

AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

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TITLE: VIEWS OF THE FEMALE ROLE, MOTHERS' EXPRESSION OF SEXUAL
AFFECTION AND FEMALE COLLEGE STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD
SEXUAL BEHAVIOR

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The present study examined the relationship between views of the female role, mothers' expression of sexual affection, and women's attitudes toward sexual behaviors. Subjects were 122 single middle-class college women from intact families who had some prior experience in heterosexual relationships. Women's scores on the Mother's Expression of Sexual Affection Scale (MESAS) and the Attitudes toward Women Scale (AWS) were used to assign subjects to one of four groups: traditional women whose mothers frequently displayed sexual affection toward their spouses; non-traditional women whose mothers frequently displayed sexual affection toward their spouses; traditional women whose mothers infrequently displayed sexual affection toward their spouses; and nontraditional women whose mothers infrequently displayed sexual affection toward their spouses.

A comparison was then made of the four groups' attitudes toward 20 sexual behaviors on the Sexual Attitudes Scale (SAS). A 2 (Woman's role attitude: traditional/nontraditional) x 2 (Mother's expression of sexual affection: frequent/infrequent) analysis of variance was performed on scores for each item. Results revealed that women with more nontraditional

attitudes toward the female role held significantly more positive attitudes toward 15 of the 20 sexual behaviors than women with more traditional views. Moreover, it was found that women with more affectionate mothers had significantly more positive attitudes toward four SAS behaviors. These findings demonstrate a clear relationship between female role orientation and sexual attitudes, and suggest that mothers may be sexual role models for a class of less intimate sexual behaviors. Implications of the research for counseling couples with sexual problems were discussed.

Views of the Female Role, Mothers' Expression
of Sexual Affection and Female College
Students' Attitudes Toward Sexual Behavior

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VIEWS OF THE FEMALE ROLE, MOTHERS' EXPRESSION
OF SEXUAL AFFECTION AND FEMALE COLLEGE
STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD SEXUAL BEHAVIOR

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A review of the literature yields very little research on factors which influence female attitudes toward sexuality. This finding is particularly surprising since sexual attitudes are believed to have a significant impact on sexual satisfaction and adjustment. Women's feelings about a variety of sexual behaviors, contraception, and assertiveness in sexual encounters may greatly influence the nature and quality of their sexual and marital relationships. Research studies have found a high positive correlation between subjective evaluations of closeness in marital relationships and pleasure in marital sex (Hunt, 1974).

Among the factors which may influence female sexual attitudes is the woman's exposure to female sexual role models. In particular, it is believed that a daughter's observation of her mother as a sexual role model may have a significant impact on her sexual feelings and her heterosexual relationships (Hetherington, 1972). Daughters are presumed to learn about sexual roles and ways of interacting with males through observation of their mother's and father's behavior. In some families, mothers are visibly affectionate with their husbands, and are seen kissing and holding hands. In other families, parents believe physical and verbal expressions of affection should be hidden from the children. In these latter families, daughters may lack the opportunity to observe expressions of sexuality within a heterosexual relationship.

Since sexual learning begins in early childhood, it is believed that a woman's observation of her mother as a sexual role model may significantly influence her attitudes toward sexual behaviors. Daughters whose mothers are more open and comfortable about expressing physical and verbal affection to their spouses may have more positive attitudes toward sexuality than daughters whose mothers feel that such behavior is inappropriate.

Another factor which may influence female sexual attitudes is the individual's view of the woman's role. Women's perceptions concerning the appropriate female role have ranged from the prescription of the traditional wife and mother to the more nontraditional feminist. Women who support the "traditional" view of the female role believe that women should be dependent upon men, and that women are naturally suited to perform domestic duties. In contrast, the women with a "nontraditional" view of the female role minimize sex role differentiation and advocate the equality of men and women (Arnott, 1973; Singleton and Christiansen, 1977; Smith, Ferree and Miller, 1975).

It may be speculated that these perceptions of the ideal female role influence women's attitudes toward sexuality. Specifically, a woman who conforms to the "traditional" passive and dependent role may feel less comfortable about initiating sexual encounters or engaging in various sexual activities. Indeed, she may feel that taking an active interest in sexual behavior will be interpreted as evidence of promiscuity. In contrast, "nontraditional" women may feel that women and men should take more equal responsibility for initiating sexual interactions. Such women may feel more positive in their attitudes toward a variety of sexual behaviors.

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between views of the female role, mothers' expression of sexuality, and female

attitudes toward various sexual behaviors. First, it was hypothesized that women whose mothers frequently displayed sexual affection toward their spouses would have more positive attitudes toward selected sexual behaviors than women whose mothers infrequently displayed sexual affection. Secondly, it was predicted that women with a more nontraditional orientation toward the female role would have more positive attitudes toward sexual behaviors than women with a more traditional orientation. A third and final purpose of this study was to examine women's sexual attitudes as a function of both their attitudes toward the female role and their mothers' expression of sexual affection. A comparison was made of the sexual attitudes of women in the following four groups: traditional females whose mothers frequently displayed sexual affection toward their spouses; nontraditional females whose mothers frequently displayed sexual affection toward their spouses; traditional females whose mothers infrequently displayed sexual affection toward their spouses; and nontraditional females whose mothers infrequently displayed sexual affection toward their spouses. It was hypothesized that women who hold nontraditional views of the female role and whose mothers frequently displayed sexual affection toward their spouses would have the most positive attitudes toward selected sexual behaviors. In contrast, women with traditional views of the female role whose mothers infrequently displayed sexual affection were expected to have the most negative attitudes.

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL ORIENTATION

Social learning theory proposes that interactions with other people have a significant impact of the learning process. The term sex role socialization is used to refer to the ways in which members of society convey expectations for male and female behavior. The process of sex role socialization begins in early childhood, as boys and girls are taught the behaviors they will be expected to display in adolescence and adulthood. Sex role socialization may involve several processes. For example, children may be rewarded for behavior considered appropriate for their sex, or they may be punished for behavior considered inappropriate for their sex (Mischel, 1966, 1970; Mussen, 1969). In addition, significant adults may serve as role models for sex-appropriate behavior, and children may strive to imitate them. Parents are probably the most influential role models for their children, as well as the major source of reinforcement/punishment for sex role behavior (Sears, Maccoby & Levin, 1957; Fagot, 1974).

One aspect of psychosexual development is the individual's attitudes toward behaviors considered "sexual" in our culture. It is clear that sexual learning begins in early childhood (McNab, 1976; Reiss, 1967). Children develop feelings about the appropriateness or inappropriateness of sexual behaviors through parents' verbal and nonverbal reactions to their own bodies, bodily functions, and bodily pleasures. In particular, children may observe the ways in which their parents display verbal and physical affection toward each other.

The same-sex parent has been described as an extremely influential role model for children's behavior (Bandura & Walters, 1963; Hartup, 1962;

Kagan, 1964). Therefore, girls would be expected to acquire sexual attitudes which are consistent with the attitudes and behaviors expressed by their mothers. Daughters whose mothers are more open and comfortable about kissing, hugging, flirting, and using affectionate terms with their spouses may communicate more positive attitudes toward sexuality than daughters whose mothers are uncomfortable exhibiting such behaviors. The mother's verbal and physical sanctions may further reinforce her daughter's observational learning about appropriate sexual behaviors.

Social learning theorists also posit that socialization experiences are influential in the development of attitudes concerning sex role behaviors. Parents, peers, family members, and significant others provide models of how children should feel and behave when they grow up (Mischel, 1970). Likewise, characters portrayed in books, television shows, movies and other media provide information about the behaviors appropriate for males and females (Flerx, Fidler & Rogers, 1975; Mischel, 1970). In addition to observational learning, differential reinforcement or punishment for specific behaviors have been found to influence the individual's perceptions of the male and female roles.

As a result of their socialization experiences, females may develop more "traditional" or "nontraditional" views of the female role. Those who adopt "traditional" views are more likely to perceive women as passive, dependent, ineffectual individuals who are most concerned with serving males (Arnott, 1973; Spence & Helmreich, 1972). In contrast, females with "nontraditional" views may perceive women as active, independent, competent, and on an equal footing with males (Arnott, 1973; Fox, 1977; Spence & Helmreich, 1972). This basic orientation toward the female role may influence attitudes toward appropriate female behavior in

a sexual relationship. Females with a more "traditional" view may believe that women should behave passively or submissively in sexual relationships, and may perceive sexual encounters more as a duty rather than a source of pleasure. In contrast, women with a "nontraditional" view may take an active role in enhancing their own sexual pleasure, and may have more positive attitudes toward a variety of sexual behaviors.

Thus, social learning theory suggests that a woman's attitudes toward sexuality may be a product of both her observations of her mother in a heterosexual relationship and her socially-acquired attitudes toward the female role.

CHAPTER III

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Mother as a Sexual Role Model

The formation of sexual attitudes begins in early childhood at a time when the parents are the most influential role models. Several studies suggest that children imitate and closely identify with the same-sex parent (Bandura & Walters, 1963; Kagan, 1964; Kohlberg, 1966). One might therefore conclude that a daughter's observation of her mother as a sexual role model may have a significant impact on her sexual attitudes.

There is very little research exploring the relationship between mother's expression of sexuality and daughter's sexual attitudes. In one recent study conducted in Sweden, Uddenberg (1976) examined the sexual relationships of women with families representing various levels of marital discord. The mothers of 101 young, unmarried pregnant women were asked to describe their marital relationships and were classified as members of one of three groups: families with severe marital discord, families with moderate marital discord, and families with no marital discord. The daughters were then interviewed about their relationships with their parents, their sexual history, and their relationship with the father of their child.

Results of the latter interviews indicated that daughters from severely discordant homes identified with their mothers and had an unsatisfactory relationship with their fathers. These women reported difficulties in relating to men and problems in their own sexual relationships. Women from harmonious homes reported positive relationships with both parents. In contrast to daughters from discordant homes, they

described stable and gratifying relationships with the father of their child. Overall, the greater the parental marital problems, the greater the number of sexual partners reported by the daughters and the more unsatisfactory their own sexual relationships.

Results of this study suggest that family experiences contribute to the formation of sexual attitudes and behaviors. In identifying with their mothers and imitating their behaviors, daughters may adopt their mother's sexual attitudes, feelings, and patterns of adaptation. In families where mothers experienced conflict with their spouses, daughters exhibited negative feelings toward their fathers and men in general. Their sexual relationships were characterized by poor sexual satisfaction. Daughters from harmonious homes were like their mothers in reporting successful relationships with men.

A second study attempted to determine whether parents' sexual attitudes were predictive of childrens' sexual attitudes (McNab, 1976). The Sex Knowledge and Attitude Test (SKAT: Lief & Reed, 1972) was administered to ninety-one male and eighty-six female undergraduate students and their parents. The SKAT measured attitudes in three areas: abortion, masturbation, and heterosexual relationships. Other subject information collected in this study included demographic data, religiosity, political conservatism/liberalism, and similarity of subject's values to parents' values.

The data suggested that mothers' and fathers' sum SKAT attitude scores were significant predictors of both male and female sum SKAT attitude scores. Knowledge of students' political conservatism, religiosity, and similarity/conflict with parents' value system also added significantly to the prediction of students' sum sex attitudes.

Analysis of data also included examining whether parents' attitudes in each of the three individual areas were predictive of children's attitudes in the separate areas. For girls, only mother's and father's abortion attitudes were predictive of their attitudes in this area.

While McNab's study supports the potential influence of parents' sexual attitudes on children's sexual attitudes, the study addresses only a limited range of sexual behaviors. Moreover, it did not examine the children's awareness of their parents' sexual attitudes or their subjective observations of their parents' heterosexual relationship. There appears a need to explore the relationship between children's sexual attitudes and their observation of their parents as sexual role models.

A final study investigating daughters in father-absent families suggested that mothers provide important role models for heterosexual behavior (Hetherington, 1972). The research involved seventy-two adolescent girls representing three groups: daughters from intact families, daughters from divorced families, and daughters from families whose fathers were deceased. The girls in this study were from lower- and lower-middle class families and did not have brothers. The girls were observed in a recreation center and in an interview with a male, and were then interviewed about their attitudes toward self, peers, and adults in their lives. Mothers were also interviewed, and several personality tests were administered to both daughters and mothers.

Results of this study indicated that girls who grew up without fathers felt insecure and apprehensive around males, and had more difficulty relating to males than did girls from father-present homes. When heterosexual relationships were considered, girls from divorced homes reported dating earlier and more frequently, and were more likely

to have engaged in sexual intercourse than girls from the other two groups. In contrast, girls whose fathers were deceased seemed to be sexually inhibited. They were extremely shy in the presence of males, turned down dates, and avoided the opposite sex in social activities. In comparison to girls from father-absent homes, daughters from intact families were more comfortable relating to adult males and males in their own age group. While many were dating, they were less likely than daughters of divorcees to engage in sexual intercourse.

The effects of father absence on daughters appear to manifest themselves during adolescence, mainly as an inability to interact appropriately with males. Since mothers in these homes did not remarry or maintain a continuous relationship with a male, their daughters were unable to observe them in the context of a heterosexual relationship. It may be speculated that limited opportunities for observation of positive adult heterosexual relationships later handicap females in their sexual interactions with males.

Although Hetherington's research does not examine daughters from intact families whose parents display varying levels of marital affection, it supports the need for further research on the relationship between daughters' sexual attitudes and mothers' expression of sexual affection. It may be speculated that within intact families, daughters who frequently observe their mothers displaying sexual affection toward their spouses will have more positive sexual attitudes than daughters whose mothers infrequently display sexual affection.

View of the Female Role

Another important variable which may influence women's sexual attitudes is the individual's view of the female role. This study will focus

on women with two general views toward this role: traditional and non-traditional. In previous research, traditional women have been defined as those who hold stereotypic sex-role attitudes. They believe that women should be subordinate to and dependent upon men, and that women's greatest rewards are achieved within the home (Arnott, 1973; Spence & Helmreich, 1972). In contrast, the nontraditional have been defined as those with nonstereotypic views toward the female role. These women support the notion of equality of males and females, and deny women's natural suitability to the domestic role (Arnott, 1973; Spence & Helmreich, 1972).

Since nontraditional women have generally perceived themselves as having more options than traditional women, researchers have hypothesized that there would be differences in the groups' contraceptive practices/fertility patterns, and attitudes toward family. Several studies have attempted to determine if these differences exist between the two groups. Arnott (1973) compared women from two diametrically opposed groups. Twenty feminists active in the National Organization for Women and forty-one anti-feminists from Fascinating Womanhood study groups completed a mail-back questionnaire examining background variables, attitudes toward "autonomy for women", and attitudes toward husband, children, and life goals.

Results of Arnott's study revealed that feminists were younger, better educated and more career-oriented than anti-feminists. On a scale measuring "Attitude Toward Autonomy for Women", anti-feminists supported female dependency while feminists stressed the importance of self-determination in women. An examination of the families of these two groups indicated that fewer feminists had children, and feminist

mothers had smaller families than anti-feminists. When women were asked how they would react to their husband's disapproval of their role behavior, feminists said they expected husbands to adjust to their behavior, while anti-feminists believed that they should give in to their husbands' demands.

In another study, Eagly and Anderson (1974) attempted to determine whether there was a relationship between sex role attitudes and desired family size. Their sample included 250 male and 136 female white undergraduate students. The respondents filled out a seven-part questionnaire which included background information, attitude toward sex role equivalence, attitude toward women's liberation, religiousness, liberalism and conservatism, attitudes toward birth control, and desired family size.

A consistent pattern of relationships was obtained between sex role and attitudinal predictors, and the number of biological children the subjects desired. That is, support for the equivalence of the sexes, favorable attitudes toward women's liberation, high liberalism, low conservatism, and low religiosity for both sexes tended to be predictive of lower family size goals for biological parenthood. Among women, non-equivalent (traditional) sex role attitudes and opposition to women's liberation were significantly related to anti-birth control attitudes were associated with a favorable stance toward birth control.

In another related study, Tobin (1976) attempted to determine whether domestic conjugal role definitions were associated with more positive perceptions of childbearing and a greater delay in using effective contraception. Over 400 married women, fifteen to forty-five, were administered a scale to measure conjugal role definitions and a scale to assess the value placed on childbearing. Respondents were then asked to indicate

the different contraceptives they had used, the regularity of their use, and the times in their childbearing years in which contraception had been used.

Tobin did find a slight relationship between conjugal role definitions, attitudes toward the desirability of children, and contraceptive use. Specifically, the more a wife's role was perceived as traditionally domestic, the longer she waited to use effective contraception and the more children she had. These women also tended to value the impact of children on marriage more favorably than non-domestic women. Conjugal role definitions were most strongly related to family size and contraceptive use in women who were educated beyond high school. Sufficient educational background seemed to permit a realistic choice of alternative roles. When respondents achieved both high education and income levels, they tended to favor non-domestic role orientations and utilized effective contraception.

Still another study examined the influence of both sex role attitudes and locus of control on contraceptive practices. Fox (1977) administered sex role attitude and locus of control questionnaires to 396 undergraduate women and 287 undergraduate men. The sex role questionnaire addressed attitudes toward status differences between the sexes, male participation in domestic tasks, male being head of household, alternative lifestyles, and traditional marriage and family structure. The Personal Control sub-scale from the Rotter Scale of Internal-External Locus of Control (Rotter, 1966) was used to measure personal control. On the basis of these two independent variables, respondents were classified as belonging to one of four groups: nontraditional sex role attitudes with an internal locus of control, nontraditional sex role attitudes

with an external locus of control, traditional sex role attitudes with an internal locus of control, and traditional sex role attitudes with an external locus of control. Information on contraceptive use was then gathered by asking questions about the type of method used, and the sex of the contraceptive in the first and most recent sexual encounters.

Fox's data suggested that there was no relationship between sex role traditionality, locus of control, and the use of contraception at first intercourse for either sex. However, when the most recent sexual episode was considered, the highest levels of contraceptive use were found for women who had both nontraditional sex role attitudes and an internal locus of control. For men, the relationships were reversed, with traditional sex role attitudes and external locus of control precipitating the highest levels of contraceptive use, and nontraditional attitudes with an internal locus of control yielding the lowest.

Recent studies have also investigated the relationship between psychological androgyny and selected sexual and contraceptive behaviors. Allgeier (1975) measured the sex role identification of college undergraduates with the Bem Sex Role Inventory (Bem, 1974). Forty-nine sex-typed (traditional) and 58 androgynous (nontraditional) men and women participated. The two groups then completed a questionnaire on family background and sexual attitudes. Results indicated that androgyns were reared in families where sex was discussed openly and frequently. Androgyns further reported less guilt over masturbation than did sex-typed individuals.

Another related study attempted to examine whether an individual's degree of sex-typing would influence his/her reaction to traditional and nontraditional coital positions (Allgeier & Fogel, 1978). After completing

the Bem Sex Role Inventory and a demographic questionnaire, 119 unmarried undergraduate students were shown six slides of various coital positions. Subjects were then asked to give their reactions to each slide along each of nine seven-point bipolar scales. Both androgynous and sex-typed females consistently rated nontraditional (i.e., female-superior) coital positions more negatively than traditional (i.e., male-superior) ones. Males did respond more positively than females to the nontraditional positions, but the differences were not significant.

Although the previous study failed to detect a relationship between sex role traditionality and attitudes toward coital positions, the findings may have been influenced by the medium of presentation. One might speculate that if explicit slides had not been used, responses may have differed. That is, if one were asked to imagine different coital positions instead of viewing them on a screen, responses might have been more positive.

One final study on sex role attitudes and sexuality examined the relationship between psychological androgyny, birth control knowledge, contraceptive use, and willingness to participate in sex discussion groups (Hansson, Jones & Chernovetz, 1979). The Bem Sex Role Inventory and a birth control knowledge test were administered to 198 female and 157 male college students. More androgynous (less conventionally sex-typed) women were reported to be more knowledgeable about birth control and more uninhibited about discussing contraceptive matters than conventionally sex-typed women.

Just as women's sex role attitudes have been associated with family size and contraceptive use, they now appear related to other attitudes toward sexuality. It appears that nontraditional women do not see themselves as passive, or perceive sexual activity as merely a womanly duty.

In contrast to the more traditional woman, the nontraditional female may feel freer to engage in a variety of sexual activities and have more positive attitudes about doing so.

Purpose of the Present Study

The specific purposes of this research were threefold. First, the study attempted to determine if there was a relationship between mothers' expression of sexual affection and women's sexual attitudes. In this experiment it was hypothesized that women whose mothers frequently displayed sexual affection toward their spouses would have more positive attitudes toward selected sexual behaviors than women whose mothers infrequently displayed sexual affection.

A second purpose of the study was to determine whether a relationship exists between women's views of the female role and their attitudes toward sexual behaviors. It was hypothesized that women with a more nontraditional orientation toward the female role would have more positive attitudes toward selected sexual behaviors than women with a more traditional orientation toward the female role.

A third and final purpose of the study was to examine women's sexual attitudes as a function of both their attitudes toward the female role and their mothers' expression of sexual affection. A comparison was made of the sexual attitudes of women in the following four groups: traditional females whose mothers frequently displayed sexual affection toward their spouses; nontraditional females whose mothers frequently displayed sexual affection toward their spouses; traditional females whose mothers infrequently displayed sexual affection toward their spouses; and nontraditional females whose mothers infrequently displayed sexual

affection toward their spouses. It was hypothesized that women who hold nontraditional views of the female role and whose mothers frequently displayed sexual affection toward their spouses would have the most positive attitudes toward selected sexual behaviors. In contrast, women with traditional views of the female role whose mothers infrequently displayed sexual affection were expected to have the most negative attitudes.

CHAPTER IV

METHODOLOGY

Subjects

The subjects for this study consisted of a volunteer sample of 122 undergraduate college women attending Oregon State University. Respondents were enrolled in either Contemporary American Families, Family Relations, Introductory Psychology or Personal Health classes during the spring of 1979. All women were single, Caucasian, between the ages of 18 and 22, and members of intact families. Women's families were classified as middle- or upper-middle class (Levels 1-3) on Hollingshead's (1957) Two Factor Index of Social Position. All participating women reported at least one steady heterosexual dating relationship with some degree of sexual intimacy (petting or more intimate sexual relations). None had taken a college level Human Sexuality class.

Measures

Four questionnaires were used in this study: The Mother's Expression of Sexual Affection Scale (MESAS), a short version of the Attitudes toward Women Scale (AWS: Spence, Helmreich & Stapp, 1973), the Sexual Attitudes Scale (SAS), and a biographical questionnaire. The MESAS, the SAS, and the biographical questionnaire were developed by the investigator. These measures are presented in Appendices A, B, C, and D.

The Mother's Expression of Sexual Affection Scale

Reports in the literature indicated that no standardized instruments were available for assessing maternal sexual expression. Therefore, The Mother's Expression of Sexual Affection Scale (MESAS) was developed. The

scale consists of ten items describing ways in which mothers might display physical or verbal affection toward their spouses. All items represent behaviors which mothers might perform in front of their children. Immediately following each statement are six alternatives used to assess the frequency of a behavior. These alternatives range from "not at all" (never seeing one's mother displaying this behavior) to "several times a day" (seeing one's mother displaying this behavior several times a day). Students are asked to indicate how often they observed their mothers displaying each behavior with their spouses by circling one of the six alternatives. The procedure is illustrated below:

1. Mother giving passionate or embracing kiss to father.
 0. not at all 1. once a month or less 2. several times a month 3. once a week 4. once a day 5. several times a day

2. Mother flirting with father.
 0. not at all 1. once a month or less 2. several times a month 3. once a week 4. once a day 5. several times a day

The MESAS is scored by adding up the numbers associated with each alternative selected for the ten behavioral items. Total scores may range from 0 (not at all affectionate: never displayed any of these behaviors) to 50 (frequently affectionate: displayed each behavior several times a day). Therefore, the higher the numerical score, the more openly affectionate the mother in the home.

Face validity of the MESAS was determined by submitting the instrument for review to three Family Life faculty members. Faculty were asked whether each item represented a form of maternal sexual expression which might be displayed in the presence of children. It was concluded that the items were appropriate for measuring the frequency of mother's display of affection toward her spouse.

Test-retest reliability was established for the MESAS by administering the measure on two separate occasions to 18 Family Life students. An interval of one week elapsed between the testing periods. A Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient was then computed for each scale item and the entire questionnaire. Test-retest reliability for the entire measure was .97. The correlation coefficients for the entire questionnaire and the individual items were significant at the .001 probability level.

The Attitudes toward Women Scale

A short version of the Attitudes toward Women Scale (AWS) was used to assess the respondents' views toward the female role. This scale consists of 25 statements about the rights and roles of women in the areas of vocational, educational, intellectual, and social activities. Adjacent to each statement is a four-point Likert-type scale with the following alternatives: agree strongly, agree midly, disagree mildly, and disagree strongly. The respondent is asked to indicate the extent of her agreement with each statement by circling the appropriate alternative. This procedure is illustrated below:

- AS AM DM DS 1. Swearing and obscenity are more repulsive
in the speech of a woman than of a man.
- AS AM DM DS 2. Women should take increasing responsibility
for leadership in solving the intellectual
and social problems of the day.

The scoring procedure of the AWS involves reversing scores for 12 of the 25 behavioral items. After this procedure is carried out, each item is given a score from 0 to 3, with 0 representing the most traditional response and 3 the most nontraditional or profeminist response. These in-

dividual scores are then tabulated to acquire total scale scores, which may range from 0 (traditional responses for all statements) to 75 (non-traditional responses for all statements).

The validity and reliability of the 55-item AWS were established at the time of the scale's development (Spence & Helmreich, 1972). A 25-item short form was developed in 1973 (Spence, et al., 1973). This procedure involved having 241 female and 286 male undergraduate students at the University of Texas at Austin complete the original 55-item scale. For each sex, respondents were divided into four quartiles on the basis of their total AWS scores. The researchers then examined the distribution of choices in each of the four response alternatives for each item. The 25 items whose distributions maximally discriminated among quartiles for both sexes, and had the highest biserial correlations, were selected for the short version.

Several reliability correlations between the short and long form of the AWS were obtained using male and female students and their parents. Correlation coefficients for all groups of subjects were over .95 and significant at the .001 probability level. The scale was also factor analyzed using a principal axis routine. It proved to be essentially unifactorial, with the first unrotated factor accounting for 67.7 percent of the variance for females and 69.2 percent of the variance for males.

The Sexual Attitudes Scale

The Sexual Attitudes Scale (SAS) was developed by the investigator because the literature failed to reveal an adequate device for assessing attitudes toward various sexual behaviors. The SAS consists of 20 items covering behaviors in the following general areas: flirting, petting,

use of endearing names, sexual assertiveness, use of erotic devices and literature, masturbation, sexual intercourse, contraceptive use, and oral-genital sexual relations. Several of these items were obtained from other scales assessing attitudes toward sexual behavior such as the SKAT (Lief & Reed, 1972) and Sexual Attitudes Questionnaire (Story, 1978).

Respondents were asked to read each behavioral statement and indicate their personal attitude toward engaging in the behavior. Adjacent to each statement is a six-point Likert-type scale with the following alternatives: extremely positive (1), moderately positive (2), slightly positive (3), slightly negative (4), moderately negative (5), and extremely negative (6). The respondent was asked to indicate her attitude by circling the appropriate alternative. This procedure is illustrated below:

- EP (MP) SP SN MN EN 1. Flirting with a member of the opposite sex.
- EP MP SP SN (MN) EN 2. Being the aggressive partner during a sexual encounter.

Face validity of the SAS was determined by submitting it for examination by three Family Life Faculty members. It was concluded that the individual behavioral items measured what they intended to measure.

Test-retest reliability was established by administering the SAS to eighteen Family Life students on two separate occasions. An interval of one week elapsed between the testing periods. The Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient was then computed for the entire scale and each scale item. The correlation coefficient for the entire scale was .93. All but two of the correlation coefficients for individual items were above .95. One item (holding hands with a member of the opposite sex)

received a correlation coefficient of .825, and another (hugging or affectionately touching a member of the opposite sex) a correlation coefficient of .710. All correlation coefficients were significant at the .001 probability level.

The Biographical Questionnaire

Questions on the Biographical Questionnaire (BQ) were designed to gather general background information and data on sexual and contraceptive history. The background information sought from subjects included responses to questions about age, class rank, marital status, dating history, racial or ethnic identity, religiosity, city/town in which subject was raised, parents' marital status, parents' occupations, and parents' educational attainments. These factors were chosen from among those identified in a review of the literature as being most likely to relate to the dependent variables, attitudes toward sexual behavior (e.g., Lief & Reed, 1972; McNab, 1976). Information from the Biographical Questionnaires gave the investigator a general idea of how relevant variables were distributed throughout the sample.

Procedure

Data collection took place during the spring term of 1979. Women attending either Contemporary American Families, Family Relations, Introductory Psychology or Personal Health classes were asked to participate in a Master's research study examining attitudes toward women and sexuality. Participation was voluntary and students were assured that their responses would be anonymous. Students were informed that administration of the measures would take approximately 20 minutes. A cover

letter, preceding the set of four questionnaires, explained the general purpose of the research. A copy of this letter is presented in Appendix E.

All completed questionnaire packets were reviewed by the investigator. Those subjects retained in the sample met the following criteria:

1. Is between the ages of 18 and 22.
2. Is Caucasian.
3. Has never been married.
4. Was born and raised in the United States.
5. Was raised by biological parents who are still married and living together.
6. Is from a middle- or upper-middle class family (as determined by Hollingshead's Two Factor Index of Social Position).
7. Has had at least one steady heterosexual relationship with some degree of sexual intimacy (petting or more intimate relations).
8. Has never completed a college level Human Sexuality class.
9. Answers each questionnaire in the packet completely.

Those subjects not meeting all of the above qualifications were eliminated from the sample.

Scores were computed for all subjects on the MESAS and AWS. Scores ranged from 0 to 47 on the MESAS and from 23 to 74 on the AWS. Median scores were then determined for each test. The median score for the MESAS was 19, and the median score for the AWS was 57. Individuals with the top 45 percent of scores on the AWS (scores of 59 or greater) were considered to have more nontraditional views toward the female role, while individuals with the lower 45 percent of scores (scores of 56 or less) were considered to have more traditional views. Women whose scores on the MESAS were in the upper 45 percent (21 or greater) were considered to have mothers who frequently displayed affection toward their spouses, while women with scores in the lower 45 percent (18 or less) were said to have mothers who infrequently expressed such behavior.

Subjects whose scores fell in the upper or lower 45 percent of scores on both the MESAS and AWS were included in the final subject pool. On the basis of their scores on the two measures they were divided into the following four groups: traditional females whose mothers frequently displayed sexual affection toward their spouses; nontraditional females whose mothers frequently displayed sexual affection toward their spouses; traditional females whose mothers infrequently displayed sexual affection toward their spouses; and nontraditional females whose mothers infrequently displayed sexual affection toward their spouses. Subjects whose scores were in the middle ten percent on one or both measures were not retained for the study. The final sample included 30 traditional females with more affectionate mothers, 30 traditional females with less affectionate mothers, 31 nontraditional females with more affectionate mothers, and 31 nontraditional females with less affectionate mothers. After women had been assigned to one of the four groups, their responses to each of the SAS items were recorded.

CHAPTER V

RESULTS

The mean scores obtained by the four groups of women for items on the Sexual Attitudes Scale are presented in Table 1. These mean scores are summed across the variables of women's role attitude and mother's expression of sexual affection in Table 2. Table 2 thus permits a comparison of attitudes held by women with traditional and nontraditional attitudes toward the female role, as well as attitudes of women whose mothers frequently and infrequently displayed sexual affection. In both tables lower scores indicate more positive attitudes toward sexual behaviors, while higher scores indicate more negative attitudes.

Insert Tables 1 and 2 about here

Mean scores on Tables 1 and 2 indicate that overall, subjects had more positive than negative attitudes toward the various sexual behaviors. Extremely positive attitudes were expressed for such behaviors as holding hands, affectionately touching and passionately kissing. Positive attitudes were also held for nine additional items, although in many cases reactions were only slightly positive. These behaviors included speaking affectionately, flirting, initiating sexual intercourse, instructing partner to facilitate orgasm, using contraception regularly, and requesting partner to use contraception. Overall, women in this study reported relatively neutral attitudes toward being sexually aggressive, engaging in cunnilingus and fellatio, and attempting to have an orgasm each time one's partner does. Negative attitudes were held toward masturbation and

Table 1. Mean Scores on Sexual Attitudes Scale Items Obtained by the Four Subject Groups

Behaviors	Subject Groups			
	Nontraditional Attitude-Mother Frequently Affectionate	Nontraditional Attitude-Mother Infrequently Affections	Traditional Attitude-Mother Frequently Affectionate	Traditional Attitude-Mother Infrequently Affectionate
Speaking affectionately	1.10	1.45	1.40	1.90
Holding hands	1.03	1.35	1.17	1.03
Flirting	1.94	2.10	1.87	2.23
Affectionately touching	1.03	1.16	1.13	1.37
Passionate kissing	1.23	1.32	1.33	1.87
Initiating sexual encounters	2.06	1.94	2.73	3.27
Using massage oils	3.39	3.90	3.83	4.73
Being aggressive	2.45	2.81	3.40	3.90
Masturbation	3.48	3.87	4.07	4.37
Petting	1.23	1.61	1.77	2.33
Having intercourse	2.00	1.97	2.87	3.97
Different positions for intercourse	1.87	2.00	2.53	3.07
Orgasm each time	3.35	2.90	3.20	3.63

Table 1. Mean Scores on Sexual Attitudes Scale Items Obtained by the Four Subject Groups (continued).

Behaviors	Subject Groups			
	Nontraditional Attitude-Mother Frequently Affectionate	Nontraditional Attitude-Mother Infrequently Affectionate	Traditional Attitude-Mother Frequently Affectionate	Traditional Attitude-Mother Infrequently Affectionate
Instructing partner to achieve orgasm	1.81	1.87	2.73	2.97
Fellatio	2.48	2.52	3.50	4.17
Cunnilingus	2.42	2.23	3.57	4.30
Erotic literature	3.94	4.03	4.40	4.93
Using vibrator or erotic aids	4.48	4.97	5.20	5.30
Contraception with each intercourse	1.39	1.71	2.23	2.27
Asking partner to use condom	1.48	1.81	2.17	2.27

Table 2. Mean Scores on Sexual Attitudes Scale Items as a Function of Women's Role Attitude and Mother's Expression of Sexual Affection.

Behaviors	Nontraditional Women's Role Attitude	Traditional Women's Role Attitude	Mothers Frequently Affectionate	Mothers Infrequently Affectionate
Speaking affectionately	1.27	1.65	1.25	1.67
Holding hands	1.19	1.10	1.10	1.20
Flirting	2.02	2.05	1.90	2.16
Affectionately touching	1.10	1.25	1.08	1.26
Passionate kissing	1.27	1.60	1.28	1.59
Initiating sexual encounters	2.00	3.00	2.39	2.59
Using massage oils	3.65	4.28	3.61	4.31
Being aggressive	2.63	3.65	2.92	3.34
Masturbation	3.67	4.22	3.77	4.12
Petting	1.42	2.05	1.50	1.97
Having intercourse	1.98	3.42	2.43	2.95
Different positions for intercourse	1.94	2.80	2.20	2.53
Orgasm each time	3.13	3.42	3.28	3.26
Instructing partner to achieve orgasm	1.84	2.85	2.26	2.41

Table 2. Mean Scores on Sexual Attitudes Scale Items as a Function of Women's Role Attitude and Mother's Expression of Sexual Affection (continued).

Behaviors	Nontraditional Women's Role Attitude	Traditional Women's Role Attitude	Mothers Frequently Affectionate	Mothers Infrequently Affectionate
Fellatio	2.50	3.83	2.98	3.33
Cunnilingus	2.32	3.93	2.98	3.25
Erotic literature	3.98	4.67	4.16	4.48
Using vibrator or erotic aids	4.73	5.25	4.84	5.13
Contraception with each intercourse	1.55	2.25	1.80	1.98
Asking partner to use condom	1.65	2.22	1.82	2.03

the use of sexual aids, such as massage/body oils, erotic literature, and vibrators.

An examination of the tables further reveals that group means were generally consistent with the experimenter's hypotheses. Specifically, subjects with nontraditional attitudes toward the woman's role expressed more positive attitudes toward 19 of the SAS behaviors than subjects with traditional attitudes about women. Likewise, subjects whose mothers frequently expressed sexual affection toward their spouses exhibited more positive attitudes on 19 of the 20 SAS behaviors than women whose mothers expressed affection infrequently.

A 2 (Woman's role attitude: traditional/nontraditional) x 2 (Mother's expression of sexual affection: frequent/infrequent) analysis of variance was then performed on scores for each of the 20 SAS items. A significant main effect of women's role attitude was obtained in 15 of the 20 analyses. Nontraditional women expressed significantly more positive attitudes than traditional women about engaging in each of the following behaviors: "speaking affectionately to a member of the opposite sex", $F(1, 119) = 5.76$, $p < .025$; "passionately kissing a member of the opposite sex", $F(1, 119) = 5.14$, $p < .025$; "initiating sexual behavior with your partner", $F(1, 119) = 18.22$, $p < .001$; "using body or massage oils in a sexual encounter", $F(1, 119) = 5.09$, $p < .05$; "being the aggressive partner during a sexual encounter", $F(1, 119) = 9.99$, $p < .001$; "engaging in petting with partner", $F(1, 119) = 9.13$, $p < .025$; "engaging in sexual intercourse", $F(1, 119) = 18.59$, $p < .001$; "experimenting with different positions for sexual intercourse", $F(1, 119) = 10.55$, $p < .025$; "instructing your partner in ways to increase your own likelihood of orgasm", $F(1, 199) = 14.77$, $p < .001$; "performing oral-genital stimulation on your partner",

$F(1, 199) = 16.78, p < .001$; "having oral-genital stimulation performed on yourself", $F(1, 199) = 24.79, p < .001$; "reading erotic literature in a sexual encounter", $F(1, 119) = 6.61, p < .025$; "using vibrators or other erotic aids to enhance sexual pleasure", $F(1, 119) = 4.71, p < .05$; "only engaging in intercourse when you or your partner are using effective contraceptive devices", $F(1, 119) = 6.68, p < .025$; and "asking your partner to use a condom if you are not protected", $F(1, 119) = 4.41, p < .05$. A summary of the significant main effects is given in Table 3. One trend also emerged, suggesting that nontraditional women had more positive attitudes toward "using masturbation as a form of sexual outlet" than traditional women, $F(1, 119) = 2.96, p < .088$.

 Insert Table 3 about here

While results revealed a significant main effect of woman's role attitude for the majority of SAS behaviors, a significant main effect of mother's sexual affection was obtained for only four SAS behaviors. As predicted, women whose mothers frequently displayed sexual affection toward their spouses felt significantly more positive toward each of the four behaviors than women whose mothers infrequently displayed sexual affection. Specifically, women with more affectionate mothers expressed more positive attitudes toward: "speaking affectionately to a member of the opposite sex", $F(1, 119) = 7.41, p < .025$; "passionately kissing a member of the opposite sex", $F(1, 119) = 4.70, p < .05$; "engaging in petting with partner", $F(1, 119) = 5.19, p < .025$; and "using body or massage oils in sexual encounters", $F(1, 119) = 6.21, p < .025$. A summary of significant main effects is given in Table 4. Two trends were also

Table 3. Summary of Significant Main Effects for the Independent Variable "Women's Role Attitude".

Dependent Variable	<u>F</u>	<u>p</u>
Speaking affectionately	5.76	.025
Passionately kissing	5.14	.025
Initiating sexual encounters	18.22	.001
Using massage oils	5.09	.05
Being aggressive	9.99	.001
Petting	9.13	.025
Having intercourse	18.59	.001
Different positions for intercourse	10.55	.025
Instructing partner to achieve orgasm	14.77	.001
Fellatio	16.78	.001
Cunnilingus	24.79	.001
Erotic literature	6.61	.025
Using vibrator or erotic aids	4.71	.05
Contraception with each intercourse	6.68	.025
Asking partner to use condom	4.41	.05

Table 4. Summary of Significant Main Effects for the Independent Variable "Mother's Expression of Sexual Affection".

Dependent Variable	<u>F</u>	<u>p</u>
Speaking affectionately	7.41	.025
Passionately kissing	4.70	.05
Petting	5.19	.025
Using massage oils	6.21	.025

revealed, indicating that women whose mothers displayed more affection in the home had more positive attitudes toward: "being the aggressive partner during a sexual encounter", $F(1, 119) = 2.97, p < .088$; and "hugging or affectionately touching a member of the opposite sex", $F(1, 119) = 2.96, p < .088$.

 Insert Table 4 about here

The 20 analyses of women's sexual attitudes yielded only one significant interaction. This interaction, illustrated in Figure 1, was obtained for the item "holding hands with a member of the opposite sex", $F(1, 119) = 6.40, p < .025$. An examination of Table 1 reveals that traditional women with more affectionate mothers had less positive attitudes toward holding hands than nontraditional women with more affectionate mothers. In contrast, traditional women with less affectionate mothers had more positive attitudes toward holding hands than nontraditional women with less affectionate mothers.

 Insert Figure 1 about here

Of further interest in this study was a comparison of attitudes toward the individual SAS items held by the four groups of women subjects. It was expected that nontraditional women whose mothers frequently displayed sexual affection would express the most positive attitudes toward sexual behaviors, and traditional women whose mothers infrequently displayed sexual affection would display the most negative attitudes. These predictions were generally supported by the data. Table 1 reveals that

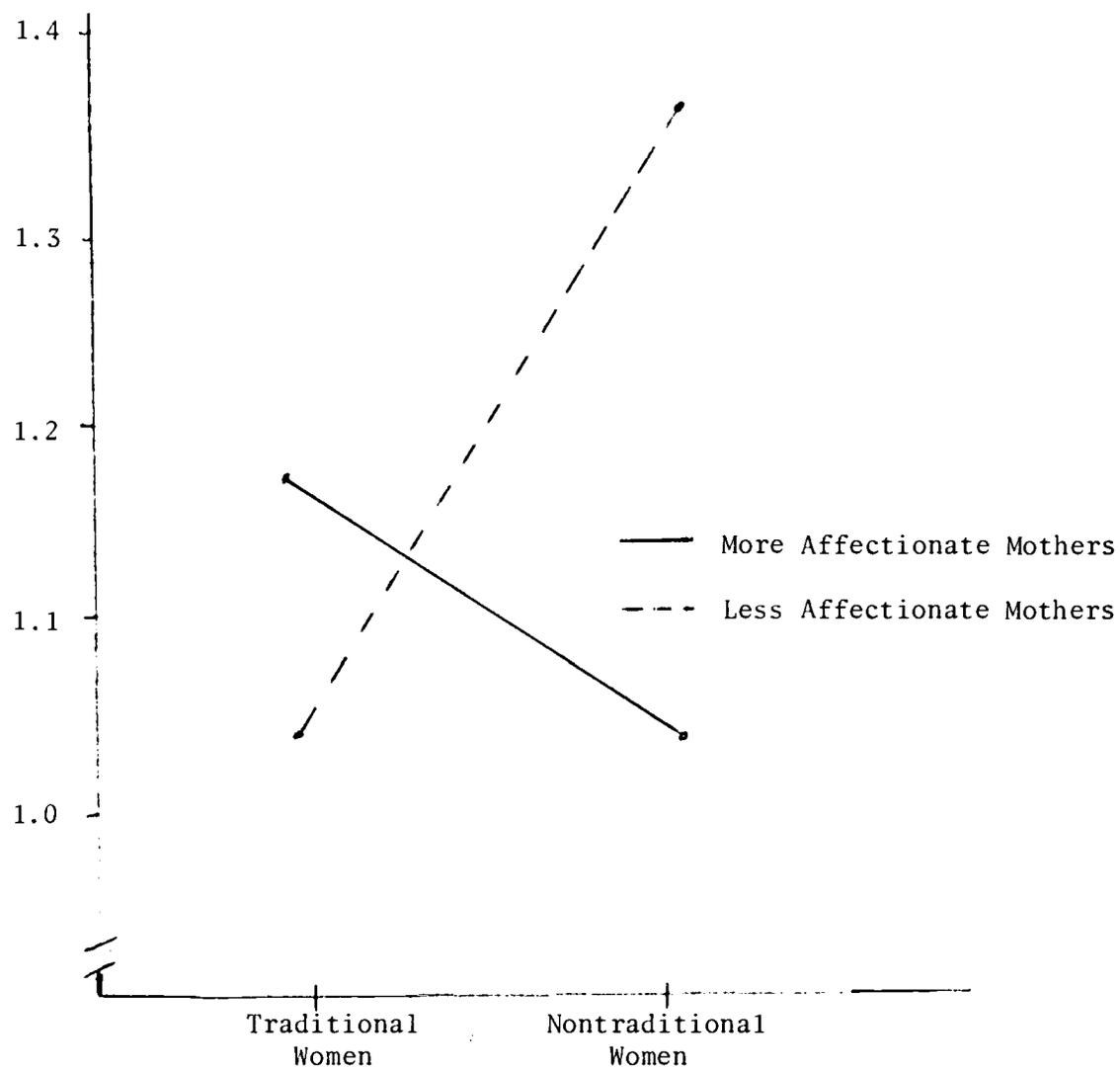


Figure 1. Mean SAS Scores Obtained by the Four Subject Groups for Holding Hands With a Member of the Opposite Sex.

the most positive attitudes toward 15 of the SAS behaviors were obtained by the group of nontraditional women whose mothers frequently displayed sexual affection. The most negative attitudes on 19 of the 20 SAS items were obtained by the group of traditional women whose mothers infrequently displayed sexual affection toward their spouses.

CHAPTER VI

DISCUSSION

The major objective of this study was to examine the relationship between mothers' expression of sexual affection, views of the woman's role, and female college women's attitudes toward sexual behaviors. With respect to mothers' expression of sexual affection, it was predicted that women whose mothers displayed frequent affection would exhibit more positive sexual attitudes than women whose mothers infrequently displayed this behavior. Support for the latter hypothesis was obtained for four of the behaviors on the Sexual Attitudes Scale. Women with more affectionate mothers reported more positive attitudes toward speaking affectionately to males, passionately kissing males, petting, and using body/massage oils in sexual encounters. There was also a tendency for these women to feel more positively about affectionately touching males and being the aggressive partner during a sexual encounter.

Interestingly, women with more and less affectionate mothers held differing attitudes toward several sexual behaviors which could be observed in the home. Daughters of more affectionate mothers presumably saw their mothers speaking affectionately to their fathers and hugging them openly. It is also possible that these women had occasion to observe their parents in passionate kissing. Several researchers have speculated that mothers serve as important sexual role models (e.g., Hetherington, 1972). Hence, daughters whose mothers were more openly affectionate with their spouses may develop more positive attitudes toward expressing verbal and physical affection in their own relationships.

Women with more affectionate mothers also possessed more positive attitudes toward petting. Although petting is unlikely to be observed in the home, it is a common behavior in adolescent relationships and is positively perceived by all women in the sample. A daughter whose mother is more sexually affectionate may feel more comfort and less guilt about engaging in petting than a daughter whose mother infrequently displays sexual affection. Several studies have indicated that many parents view petting as a normal form of adolescent sexual expression, and have more positive attitudes about petting than engaging in sexual intercourse (LoPiccolo, 1973; Reiss, 1967). Therefore, many women may perceive petting as an acceptable behavior, especially if they have observed their own mothers enjoying sexual interactions. In contrast, most adolescents know that their parents would disapprove of their engaging in sexual intercourse or other more intimate behaviors (LoPiccolo, 1973). Notably, there are no differences between daughters of more and less affectionate mothers in their attitudes toward intercourse, fellatio, cunnilingus, and other such intimate behaviors.

One final behavior which differentiated daughters of more and less affectionate mothers was using massage and body oils in sexual encounters. In contrast to women with less affectionate mothers, women with more affectionate mothers may be more likely to have observed their parents massaging one another as a means of physical relaxation. Exposure to such behavior may result in their greater acceptance of using massage in a sexual encounter. However, it should be noted that neither group expressed positive attitudes toward this behavior. Women with more affectionate mothers perceived it as neutral, while women with less affectionate mothers perceived it as slightly to moderately negative.

Overall, it appears that daughters of more sexually affectionate mothers had more positive attitudes toward behaviors which might be openly displayed in the home or considered acceptable by their parents. This finding is consistent with the predictions of social learning theory, and suggests that mothers may serve as role models for a class of less intimate sexual behaviors. The two groups of women did not differ in their attitudes toward more intimate sexual behaviors such as intercourse, using numerous positions for intercourse, fellatio, cunnilingus, and the use of vibrators and erotic literature. These behaviors are less likely to be observed or discussed in the home (Schofield, 1965; Sorenson, 1973).

A second purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between women's views of the female role and their attitudes toward sexual behaviors. As predicted, women with nontraditional views of the female role had more positive attitudes toward a majority of the behaviors in the Sexual Attitudes Scale. The nontraditional women's belief in the equality of the sexes and rejection of the traditionally passive female role appears to have influenced their attitudes toward appropriate behaviors in sexual relationships.

In this study, women with nontraditional sex role attitudes had more positive attitudes than women with traditional attitudes toward a group of behaviors which may be classified as "sexually assertive". Specifically, nontraditional women felt more positive about initiating sexual behavior with men, being the aggressive partner in a sexual relationship, and instructing their partners in ways to increase their own likelihood of orgasm. Thus, a more egalitarian belief toward the woman's role was associated with a more positive attitude toward taking measure to enhance one's own sexual pleasure.

In addition to the more favorable attitudes toward assertive behaviors, nontraditional women had more positive attitudes than more traditional women toward contraceptive use. This finding is consistent with earlier studies (e.g., Eagly & Anderson, 1974; Fox, 1977) comparing the contraceptive practices of women with traditional and egalitarian attitudes toward the female role. Such research has found that nontraditional women place their own contraceptive security above their partner's pleasure, and take more active steps to prevent an unwanted pregnancy. In contrast, traditional women have been discovered to be less effective contraceptors. It may be speculated that traditional women perceive premarital sex as less compatible with the ideas about appropriate feminine behavior. This belief will make it more difficult for these women to communicate with their partners about contraception or adopt effective contraceptive practices.

The hypothesis that nontraditional women would have more positive attitudes toward sexual intercourse than their more traditional counterparts was supported by the data. In contrast to traditional women, nontraditional women expressed more favorable views toward engaging in intercourse and experimenting with different positions in intercourse. Overall, the nontraditional women held more positive attitudes toward a variety of different modes of sexual expression. These ranged from the less intimate behaviors of affectionate language and passionate kissing, to petting, cunnilingus and fellatio. Nontraditional women were also more positive about using aids to sexual arousal, such as erotic literature, body/massage oils, and vibrators.

Interestingly, most of the behaviors which failed to differentiate traditional and nontraditional women could be categorized as being less

sexually intimate. Traditional and nontraditional women did not differ significantly in their attitudes toward holding hands, flirting, and hugging or affectionately touching a member of the opposite sex. These behaviors would seem congruent with all women's views of acceptable feminine sexual expression. Consequently, it was not surprising that women with both role orientations expressed very positive attitudes toward these behaviors.

One additional behavior viewed similarly by traditional and nontraditional women was attempting to have an orgasm each time one's partner does. Interestingly, the results of this study are congruent with an earlier national survey (Hite, 1976) illustrating significant variation in women's attitudes about the necessity of achieving orgasm. Although Hite's survey consisted of open-ended questions (rather than more objective multiple choice items), differences in the women's responses were very clear. While regular achievement of orgasm was very important for some, other women were far more interested in the emotional satisfaction associated with sexual intercourse. This finding is particularly notable in that Hite's survey was composed of a disproportionately high percentage of feminist women. The present study, with its balance of traditional and nontraditional women, indicates that female role orientation is currently unrelated to concerns about the regularity of orgasm.

In summary, it appears that there is a very strong relationship between women's views of the female role and their attitudes toward sexuality. Current results extend earlier findings which reveal that sex role orientation is related to women's career interest (Arnott, 1973), desired family size (Eagly & Anderson, 1974) and contraceptive use (Fox, 1977; Tobin, 1976). Thus, the nontraditional woman's tendency to minimize

sex role differentiation may lead her to adopt more flexible sexual attitudes, and assume greater responsibility for initiating sexual interactions with the opposite sex.

A final purpose of this study was to examine women's sexual attitudes as a function of both female role orientation and mother's expression of sexual affection. As predicted, nontraditional women with more affectionate mothers had the most positive attitudes of all the groups toward the majority (15 of 20) of sexual behaviors. Moreover, traditional women with less affectionate mothers had the most negative attitudes toward the sexual behaviors, with the exception of holding hands. Thus, the combination of being exposed to an affectionate mother and adopting an egalitarian role orientation may facilitate especially positive attitudes toward sexual behavior and effective contraceptive use. In contrast, a more traditional role orientation and exposure to a less affectionate mother may have the reverse effect.

As noted, the only behavior for which traditional women with less affectionate mothers did not have the most negative attitudes was holding hands with a member of the opposite sex. Holding hands was viewed most positively by this group, and least positively by the group of nontraditional women with less affectionate mothers. Possibly, the latter group is more likely to associate holding hands with a traditional "outdated" courtship pattern. However, since all four groups had extremely positive attitudes toward this behavior one should be cautious in interpreting this finding.

Limitations and Implications

One possible limitation of this study was the procedure used in assigning women to one of the four subject groups. Since the sample size

was relatively small, women whose scores were in the upper 45 percent of the sample on the Attitude Toward Women Scale were labeled traditional and women whose scores fell in the lower 45 percent were labeled nontraditional. Likewise, scores in the upper and lower 45 percent on the Mother's Expression of Sexual Affection Scale were used to identify women with more and less affectionate mothers. Selection of subjects from the more extreme ends of the MESAS and AWS scales may have resulted in a greater number of significant findings, especially with respect to the mother's expression of sexual affection variable.

Another possible limitation concerned the nature of the subjects' sexual experience. Although all subjects had some prior sexual experience (petting), not all women had engaged in intercourse or more intimate behaviors. The individual's history of sexual activities may have had some impact on current findings. In particular, it might be predicted that nonvirgin women would have positive attitudes toward sexual behaviors. It is recommended that future research adopt the basic design of this study to investigate the sexual attitudes of married women or nonvirgin women who have been involved in long term sexual relationships. Future research might also explore the relationship between women's role orientation, mother's expression of sexuality, and the frequency of engaging in these behaviors. In other words, researchers might focus their attention on actual sexual behaviors rather than sexual attitudes.

Although this study may suffer from some minor limitations, it is believed that the results have significant implications for counselors and other professionals working with young adult couples. Specifically, a knowledge of women's attitudes toward the female role and her exposure to more or less affectionate mothers may increase our understanding of

her attitudes toward a variety of sexual behaviors. The strong relationship between women's role orientation and sexual attitudes suggests that traditional and nontraditional women may vary in their feelings about acceptable feminine sexual behavior. These feelings will presumably influence the amount of comfort a woman experiences when she participates in specific sexual activities. A change of role orientation in the direction of egalitarianism may lessen sexual anxiety and increase feelings of enjoyment in sexual relations.

While the research revealed fewer relationships between mother's display of sexual affection and daughter's sexual attitudes, a knowledge of the mother's behavior may also aid counselors working with distressed couples. The evidence suggests that a woman's attitudes toward several less intimate sexual activities may be influenced by observations of her own mother's relationship with her spouse. Moreover, the data suggest that women who have been exposed to a less affectionate mother and have adopted a more traditional attitude toward the female role may develop less positive attitudes toward sexual behaviors. Thus, professionals counseling women with sexual problems may find it useful to explore their family backgrounds and views of the female role.

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APPENDIX A

Mother's Expression of Sexual Affection Scale
(MESAS)

Mother's Expression of Sexual Affection Scale

Listed below are some displays of affection that may take place between husbands and wives. For each question, please indicate how often you observed your mother displaying such behavior with your father, by circling the most appropriate response.

1. Mother giving passionate or embracing kiss to father.
0. not at all 1. once a month or less 2. several times a month
3. once a week 4. once a day 5. several times a day
2. Mother flirting with father.
0. not at all 1. once a month or less 2. several times a month
3. once a week 4. once a day 5. several times a day
3. Mother hugging or affectionately touching father.
0. not at all 1. once a month or less 2. several times a month
3. once a week 4. once a day 5. several times a day
4. Mother praising father's appearance.
0. not at all 1. once a month or less 2. several times a month
3. once a week 4. once a day 5. several times a day
5. Mother speaking affectionately to father (e.g., "I love you").
0. not at all 1. once a month or less 2. several times a month
3. once a week 4. once a day 5. several times a day
6. Mother holding father's hand.
0. not at all 1. once a month or less 2. several times a month
3. once a week 4. once a day 5. several times a day
7. Mother modeling or showing off provocative (sexy) outfit to father.
0. not at all 1. once a month or less 2. several times a month
3. once a week 4. once a day 5. several times a day
8. Mother using endearing or pet name when speaking to father (e.g., sweetheart).
0. not at all 1. once a month or less 2. several times a month
3. once a week 4. once a day 5. several times a day
9. Mother giving father ritual kiss (e.g., before leaving for work).
0. not at all 1. once a month or less 2. several times a month
3. once a week 4. once a day 5. several times a day
10. Mother giggling over intimate conversational exchange with father.
0. not at all 1. once a month or less 2. several times a month
3. once a week 4. once a day 5. several times a day

APPENDIX B

Attitudes toward Women Scale
(AWS)

Attitudes toward Women Scale

The statements listed below describe attitudes toward the role of women in society that different people have. There are no right or wrong answers, only opinions. You are asked to express your feelings about each statement by indicating whether you agree strongly, agree mildly, disagree mildly, or disagree strongly.

AS = Agree Strongly AM = Agree Mildly DM = Disagree Mildly DS = Disagree Strongly

- | | | | | |
|----|----|----|----|---|
| AS | AM | DM | DS | 1. Swearing and obscenity are more repulsive in speech of a woman than of a man. |
| AS | AM | DM | DS | 2. Women should take increasing responsibility for leadership in solving the intellectual and social problems of the day. |
| AS | AM | DM | DS | 3. Both husband and wife should be allowed the same grounds for divorce. |
| AS | AM | DM | DS | 4. Telling dirty jokes should be mostly a masculine prerogative. |
| AS | AM | DM | DS | 5. Intoxication among women is worse than intoxication among men. |
| AS | AM | DM | DS | 6. Under modern economic conditions with women being active outside the home, men should share in household tasks such as washing dishes and doing the laundry. |
| AS | AM | DM | DS | 7. It is insulting to women to have the "obey" clause remain in the marriage service. |
| AS | AM | DM | DS | 8. There should be a strict merit system in job appointment and promotion without regard to sex. |
| AS | AM | DM | DS | 9. A woman should be as free as a man to propose marriage. |
| AS | AM | DM | DS | 10. Women should worry less about their rights and more about becoming good wives and mothers. |
| AS | AM | DM | DS | 11. Women earning as much as their dates should bear equally the expense when they go out together. |
| AS | AM | DM | DS | 12. Women should assume their rightful place in business and all the professions along with men. |

- AS AM DM DS 13. A woman should not expect to go to exactly the same places or to have quite the same freedom of action as a man.
- AS AM DM DS 14. Sons in a family should be given more encouragement to go to college than daughters.
- AS AM DM DS 15. It is ridiculous for a woman to run a locomotive and for a man to darn socks.
- AS AM DM DS 16. In general, the father should have greater authority than the mother in the bringing up of children.
- AS AM DM DS 17. Women should be encouraged not to become sexually intimate with anyone before marriage, even their fiancés.
- AS AM DM DS 18. The husband should not be favored by law over the wife in the disposal of family property or income.
- AS AM DM DS 19. Women should be concerned with their duties of childbearing and house tending, rather than desires for professional and business careers.
- AS AM DM DS 20. The intellectual leadership of a community should be largely in the hands of men.
- AS AM DM DS 21. Economic and social freedom is worth far more to women than the acceptance of the ideal of femininity which has been set up by men.
- AS AM DM DS 22. On the average, women should be regarded as less capable of contributing to economic production than are men.
- AS AM DM DS 23. There are many jobs in which men should be given preference over women in being hired or promoted.
- AS AM DM DS 24. Women should be given equal opportunity with men for apprenticeship in the various trades.
- AS AM DM DS 25. The modern girl is entitled to the same freedom from regulation and control that is given to the modern boy.

APPENDIX C

Sexual Attitudes Scale
(SAS)

Sexual Attitudes Scale

Listed below are some sexual behaviors toward which there are differences in attitudes. Using the following scale, please circle the answer which nearly represents your own attitude toward engaging in each of these behaviors. Your response should indicate how you currently feel about participating in each behavior.

EP = Extremely Positive MP = Moderately Positive SP = Slightly Positive
 SN = Slightly Negative MN = Moderately Negative EN = Extremely Negative

- | | | | | | | |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|--|
| EP | MP | SP | SN | MN | EN | 1. Flirting with a member of the opposite sex. |
| EP | MP | SP | SN | MN | EN | 2. Being the aggressive partner during a sexual encounter. |
| EP | MP | SP | SN | MN | EN | 3. Passionately kissing a member of the opposite sex. |
| EP | MP | SP | SN | MN | EN | 4. Performing oral-genital stimulation on partner. |
| EP | MP | SP | SN | MN | EN | 5. Holding hands with a member of the opposite sex. |
| EP | MP | SP | SN | MN | EN | 6. Using masturbation as a form of sexual outlet. |
| EP | MP | SP | SN | MN | EN | 7. Engaging in sexual intercourse. |
| EP | MP | SP | SN | MN | EN | 8. Reading erotic literature in a sexual encounter. |
| EP | MP | SP | SN | MN | EN | 9. Asking your partner to use a condom if you are not protected (i.e., no Pill, no I.U.D., etc.) |
| EP | MP | SP | SN | MN | EN | 10. Instructing your partner in ways to increase your <u>own</u> likelihood of orgasm. |
| EP | MP | SP | SN | MN | EN | 11. Having oral-genital stimulation performed on yourself. |
| EP | MP | SP | SN | MN | EN | 12. Engaging in petting (mutual stimulation of genitals and breasts) with partner. |
| EP | MP | SP | SN | MN | EN | 13. Using vibrators or other erotic aids to enhance sexual pleasure. |
| EP | MP | SP | SN | MN | EN | 14. Only engaging in intercourse when you or your partner are using contraceptive devices. |
| EP | MP | SP | SN | MN | EN | 15. Hugging or affectionately touching a member of the opposite sex. |

- EP MP SP SN MN EN 16. Attempting to have an orgasm each time your partner does.
- EP MP SP SN MN EN 17. Initiating sexual behavior with your partner.
- EP MP SP SN MN EN 18. Experimenting with different positions for sexual intercourse.
- EP MP SP SN MN EN 19. Speaking affectionately to a member of the opposite sex (e.g., "I love you", "sweet-heart", etc.)
- EP MP SP SN MN EN 20. Using body or massage oils in sexual encounters.

APPENDIX D

Biographical Questionnaire

Biographical Questionnaire

You have finished the major part of the questionnaire. However, we need to know something about your background. Please respond to each of the following items by circling or filling in the correct response.

1. Age: a. 17-18 b. 19-20 c. 21-22 d. 23-24 e. 25+
2. Class rank: a. freshman b. sophomore c. junior d. senior e. other
3. Marital status: a. single b. married c. separated or divorced
d. widowed
4. What is your racial or ethnic identity?
a. Caucasian (white) b. Afro-American (black) c. American Indian
d. Mexican American e. Asian American f. other
5. What is your current religious affiliation?
a. Protestant b. Catholic c. Jewish d. other (please describe) _____
6. How often do you attend religious services?
a. once a week b. once or twice a month c. several times a year
d. never or less
7. Where, for the most part, did you spend your childhood and adolescence?
a. farm or rural area b. small town - 2500 or less
c. medium-sized town - 2500-25000 d. large town - 25,000-100,000
e. urban-suburban community in metropolitan area of 100,000 or more
8. What is your parents' current marital status?
a. married and living together b. separate or divorced
c. mother deceased d. father deceased e. other (please explain) _____

9. Father's occupation:
10. Mother's occupation:
11. Father's age:
12. Mother's age:
13. Father's education (last level completed): a. elementary school
b. some high school c. senior high school d. some college
e. 4-year college graduate f. advanced degree (M.A., M.D., Ph.D.)
14. Mother's education (last level completed): a. elementary school
b. some high school c. senior high school d. some college
e. 4-year college graduate f. advanced degree (M.A., M.D., Ph.D.)

15. When did you begin dating members of the opposite sex?
 a. during junior high school or before b. during high school
 c. during college d. have not yet begun dating
16. Have you ever been involved in a "steady" dating relationship (limited your dating to one partner who you saw frequently)?
 a. yes b. no
17. How many such relationships have you had?
 a. none b. one c. two-five d. five or more
18. Which statement most accurately describes your sexual experiences with members of the opposite sex?
 a. have engaged only in handholding and/or kissing
 b. have engaged only in above plus petting (mutual stimulation of genitals and breasts)
 c. have engaged in the above plus sexual intercourse with only one partner
 d. have engaged in above plus sexual intercourse with more than one partner
 e. have not engaged in any of the above
19. If you are not married, which of the following best describes your current dating situation?
 a. living with nonmarital partner
 b. going exclusively with one person
 c. going out, but not with anyone special
 d. not dating or going with anyone at all
 e. dating or living with someone of the same sex
20. During the past year, did you or your partner(s) ever use any of the following contraceptive methods? Indicate "yes" or "no" for each method.
- | | | |
|---|--------|-------|
| Abstinence (from intercourse) | a. yes | b. no |
| I.U.D. - Intrauterine Device (Loop, Coil) | a. yes | b. no |
| Pill | a. yes | b. no |
| Diaphragm | a. yes | b. no |
| Contraceptive creme or foam | a. yes | b. no |
| Douche | a. yes | b. no |
| Rhythm or natural methods | a. yes | b. no |
| Condom or rubber | a. yes | b. no |
| Withdrawal or male pulling out | a. yes | b. no |
21. Have you ever completed a college level Human Sexuality course?
 a. yes b. no

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION & COOPERATION!!

APPENDIX E

Letter to Subjects

School of
Home Economics



Corvallis, Oregon 97331 (503) 754-3551

Family Life Department

Dear Student:

Female college students have a wide range of attitudes concerning women and sexuality. I am conducting a study to learn something about these attitudes. I feel this study is particularly important since there is not much research in this area.

I am asking you to participate in this study by filling out the attached questionnaires. Your participation is completely voluntary, and all responses will remain totally anonymous. There is no way that any information can be traced back to you personally once this questionnaire has been completed and returned.

In completing these questionnaires, please answer each question honestly and to the best of your recollection. It is possible that some of the questions may be difficult for some of you to answer. But I want to assure you that your opinions and experiences--whatever they may be--will be respected and need to be represented. There are no right or wrong answers on the questionnaires. You can contribute most to the success of the study if you take care not to exaggerate or understate your true attitudes. Please report your own feelings and your own experiences as you answer each question. If you do not wish to continue answering the questionnaires, you are free to withdraw from the activity.

Feel free to make comments on the questionnaires whenever you feel they are needed to clarify your response. Please return the completed questionnaires to the researcher when you are done.

This study has been reviewed and approved by the Oregon State University committee which evaluates research involving human subjects. If you would like to discuss any aspect of this study with me, please call or stop by my office in Milam Hall. I thank you in advance for your participation.

Sincerely,

Redacted for Privacy

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