.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Children should be encouraged to accept the practice of masturbation.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Easily accessible abortion will probably cause people to become unconcerned and careless.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>There’s nothing wrong with a little sweet talk to get what you want.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>A woman cannot be forced to have intercourse against her will.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>The primary goal of sexual intercourse should be to have children.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Sexual inaccessibility of a man’s partner is a common cause of child sexual abuse in the home.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>It’s not okay for a guy to pressure for more sex even if he thinks the girl has led him on.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Normal males can commit rape.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Children should be ignored if found playing “doctors and nurses” or other games of sexual exploration.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>It doesn’t hurt children to have a little bit of sex play with their older relatives.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>If the couple have dated a long time, it’s only natural for the guy to pressure her for sex.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>Women who are raped are usually a little to blame for the crime.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>The elderly in nursing homes should have as much sexual access to each other as they want.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>Contraceptives should be readily available to teenagers.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Mildly Agree</td>
<td>Mildly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
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<td>----------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>Even if the guy gets sexually excited, it's not okay for him to use force.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>Rape is usually planned and premeditated.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>Masturbation is a normal sexual activity throughout life.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>Women should receive preferential treatment right now to make up for past discrimination.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>If a guy spends a lot of money on a girl, he's got a right to expect a few sexual favors.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>Forcing a woman to have sex when she doesn't want to is rape.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27.</td>
<td>A woman who initiates a sexual encounter will probably have sex with anybody.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28.</td>
<td>Being whistled at in public is like getting a compliment.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>You can't blame a guy for not listening when the girl changes her mind at the last minute.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.</td>
<td>No woman harbors a secret desire to be raped.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31.</td>
<td>Sexuality education probably leads to experimentation and increased sexual activity.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32.</td>
<td>Intoxication among women is worse than among men.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33.</td>
<td>A girl should give in to a guy's advances so as not to hurt his feelings.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34.</td>
<td>Rape has noting to do with an uncontrollable desire for sex.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35.</td>
<td>Male and female homosexuality is a threat to many of society's institutions.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36.</td>
<td>If there are rules about corporal punishment in schools, they should apply equally to girls and boys.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37.</td>
<td>If a girl engages in necking or petting and she lets things get out of hand, it is her own fault if her partner forces sex on her.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38.</td>
<td>A woman who claims she was raped by a man she knows can be described as a &quot;woman who changed her mind afterward.&quot;</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39.</td>
<td>Most adults who contract AIDS get pretty much what they deserve.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40.</td>
<td>No clubs should be allowed to refuse membership, terms, or conditions of membership on the basis of gender.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Sexual Double Standard Scale (SDS)

These questions ask you about your sexual attitudes. Please circle one of the following numbers to indicate your opinion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Disagree Strongly</th>
<th>Disagree Mildly</th>
<th>Agree Mildly</th>
<th>Agree Strongly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>It's worse for a woman to sleep around than it is for a man.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>It's best for a guy to lose his virginity before he's out of his teens.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>It's okay for a woman to have more than one sexual relationship at the same time.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>It is just as important for a man to be a virgin when he marries as it is for a woman.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>I approve of a 16-year-old girl's having sex just as much as a 16-year-old boy's having sex.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>I kind of admire a girl who has had sex with a lot of guys.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>I kind of feel sorry for a 21-year-old woman who is still a virgin.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>A woman's having casual sex is just as acceptable to me as a man's having casual sex.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>It's okay for a man to have sex with a woman with whom he is not in love.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>I kind of admire a guy who has had sex with a lot of girls.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>A woman who initiates sex is too aggressive.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>It's okay for a man to have more than one sexual relationship at the same time.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>I question the character of a woman who has had a lot of sexual partners.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>I admire a man who is a virgin when he gets married.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>A man should be more sexually experienced than his wife.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>A girl who has sex on the first date is &quot;easy.&quot;</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>I kind of feel sorry for a 21-year-old man who is still a virgin.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>I question the character of a guy who has had a lot of sexual partners.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>Woman are naturally more monogamous (inclined to stick with one partner) than are men.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>A man should be sexually experienced when he gets married.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>A guy who has sex on the first date is &quot;easy.&quot;</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>It's okay for a woman to have sex with a man she is not in love with.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>A woman should be sexually experienced when she gets married.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>It's best for a girl to lose her virginity before she's out of her teens.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>I admire a woman who is a virgin when she gets married.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>A man who initiates sex is too aggressive.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sexual Desire Inventory (SDI)

This questionnaire asks about your level of sexual desire. By desire, we mean interest in or wish for sexual activity. For each item, please circle the number that best shows your thoughts and feelings. Your answers will be confidential.

1. During the last month, how often would you have liked to engage in sexual activity with a partner (for example, touching each other’s genitals, giving or receiving oral stimulation, intercourse, etc.?)

   0) Not at all 4) Twice a week
   1) Once a month 5) 3 to 4 times a week
   2) Once every two weeks 6) Once a day
   3) Once a week 7) More than once a day

2. During the last month, how often have you had sexual thoughts involving a partner?

   0) Not at all 4) Twice a week
   1) Once a month 5) 3 to 4 times a week
   2) Once every two weeks 6) Once a day
   3) Once a week 7) More than once a day

3. When you have sexual thoughts, how strong is your desire to engage in sexual behavior with a partner?

   0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
   No desire Strong desire

4. When you first see an attractive person, how strong is your sexual desire?

   0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
   No desire Strong desire

5. When you spend time with an attractive person (for example, at work or school), how strong is your sexual desire?

   0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
   No desire Strong desire

6. When you are in romantic situations (such as a candle-lit dinner, a walk on the beach, etc.) how strong is your sexual desire?

   0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
   No desire Strong desire

7. How strong is your desire to engage in sexual activity with a partner?

   0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
   No desire Strong desire
8. *How important* is it for you to fulfill your sexual desire through activity with a partner?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not at all Important</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Extremely Important</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9. Compared to other people you age and sex, how would you rate you desire to behave sexually with a partner?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Much less desire</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Much more desire</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10. During the last month, *how often* would you *have liked* to behave sexually by yourself (for example, masturbating, touching your genitals, etc.)?

- 0) Not at all
- 1) Once a month
- 2) Once every two weeks
- 3) Once a week
- 4) Twice a week
- 5) 3 to 4 times a week
- 6) Once a day
- 7) More than once a day

11. *How strong* is your desire to engage in sexual behavior by yourself?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No desire</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Strong desire</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12. *How important* is it for you to fulfill your desires to behave sexually by yourself?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not at all Important</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Extremely Important</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13. Compared to other people of your age and sex, how would you rate your desire to behave sexually by yourself?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Much less desire</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Much more desire</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14. *How long* could you go comfortably without having sexual activity of some kind?

- 0) Forever
- 1) A year or two
- 2) Several months
- 3) A month
- 4) A few weeks
- 5) A week
- 6) A few days
- 7) One day
- 8) Less than one day
Section II: Personal Information.

1. My age is: ______ years

2. Currently my sexual relationship status is (check one):
   ______ in a sexual relationship
   ______ beginning a relationship that may become sexual
   ______ nearing the end of a relationship that is or was sexual
   ______ seeking/hoping for a possibly sexual relationship
   ______ neither in nor interested in a sexual relationship at this time
   ______ other ____________________________

3. My sexual orientation is (check one):
   ______ lesbian
   ______ heterosexual (straight)
   ______ bisexual
   ______ not sure

4. My ethnicity is (check all that apply):
   ______ White/European/Caucasian
   ______ Black/African/Caribbean
   ______ East Asian/Chinese/Japanese
   ______ South Asian/Indian/Pakistani
   ______ Other ____________________________

5. Do you have a religious affiliation? Yes _____ No _____

5a. If yes, with which religion are you affiliated? ____________________________

5b. How important is your religious affiliation to you?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Importance</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not very</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>important</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Somewhat</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>important</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>important</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thank you for your participation!
Please return this survey in the envelope provided.
APPENDIX F

Consent Form
Department of Psychology, University of Windsor

Name of Researcher: Shelley Balanko

Title: Emancipatory sexuality education: An exploration of young women’s perceptions of their sexuality and sexuality education influences.

Objectives, Rationale, and Procedure: The purpose of this research is to explore young women’s perceptions of their sexuality and how sexuality education influences those perceptions. The information obtained will be used for a doctoral dissertation research project conducted by Shelley Balanko, M.A. under the supervision of Dr. Charlene Senn in the Department of Psychology.

Participation in this project involves attending 6 sexuality education sessions (1 introductory session, 4 education sessions, 1 closing session). Each of the 6 sexuality education sessions will be 2.5 hours. Participation also involves completing a questionnaire package at three time periods. You will complete a questionnaire package during the first and last sexuality education sessions. The third time, the questionnaire package will be mailed to your home and you will be asked to return it by mail. The questionnaire package contains questions about your attitudes and beliefs concerning sexuality. For some participants (chosen at random), participation will also involve participating in two 1-hour interviews. You will be asked to talk about your attitudes and feelings about your sexuality. There will be a separate consent form for you to read if you are chosen for this part. If interviewed, you will receive $10.00 for your participation. For each sexuality session attended and each questionnaire package returned, your name will be entered into a lottery for $200. The draw will take place at the completion of the research (approximately July, 2001). If your name is drawn, you will be notified by telephone and will receive the prize by mail.

Confidentiality: I want to emphasize that participation in this research project is completely voluntary, and you are not obligated to complete the sexuality education program, the questionnaire packages, or interviews. You may withdraw from participating at any time without any consequences. However, it is better for the research to have participants make a solid commitment to the project and provide complete information. Information shared in the sexuality education sessions, responses to the questionnaire package, and interview responses will be kept completely confidential. Individual responses and personal identities will be made available only to the researcher. Your names, telephone numbers, and addresses will be put on a master list which will be kept in a locked cabinet. You will be asked to write your student identification number on the questionnaires. Once the questionnaires have been matched, your student numbers will be cut off. At the completion of the study, the master list of names, addresses, and phone numbers will be destroyed. For those participants who are interviewed, you will select your own pseudonym by which you will be referred in data analysis and written reports.
**Direct Benefits to Participants:** This research provides the opportunity to learn about sexuality, explore your own sexual attitudes, beliefs, and feelings, and increase self-understanding. Furthermore, the research will contribute to the academic community’s understanding of female sexuality. Finally, participants will benefit from free sexuality education that others would have to pay to receive.

**Possible Risks to Participants:** There are no serious anticipated risks associated with participating in this study. However, due to the sensitive and personal nature of some questions and topics I will cover, you may experience both positive and negative feelings. Should you feel any negative emotions, please contact the sexuality education facilitator, Dr. Julie Fraser, or the researcher/co-facilitator, Shelley Balanko, so she may assist you.

If you have any questions regarding this study, please contact me, Shelley Balanko, at (519) 253-3000 ext. 2218, or my dissertation supervisor, Dr. Charlene Senn (Department of Psychology) at (519) 253-3000 ext. 2255. If you have any comments or questions about the ethics of this study you may contact the Chairperson on the Departmental Ethics Committee (Dr. Stewart Page) at the University of Windsor, Department of Psychology at (519) 253-4232 ext. 2243.

Once the study has been completed, you may receive a copy of the study results if you wish by leaving your name and address on a sign-up sheet that will be available at the last sexuality education session. Thank you.

Please read and sign the following declaration of informed consent if you agree:

I have read the description of the study, understand its purpose, and recognize that, while there are no serious anticipated risks involved in my participation, due to the personal and sensitive nature of some of the activities and questions I may at times experience negative feelings. I understand that my responses will be kept confidential and that my name will not be associated with my responses. I voluntarily consent to participate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant's Name</th>
<th>Participant's Signature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Date
APPENDIX G

Statement of Group Ground Rules

1. Confidentiality: Whatever is said in this room, stays in this room. However, the leaders have a legal and moral responsibility to break confidentiality agreements if we believe a participant’s life or well-being is in serious danger because of abuse or threat of suicide. We will not tell others about a participant without first discussing it with the participant.

2. Right to pass: Although group participation and discussion are important parts of the sexuality education program, no one is ever required to speak on a given issue. You can simply say, “I pass.”

3. No killer statements: Put-downs are not acceptable. We need to respect one another.

4. Respect for diversity: We are not going to agree on every subject. We need to respect one another’s views without trying to change or dismiss them.

5. Openness: It is important to be open and honest, but participants should not disclose personal information about the private lives of family members, friends, neighbors, or others. It is fine to discuss general situations without using names.

6. “I” statements: Group members should try to share their own feelings, beliefs, or values using “I” statements such as “I believe...,” “I feel...” We should speak for ourselves, and not whole groups of people such as “Women like this” or “Men never think that.”

7. No direct questions: Participants should be free to speak as much or as little about themselves as they choose and should not be put on the spot by other group members asking personal questions. Questions like “Are you a virgin?” or “How many times have you had sex?” are inappropriate. Participants and leaders should not direct personal questions to participants or to leaders.

8. Right to call one another on ground rules: It is the group’s responsibility, as well as the leaders’, to enforce the ground rules. Group members, therefore, have a right to call one another on the ground rules when they feel one is being broken.

The undersigned agree to abide by the following ground rules while a member of this group engaged in this program:
APPENDIX H

Interview Consent Form
Department of Psychology, University of Windsor

Name of Researcher: Shelley Balanko

Title: Emancipatory sexuality education: An exploration of young women’s perceptions of their sexuality and sexuality education influences.

Objectives, Rationale, and Procedure: The purpose of this research is to explore young women’s perceptions of their sexuality and how sexuality education influences those perceptions. The information obtained will be used for a doctoral dissertation research project conducted by Shelley Balanko, M. A. under the supervision of Dr. Charlene Senn in the Department of Psychology.

Participation in this part of the project involves being interviewed about your attitudes and feelings about your sexuality. The interviews will last about one hour, and they will be audiotaped. Once the interviews have been transcribed, the audiotapes will be destroyed. You will receive $10.00 for your participation in the interview.

Confidentiality: I want to emphasize that participation in this research project is completely voluntary, and you are not obligated to complete the interview, and you may refuse to answer any questions. You may withdraw from participating at any time without any consequences. However, it is better for the research to have participants make a solid commitment to the project and provide complete information. For the interviews, you will select your own pseudonym by which you will be referred in data analysis and written reports.

Direct Benefits to Participants: This research provides the opportunity to learn about sexuality, explore your own sexual attitudes, beliefs, and feelings, and increase self-understanding. Furthermore, the research will contribute to the academic community’s understanding of female sexuality. Finally, participants will benefit from free sexuality education that others would have to pay to receive.

Possible Risks to Participants: There are no serious anticipated risks associated with participating in this study. However, due to the sensitive and personal nature of some questions and topics I will cover, you may experience both positive and negative feelings. Should you feel any negative emotions, please contact the sexuality education facilitator, Dr. Julie Fraser, or the researcher/co-facilitator, Shelley Balanko, so she may assist you.

If you have any questions regarding this study, please contact me, Shelley Balanko, at (519) 253-3000 ext. 2218, or my dissertation supervisor, Dr. Charlene Senn (Department of Psychology) at (519) 253-3000 ext. 2255. If you have any comments or questions about the ethics of this study you may contact the Chairperson on the Departmental Ethics Committee (Dr. Stewart Page) at the University of Windsor, Department of Psychology at (519) 253-4232 ext. 2243.
Once the study has been completed, you may receive a copy of the study results if you wish by leaving your name and address on a sign-up sheet that will be available at the last sexuality education session. Thank you.

Please read and sign the following declaration of informed consent if you agree:

I have read the description of the study, understand its purpose, and recognize that, while there are no serious anticipated risks involved in my participation, due to the personal and sensitive nature of some of the activities and questions I may at times experience negative feelings. I understand that my responses will be kept confidential and that my name will not be associated with my responses. I voluntarily consent to participate.

______________________________  ______________________________
Participant's Name               Participant's Signature

______________________________
Date
APPENDIX I

Sexuality Resources and Support Services List

Sometimes talking about sexual experiences can bring up unpleasant memories. It often helps to talk about it. Below are a list of resources and services that will help you access more information about sexuality or help you with your thoughts and feelings about sexuality and sexuality-related issues. The list is divided into University of Windsor resources/services, community resources/services, and internet resources.

University of Windsor Resources/Services: (phone: 253-3000 plus ext.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Campus Police</td>
<td>1234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency</td>
<td>4444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Childcare Services</td>
<td>253-5235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Education</td>
<td>3260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Services</td>
<td>7002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Rights</td>
<td>3400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus Ministry</td>
<td>4512</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out on Campus</td>
<td>3872</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Centre Pharmacy</td>
<td>3644</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Support Program</td>
<td>4616</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological Services</td>
<td>7012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race Relations Officer</td>
<td>3400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Counselling Centre</td>
<td>4616</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walksafe</td>
<td>1234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Womyn's Centre</td>
<td>4507</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Windsor Community Resources/Services:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AIDS Committee of Windsor</td>
<td>973-0222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amherstberg Crisis Service</td>
<td>736-0255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belle River Crisis Service</td>
<td>728-4017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brentwood Recovery Home (substance abuse)</td>
<td>253-2441</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canadian Abortion Rights Action League</td>
<td>254-3807</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windsor Regional Cancer Centre (breast health)</td>
<td>253-0903</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic Family Services</td>
<td>254-5164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Mental Health Clinic Crisis</td>
<td>257-5125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distress Line</td>
<td>256-5000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essex Crisis Service</td>
<td>728-4017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Service Windsor</td>
<td>256-1831</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiatus House (domestic violence)</td>
<td>252-7781</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House of Sophrosyne (substance abuse)</td>
<td>252-2711</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leamington Crisis and Short-Term Therapy</td>
<td>1-800-661-3135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesbian/Gay Community Council</td>
<td>973-4951</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Family Planning Ovulation Method</td>
<td>737-7060</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Windsor Community Resources/Services (Continued):

Parents & Friends of Lesbians and Gays 973-0222 ext. 238
Parkwood Christian Counselling Centre 948-2492
Planned Parenthood of Windsor & Essex County 981-3511
Provincial Medical Centre/Women’s Health Centre 250-6961
Sandwich Community Health Centre 258-6002
Sexual Assault Crisis Centre 253-3100 (Crisis: 253-9667)
Sexual Assault Treatment Centre 255-2234
South Asian Centre of Windsor 252-7447
Teen Health Centre (12-24 yrs.) 253-8481
Well-Come Centre for Human Potential
(empowerment: women and children) 971-7595
Windsor Family Forum 253-2607
Windsor Women Working
with Immigrant Women (support/counseling) 973-5588
Windsor Women’s Incentive Centre
(counseling, education, referrals) 966-0992
Windsor Essex County Health Unit 258-2146

Internet Resources:

Condomania http://www.condomania.com
Go Ask Alice http://www.goaskalice.columbia.edu
It’s Your (Sex) Life http://www.itsyoursexlife.com
Gay Teen Resources http://www.gayteenresources.com
Contraceptive Choices http://www.emory.edu/WHSC/MED/FAMPLAN/choices.html
SIECUS http://www.siecus.org
SIECCAN http://www.sieccan.org
APPENDIX J

Results of the Qualitative Analysis

Following is a list of categories derived from participants’ interview transcripts headed by their code family title. The indented words represent sub-categories.

**Central Categories**
Control
Other-focus
Self-focus

**The Body**
being outside the experience
body image
- body weight
- body manipulation
- exercise
- dieting
- breasts
- butts
- unrealistic expectations
mind/body connection
nakedness
- genital shame
- boundary imposition
self-monitoring/self-objectification
violation

**Context**
adolescent experiences
childhood experiences
clubs/bars
- alcohol involvement
educational influences
- sex education
feminism
friends
media influence
- objectification
- unrealistic
medical influences
past experiences
reputation concerns
- compromise
- double standard
- manner of dress
reputation/impression management
self-sanctioning
sexual harassment
intention
sexual victimization experience
impact of victimization
society

Desire
curiosity
desire as physical need
desire as physical sensation
desire for sexual activity
desire for masturbation
desire for intimacy
being desired
mood

Negative States of Being
anger
confusion
disappointment
disbelief
disgust
embarrassment
fatigue
fear
frustration
guilt
insecurity
jealousy
mixed emotions
powerlessness
regret
disrespect
sadness
shame
uncertainty
vulnerability

Positive States of Being
appreciation
confidence
freedom
fun
hope
independence
intimacy
love
powerfulness
pride
satisfaction
security
trust

Relationships
acceptable partners
  waiting for what’s right
  worthiness
fear of relationships
  distancing the self
  relationship management strategy
fear of rejection
forming relationships
other priorities
relationship type
  commitment
relationship status

Sex Education Program
awareness
consciousness-raising
  alienation
  bonding
  group diversity
  normal
  shared experiences
empathy/support
healthy sexuality
  therapy
learning experience
  discovery
  information
  pushing boundaries
  risk taking
  turning point
  workshop exercises
openness
  taboo
others experiences
others openness
research experience
interviews
surveys
re-evaluation
safe environment
  ground rules
self-disclosure
self-acceptance
self-reflection
self-definition of sexuality
spirituality/sexuality
surprising
unique experience
useful

Sexual Interactions
distinctions among sexual activity
  fucking
  kissing
  making love
  making out
  masturbation
  oral sex
  sex
safe sex
  condoms
  invincibility
  the pill
  pregnancy
  resistance
  sexual history taking
  STDs
sexual diversity
  experimentation
  internet sex
  same-sex experience
  sexual orientation
sexual expression
  acting out
  assertiveness
  avoidance
  dancing
  fantasy
  flirting
  game playing
  joking
  passiveness
  physical
physical gesture
preparedness
private
sexual advances
  pressure
sexual invitation
significant act
  precious possession
verbal communication
  sharing with girlfriends
sexual identity
  comparison to other women
concealment
de-sexualization
development
incongruency between beliefs and actions
journey
re-definition of self
self-esteem
virginity
sex quality
  emotional
    intimacy
perfection anxiety
satisfaction
sexual pleasure
  orgasm
APPENDIX K

Diagram of Qualitative Findings
VITA AUCTORIS

Shelley Balanko was born in 1971 in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. She graduated from McNally C.H.S. in 1989. From there she went to the University of British Columbia where she received a B.A. in Psychology in 1993. Shelley obtained a M.A. in Applied Social Psychology from the University of Saskatchewan in 1997. She will graduate with the Doctorate degree in Applied Social Psychology from the University of Windsor in Spring 2002.