

Sexual Attitudes and Behaviors of

Married Christian College Alumni

by

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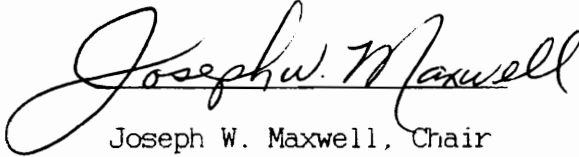
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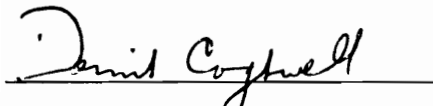
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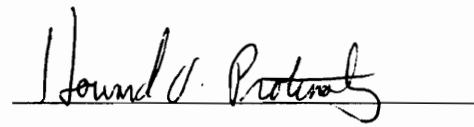
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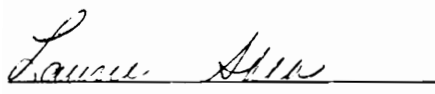
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# SEXUAL ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIORS OF MARRIED CHRISTIAN COLLEGE ALUMNI

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(ABSTRACT)

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationships between religiosity, marital satisfaction, sexual behaviors, and sexual satisfaction of married persons who attended a church-affiliated university.

Data were collected from 56 married individuals who attended a conservative, church-affiliated university located in the south-central United States. The sample was mostly caucasian, heterosexual, upper-middle income, college educated, divided equally by gender, and ranged in age from 27 to 83 ( $M$ =age 46). Participants had been married between 4 and 54 years ( $M$ =22 years), and most (90%) participants were in their first and only marriage.

Religiosity was operationalized by Rohrbaugh and Jessor's (1975) religiosity scale. Marital satisfaction was operationalized using the Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale (Hatch, James, & Schumm, 1986). Sexual satisfaction was operationalized from global sexual satisfaction questions (Darling & Davidson, 1987).

The study participants were found to be highly religious and to hold conservative attitudes toward premarital and extramarital sexual behaviors. A majority reported engaging in a wide range of premarital and marital sexual behaviors.

Religiosity was positively but not significantly associated with both sexual satisfaction and marital satisfaction.

Regression analysis was conducted with marital satisfaction as the dependent variable regressed on religiosity, conventionality, and sexual satisfaction. Higher levels of conventionality were positively associated with both marital and sexual satisfaction. Higher levels of religiosity were weakly and positively associated with marital and sexual satisfaction. Religiosity was found to enhance rather than inhibit marital sexual satisfaction due to its influence on communication.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This is my first opportunity to publicly acknowledge those who have influenced my doctoral studies and dissertation. I thank God for what I have accomplished thus far in my life, and I am indebted to my wife and children, who have endured a difficult three years while I juggled school, work, and family responsibilities. The doctorate is as much theirs as mine.

I credit my family of origin for how they have caused me to rethink my basic assumptions about marriage and family relationships. Lou and Sandy Butterfield, I'll never forget our evening meetings for premarital counseling and your assurance that "it" just got better and better!

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My dissertation committee has challenged and supported me since prelims: Mike—no one integrates (or edits) MFT and Family Studies like you; Bud—your collegiality and Ericksonian persona

continue to inform and challenge my clinical practice; Dennis—you helped me to see the importance of connecting the academic and the community; Marilyn—I wish you hadn't moved to NOVA; Laurie—as a supervisor and cotherapist, you have always modelled the genuine, warm side of professional practice. Thanks for rejoining!

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This study was inspired by Vann Rackley's late night questions concerning marital adjustment. Other contributors included the alumni office staff of my alma mater for their assistance with address changes; the couples who participated in the pilot study; Dr. Davidson, Dr. Moore, and Captain Hurlbert for the use of their questionnaire items; and especially my fellow university alumni, who were willing to take the time and risk to share the privacy of their sex lives.

This stage of my education has successfully ended because of the support of several other friends: Dave Parrish—thanks for asking "How's it coming along?" Adrian—I'm impressed by your accomplishments of the past two years! Ward and Karen—when it comes to friends, there are none that can match you!

## DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to Jane and Ed Coates, a wife-husband team of educators who have been pioneer leaders among churches of Christ in championing progressive and responsible attitudes toward human sexuality. Their quiet inspiration and steady teaching of sex education classes across the south have helped thousands of parents and young people to feel at ease and better prepared to talk with each other and their children about the most private aspects of life and relationships. Thank you for your influence on me and my family, and may you have many more years of ministry!

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
DEDICATION	vi
LIST OF TABLES	ix
CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION	
Overview and Purpose of the Study	1
Rationale for the Study	1
Theoretical/Conceptual Framework for the Study	5
Research Questions	17
Definition of Concepts	17
Significance of the Study	19
CHAPTER II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	
Overview	21
Use of Theory in Sex Research	21
Marital Quality	22
Marital Sexual Relationships	23
Themes in Sex Research	26
Religion and the Family	30
Summary of Research	35
CHAPTER III. METHODOLOGY	
Overview of Research Design	36
Description of Sample and Selection Process	36

Instrumentation	38
Pilot Study	41
Data Collection Procedures	42
Analysis of Data	45
CHAPTER IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	
Demographics	46
Findings by Research Question	52
Summary and Discussion of Study Findings	72
CHAPTER V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	
Summary of Results	89
Limitations of Study	96
Theoretical Implications	98
Clinical Implications	107
Implications for Education and Training	111
Implications for Research	113
Conclusions	113
REFERENCES	115
APPENDIX A - Definition of Concepts	127
APPENDIX B - Systems Theory Definitions	139
APPENDIX C - Mailed Documents and Questionnaire	142
APPENDIX D - Tables	180
APPENDIX E - Qualitative Question Responses	213
VITA	229

## LIST OF TABLES

Table #	page
1a. Response Rates by Stage of Research	44
1. Descriptive Statistics for Nonparticipants	180
2. Reasons For Not Participating in Study as Function of Gender and Age	181
3. Sample Characteristics	49,182
4. Responses to Attitude Questions	185
5. Description of Petting & Foreplay Behaviors Premaritally and Postmaritally, by Gender	186
6. Same Sex Contacts	188
7. Ages of Respondent & First Sexual Intercourse Partner	189
8. Relationship to First Sex Partner (%)	190
9. Feelings About First Sexual Experience	191
10. Frequency of Postmarital Sexual Behaviors by Age for Females	192
11. Frequency of Postmarital Sexual Behaviors by Age for Males	194
12. First Orgasm Experience	196
13. Frequency of Orgasm by Behavior for Females	197
14. Frequency of Orgasm by Behavior for Males	198
15. Frequencies of Spouse Asking About Orgasm/Pretending Orgasm	199
16. Frequency of Extramarital Contact by Gender and Age	200

LIST OF TABLES, continued

Table #		page
17.	Sex Behaviors Preferred More Often by Age and Gender	201
18.	Summary of Sex Behaviors Preferred More Often by Gender	203
19.	Current Sexuality Comfort Level	204
20.	Report of Sexual Satisfaction: Physical, Emotional & Overall	205
21.	Correlation Coefficients of Gender, Age, Years Married, and Satisfaction with Marital Sex	206
22.	Correlation Coefficients of Premarital Sexual Behaviors and Religiosity, Sexual Satisfaction, Marital Satisfaction, and Conventionality	207
23.	Correlation Coefficients of Marital Sexual Behaviors and Religiosity, Sexual Satisfaction, Marital Satisfaction and Conventionality	208
24.	Multiple Regression Analysis With Overall Sexual Satisfaction as the Dependent Variable	209
25.	Summary of Overall Marital and Sexual Satisfaction Dependent Variables Regressed on Religiosity and Conventionality	210
26.	Means and Standard Deviations for Marital Satisfaction, Sexual Satisfaction, and Religiosity	211
27.	Class Years of Participants and Nonparticipants by Gender	212

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### Overview and Purpose of Study

The purpose of the present study was to examine the sexual attitudes and behaviors of married individuals who attended a conservative church-affiliated university. The research findings described: 1) some of the attitudes held about sexuality; 2) the sexual behaviors engaged in by these persons; 3) the relationship between religiosity and sexual attitudes and behaviors; 4) the relationship between religiosity and sexual satisfaction; and 5) the relationship between religiosity and marital satisfaction.

The study was exploratory in that there are no known studies dealing exclusively with marital sexuality among nonclinical religiously conservative couples. The findings were interpreted and explained from a family development and systems perspective.

#### Rationale for the Study

Many who grew up in conservative homes and attended middle-class Protestant churches heard statements such as "Christians have good marriages, non-Christians do not", and "the family that prays together stays together" (Stellway, 1990, p. xiii). It is unknown whether these particular statements have been empirically tested. The empirical linkage between religiosity and marital

satisfaction, and marital sex is often anecdotal, excludes comprehensive measurement of religiosity, and reflects the conservative biases of church leaders. The ultimate result is the silencing of voices which might challenge the status quo if they speak out about human sexuality.

#### Anecdotal Evidence

Anecdotal evidence (Gleick & Carswell, 1992) and limited empirical data (Allen & Allen, 1992; Lewis, Dodd & Tippens, 1989; Stellway, 1990) suggest the existence of a direct relationship between religiosity and sexual attitudes and behaviors, especially in areas of the United States (commonly known as the Bible Belt) where conservative religious beliefs and practices are common among a large majority of the population and social institutions. In Stellway's (1990) Christiantown, USA, the editor of the study observed:

One of the most misunderstood groups in America today is also one of the largest: people who identify themselves as Christians. What is particularly enigmatic about this segment of the population is that it represents both a religion and a culture. From the religious perspective, the tenets and beliefs are fairly well understood. However, from a cultural standpoint, little is really known....it is critical that empirical research be conducted so that the

true sociology of this highly visible and influential subculture is understood. (p. ix)

Stellway's study examined sociological and demographic trends and changes of a sample of married couples living in the midwestern United States. His findings reported the influence of popular culture on the middle class study participants, and described overall levels of marital quality and adjustment. While he asked some general questions about marital sexuality, his findings were limited to reporting satisfaction levels with no examination of the attitudes or actual sexual behaviors in which the sample engaged. In addition, the evangelical families studied by Stellway seemed to have become part of the society and culture around them (Stellway, 1990, p. xi). Stellway and his editor called for additional research to help determine if there were other, more subtle ways in which evangelical families are different from others in the culture.

#### Neglected Area of Study

The field of family studies has neglected study of the relationship between religion and the family (Berardo, 1990). Studies concerning sexuality usually exclude religiosity as a related construct, and often focus on clinical populations of married persons, adolescents, college students, or the elderly, thus omitting non-clinical married couples.

What we know about marital sexuality has come from either national studies (Heaton & Albrecht, 1991; Hite, 1976; Janus & Janus, 1993; Kinsey, 1948, 1953), clinical populations (Bancroft, 1984; Farley & Davis, 1980; Hartman, 1983; O'Leary & Arias, 1983), or self-selected respondents who answered magazine surveys (see Greenblat, 1983). These studies did not collect detailed information about religiosity (Hurlbert, 1991; McCann & Biaggio, 1989; Nathan & Joanning, 1985; Rosenzweig & Dailey, 1989).

Studies incorporating marital sexuality and religiosity typically are produced by religious leaders/educators (Clinebell & Clinebell, 1970; Cotterly, 1987; Harley, 1986; McQueen, 1988; Miles, 1967; Stellway, 1990) who promote their definition of healthier sexual attitudes and behaviors but whose research often lacks detailed knowledge of current attitudes and behaviors of married couples. For example, religiously-affiliated literature often avoids discussion about masturbation and oral-genital sex in marital relationships.

#### Silence in the Churches

The Sexuality study committee convened by the Presbyterian Church in 1988 recognized the tendency of church members to be silent about sexuality. The committee members determined to "...speak a fresh word to the church and to promote conversation, deliberation, and new insight..." (The 203rd General Assembly,

1991, p. 2). The present study was a beginning place for the churches of Christ, a means of discovering the condition of marital sexuality among a population of religiously conservative married persons. With this information it will be possible to begin speaking a fresh word in order to promote conversation and new insight about marital sexuality.

### **Theoretical/Conceptual Framework for the Study**

This study was conceptually and theoretically informed from the Family Developmental perspective (Hill & Hansen, 1960; Holman & Burr, 1980; Mattessich & Hill, 1987) and from Systems Theory (de Shazer, 1991; Sheafor, Horejsi, & Horejsi, 1988). The integration of these perspectives provided a lens through which one could view individuals, marital dyads, family groups, and intergenerational family units as structural elements. At the same time, the theoretical assumptions provided a means of analyzing and gaining understanding about the dynamic interactional processes between these elements.

#### Family Developmental Perspective

Family Development is a conceptual framework and set of theoretical propositions which attempt to describe and explain the processes of change in individuals and families. Family time, the focal point of this perspective, refers to the internally and

externally motivated sequence of stages through which family members move biologically, psychologically, and socially. It is the primary means of explaining change and development of individuals and of family groups as they experience transformation and differentiation over the family's history (Mattessich & Hill, 1987).

#### Assumptions of the Family Development Model

Historically, there are five assumptions advanced by proponents of Family Development:

1. Human conduct is best seen as a function of the preceding as well as the current social milieu and individual conditions.
2. Human conduct cannot be adequately understood apart from human development.
3. The human is an actor as well as a reactor
4. Individual and group development is best seen as dependent on stimulation by social milieu as well as on inherent (developed) capacities.
5. The individual in a social setting is the basic autonomous unit. (Hill & Hansen, 1960, p. 309)

#### Structural Concepts of Family Development

Each individual family member has a position or location within the family group, and attached to each position are roles.

Roles serve to create sets of norms which specify appropriate or required behaviors for the individual in the role. Norms are rules for behaviors, and are expectations that guide the conduct of persons within particular roles.

Among the aspects of the family career are the group-  
interactional facet and the individual-psychological facet. The group-  
interactional dynamics involve the learning of values, norms, and behaviors which may be somewhat fixed but are also negotiable among family members. Individual-psychological dynamics take into account the individual personalities of family members which are shaped by and also affect family behavior. The family is a group in its own right, but its' individual members always maintain a certain measure of autonomy.

### The Family Life Cycle

The stages of the family career, or family life cycle stages, are often described in models having seven levels (Aldous, 1978) which vary by changes in family size, changes in age composition, and changes in the occupational status of wage earners. The seven stages are:

1. Newly established couples (childless)
2. Childbearing families (infants-preschoolers)
3. Families with schoolchildren
4. Families with secondary school children (adolescents)

5. Families with young adults (over age 18)
6. Families in the middle years (children launched)
7. Aging families (retirement)

Allowance must be made for variations from the traditional nuclear family structure. For example, single-parent families have family careers that are still capable of being described by stages that may resemble but not be identical to those listed above (Aldous, 1978). Dual wage-earner families may experience unique stresses from having aging parents as well as children for whom they must plan and provide care.

#### Summary of Family Development Theory

The family is the unit in which human growth, development, and socialization occurs. The learning of values, norms, and behaviors is influenced by a complex mix of individual dynamics and social context. Patterns of change are sometimes predictable as one moves through interchanging stages of individual development and family career or family life cycle. These constructs have implications for the growth and development of one's sexual identity, attitudes and behaviors. For example, religiously conservative parents may find it difficult or impossible to discuss sexuality with their children. The silence might communicate disapproval or imply deviance for the times when one has interests in sexual matters. Given the power of religious

beliefs to shape human behavior, one could be psychologically imprinted with inhibitions about sex, and could experience inhibited communication or participation in marital sex.

### Systems Theory

General Systems Theory was first proposed by Ludwig von Bertalanffy in the 1940s as a framework for understanding how seemingly unrelated phenomena can in fact be seen as interrelated parts of a larger system (Sheafor, Horejsi & Horejsi, 1988). Systems are best understood as both structures and processes by which the structures interact.

### Structural Elements

Systemic structures may include subsystems and suprasystems. Systems can contain numerous subsystems (spousal, parent-child, sibling, and so forth). All systems are part of a larger system or suprasystem, and have boundaries across which inputs and outputs occur (see Appendix B for additional definitions).

### Systemic Processes

Systemic behaviors are best understood by studying the interaction or communication between parts of the system. According to General Systems Theory, objects are defined by their interactive patterns rather than by their structures. System parts exchange information or outputs with other parts and use feedback loops to maintain homeostasis. Systems are sometimes

described as dysfunctional when this information processing breaks down.

Human behavior, when viewed through the Systems lens, is better understood when one takes into account multiple factors which influence the observed behavior, including influences from biological/physiological, psychological, or socio-cultural origins. This perspective provides a framework with concepts which can readily be applied to families.

### Systems and the Family

The family has four systemic features, including its interdependence, its selective boundary maintenance, its ability to adapt to change, and its task performance (Mattessich & Hill, 1987).

Interdependence is apparent in that a member of a family does not live or act in isolation. Each family member's behaviors have consequences for all other members.

The nuclear family demonstrates the systemic feature of selective boundary maintenance as it creates and retains its own culture and identity within the larger social culture. Interaction with outsiders allows assimilation of values and beliefs from extended family, the community, and the society. At the same time, family units utilize kinship terminology, rituals, and unique family vocabulary to give their members a distinctive

heritage.

Families share an organizational resilience and capacity to adapt to changes. Family members have the capacity to reorganize their role structures toward the accomplishing of their individual and collective goals. Change may be brought about by internal or external factors.

Task performance is essential to ensure the survival of the family unit, and is also a functional contribution of the family to the larger society. Typical tasks include physical maintenance, socialization for roles inside and outside the family, maintenance of family morale and motivation to continue role performance inside and outside the family, maintenance of social control, and family perpetuation by birth or adoption of new members who will be launched from the family when mature.

#### Integration of Family Development and Systems Theories

Marks (1989) described a Systems theory of marital quality which integrated Cuber & Haroff's (1966) marital quality typology with systemic linkages. In effect this provided a model integrating Family Development and Systems theories.

#### Model Structures

Marks' model (1989) conceptualized each spouse in a marriage as a three-sided Self represented by a triangle. Corner #1 represented the inner self—the interior individual, a center of

intentionality informed by the historical record of its total life experience. This also included personal values, norms and expectations developed during one's childhood. Corner #2 represented the partnership part of the self that noticed, coordinated with, and attended to the primary partner. Corner #3 represented the recurring outward focus of the self aside from the primary partner, which possibly included all or none of the following—children, jobs, relatives, friends, recreational interests, and religious commitments. In the current study, religious commitments were believed to have both historical and contemporary influences on how marital partners organized their relationships.

### Structural Dynamics

The marital relationship was conceptualized structurally and metaphorically as the two triangular shapes aligned themselves into various marital quality types. Bowen's (Kerr & Bowen, 1988) systemic construct of differentiation provided a useful description of how the "I" of the Self moved freely from corner to corner, with stuckness toward any corner representing levels of fusion/enmeshment, as well as disengagement from the other corners. Likewise, the nature of religiosity is influenced and may be characterized as having potentially high levels of fusion, enmeshment, or disengagement.

Marks (1989) described four basic types of relationship dynamics. In Romantic Fusion, the couple's energies are focused in the partnership corner #2 as corners 1 & 3 lose their importance. In Dependency-Distancing, one spouse fuses with the partnership corner 2, while the other spouse may fuse with corner 3/independence interests. This leaves the couple in the classic pursuer-distancer dynamic. Separateness is a typology wherein each spouse fuses in the corner 3 independence position. Balanced Connection is a pattern of relational dynamics where both spouses evenly balance their privateness, jointness, and independence. Variations on Balanced Connection are Couple-centered Connection (lacks the partnership fusion of Romantic Fusion), Family-centered Connection (spouses focus on parenting issues), and Loose Connection (typical of dual career couples).

The above relational typologies represent recurring relational tendencies between the spouses, which can be shifted whenever changes become necessary. In relation to individual and family development, the different phases of the family life cycle model lend themselves to some configurations more than others. Couple-centered connection is often prominent before the arrival of children, after which culture may tend to push wives toward or wives may choose to engage more into the Family-centered connection while the husband either joins her or moves into a

Loose connection. As children grow older the couple may shift toward both spouses being loosely connected, especially if both have demanding careers. Once children leave, some couples may revert to Couple centered connection, or grandparenting may create the basis for Family-centered connection again. Marital quality may be low, high, or fluctuating with any of these connection typologies.

#### Additional Influences on Marital Quality

Marital quality may also be affected by altering one's relative positioning with and resulting influence from the corner 3 influences of jobs, relatives, friends, and/or religion. What is unique about religion is that it offers the possibility of spiritual family outside biological family. This can help create additional support networks for spouses whose energies and attention are temporarily focused away from the corner two partnership part of the self. Thus it is possible that, with the positive input of spiritual family and relationships, one can feel high levels of marital satisfaction concurrently with experiencing high levels of religiosity.

The collective work of Lewis and Spanier (Marks, 1989) suggested that marital quality is a function of three classes of variables:

1. Social & personal resources derived premaritally (corner 1),

including self confidence as a giver and receiver of sexual pleasure while engaging in premarital sexual activities.

2. Satisfaction with their lifestyle (corner 3), including changes in one's religious beliefs and practices.
3. Rewards from spousal interaction (corner 2), including those which are sexual [italics added].

Lewis and Spanier proposed that the greater the marital quality, the greater the marital stability, with stability defined as whether or not the marriage is intact. In the present study sample, it was assumed that high levels of marital quality have resulted in the marital stability represented by the average 20-year marriages experienced by study participants.

Finally, Lewis and Spanier asserted there are two sets of external forces brought to bear on the marriage, namely negative alternative influences to leave marriage and strong positive pressures to stay married. Marks (1989) conceptualized the independent 3rd corners as sometimes negative, sometimes positive, always subject to change, and always in part constitutive of the marriage's quality. This serves once again as a powerful reminder of the potential that high levels of religiosity have for influencing marriage and family relationships.

#### Integrative Summary

Religion has been an under-recognized influence for shaping

the role expectations of individuals in marital and family units. Many conservative Protestant Christians view the Bible as the primary source of values and principles for living and developing relationships. The dominant culture may be viewed as a source of sinful temptation to abandon the spiritual for the physical and carnal life. Spiritually-minded individuals may use family-of-origin and biblical values to define and interpret the normative behaviors expected to accompany roles. Thus, the role of wife might carry one set of normative behavioral expectations, as would the role of mother, or that of lover and sexual partner. For this study, the lenses of Family Development and Systems provided the linkage whereby religiosity, sexuality, and marital quality became closely interconnected. The premaritally derived personal and social resources which one brings to the marriage are seen to include values, beliefs and attitudes about the Self as a bio-psycho-social person. Given the strong influence of religious teaching in areas of sexual mores and morality, adjustment and change may be quite difficult for the religiously informed Self to accomplish, particularly if the "I" is fused into corner 3 concerns which are based in church interests or expectations.

### **Research Questions**

1. What are the attitudes of religiously conservative married individuals toward various sexual behaviors?
2. What are the sexual behaviors engaged in by conservative religious individuals?
3. How satisfied are respondents with their marital sexuality?
4. What is the relationship between age, gender, length of marriage, and sexual satisfaction?
5. What is the relationship between sexual behaviors and level of religiosity?
6. What is the relationship between sexual behaviors and overall sexual satisfaction?
7. What is the relationship between religiosity, conventionality, and marital satisfaction?
8. What is the relationship between religiosity and sexual satisfaction?

### **Definition of Concepts**

The following concepts were the focus of the research conducted: sexual attitudes, sexual behaviors, religiosity, marital satisfaction, sexual satisfaction, and marital conventionality.

Sexual attitudes: simply defined as the attitudes respondents held

toward a variety of beliefs about human sexual behaviors (see appendix A for actual questions). Respondents' attitudes were described as either traditional and conservative toward sex, or as liberal and progressive toward sex on the basis of their agreement with statements in Likert type questions.

Sexual behaviors: sexual behaviors were those reportedly engaged in by respondents, both pre- and post-maritally, and included masturbation, foreplay/petting, oral-genital stimulation, and sexual intercourse.

Religiosity: the respondents' score on a multidimensional religiosity scale developed by Rohrbaugh and Jessor (1975). The scale is based on the four dimensions of religiosity initially conceptualized by Glock (1959)—ritual, consequential, ideological, and experiential. The higher the score, the more one is believed to be influenced by religious values and doctrines.

Marital satisfaction: the respondents' score on the Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale (KMSS) developed by Hatch, James, and Schumm (1986). The KMSS consists of three questions about ones' satisfaction with husband/wife as spouse, satisfaction level with marriage, and satisfaction level with current relationship with spouse.

Sexual satisfaction: was reported as a combined score from responses to three Likert type questions ranging from very

satisfied to very dissatisfied, which asked about the respondents' level of physical, emotional and overall satisfaction with current marital sexual relationship.

Marital conventionality: the respondents' score on the Edmonds Marital Conventionalization Scale (Edmonds, 1967; Edmonds, Withers & Dibatista, 1972). Higher scores indicated stronger likelihood the respondent was answering in more socially desirable response patterns ("faking good").

### Significance of Study

The study extends what is known about the relationship between religiosity and sexual attitudes and behaviors of religiously conservative married individuals.

The study described in great detail the types of premarital and marital sexual behaviors engaged in by the population studied and proposes some explanations for the high incidence of premarital sexual behaviors among such a highly religious sample.

The study findings leave intact the empirical connection between religiosity and marital satisfaction, and some possible explanations are provided for the connections between the variables.

This information is of interest to both secular and religious communities. Sociologists, social workers,

psychologists, counselors, sex educators, religious leaders, and the general public will benefit from the study findings because it provides empirical support for believing that religiously conservative persons are not necessarily conservative in their marital sex lives.

**CHAPTER II****REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE****Overview**

General Systems and Family Development theory provided the conceptual frame of this study. A systemic frame provided linkage for the interactive dynamics of religion, marriage, and sexuality. The literature reviewed came from a variety of fields of study, including sociology, family studies, human development, religious studies, and marriage and family therapy.

**Use of Theory in Sex Research**

There is a lack of theory-driven research concerning marital sexual expression. Much of what has been written concerning sexual behavior assessment addressed sexual dysfunction among clinical populations, and utilized theoretical models such as Systems (Treat, 1987), Psycho-biological (Masters & Johnson, 1970), Psychodynamic (Hof, 1987), and Developmental (Hof, 1987).

During the past decade of family research, marital sexuality received practically no focused attention and remained a sub-categorical construct measured only in sub-scales which assessed marital satisfaction/adjustment. Since the late 1960s and 1970s, little has changed about what we know concerning marital sexuality (Greenblat, 1983). Klassen and his colleagues (Klassen, Williams, & Levitt, 1989) described the theoretical and sampling limitations

of several studies published during the 1970s, including those published in Psychology Today (Athanasiou, Shaver, & Tavris, 1970), Redbook (Tavris & Sadd, 1973), and Sexual Behavior in the 1970s (Hunt, 1974). A welcome addition to the field is The Janus Report (Janus & Janus, 1993), which is described later in this chapter.

Marital sexual expression is a key element in determining levels of marital success, adjustment, and satisfaction. Theory-driven research is still needed which will shed new light on "the major location of sex for adults—the marital relationship" (Greenblat, 1983, p. 289).

### **Marital Quality**

During the 1970s and 1980s, marital quality was one of the most studied topics in the field of family studies (Berardo, 1990). Researchers guided by the Family Development–life cycle framework (Bretschneider & McCoy, 1988; Greenblat, 1983; Rubin & Adams, 1986; Turner & Adams, 1988) have defined and measured marital quality in terms of marital adjustment, satisfaction, happiness, intimacy, and even stability of the marital relationship (Hof, 1987; Patton & Waring, 1991).

Scales used to measure marital adjustment gather information about dyadic satisfaction, dyadic cohesion and intimacy, dyadic

consensus, affective communication, sexuality, problem-solving communication, conflict resolution, quality of leisure time together, identity, autonomy, compatibility, and expressiveness (Hof, 1987; Spanier, 1976). Research studies have continued to confirm the curvilinear relationship between family life stages and marital quality. Marital quality was higher in the preparental and postparental stages, and declined upon assumption of the parental role (Berardo, 1990).

### **Marital Sexual Relationships**

As has been previously stated, marital sexuality has been a neglected topic of study in family studies. The majority of studies have examined clinical therapy populations and then usually referenced sex in terms of sexual intercourse rates (Greenblat, 1983). With the exception of a few reports (referenced below), no studies have been found which examined the relationships between attitudes toward sex, actual sexual behaviors, sexual satisfaction, and marital satisfaction among a non-clinical religiously conservative married population.

Recent research has generally replicated the findings of Alfred Kinsey (reviewed in Brecher, 1979), who interviewed and collected information about sexual behavior from volunteer males and females during the 1940s and 1950s. These studies indicated

that over the past 30-40 years: 1) there has been little change in rates of marital sexual intercourse; 2) variance in coital rates cannot be accounted for by standard background variables (such as education, income, religion); and 3) there is a uniform decline in frequency of marital intercourse by age (Greenblat, 1983). This last finding has been challenged recently by Janus and Janus (1993).

#### Sex and Morality in the U.S.

The Kinsey Institute produced an extensive empirical study in 1989, Sex and Morality in the U.S., based on data collected from face-to-face interviews and self-report questionnaires during 1970 to discover whether there was in fact such a thing as a "Sexual Revolution" during the 1960s. The study authors (Klassen, Williams, & Levitt, 1989) developed serious disagreements during the early 1970s about presentation of their findings, and the study languished until 1988, when the Kinsey Institute commissioned O'Gorman to reorganize and edit the original study results (Klassen et al. 1989).

The Klassen study (Klassen et al., 1989) reported the respondents' feelings toward premarital and extramarital sex, homosexuality, and masturbation as sexual behaviors with moral overtones. The sample of 3,018, evenly divided between males and females, was randomly drawn by the National Opinion Research

Center and demonstrated to match closely the 1970 U.S. Census. In summary, the researchers found the sample to be extremely conservative: a majority disapproved of homosexuality, prostitution, extramarital sex, and most forms of premarital sex. Masturbation was disapproved of by 48% of the respondents. The study suggested that national sexual morality was in fact stable over time, and that while most persons held stern and moral views about sexual behavior, over 75% reported having enjoyable sex lives.

### The Hite Report

The Hite Report (1976) was sponsored by the National Organization of Women, and consisted of data collected from women during 1972-74. Respondents were volunteers who answered advertisements in magazines such as The Village Voice, Mademoiselle, Brides, Ms., and Oui, or heard about the study through women's advocacy groups, newsletters, and church bulletins. The study author distributed over 100,000 questionnaires, and just over 3,000 were returned (3% response rate). Four different questionnaires were used, only two of which asked about religious affiliation; none asked about the influence of religion on lifestyle. Of those asked, between 65% and 82% of the sample affiliated themselves with Catholic, Jewish, or Protestant churches, and 36% of the sample stated they were

married, but it is unknown how many of the religiously affiliated were married. No questions were asked about the influence of religious beliefs on sexual expression, although frequent comments connected childhood prohibitions regarding sexual behaviors with religious teachings.

### The Janus Report

The Janus Report on Sexual Behavior (Janus & Janus, 1993) is the most recent contribution to the field and may be the most comprehensive guide to sexual behavior ever produced. The married team of Cynthia Janus, M.D. and Samuel Janus, Ph.D, surveyed over 2700 persons, half of whom were married. Their data were collected during a 10 year time period, but early reviews of the data (Brenner, 1993) appear to exclude any relational assessment of the impact of religiosity on marital sexual behaviors.

### **Themes in Sex Research**

Current sex research appears to be focused toward gaining a better understanding of how different factors might explain, predict, or influence sexual expression. Five areas of influence emerged from the studies reviewed for this proposal: personality factors, time factors, biological factors, therapy and/or education, and marital form (i.e., sexually open/closed marriages). Findings are not reviewed since none of the studies

examined the influence on sex due to religion, nor did they examine or describe particular marital sexual behaviors.

### Personality Factors

Four studies examined the influence of personality factors on marital sexual satisfaction. Farley and Davis (1980) studied the influence of personality in marital sexual satisfaction among 102 married college couples, who were measured for three major personality dimensions: extraversion-introversion, neuroticism, and psychoticism. Wheeler & Kilmann (1983) contrasted individual and relationship variables of 35 married couples who engaged in comarital behaviors with those of 35 married monogamous couples. McCann and Biaggio (1989) examined the relationship between sexual satisfaction and the level of self-actualization/meaning of life among 48 married couples. Hurlbert (1991) investigated how the level of sexual assertiveness of married women effected differences in frequency of sexual activities, orgasm, sexual desire, and marital and sexual satisfaction. Finally, Jupp & McCabe (1989) conducted studies of the interrelationships among neuroticism, general arousability, sexual desire, and sexual dysfunction in women.

### Time Factors

An additional three studies investigated the influence of time factors on preferences for sexual activity. Greenblat (1983)

conducted telephone interviews with 80 married individuals who had been married less than 5 years to discover frequencies of sexual behaviors and any changes in frequency over the course of the marriage. Bretschneider and McCoy (1988) studied the sexual interests and behaviors of over 200 elderly persons living in retirement facilities, the majority of whom were no longer married. Turner and Adams (1988) examined how preferences for sexual activity changed over the adult years among 59 women and 40 men between the ages of 60 and 85, the majority of whom were still married.

#### Biological Factors

Two studies examined biological factors as a primary influence on sexual behavior. Bancroft (1984) examined differences in presenting complaints of males and females at a sex therapy clinic, noting the influence of effects of aging and physical handicap on sexual happiness. Morris, Udry, Khan-Dawood, and Dawood (1987) conducted a replication study of how testosterone levels in married women influenced the frequency of sexual intercourse among married couples.

#### Therapy and Education

The influence of therapy and/or education on sexual interaction and satisfaction was investigated in three studies. Hartman (1983) compared the outcomes of marital therapy and sex

therapy in levels of reported sexual satisfaction among couples who had complained of sexual difficulties in their relationships. O'Leary and Arias (1983) examined the influence of behavioral marital therapy on the sexual satisfaction of 44 married couples who were treated at a university marital therapy clinic. Nathan and Joanning (1985) evaluated a sexual enrichment program given to 18 college-age married couples, measuring the couples' sexual and marital satisfaction.

#### Marital Factors

The final study examined the influence of different marital forms and related sexual behaviors on marital stability. Rubin and Adams (1986) conducted a follow-up study of 82 matched couples to discover whether there were differences in marital stability between the sexually open and the sexually exclusive couples over a 5-year time period.

#### Lack of Related Research Findings

None of the studies described above reported influences due to religiosity, nor did any utilize in-depth data collection about sexual behaviors. Describing the nature of the interrelationships between the dimensions of these concepts will require more research, which to date has been very limited.

### Religion and the Family

Studies of the relationship between religion and the family have lagged behind other areas of family research (Berardo, 1990; Wilson & Filsinger, 1986) despite general agreement that there is a clear and positive relationship between religiosity, marital adjustment, and marital stability (Hatch, James & Schumm, 1986; Heaton & Pratt, 1990; Ortega, Whitt & William, 1988). Most studies have emphasized the importance of religion in providing a moral base which supported marital and family behavior, but studies are lacking which attempt to explain the long-documented positive relationship between religiosity and marital adjustment as research variables.

Recent research has focused on the relationships between various dimensions or subscales of the different variables, such as gender and marital intimacy (Patton & Waring, 1985), dimensions of religiosity and dyadic adjustment (Wilson & Filsinger, 1986), and sexual satisfaction as a function of life meaning (McCann & Biaggio, 1989). Researchers have also begun investigating the reciprocal influence of the individual and family culture on how one practices religion (Berardo, 1990). Thornton & Camburn (1989) argued that sexual attitudes and behaviors influenced religious involvement, producing strains in the relationship between the individual and the church.

Researching Religiosity

Researchers have attempted to deal with the question of what it means to be religious by measuring dimensions of religious experience, belief, and behavior. Experience often refers to whether the believers have sought and found a sense of forgiveness of their sins by God as well as the degree to which one feels spiritually empowered for daily living. Belief usually refers to personally held beliefs concerning theology, biblical teaching and amount of knowledge about spiritual and religious matters. Behavior is measured in terms of attendance at religious services, participation in organizational activities, and giving of money.

King and Hunt (1972, 1975, 1990) spent 25 years testing the hypothesis that religious behavior of Protestants and Catholics is multidimensional. After one preliminary and two replication studies, they concluded that the multidimensional hypothesis was supported, and further stated that all their populations were capable of being measured with the same set of religiosity dimensions (King & Hunt, 1990).

The dimensions of King and Hunt's scale included: 1) Creedal assent; 2) Devotionalism; 3) Church attendance; 4) Organizational activity; 5) Financial support; 6) Religious knowledge; 7) Orientation to growth and striving; 8) Extrinsic orientation; 9) Salience-behavior; and 10) Salience-cognition. Given the length

of the scale (98 items), it is rare to find researchers outside the field of Religious Studies using full religiosity scales such as the one developed by King and Hunt (1975).

Recent combinations of dimensions utilized in Family Studies included church attendance and importance of religion (Thorton & Camburn, 1989) for predicting adolescent sexual attitudes and behaviors; "Attendance", "Born again", "Fundamentalist", and "Forgiven of Sins" were partially correlated with measures of marital satisfaction by Hatch, James and Schumm (1986); Heaton and Pratt (1990) measured religious homogamy from dimensions of denominational affiliation, church attendance, and belief in the Bible; Wilson and Filsinger (1986) used a religiosity scale which measured religious ideology, religious experience, attendance/giving, biblical knowledge, and morality to examine interrelationships between the dimensions of religiosity and dyadic adjustment; and Ortega, Whitt and William (1988) defined religious homogamy on the basis of denominational affiliation and respondent attendance at religious services the week prior to the study.

The present study utilized a religiosity scale developed by Rohrbaugh and Jessor (1975). The scale incorporates the four religiosity dimensions conceptualized by Glock (1959), and utilizes wording intended to minimize reference to the doctrines

of any specific religion (Rohrbaugh & Jessor, 1975). The content areas of the scale and validation studies are described in the Instrumentation section of Chapter III which covers the research design and methodology of the study.

#### Religion and Marital Sexuality

For literally thousands of years, the universal christian church and its leaders have struggled with matters of sensuality. Ambivalence has been commonplace due to contrasting beliefs that senses are good as created by God, but "the senses may lead the Christian down the broad road to sin, hell, and damnation." (Synnot, 1991, p. 64).

One famous church leader, Augustine, reflected this ambivalence in his teachings, referring on the one hand to his senses as channels through which the glory of God is experienced, and on the other hand as occasions of sin, and dangerous. His conflict was reflected in his prayer "give me chastity and continence, but not yet" (in Synnot, 1991, p. 67). Augustine's contemporary, Jerome, who lacked this ambivalence, praised marriages only because they bore virgins. Jerome insisted that "all sexual intercourse is unclean" (Synnot, 1991, p. 67), and ultimately (and unfortunately!) the early christian church institutionalized the ascetic tradition of renunciation of sensual gratification and the mortification of the flesh.

The impact of Judeo-Christian religious culture and the Victorian tradition upon Western sexual mores during the past 100 years cannot be overstated. Studies about male and female sexuality by Kinsey, Pomeroy, Wardell, and Martin (1948) and Kinsey, Pomeroy, Martin, Wardell, and Gebhard (1953) were some of the first to point out the impact of religion on sexuality (Brecher, 1979). Kinsey et al. (1948, 1953) generally found that religion served to limit and channel erotic behavior. Total sexual outlet in both males and females was negatively correlated with religious orthodoxy; total sexual outlet positively correlated with increases in religious inactivity.

Klassen et al. (1989), in their study of morality, found that religious affiliation strongly influenced one's sexual norms. Fundamentalist Protestants were the most conservative of their study respondents (including Catholics and Jews), but were only moderately more conservative than the sample as a whole. Klassen et al. (1989) also found that the great majority of the sample had maintained the religious affiliation of their childhood into their adulthood. The majority did not change their religion, while those that did change tended to move into more liberal ways of thinking. Religious devoutness and strength of convictions were the most powerful factors influencing morality.

Marital sexuality has been addressed more recently within

the religious setting by academicians and counseling professionals. It is commonplace to hear and read advertisements for Marital Enrichment Seminars in churches throughout the United States. Various church denominations sponsor training programs developed by religious and professional counselors (i.e., James Dobson/Focus on the Family, Brecheen & Faulkner/Marriage Enrichment Weekends, Tim & Beverly LaHaye). Christian bookstores are sources for dissemination of religiously-based reading and training materials for the lay audience. The main piece of information missing in the field of Religious Marital & Family Studies is the empirical data collection which will indicate that change of sexual attitudes and/or behaviors is or is not occurring among the religiously conservative.

### **Summary of Research**

The study of the relationship between religiosity and marital sexuality has been neglected, or has been unfruitful for researchers. Little is known about the interrelationships among dimensions of the variables called marital satisfaction and sexual satisfaction as they relate to religiosity. Researchers have demonstrated the positive correlation between religiosity, marital satisfaction, and marital adjustment, but the reasons for this relationship are not yet determined.

**CHAPTER III****METHODOLOGY****Overview of Research Design**

This study utilized a survey research design (Isaac & Michael, 1977; Bailey, 1987) employing a mailed questionnaire (see Appendix D for questionnaire) to collect data describing the sexual attitudes and behaviors of respondents. Respondents were selected randomly from the alumni catalog of a private, conservative, church-affiliated, four-year, liberal arts university. The questionnaire was constructed from validated items in questionnaires used previously by researchers (Darling & Davidson, 1987) to collect information about the sexual attitudes and behaviors of college students, nursing students, and nurses. The questionnaire included both structured and semi-structured questions, and was pilot-tested prior to mailing.

**Description of Sample and Selection Process**

The sample of married individuals was chosen randomly from the alumni catalog of a four-year liberal arts university located in central Arkansas. The university's conservative religious focus and mission have changed very little over the past 20 years. (See Appendix for comparison of 1974 and 1992 mission statements.)

### Sample Description

Students who attend the selected university typically are members of conservative Protestant churches, especially the churches of Christ. Concerning sexual attitudes and sexual behaviors, it is common for members of the churches of Christ to believe and teach that:

God designed sex for marriage....The church stands as a counter-culture now more than ever in America. We need the strength and encouragement of other Christians to hold up God's ideal of abstinence before marriage and fidelity in marriage....We must hold up this ideal, proclaim it lovingly, yet loudly, and live it out before our children [italics added] (Allen & Allen, 1992, p. C-5).

### Sample Selection

The researcher purposively chose 25 class years from more than 50 that were listed in the 1990 Alumni Catalog of the selected university. The selected class years ranged from 1937 to 1990 (Table 27). These years were chosen to enable collection of information from alumni of multiple age cohorts.

Based on a chart of random numbers (Bailey, 1987), three males and three females were chosen randomly from each of the 25 class years. These 150 potential participants were sent a packet

of information (see Appendix E) which included a letter of introduction, a brief description of the research questionnaire, an informed consent form, and a self-addressed stamped envelope. The researcher chose not to do repeat mailings to the first sample because of a desire not to offend or pressure alumni. Because of the low response rate of the first mailing, a second set of invitation letters was sent one month later to 100 males and 100 females who were selected randomly in identical fashion to the first 150. Criteria for participation included 1) attendance at the university for at least three semesters, and 2) in one's current marriage at least 3 years.

### **Instrumentation**

Data for this study were collected by means of a mailed self-report questionnaire. The questionnaire content was developed from several other questionnaires which have been used by researchers collecting data on sexuality (Darling & Davidson, 1987), religiosity (Rohrbaugh & Jessor, 1975), marital conventionality (Edmonds, 1967), and marital satisfaction (Hatch, James, & Schumm, 1986).

### **Measuring Sexuality**

Questionnaire items for describing sexual attitudes and behaviors (Appendix D) were obtained by modifying survey

instruments developed by Davidson (Darling & Davidson, 1987; Davidson & Moore, 1991; 1992). Davidson's research has focused on sexual attitudes and behaviors of college students and post-college age women (Davidson & Moore, 1991). These instruments have been in use and constantly refined since the early 1970s by Davidson and his colleagues. Because they have been used primarily with nonmarried populations, item content or wording was changed to more appropriately address the married respondents of the present study.

The questionnaire consisted of structured and semi-structured items which collected nominal, ordinal and interval data. The first section of the questionnaire collected general demographic information including age, gender, ethnicity, marital history, and socioeconomic data such as career information, income level, and so forth. The next section contained more specific questions about sexual attitudes and behaviors prior to and after marriage. These questions asked about the respondent's experience with and attitudes about masturbation, petting, intercourse and orgasm. The questionnaire concluded with questions about extramarital sexual experiences, history of sexual abuse, overall marital and sexual satisfaction, sexual conservatism, marital conventionality, and open-ended questions about what had been most and least helpful for improving marital sexuality.

### Measuring Religiosity

Religiosity was reported descriptively and also as a score obtained from a multidimensional religiosity scale developed by Rohrbaugh and Jessor (1975). The Religiosity scale yielded scores ranging from 0–32, with higher scores meaning greater religiosity.

### Marital Conventionalality

Marital conventionality was measured by the Edmonds Marital Conventionality Scale (Edmonds, 1967). Controlling for conventionality is one means of evaluating the likelihood that respondents will answer questions in expected directions (faking good or bad). Given the sensitive sexual content of the study, it was possible that highly religious persons might have their responses skewed by conventionality influences. The Edmonds scale has been used to control for and explain extraneous variable influence in studies dealing with marital adjustment and conservatism (Edmonds, Withers, & Dibatista, 1972).

### Marital Satisfaction

Marital satisfaction was reported descriptively using the Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale (KMSS) developed by Hatch, James, and Schumm (1986). The KMSS consists of three questions about satisfaction with husband/wife as spouse, satisfaction level with marriage, and satisfaction level with current relationship

with spouse. The three questions of the KMSS were located in different sections of the research questionnaire to avoid confusion about the meaning of their wording. The items have correlated in the .80s and .90s with other measures of marital adjustment (Hatch, James, & Schumm, 1986).

#### Protection of Human Subjects From Undue Risk

A study which collects information about sexuality, and particularly sexual behaviors which may be considered immoral and/or illegal in some jurisdictions, creates the potential for putting study participants at risk. Furthermore, focusing a study such as the one proposed on a population expected to be highly religious raises the probability of embarrassing and offending the prospective respondents before they even have a chance to answer questions. This study was presented to and approved by the Institutional Review Board of the Research Division of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.

#### **Pilot Study**

The researcher mailed the questionnaire to several married individuals who attended conservative church-affiliated universities. These respondents were asked to complete the questionnaire, critique the form for ease of reading and

understanding, stylistic problems, or redundant content, and return it by mail in the provided postage-paid envelope. Minor changes in format and wording of the questionnaire were made prior to using it with the study sample. Changes included dropping some questions about homosexual behaviors, orgasmic experience, and anal intercourse, as these were found to be particularly invasive and/or offensive to pilot study participants. Questions were added to allow description of income levels and occupations of participants.

#### Data Collection Procedures

Information packets (see appendix C) were sent to 350 persons, 40 of which were returned due to incorrect addresses. From the 310 invitation packets mailed and assumed received, 112 were returned. Minimal information was requested from those persons who returned the consent form unsigned and chose not to participate. Of the 112 responses, 11 did not meet the study criteria (not presently married), 35 declined to participate for various reasons, and 69 returned signed consent forms agreeing to participate.

After returning the signed consent form, the 69 respondents were sent a self-administered questionnaire with directions for completing the questionnaire. Respondents were instructed to

complete the questionnaires in private with no discussion until the questionnaire had been returned by mail. A self-addressed stamped return envelope was provided for return of the completed questionnaire.

A total of 56 completed questionnaires were returned to the researcher, all of which were usable, which represented a total response rate of 19% (56 out of 299).

Table 1a

Response Rates by Stage of Research

---

36% (112 of 310) returned forms to researcher

23% (69 of 299) agreed to participate

19% (56 of 299) returned usable questionnaires

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### **Analysis of Data**

Analysis of data included use of descriptive statistics and qualitative analysis of open-ended responses of participants. The questionnaire response sets were designed for immediate input into the researcher's personal computer. Analysis of quantitative data was run on Anderson Bell Statistical Software (Anderson-Bell, 1989).

## Chapter IV

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Study results were described in terms of percent responding to various items, as well as the total n for various data when meaningful. Sometimes percentages are given cumulatively, thus totalling over or under 100%. Concerning statistical analyses, the probability level (p) was provided when levels reached statistical significance for both correlation and regression analysis.

#### **Demographics**

Of those invited to participate, 36% (112 out of 310) returned the response form in the self-addressed stamped envelope, while the others (198 out of 310) chose not to respond. Ten percent (n=11, of 112) of those who responded were not eligible for the study. Of those qualified alumni who responded initially, 69 of 299 (23%) returned a signed informed consent form and agreed to complete the research questionnaire. Almost one fifth (56 of 299, 19%) of the alumni contacted completed and returned the questionnaire.

#### Nonparticipants

The 56 who returned demographic data but declined to participate represented a diverse cross section of the sample (see Table 1, Appendix). Eleven did not indicate their age; two were

in their twenties, nine were in their thirties, 9 were in their forties, 9 were in their fifties, 10 were in their sixties, and 6 were in their seventies. Concerning gender, 33 were females, 21 were males, and 2 didn't share their gender. The nonparticipants were from class years ranging from the 1930s to the 1980s (Table 27, Appendix).

#### Reasons for Not Participating

Reasons for not participating (see Table 2, Appendix) included: 1) the questionnaire was too personal (n=9, 16%), 2) not interested or no reason given (n=20, 36%), 3) too busy to participate (n=6, 11%), 4) didn't meet the qualifying criteria (n=11, 20%), and 5) unknown—failed to return the questionnaire (n=10, 18%).

Measures of association were conducted for gender, age, class year, and reasons given for not participating (Table 2, Appendix). For females, the reason given for non-participation was negatively correlated with age (-.251) and class year (-.552,  $p < .01$ ). For males, the the reason given for non-participation was negatively correlated with age (-.385,  $p < .01$ ) and class year (-.635,  $p < .01$ ). This meant that as age increased, nonparticipants were more likely to decline participation in the study on the basis of the research content being too personal, a lack of interest in the research, or for reasons they were

unwilling to share. Interestingly, as class year increased (age decreased), respondents were also more likely to decline on the basis of the research content being too personal, a lack of interest in the research, or for reasons they were unwilling to share.

#### Questionnaire Respondents

Of the 69 questionnaires sent, 56 were completed and returned to the researcher. Participants were 54% female and 46% male, mostly Caucasian, protestant, heterosexual, and middle-to-upper-middle income. Respondents ranged in age from 29 to 83, with a mean age of 46. The oldest class year represented was 1937, while the most recent was 1986 (see Table 27, Appendix). Respondents had been married an average of 22 years (range of 4-54 years), and 90% were still in their first and only marital relationship, while 10% (n=6) had been widowed or divorced and remarried. One of the remarried reported cohabiting prior to remarrying.

Table 3

Sample Characteristics

	Female (n=30)	Male (n=26)	Total (N=56)
Gender (%)	54	46	100
Age group (%)			
29-39 years	40	27	34
40-49 years	27	23	25
50-59 years	23	23	23
60-69 years	10	19	14
70-79 years	0	4	2
80-89 years	0	4	2
Race: (%)			
Caucasian	93	100	96
Native American	7	0	4
African American	0	0	0
Hispanic	0	0	0
Sexual Orientation: (%)			
Heterosexual	100	100	100
Homosexual	0	0	0
Bisexual	0	0	0
Years Married:			
Mean	20.1	25.1	22.4
SD	11.2	15.3	13.4
Range	4-42	5-54	4-54
Education: (%)			
Associate's	10	4	7
Bachelor's	60	42	52
Master's	27	31	29
Doctoral	3	15	9
other (EdS, etc.)	0	8	4

Table 3, continued

Sample Characteristics

	Female (n=30)	Male (n=26)	Total (N=56)
Occupation: (%)			
Tech-professional	13	38	25
Teacher	27	8	18
Skilled trade	10	15	13
Healthcare	13	8	11
Homemaker	17	0	9
Minister	0	8	4
Office worker	3	4	4
Salesperson	3	0	2
Unemployed	0	8	4
Retired	13	12	13
# paid work hours/week: (%)			
0	20	19	20
1-10	13	4	9
11-20	13	0	7
21-39	20	0	11
40-49	30	31	30
50-61	3	46	23
Mean	22.7	37.7	
SD	17.7	21.3	
Range	0-50	0-61	
Total Family Income (%)			
\$20,001-\$30,000	13	4	9
\$30,001-\$40,000	17	27	21
\$40,001-\$50,000	17	19	18
\$50,001-\$60,000	23	12	18
over \$60,000	27	35	30
# of children: (%)			
None	13	0	
One	0	8	
Two	50	54	
Three	17	27	
Four	10	4	
Five	10	8	

Table 3, continued

Sample Characteristics

	Female(n=30)	Male(n=26)	Total (N=56)
Community type: (%)			
While growing up:			
Urban			39
Rural			36
Mix of both			25
Living today:			
Urban			63
Rural			21
Mix of both			16
Family-of-Origin			
# of siblings: (%)			
None	0	8	
One	20	12	
Two	30	31	
Three	40	12	
Four	0	15	
Five+	10	23	
Birth order: (%)			
Only child	0	8	
1st born	37	39	
2nd oldest	37	27	
3rd oldest	10	8	
4th oldest	10	8	
other	6	10	
Church Raised In: (%)			
Church of Christ	87	81	
Baptist	7	8	
Methodist	3	8	
Lutheran	0	4	
None	3	0	

### Findings by Research Question

1. What are the attitudes of religiously conservative, married individuals toward various sexual behaviors?

Concerning attitudes, morality and sexuality, what one defines as conservative or liberal is related to one's beliefs, values and standards. Researchers (Klassen et al. 1989; Reiss, 1967) have attempted to objectify the subjectivity of morality, often by asking respondents to state their beliefs about whether certain sexual behaviors are felt to be right or wrong. The range of responses may be referred to as a scale of sexual morality (Klassen et al. 1989) or sexual permissiveness (Reiss, 1967).

In this study, respondents were asked to agree or disagree with a series of statements about sexual behaviors and relationships (Table 4, Appendix). Their responses were conservative in nature, in that the majority disapproved of cohabitation, premarital sexual intercourse, homosexuality, and anal intercourse. Over half of the men (62%) thought it was important to marry a virgin, but less than half of the women (43%) agreed.

The majority (70% of females, 92% of males) of respondents agreed that both spouses should experience orgasm most of the time they have sexual intercourse. The majority (80% of females, 85%

of males) agreed that oral-genital stimulation between spouses was an acceptable sexual behavior, although only a small percentage engage in the practice very frequently.

A majority (70%) agreed that it was acceptable for married persons to masturbate alone, but many respondents (43% of women, 85% of men) gave reasons why they personally did not masturbate alone, and reported that 87% of women and 50% of men masturbate alone less than once a month. These data were especially interesting in light of later behavioral reports by both sexes of much higher frequencies of masturbation (see Tables 10 & 11, Appendix).

The differences between feelings about masturbation and actual reported practices may be reflective of the fact that for generations it has been common in churches to teach that masturbation was wrong both in and out of marriage. It is still common to observe parents reacting with shock and embarrassment when their toddlers self-stimulate in public. Early ideas are thus conveyed to children about pleasurable behaviors being considered embarrassing, bad, dirty, unnatural, or signs of developing promiscuity. Some may believe masturbation wrong because it deprives the spouse of a mutual sexual experience. [For a short summary of historical religious injunctions against masturbation and other sexual behaviors, see Kinsey et al. 1948,

and Klassen et al. 1989, chapters 13 and 12 respectively.]

2. What are the sexual behaviors engaged in by conservative religious individuals?

Several measures of sexual behaviors were collected. The first checklist asked respondents to check off all the petting or foreplay behaviors in which they had engaged with any person of the opposite sex before they were married. Respondents were later asked to check off the current petting/foreplay behaviors in which they engaged with their spouse. Petting behaviors were characterized as either those behaviors one had received or had done to them, or those behaviors one had performed or given to another. Finally, respondents indicated in checklist format the frequency of sexual behaviors with their spouse or alone, ranging from daily behaviors to those engaged in monthly, a few times annually, or never.

Premarital Sexual Behaviors

Prior to marriage, a large majority of men and women had tongue kissed and had their covered breasts/chest area fondled by the opposite sex (see Table 5, Appendix). A majority of men and women reported their genitals had been caressed, both clothed (70%) and unclothed (55%). Over one-third of men (35%) and over

one-fourth of women (27%) had received oral-genital stimulation prior to marriage, and practically the same percentages (35% and 20%, respectively) had given oral-genital stimulation.

Concerning behaviors performed on another person of the opposite sex, half of the women (50%) and over three fourths (85%) of men fondled another's covered breasts/chest area. Over one-third of women (40%) had fondled or kissed a man's bare chest area, while over half the men (58%) had fondled or kissed a woman's bare breasts. A majority of men and women had manually stimulated another person's genitals, both covered and bare; 20% of women and 35% of men had given oral-genital stimulation. Engaging in intercourse movements while clothed was experienced by 65% of men and 60% of women; however, there was no reported incidence of intercourse movements unclothed, nor was there any reported incidence of sexual contact with two or more people simultaneously.

#### Same Sex Experiences

A total of 11% of the respondents reported they had engaged in petting/foreplay behaviors with a person of the same sex with the intent of sexual arousal and/or experiencing orgasm (see Table 6, Appendix). Seven percent (n=2) of women and 15% (n=4) of men stated they had sexual contact with a person of the same sex. Four of the seven indicated the behavior occurred between

themselves and other same-age peers during adolescence. One reported that genital fondling behavior was forced on him by an older cousin, and two gave no clarification about the behaviors in which they had engaged. All respondents reported they identified their sexual orientation as heterosexual.

#### First Sexual Intercourse

The mean age of females and males at the time of first sexual intercourse was 22 and 20, respectively, with a range of 15 years to 42 years for females and 15 to 28 for males. The mean age of the first-time sex partner was 25 for females and 22 for males (see Table 7, Appendix).

For women, 17% experienced their first sexual intercourse in a steady dating/committed love relationship, 27% with their fiancée, and 57% with their spouse after marriage. For men, 28% had their first sex with a casual friend, relative of a friend, or a prostitute, 20% in a steady dating/committed love relationship, 12% with their fiancée, and 42% with their spouse after marriage (see Table 8, Appendix).

All respondents indicated they had sexual intercourse the first time after having given verbal or implied consent to their sex partner. Half of the women reported first-time intercourse was satisfying both physically and emotionally. Thirty percent said the first time was unsatisfying emotionally, and 20% said it

was unsatisfying physically. Over 80% of men said the first time was satisfying physically, and almost 75% said it was satisfying emotionally. The majority of respondents reported no guilt feelings about their first sexual experiences (see Table 9, Appendix).

#### Postmarital Sexual Behaviors

After marriage, a large majority of both husbands and wives reported participating in virtually all the petting behaviors listed previously (Table 5, Appendix). Moderate variations were reported in incidences of breast stimulation, with husbands more likely to stimulate their wife's breasts, but wives not as likely to stimulate their husband's breast/chest area. More women (70%) than men (62%) reported receiving oral-genital stimulation, with virtually equal numbers of men (69%) and women (67%) indicating they gave oral-genital stimulation to their spouse (although the frequency is relatively low in comparison to other petting behaviors). Less than one fifth of couples indicated they engage in manual stimulation of the anal area. Less than half reported giving or receiving full body massage. Finally, a few respondents indicated they used erotic magazines, books, or movies as a form of foreplay, and two females mentioned using vibrators to masturbate alone and also with their spouses during mutual stimulation (the research questionnaire accidentally omitted

direct questions about the use of vibrators or other pleasure-giving paraphernalia).

#### Frequency of Sex Behaviors

Most men and women reported kissing and hugging daily, and petting/caressing behaviors three to five times weekly. The majority of women under age 39 have intercourse two or three times weekly, while the majority of those age 39 to 59 have intercourse one to three times weekly (see Table 10, Appendix). The same rates were reported by the men. One third of women in their sixties had intercourse weekly, one third monthly, and one third reported never having intercourse anymore. All men stated they had intercourse at least once a month, with the majority reporting weekly intercourse (see Table 10, Appendix).

#### Oral-Genital Stimulation

Most women (56-67%) aged 29 to 59 received oral-genital stimulation between one and four times monthly (Table 10). One third of women in their sixties received oral-genital stimulation a few times a year, the rest never. This concurred with the report of about one third of the men ages 29-59 who said they gave oral-genital stimulation 1-3 times monthly. The majority of men age 50-70 gave oral-genital stimulation once a month or less, with those over 70 reporting no incidence.

A third of men between ages 29 and 59 said they received

oral sex 1-3 times monthly. One third of women ages 29-59 said they gave oral-genital stimulation 1-3 times weekly, and over half in this age range reported giving oral-genital stimulation to their spouse at least 1-3 times monthly. The great majority of men ages 29-69 reported receiving oral-genital stimulation a few times annually or less. Eighty percent of men in their 60s and 100% of those in their 70s said they never received oral-genital sex. Over half the women in their 50s never gave oral-genital stimulation, while one third of women in their 60s gave stimulation a few times a year, and the other two thirds said "never."

The comparisons of giving and receiving sexually between men and women brings to mind the lines in a Hollywood movie in which the man said he "hardly gets any-only 2-3 times weekly" while his wife said "all the time...2-3 times weekly". This tendency was reported by Kinsey et al. (1953), who noted that males tended to under-report frequency of sexual activities, while women tended to over-report frequencies of sexual behaviors.

#### Masturbation

Even though 43% of women and 85% of men gave reasons why they did not masturbate alone, a majority of men and women said they thought it was okay for married persons to masturbate alone. Therefore it was not surprising that of men in their 30s, 28% said

they masturbated alone 2-5 times weekly, and nearly half said they masturbated 1-3 times monthly. Half of the men in their 40s masturbated 1-3 times weekly, while a third of those in their 50s masturbated 2-5 times weekly and another half did so 2-4 times monthly. Almost half of men in their 60s masturbated 1-4 times monthly, and those in their 70s once monthly or less (Table 11).

For women ages 29-59, over one third masturbated 1-3 times weekly. Over half of women age 30-60 masturbated once a month or less, and over half of those age 50-70 reported never masturbating (Table 10, Appendix).

#### Pornographic Magazines and Movies

None of the women reported any use of pornographic literature, and several wrote their concerns and complaints about how such reading helped create unrealistic expectations for appearance and sexual behaviors and contributed to women being viewed as sex objects instead of persons. Between 17-43% of men reported viewing this type of magazine a few times a year, with most aged 29-39.

One woman in her 30s and almost one-third of women age 50-59 reported viewing sexually explicit movies with their spouses a few times a year (Table 10, appendix). Fifteen percent of men age 30-50 said they viewed such movies a few times annually, while one third of men age 50-59 reported viewing the same (Table 11).

### Frequency of Orgasm

Forty percent of women and 81% percent of men experienced their first orgasm while masturbating, while 23% and 12% experienced orgasm from petting, respectively. Another 30% of women experienced their first orgasm during vaginal/penile intercourse (see Table 12, Appendix).

Behaviors which frequently or almost always resulted in orgasm for women included vaginal/penile intercourse (60%), receiving oral-genital stimulation (40%), masturbating (33%), petting (24%), and manual clitoral stimulation by spouse (13%) (see Table 13, Appendix). Behaviors reported by men as frequently or almost always resulting in orgasm were vaginal/penile intercourse (97%), masturbation (69%), receiving oral-genital stimulation (12%), giving oral-genital stimulation (8%), and dreams (4%) (Table 14, Appendix).

When asked whether their spouse asks if they experienced orgasm during intercourse, 57% of women and 73% of men said rarely or never. Twenty percent of women and 27% of men said their spouse always asked. It was unclear whether the asking behavior reflected spousal concern for the other being satisfied sexually or whether it reflected some degree of anxiety about being able to please one's spouse. Several made written comments suggesting that asking wasn't necessary because of the magnitude of the

physical and/or emotional release at the time of orgasm.

Asked if they pretended to orgasm, 97% of women and 100% of men said rarely or never. Only 3% of women said they sometimes pretend (Table 15, Appendix).

#### Extramarital Sexual Behavior

Only 3% of women reported ever having extramarital sexual contact, in contrast to 27% of males (Table 16, Appendix). Seven percent of the women and 15% of the men reported they have never told their spouse about either their premarital or extramarital sexual behaviors.

### 3. How satisfied are respondents with their marital sexuality?

Satisfaction with marital sexuality was reported in several ways. Respondents reported which sexual behaviors they would prefer more often, as well as which behaviors they believed their spouse would like more often. Answers reflected areas of good as well as problematic communication concerning the marital sexual relationship. Respondents also rated their current level of comfort with their sexuality. Finally, respondents were asked to describe their level of satisfaction with physical and emotional aspects of their marital sexual relationship.

#### Sex Behaviors Preferred More Often

Half of the females said they would like more kissing, hugging, petting and caressing (Table 17, Appendix). Half of the males also said they would like more of the same behaviors with their wives! However, the women said only 23% of their husbands would like more demonstrative expression of affection, while half of the men believed their spouses would prefer increased display of affection. What seems unclear is what prevents the men from acting on their desire for increased hugs and kisses since they also believe their spouse wants the same.

One third of women said they would like intercourse more often, and half stated they thought their spouse wanted intercourse more often. Over two-thirds of men (69%) said they would like intercourse more often, but only a fourth of men believed their spouse would like more intercourse. For the females in their 30s, one-fourth said they would like to receive more oral-genital stimulation. This same age group believed 58% of their spouses would like more as well. None of the women age 40-70 wanted more oral-genital stimulation, but most thought their husbands would like it more. The males' responses corroborated this belief - 65% across all age groups said they would like to receive more oral-genital stimulation. The males in their 30s and 40s were also perceptive in believing about 15% of their spouses would like more as well (see Table 18 & Table 17). Almost half

the males said they would like to give more oral-genital stimulation; however, the female respondents did not share the same level of interest in giving as they had for receiving.

#### Comfort Level With Sexuality

Regardless of the behaviors they would like more often, 80% of females and 88% of males described themselves as almost always or always comfortable with their sexuality (see Table 19 below). Lower levels of comfort were reported by women in the younger age ranges, whereas older men were more likely to report discomfort with their sexuality.

#### Overall Satisfaction With Marital Sexuality

Almost three-fourths of females (73%) and the same percentage of males (77%) reported they were satisfied with both the physical and emotional aspects of their sexual relationships (Table 20, Appendix). Between 10% and 20% said they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, while 8% were dissatisfied with the physical and 12-17% were dissatisfied with the emotional component of their marital sexual relationship. Asked to rate their overall sexual relationship with their spouses, 73% of females and 77% of males were satisfied-very satisfied, 17% of females and 8% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, and 10% of females and 15% of males were dissatisfied.

4. What is the relationship between age, gender, length of marriage, and sexual satisfaction?

Some people might assume that sexual satisfaction varies as a function of age and length of marriage, believing that familiarity, improved communication, and maturity might account for increased sexual satisfaction. Or, others might assume that sexual satisfaction could decrease as older spouses become more set in their ways and cease to experiment or communicate about sex. Therefore, the above question was addressed through correlational analysis.

Measures of association were completed on the variables gender, age, length of marriage and overall sexual satisfaction (see Table 21, Appendix). The obtained  $r$  values were  $-.040$ ,  $.084$ , and  $.242$  respectively. Gender proved to be a meaningless variable, in that it was a nominal variable; the negative correlational simply indicated that males were coded with a higher value integer. Males tended to report slightly higher levels of sexual satisfaction than females, and low scores on sexual satisfaction meant higher levels of sexual satisfaction, which explains the weak negative correlation for gender. Age was weakly and positively associated with sexual satisfaction, indicating that as age increased, sexual satisfaction was likely to slightly

increase. Years married was more strongly and positively correlated to sexual satisfaction, which reflected that younger spouses were perhaps less settled maritally and sexually due to child-rearing, career stresses, and work fatigue, all of which became less significant factors for older respondents.

5. What is the relationship between sexual behaviors and level of religiosity?

Correlational analysis was completed with premarital and marital sexual behavior variables and religiosity (Table 23, Appendix). As will be noted in the discussion below, higher levels of religiosity tended to be negatively associated with premarital sexual behaviors, and was mixed in its association with marital sexual behaviors.

Premarital Sexual Behaviors and Religiosity

Overall, there was weak negative correlation between premarital sexual behaviors and religiosity, meaning that as religiosity increased, incidences of behaviors decreased. Only three measures of association were significant for religiosity and premarital sexual behaviors (Table 22, Appendix). These included receiving oral-genital stimulation ( $-.317, p < .05$ ), kissing another's bare breasts/chest area ( $-.286, p < .05$ ), and giving

oral-genital stimulation ( $-.288, p < .05$ ). Some previous research has supported the existence of technical virginity among religiously conservative populations. Several studies (Allen & Allen, 1992; Darling & Davidson, 1987; Lewis, Dodd, & Tippens, 1989) have reported on the incidence of petting and other forms of sexual contact exclusive of sexual intercourse which occurs when young people are taught while growing up to abstain from premarital sex in order to not be guilty of sins of the flesh. Unfortunately, premarital sex may often be narrowly defined as sexual intercourse. With such absolutist thinking, it follows that one can satisfy sexual appetites through kissing, petting, and oral-genital contact, and still technically be considered a virgin on the wedding day. The present research found weak support for this premise, in that religiosity was negatively associated with all incidences of premarital sexual behavior.

#### Marital Sexual Behaviors and Religiosity

Overall, there were mixed associations between religiosity and marital sexual behaviors (Table 23). Several sexual behaviors were positively correlated with religiosity, including receiving kissing ( $.343, p < .05$ ), petting ( $.313, p < .05$ ), vaginal-penile intercourse, receiving oral-genital stimulation, giving oral-genital stimulation, and asking if spouse had orgasm. As religiosity increased, these behaviors were likely to also

increase.

Several behaviors were negatively associated with religiosity, including masturbating alone ( $-.297, p < .05$ ), watching sex videos ( $-.322, p < .05$ ), pretending to orgasm, and reading sex magazines alone or with spouse. At face value, these correlations portrayed higher levels of religiosity as more connected with interactional intimacy and physical expression toward one's spouse, and less toward sexual expression in private and isolated ways.

In summary, religiosity was negatively correlated with all premarital sexual behaviors, positively correlated with intimate interactional behaviors, and negatively associated with isolating and objectifying behaviors.

6. What is the relationship between sexual behaviors and overall sexual satisfaction?

Measures of association were calculated for overall sexual satisfaction and premarital/marital sexual behaviors. Overall sexual satisfaction as a dependent variable was also regressed on the significant marital sexual behaviors.

Marital Sexual Behaviors

All marital sexual behaviors except one were positively correlated with sexual satisfaction. Five measures of association were statistically significant at  $p < .05$  (Table 23, Appendix)

including mutual kissing and hugging (.335), mutual petting and caressing (.360,  $p < 0.01$ ), vaginal/penile intercourse (.364,  $p < 0.01$ ), receiving oral-genital stimulation (.391,  $p < 0.01$ ), and giving oral-genital stimulation (.326). Positive but statistically non-significant correlations were found for masturbation, viewing sex magazines alone and together with spouse, watching sex movies, and pretending to experience orgasm. Asking whether one's spouse had experienced an orgasm was negatively correlated with overall sexual satisfaction.

#### Multiple Regression Analysis

Overall sexual satisfaction as the dependent variable was regressed on the five above-mentioned marital sexual behaviors, including mutual kissing/hugging, petting/caressing, sexual intercourse, giving oral-genital stimulation, and receiving oral-genital stimulation (Table 24, Appendix). The regression analysis yielded a coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) of .251, indicating the combined effect of the sexual behaviors accounted for 25% of the variance in sexual satisfaction,  $F(5,50) = 3.358$ ,  $p < .05$ . Sexual intercourse (Beta = .153,  $F(5,50) = 1.66$ ) and receiving oral-genital stimulation (Beta = .176,  $F(5,50) = 2.55$ ,  $p < .05$ ) accounted for significant portions of the variance.

#### Premarital Sexual Behaviors

Slightly over half of the premarital sexual behaviors were

positively correlated with overall sexual satisfaction (Table 22, Appendix). It is interesting that those premarital behaviors which were negatively correlated included tongue kissing, receiving oral-genital stimulation, fondling another's bare breasts, kissing another's bare breasts, giving oral-genital stimulation, and simulating intercourse movements while clothed. Most of these are the behaviors which would still allow one to claim technical virginity. None of the premarital behaviors was statistically significant in correlation to overall sexual satisfaction.

In summary, kissing, petting, sexual intercourse, receiving oral-genital stimulation, and giving oral-genital stimulation were all positively correlated with overall sexual satisfaction. Petting, intercourse and receiving oral-genital stimulation had the strongest correlations, while intercourse and receiving oral-genital stimulation accounted for the largest portions of variance in sexual satisfaction ratings.

7. What is the relationship between religiosity, conventionality, and marital satisfaction?

Correlational analyses were completed for religiosity, conventionality, and marital satisfaction (Table 23, Appendix).

Religiosity was negatively correlated with conventionality (-.062) and positively correlated with marital satisfaction (.174), both at statistically non-significant levels. The statistically significant correlation between conventionality and marital satisfaction was positive (.495,  $p < .01$ ).

Simple regression analysis was conducted with marital satisfaction as the dependent variable regressed on religiosity (see Table 25, Appendix). The analysis yielded a multiple correlation coefficient of .174 and an  $R^2$  value of only .030, Beta = .027,  $F(1,54) = 1.69$  which was statistically non-significant at  $p < .05$ .

Marital satisfaction as the dependent variable was regressed on conventionality, yielding a multiple correlation coefficient of .495,  $R^2 = .245$ , Beta = .013,  $F(1,54) = 17.51$ ,  $p < .01$ . This F value indicated that conventionality explained almost 25% of the variance in overall marital satisfaction of respondents.

In summary, level of religiosity had no significant influence on level of marital satisfaction. Conventionality was more likely to explain the variance in levels of marital satisfaction than was religiosity. The variance was likely to be positively directed; that is, the higher one scored on the marital conventionalization scale, the higher the overall marital satisfaction was likely to be.

8. What is the relationship between religiosity and sexual satisfaction?

Correlational analysis for religiosity and sexual satisfaction indicated a positive correlation between the variables (.188) which was not statistically significant at  $p < .05$  (Table 23, Appendix). Simple regression of sexual satisfaction on religiosity (Table 25, Appendix) resulted in Beta = .053,  $F(1,54) = 1.98$ , which was not statistically significant at  $p < .05$ . The coefficient of determination suggested that religiosity accounted for only 3.5% of the variance of sexual satisfaction. Therefore, increases in religiosity would be associated with very slight increases in overall sexual satisfaction.

### **Summary and Discussion of Study Findings**

This was a study of the influence of religiosity on the sexuality of married Christian college alumni. More specifically, it was an examination of the relationship of religiosity with the most intimate of sexual attitudes and behaviors and the overall satisfaction of married individuals with their sexual and marital relationships. Level of religiosity was found to have no statistically significant influence on either level of sexual

satisfaction or level of marital satisfaction. This and other related findings will be discussed in the following sections.

#### The Sample and Response Rates

The study had two types of respondent represented. Of 310 letters of invitation sent to randomly drawn names in the selected population of university alumni, 36% (112/310) responded by letter to indicate their willingness to participate or to decline involvement. Two thirds of the population either failed to receive the invitation, were too busy to take 5 minutes to return the self-addressed stamped envelope, were not convinced of the merits of the study, or perhaps were too anxious about the prospect of openly but anonymously examining their feelings and beliefs about sexuality. Based upon the comments of nonparticipants who did respond by saying no, it is conceivable that the non-respondents represented a slightly more conservative or more sexually inhibited segment of the research population.

Those respondents who said "no" by returning the consent form unsigned gave a mixture of reasons for not participating. At least 10% (11 of 112) of those who returned the consent form unsigned did not qualify for participation. A negative but significant correlation between age/class year and reasons given for not participating suggested that both younger and older alumni tended to decline due to concerns about privacy, lack of interest,

or reasons which they were unwilling to share, such as discomfort or anxiety about the focus of the study.

Of 69 qualified respondents who agreed to participate, 56 (81%) completed and returned the questionnaire. This return rate compared somewhat favorably with another which involved anonymous responses to mailed sex questionnaires. Catania (1990) reported a return rate of 45% from his sample of mostly caucasian heterosexual female adults ( $M$  age=32) living in California. Bailey (1987) suggested that response rates by mail should average 70-75% to allow for meaningful generalizations, however, his recommendations included multiple followup mailing reminders, and failed to consider the influence on response rates of research about sexuality. The overall response rate for the present study was 19% (56 of 299).

The participants, 30 females and 26 males representing 56 different marital relationships, were mostly middle to upper-middle income, heterosexual, Caucasian protestants who lived throughout the Southeastern, Southern, Midwestern and far Western area of North America. The mean age was 46, with ages ranged from 29 to 89, and average length of marriage was 20 years, with 91% still in their first and only marriage. Most participants held a Bachelor's degree, and over one fourth of both sexes had completed graduate degrees. Seventeen percent of females identified

themselves as homemakers. Females worked an average of 23 paid hours weekly, males an average of 38 hours, and 87% of household incomes were over \$30,000. Two thirds lived in urban/suburban areas, having been raised in a mix of rural and urban settings. Most respondents grew up in a sibling group of 1-3 brothers or sisters. A majority of both males and females were likely to have been the first or second born of their sibling group.

#### Attitudes Toward Sex

Respondents held relatively conservative attitudes toward behaviors outside of the marital relationship. They disapproved of cohabiting, premarital intercourse, and disapproved of church leaders being homosexual. Within marriage they disapproved of anal intercourse and use of pornographic media in written and video form. These findings paralleled those of Klassen et al. (1989) for premarital sex and attitudes toward homosexuality. A majority of males but less than half of females thought marrying a virgin had been important to them. The majority of respondents thought both spouses should experience orgasm the majority of times they engage in sexual intercourse, and likewise agreed that giving and receiving oral-genital sex was an acceptable marital sexual behavior. Majorities of both sexes (M=73%, F=83%) agreed one could masturbate alone and still be considered sexually well adjusted, and many reported doing the same with varying

frequencies. This was in marked contrast to Klassen et al. (1989), who reported that among fundamentalist protestants, over 60% thought masturbation was always or almost always wrong. Although fundamentalists and conservative protestants are not synonymous categorizations, the present study findings supported the belief that perhaps attitudes about masturbation have changed somewhat during the past 12-15 years among conservative protestants. It is possible that difference in educational levels accounted for some of the difference of this study's findings and Klassens' sample.

#### Premarital Sexual Behaviors

Opposite Sex Experience: The majority of both sexes had experienced a wide range of petting behaviors prior to marriage, including tongue kissing, caressing of breasts and genitals, and intercourse movements while still clothed. The present study's incidence rates were much lower than those of college students at a large southern university (Coward-Steckler, 1984), but very similar to those of the students attending a large university in the midwest (Story, 1982). A third of males and a fourth of females in the present study had given and received oral-genital stimulation prior to marriage, but these percentages were 15-30 points lower than those of the two studies mentioned above (Coward-Steckler, 1984; Story, 1982).

Same Sex Experience: Eleven percent of respondents reported sexual contact with persons of the same sex, with over half occurring during adolescence with same-age peers. Only one incidence was viewed as coercive, and others were not described in any detail. These findings paralleled those of other researchers (Kinsey et al. 1948, 1953; Story, 1982) in terms of occurrences and percentages.

#### First Intercourse Experience

Over half of women (84%) and men (54%) had their first intercourse experience with either their fiance prior to marriage or their spouse after marriage. This finding tends to reflect the continued existence of the double standard for the sexes, which presumes females should be sexually pure for marriage, but males are more free to act sexually prior to marriage. That this attitude exists is further supported by the above-mentioned attitudes held by men and women regarding the relative importance of marrying a virgin. It appeared women held lesser expectations for men than men held for women, particularly in this religiously conservative population. Most respondents of both sexes stated that their first intercourse experience was satisfying both physically and emotionally.

Age at first intercourse for females and males was 22 and 20, respectively, which is 5-7 years later than that reported in

other national samples (Kinsey et al. 1948, 1953; Miller & Heaton, 1991). Incidence of premarital intercourse was somewhat higher (males 58% versus 46%, females 44% versus 38%) to that of one midwestern university sample (Story, 1982), but much lower compared to percentages (over 80% for males, over 60% for females) in other college and national populations (Coward-Steckler, 1984; Darling & Davidson, 1987; Miller & Heaton, 1991).

#### Marital Petting & Foreplay

Respondents said their current petting/foreplay behaviors included virtually all the possible petting behaviors listed. A large majority reported giving and receiving kisses, hugs, fondling and caressing of breasts and genitals, and oral-genital stimulation. Less than half gave or received full body massage. Practically none used pornographic magazines or videos alone or as foreplay, nor did any report engaging in bondage/fantasy or sado-masochistic activities. While some may have engaged in bondage or similar activities and simply chose not to report, the comments in the questionnaire margins by a few women and men reflected concern for their spouse's emotional and physical wellbeing which precluded any behaviors which might cause pain or discomfort.

#### Frequency of Marital Sexual Intercourse

Compared to Greenblats' (1983) New Jersey sample, the present study's respondents, when roughly matched for age and/or

length of marriage, reported slightly higher frequencies of sexual intercourse (12X/monthly versus 9X/month), but the difference may be due to the New Jersey sample having later onset of childbearing in the marriage. For women in the present study, the frequency of vaginal/penile intercourse (coitus) across all ages was practically identical to the findings of Kinsey et al. (1953) for married women, with women in their late 20s to late 30s reporting a slightly increased frequency over Kinsey's sample. The present study found, as did Kinsey et al. (1953), that religiosity had no apparent influence on coital frequency for married females.

For men in the present study, the frequency of coitus across all ages was again practically identical to the findings of Kinsey et al. (1948) for married men in comparable age ranges. Kinsey et al. (1948) did not report marital coital rates by religious groups for males older than 40, but it appears that the present study found average to slightly higher coital frequencies for males between the ages of 40 and 70 compared to Kinsey's findings. This appears likely based on Kinsey's report that actively religious males had consistently lower coital frequency rates than those of their less religious peers. In the present study, highly religious males had identical coital frequencies to those of Kinsey's non-religious males (Kinsey et al. 1948, 1953). Therefore, it can be said that for participants in the present

study, religiosity had no negative effect on coital rates.

### Masturbation

Respondents gave mixed information which reflected their ambivalence about masturbation. The majority of men and women agreed masturbation was normal and okay for married persons to masturbate alone. The majority also wrote reasons that they did not engage in masturbation. However, a third of women age 29–59 reported masturbating 1–3 times weekly. Half the women age 30–60 reported masturbating at least monthly, while half of women age 50–70 said they never masturbate. Between one third to one half of men age 30–60 reported masturbating 1–3 times weekly. There was a very slight decrease in masturbation for men as their age increased.

As noted earlier, the mixed feelings about masturbation may be reflective of the fact that for generations it has been common in churches to teach that masturbation was wrong both in and outside of marriage. It is still common to observe parents reacting with shock and embarrassment when their toddlers self-stimulate in public. Early ideas are thus conveyed to children about pleasurable behaviors being considered embarrassing, bad, dirty, unnatural, or signs of developing promiscuity. Some adults still associate masturbation with the sin of Onan in the Bible, who practiced coital withdrawal and was condemned for failing to

fulfill his obligation under Levirate Law to impregnate his brother's wife when his brother died. Others may believe masturbation wrong in that it deprives the spouse of a mutual sexual experience. [For a short summary of historical religious injunctions against masturbation and other sexual behaviors, see Kinsey et al. 1948, and Klassen et al. 1989, chapters 13 and 12 respectively.]

It is common for marriage counselors to assign homework for couples which help them learn to communicate to their spouse which behaviors feel good sexually. This is one way that masturbation can be an especially helpful practice to individuals and couples as they learn more about their own sexual response as well as that of their mate. Compulsive masturbating may simply be a sign of undue stress for children and adolescents, particularly about their developing sexual interests and drive. Discussion of one's feelings with parents or counselors seems to be a much more reasonable response to the behavior than shaming or causing guilt for normal and natural feelings.

#### Orgasm

Three percent of females (n=1) reported never experiencing orgasm. The great majority of respondents regularly experienced orgasm as a result of masturbation, petting, oral-genital stimulation, manual clitoral stimulation by spouse, or sexual

intercourse. Most women had their first orgasm from masturbation (40%), intercourse (30%), petting (23%), or dreams (3%), and one woman reported never having experienced orgasm. Men first experienced orgasm from masturbating (81%), petting (12%), or while dreaming (8%). Current behaviors which usually resulted in orgasm for women included intercourse (60%), receiving oral-genital stimulation (40%), masturbating (30%), petting with spouse (24%), and spouse giving manual clitoral stimulation (13%). Men usually experienced orgasm from intercourse (97%), masturbation (69%), and receiving oral-genital stimulation (12%).

Asking one's spouse whether they had an orgasm seemed unimportant to a majority of males and females, as most said it was not necessary—the magnitude of physical and emotional release made it clear what happened. For 20–25% of respondents, the asking behavior seemed reflective either of a desire to please or of an anxiety about being unable to please one's spouse. The asking behavior was negatively correlated with overall sexual and marital satisfaction. Reported in this way, it would appear that the asking behavior reflects prior or potential communication problems concerning sexual interaction. The problem may be an undue focus on obtaining orgasm as the ultimate end, rather than seeing orgasm as a means to accomplishing marital-sexual union and satisfaction both emotionally and physically. A parallel finding

which supported the latter perspective for the study participants was that 97% of females and 100% of males said they never pretend to have an orgasm.

#### Extramarital Sexual Behavior

Only one question was asked about extramarital sexual behaviors. In response, 3% of women (n=1) and 27% of men (n=6) stated they had sexual contact with someone other than their spouse while still married. Seven percent of females and 15% of males had never told their spouse about their extramarital or premarital sexual behaviors. Kinsey et al. (1948) found that 27-33% of males had extramarital sex, but estimated the actual incidence was as high as 50%. Kinsey et al. (1953) found that for devoutly religious females, extramarital sex occurred in 5-7% of marriages.

#### Level of Overall Sexual Satisfaction

Women and men described several behaviors which they would like more of, including kisses, hugs, and petting behaviors - more "cuddling" as one respondent stated. A minority of women wanted more intercourse and oral-genital stimulation, while a majority of men wanted more of the same. Overall, clear majorities of both sexes (80% of females, 88% of males) reported they felt satisfied with their sexuality. Finally, almost 75% of both women and men reported they are satisfied or very satisfied with the physical,

emotional and overall sexual aspects of their marriage. This finding matched Klassen et al.'s (1989) report that 75% of his sample said they had an enjoyable sex life.

For the less satisfied (8-17% were neutral, and 10-15% were dissatisfied), most of the dissatisfaction for younger couples related to time and energy pressures from careers and family needs which prevented regular sexual contact (see Appendix E). Older respondents tended to feel frustrated about problems with communicating their changing needs to their spouse, getting their spouse to change patterns and old habits of sexual behaviors, or deteriorating health which eliminated sexual energy or caused impotence.

#### Relation of Age, Gender, Length of Marriage and Sexual Satisfaction

There was no significant correlation between age, gender, length of marriage and sexual satisfaction. Age and length of marriage were positively related to sexual satisfaction, with length of marriage the more amplified of the two, but not at statistically significant levels. Age was weakly and positively associated with sexual satisfaction, indicating that as age increased, sexual satisfaction was likely to slightly increase, due to improved marital relationship factors such as communication and comfort with sexuality, as well as a decrease in stress

factors such as work fatigue and interruptions by children. Length of marriage was even more strongly and positively correlated to sexual satisfaction, which reflected that younger spouses were perhaps less settled maritally and sexually due to child-rearing, career stresses, and work fatigue. These results mirror other research findings which describe decreased marital satisfaction in the early and middle years of marriage (Greenblatt, 1983).

#### Relation of Religiosity to Sexual Behaviors

Premarital Sex: Higher religiosity was negatively associated with incidences of premarital sexual behaviors. All measures of association with religiosity were negative, and 3 were statistically significant, including receiving oral-genital stimulation ( $-.317, p < .05$ ), giving oral-genital stimulation ( $-.288, p < .05$ ), and kissing another's bare breasts ( $-.286, p < .05$ ). This meant that as religiosity increased, it was less likely that respondents had engaged in these particular behaviors premaritally. However, associational levels were non-significant for the majority of premarital sexual behaviors, indicating that religiosity did not prevent one from engaging in most of the named behaviors.

Marital Sex: High levels of religiosity were positively correlated with higher incidences of behaviors which could be construed as interactive and participatory; kissing, petting,

coitus, giving and receiving oral-genital stimulation, and asking if spouse experienced orgasm. Other marital sexual behaviors were negatively associated with higher levels of religiosity, including masturbating alone, watching sex videos, reading sex magazines alone or with spouse, and pretending to experience orgasm. On the basis of these measures of association, religiosity can be said to have a positive effect on marital sexuality. This finding gives support to the contentions of religiously conservative persons (Allen & Allen, 1992; Lewis, Dodd, & Tippens, 1989) that their faith system in no way constricts their sexuality, but rather channels it in relationship-enhancing ways.

#### Relation of Sexual Behaviors to Overall Sexual Satisfaction

Measures of association between premarital and marital sexual behaviors and overall sexual satisfaction were conducted using correlational analysis and regression analysis. Kissing, petting, sexual intercourse, receiving oral-genital stimulation, and giving oral-genital stimulation were all positively correlated with overall sexual satisfaction. Petting, intercourse and receiving oral-genital stimulation had the strongest correlations, while intercourse and receiving oral-genital stimulation accounted for the largest portions of variance in sexual satisfaction ratings. The above behaviors are the specific behaviors positively associated with levels of sexual satisfaction.

### Religiosity, Conventiality, and Marital Satisfaction

Measures of association between religiosity, conventionality, and marital satisfaction were conducted using correlational analysis and regression analysis. Religiosity was positively but weakly correlated with both conventionality and marital satisfaction. Conventiality was positively and significantly correlated with marital satisfaction (.495,  $p < .01$ ). Regression analysis further confirmed the weak positive relationship between religiosity and the other variables, while conventionality was strongly and positively associated with marital satisfaction. These findings support the belief that religiosity in no way diminishes reported levels of marital satisfaction. In the present study, it is possible that religiosity as a predictor or intervening variable was lessened in impact due to the homogeneity of the sample religiously. It would be interesting to see if the same measures of association occurred in a sample of persons more divergent in levels of religiosity. In summary, religiosity was weak but positive in its association with marital satisfaction.

### Religiosity and Sexual Satisfaction

Measures of association between religiosity and overall sexual satisfaction were conducted using correlational analysis and regression analysis. Religiosity and sexual satisfaction were

modestly but positively correlated (.188) at statistically non-significant levels. Simple regression of sexual satisfaction on religiosity indicated that religiosity accounted for only 3.5% of the variance in reported level of sexual satisfaction. Once again, the present study found that religiosity in no way detracts from marital sexual satisfaction. In fact, higher levels of religiosity were associated with slight increases in overall sexual satisfaction.

## CHAPTER V

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter contains a report of the summarized results of the study, a discussion of the limitations of the study, and a discussion of the study implications for theory, clinical practice, and research.

**Summary of Results**

The purpose of the study was to examine the relationship between religiosity and sexual attitudes and behaviors, and to determine how this related to overall sexual and marital satisfaction for persons who grew up in a religiously conservative atmosphere. It was interesting and disappointing that only one third of the alumni who were randomly selected to participate in the study returned the postage-paid envelope. This raised the question of why so many were unwilling to respond to an invitation to participate in University-related sex research. If the nonparticipant respondents were an accurate representation of the population, it can be assumed that over half of the population (52%) were bothered by the personal nature of the content and did not trust that their privacy would be protected, or they were in effect speechless regarding sexuality and gave no reason for choosing not to participate. This gives further and conclusive

evidence that there still is a deafening silence in christian churches when it comes to discussing sex.

### Participants

Prior to data collection, it was understood that the population from which the sample was randomly drawn represented a religiously conservative and under-studied segment of the general population of the United States. The present study confirmed that the research population was in fact religiously conservative, and also shed some light on reasons that conservatively religious populations are understudied. These included an unwillingness to be involved in studies, perhaps due to embarrassment, fear, anxiety, or general inhibitions about sexuality.

Participants in the study fit a semi-traditional nuclear family model in structure and composition. They were almost totally white, heterosexual, conservative protestants who grew up in an intact nuclear family with 1-3 siblings. Most (91%) had been in their first and only marriage for over 20 years. They tended to be well educated and well paid in their careers, and most had raised or were raising 1-3 children.

### Educational and Preventive Mindset

Respondents to this study opportunity could be accurately described as a group of persons interested in providing empirical information which might be useful to future couples and parents

for guiding their childrens' sexual education and development. Many participants wrote specific comments about how they hoped the results would be useful, and thus worth the slight embarrassment or anxiety they experienced while completing the questionnaire. Because of this particular nature of some respondents, it is conceivable this could help explain their success in managing to overcome restrictive religious teachings about sex in order to enjoy a more creative and fulfilling sexual relationship.

#### Religiosity

Religiosity is generally measured in terms of experience, belief, and behavior (King & Hunt, 1990, 1975, 1972; Rohrbaugh & Jessor, 1975). The present sample described themselves as very religious in terms of spiritual experience. Most described frequently or daily experiencing feelings of religious reverence and devotion. Concerning beliefs, most believed in a personal God who was active in their daily life, and that there was a personal life after death with a soul existing as a specific individual. Behaviorally, most prayed daily and were active in a church fellowship, but some had pulled away from their involvement and support of traditional church structures and practices. Most felt they had relaxed from previous tendencies toward strict and legalistic interpretations of doctrinal beliefs, and saw themselves now as more tolerant of other points of view (see

Appendix E). Many wrote comments alongside their questionnaire responses expressing support for studies of sexuality among their population because so little has been said or done to educate members of mainstream protestant churches. The entire sample requested copies of the findings of this study following it's conclusion.

In relation to other research samples, the present sample scored higher on the religiosity scale ( $\bar{M}$ =28.6, Table 26, Appendix) than did Rackley's (1993) sample of church attenders in southwestern Virginia ( $\bar{M}$ =25.1) or Rohrbaugh and Jessor's (1975) high school and college student samples, respectively ( $\bar{M}$ =15;  $\bar{M}$ =12).

#### How Religiosity May Have Enhanced Marital Sexuality

Previous research has suggested that higher levels of devoutness or religiosity tended to limit and channel erotic behavior (Kinsey et al., 1948), as well as inhibit natural sexual desires for both men and women (Klassen et al., 1989). The present study did not support the contention that religiosity constricted or inhibited sexuality in the marital relationship. In fact, the following discussion will help to explain how religiosity seemed to enhance marital sexuality.

A limitation of studies such as those cited above (Kinsey et al., 1948; Klassen et al., 1989) is that they did not investigate

the influence of the sub-constructs of religiosity, namely **experience, belief, and behavior**. In the present study, qualitative responses (Appendix E) identified ways that these sub-constructs seemed to influence marital and sexual satisfaction, such as:

Female—"Outwardly, (my religious beliefs and practices have changed) very little; inwardly, (beliefs and experience are) somewhat calmer....(Concerning how sex has changed,) it has improved a great deal. We are freer, more comfortable with one another. I now enjoy it much more than I did."

Female—"My personal faith has deepened and grown....Talking about personal problems and attitudes and reactions towards those problems (has helped sex life to improve); my husband was very inhibited when we married—very distant—I could not understand why because he would never discuss it [husband had low esteem and high pride]."

Male—"I have become much more reliant on the Spirit of God to help me learn....(Sex has improved because of) our individual relationships with Christ and mutual respect for each other. We have each had serious extramarital proposals, but our loyalty to God and each other precluded

consideration. Passion seemed to rise for me each time the right choice was made."

Male—"...have become more grace-oriented and less legalistic....(Sex is better because we are) acting loving, (and have) better communication."

### Religious Belief

Religious belief referred to personally held beliefs concerning theology, biblical teaching and amount of knowledge about spiritual and religious matters. While some respondents (23%, n=13) reported that their beliefs had changed little or none since their college years, 35% stated they had become more relaxed, tolerant, and open to belief systems of others. This change seemed more prevalent as age of respondents increased. This movement away from rigid and intolerant beliefs was consistent with flexibility and adaptive stances needed to make adjustments maritally and sexually as couples worked to strengthen their marital relationships.

### Religious Behavior

Religious behavior was measured in terms of attendance at religious services, participation in organizational activities, and giving of money. Respondents in the present study reported

slight changes in attending behaviors, with some indicating they had ceased to attend organized religious activities, or had changed the church group with whom they worshipped. The majority appeared to be involved in ways similar to those of their college years.

### Religious Experience

Religious experience referred to whether the believers have sought and found a sense of forgiveness of their sins by God, as well as the degree to which one feels spiritually empowered for daily living. Most respondents reported that they felt equal to or even more religious than their friends of similar ages and religious beliefs, and they also reported a connection between increased levels of religious experience and increased levels of marital communication and sexual satisfaction. When respondents reported religious experiences had an influence toward openmindedness and acceptance of their own limitations as well as those of the marital partner, it seemed to solidify the marital and sexual aspects of relationship.

The study findings indicated that for a majority of respondents, being raised in a religiously conservative atmosphere had not prevented the development of mutually satisfying marital and sexual relationships. On the contrary, even though this population reported high levels of religiosity, and even though

religiosity was weakly and positively associated with marital and sexual satisfaction, the majority of study respondents felt they had successfully blended religiosity and companionship into a bond described as very satisfying sexually and relationally. Some reported they had to struggle to overcome inhibitions and problematic expectations for themselves and their spouses in order to develop their current level of marital satisfaction. For many older respondents there was a sense they had resigned themselves to accepting that which they could not change. For example, some older women stated that sex had changed for good since their spouses had become impotent. Some older men stated sex was less frequent because their spouses had simply lost interest in sexual interaction. Through acceptance of the change, and during subsequent pursuit of other interests, these respondents reported that the marital relationship grew stronger.

### **Limitations**

This study attempted to collect data from randomly chosen, religiously conservative, married individuals who were representative of a unique and understudied population of the United States. Inasmuch as the purpose of the study was to examine the relationship between religiosity and marital sexual attitudes and behaviors, it has been successful. Care should be

taken, however, in how these results are generalized to the population from which the sample was drawn.

#### Self-Selection Issues

The sample relied heavily on a self-selection process which had both positive and negative outcomes, the negative being that many chose not to participate. Even though two different mailings were completed, there was a large segment of the population not described in the study. In comparing response sets of the two respondent groups, the responses of the persons in the first group were found to be similar to those of the second group. It was likely that additional mailings to the population for the purpose of collecting new and different data would have served no useful purpose. This study described the individuals from the population sampled that apparently felt confident enough about their sexual and marital adjustment to be willing to participate. It is possible that many potential respondents who were uncomfortable with their sexuality selected themselves out of the study. Adding the responses of the missing segment of the population could alter the overall view of the influence of religiosity on marital sexuality. For example, for spouses who have been unsuccessful in overcoming inhibiting childhood sexuality experiences, religiosity might appear to exert a more negative influence on current level of marital and/or sexual

satisfaction.

#### Homogeneity of Sample

While considerable diversity was evident for the study sample in terms of gender, age, occupation, length of marriage, community and geographic locale, there was still a significant element of homogeneity of sample by religious background and beliefs, race, sexual orientation, educational background, income level, family structure, and comfort level of sexuality. It would not seem justifiable, from a statistical point of view, to extrapolate the findings to other than religiously conservative groups.

### **Theoretical Implications**

In this section, study findings concerning the influence of one's family of origin on religiosity and sex education are presented first, followed by a discussion of how these findings fit within the theoretical framework.

#### Family Influence on Religiosity

Study participants described themselves as very much influenced by the religious value systems and behaviors surrounding them during their childhoods. Over 90% of males and females reported attending church services 2-3 times weekly during their formative, growing-up years. Large majorities of both sexes

(females-93%, males-88%) still attended 2-3 times weekly. Asked how religious they are in comparison to persons of their same religious preference and age, 50% of men and 60% of women said about the same, while 40% of both sexes saw themselves as more religious. The religiosity scores reported in the present study ( $M=28.6$ , Table 26) were higher than those reported by Rackley (1993;  $M=25.1$ ) in his study of 170 married persons in southwestern Virginia. The present study scores were substantially higher than previously reported findings of general population means for high school students ( $M=16$ ), college students ( $M=12.5$ ) who lived in the midwest and affiliated themselves with traditional Judeo-Christian denominations (Rohrbaugh & Jessor, 1975).

#### Family Environment

Almost the entire sample reported they grew up with both parents in an intact family system. Most reported feeling somewhat attached-to-very attached emotionally to both parents while growing up. Open display of affection between parents occurred in 65-70% of households, and almost three fourths of respondents described their parent's marriage as average to extremely happy.

#### Family Influence on Sex Education

Most males learned about intercourse between the ages of 12-14, most females ages 10-13. Most of the respondents reported

that conversations about sexuality with either parent occurred seldom or never. The majority of females learned about sex by conversation from their peers (47%), mother (20%), or teachers (13%), while males learned from conversation from peers (58%), father (15%), teachers (15%), or siblings (4%).

#### Family Development & Systemic Applications

The next section restates theoretical assumptions from the chapter above concerning conceptual framework. Appropriate study findings are then discussed which have relevance to the stated assumptions.

The family is the unit in which human growth, development, and socialization occurs. The nuclear family demonstrates the systemic feature of selective boundary maintenance as it creates and retains its own culture and identity within the larger social culture.

From comments and responses of study participants, it seemed apparent that most were benefitted by the influence of their parents and family life in the modeling of normative marital relationships which demonstrated commitment, emotional attachment, and demonstrative displays of affection. Families utilized commonality of belief systems for helping create and maintain the separate family culture and identity within the larger culture, as was seen in the normative participation of family members in

church-related activities.

The learning of values, norms, and behaviors is influenced by a complex mix of individual dynamics and social context. Interaction with outsiders allows assimilation of values and beliefs from extended family, the community, and the society.

Respondents described themselves as positively influenced by their families of origin, but they also were influenced by their interaction with peers, especially as they matured and left home to attend a religiously conservative college. Similar to the manner in which parents didn't directly connect religion with communication about sex, respondents seemed to not conform to the standard religious prohibitions about general premarital sexual contact. In this regard it seems that values of the dominant culture had greater influence on the decisions of respondents when it came to choices about sexual behaviors prior to marriage.

Marriage brought further interaction with a new significant other whose values and beliefs were usually more similar to those of the respondent. Respondents frequently commented about the necessity of working hard with their spouse to learn to communicate about their sexual interests and desires. Enhanced communication was reported by participants to be second in importance for marital and sexual satisfaction only to individual

self esteem of each spouse.

For the individual and the family, patterns of change are sometimes predictable as one moves through interchanging stages of individual development and family career or family life cycle.

Unfortunately, the modeling of open communication about sexuality with their children was a behavior which respondents generally described as inadequate. It seemed parents were uncomfortable or simply did not know how to talk to children about sex. Study respondents demonstrated by their example how it was possible to compensate for a perceived lack of information and preparation for marital sexuality as they moved through the stages of their individual development and family careers, learning how to communicate about matters of intimacy:

"Talking about masturbation/fantasy/pornography etc. even when it was uncomfortable for us. Talking about what each of us likes and dislikes."

"We spend more time and communicate better. We seem to have less time because of job pressure and the kids but our time is more quality."

"I enjoy sex much more. I know what I want and what he

wants. We are much more creative in positions and places and we experiment all the time on what feels good...Time—as I learned to relax and enjoy sex and know it's a natural way between husband and wife... Also an open communication with my spouse."

Family systems are resilient and capable of adapting to changes, which may be brought about by internal or external factors. Family members have the capacity to reorganize their role structures toward the accomplishing of their individual and collective goals.

Sexual identity, attitudes and behaviors changed (see Tables 5, 9, 10, 11, & 19) as respondents moved through premarital relationships and sexual behaviors, then into childless marital relations, followed by the challenges of the early childbearing years. According to qualitative responses (Appendix E), older respondents who had raised their children and resolved the need for birth control reported that sexual expression through their 40s and 50s was relatively enhanced compared to earlier years of the marriage.

Religiosity may have changed dependent on one's family stage of development; however, respondents mostly described having changed the behaviors and beliefs of their religiosity, without

losing their experiential sense of religious devotion:

"It has become more personal, more a part of me in a conscious way, not just inherited from my parents."

"I attend three or more times per week. My personal faith has deepened and grown."

Many respondents who wrote additional margin comments felt that growth and development of the experiential part of their faith was responsible for being able to alter the doctrinally narrow aspects as well as the accompanying behaviors. They made comments such as:

"...more stable beliefs... I quietly practice now."

"My faith and understanding have grown to believe more in God's grace, to have less prejudice towards those of other races, ethnic groups, etc."

"less structured, not currently attending church but believe I am more spiritual."

"I have become much more reliant on the Spirit of God to help me learn rather than commentaries and journals. I believe in responsible study more than ever; [I'm] just not

political."

### Marital Quality and Religiosity

The study results raise the question of how marital quality and religiosity can both be so high for the sample, given the negative correlation of the two variables. The following section presents some theory-based explanations of how this might be explained.

Previous researchers (Marks, 1989) have suggested that marital quality is a function of three classes of variables:

1. Social & personal resources derived premaritally (corner 1), including self confidence as a giver and receiver of sexual pleasure while engaging in premarital sexual activities.
2. Satisfaction with their lifestyle (corner 3), including changes in one's religious beliefs and practices.
3. Rewards from spousal interaction (corner 2), including those which are emotional, material, and sexual [italicized comments added].

Lewis and Spanier (Marks, 1989) proposed that the greater the marital quality, the greater the marital stability, with stability defined as whether or not the marriage is intact. Applying this criteria to the present study, it was apparent from respondent

reports that high levels of marital quality existed, in that the sample reported an average 20-year marriage history (i.e., stability), plus they reported from the KMSI high levels of marital and spousal satisfaction. This still did not account for the role of religiosity.

Lewis and Spanier asserted there are two sets of external forces brought to bear on the marriage, namely negative alternative influences to leave marriage and strong positive pressures to stay married. The corner 3 influence of Marks' (1989) marital quality model (see Conceptual Framework, Chapter 1) included the individual and/or combined effects of children, jobs, relatives, friends, recreational interests, and religious interests [italics added]. It seems probable that when the sum total effects of the corner 3 influence are all complementary toward marital and family values, the family has the ability to greatly insulate itself against the negative alternative influences of the culture to leave the marriage.

Marks (1989) conceptualized the independent 3rd corners in his model as sometimes negative, sometimes positive, always subject to change, and always in part constitutive of the marriage's quality [italics added]. The level of religiosity reported by respondents in the study was seen as a positive in the individual's life. Furthermore, many study respondents wrote

comments to the effect that sharing common religious heritage and commitment to spiritual growth with their spouse was a key part of having a strong marriage. Perhaps a key to the interpretation of the relationship between religiosity and marital quality is the spouses' perception of the role and influence that religiosity plays in the marital relationship. If so, this would serve as a powerful testimony to the potential that high levels of religiosity have for influencing marriage and family relationships, even when religiosity has a dampening effect on some aspects of family interaction (such as parent-child communication about sex).

### **Clinical Implications**

Several comments seem relevant given the findings of the study. First, anyone who conducts clinical practice in the area of human sexuality needs thorough training which addresses the personal as well as biological aspects of sexuality. Use-of-self issues in counseling pertaining to sexuality should be addressed in any competent training and supervision program.

Second, clinicians working with persons from a religiously conservative background should be careful about the assumptions they might make about individuals who claim religion has a significant impact on their relationships and family life. As

many as 25% of participants in this study reported having obtained individual, marital or family therapy at some time in their life. Therapy is likely to be an avenue of help requested by more and more conservatives as church leaders and educators become increasingly informed and comfortable with the potential benefits to be obtained by their members.

#### Utilizing Religiosity

Religiosity has often been portrayed in the media as a negative factor in the lives of individuals, couples, and families, likely to give rise to religious fanaticism and intolerance. This study has demonstrated, by showing high levels of religiosity and marital satisfaction for the study participants, that this need not be the case. In fact, religiosity can often be utilized to enhance and strengthen marital quality. The Bible is a ready source of teachings about how sex is from God, and is a natural gift which is to be celebrated. The Song of Songs by king Solomon in the Old Testament is a good example of biblical yet sensual writing which celebrates the marital and sexual relationship.

#### Sensitivity and Pacing Sex Therapy

Many respondents who saw themselves as sexually well-adjusted reported that discussing their sexual behavior was at

times awkward, embarrassing, and uncomfortable, even though the questionnaire was anonymously completed. Therefore, counselors and sex therapists need to be aware of the likelihood that individuals or couples presenting for sex or marital therapy may need careful pacing and sensitive help to assist them in learning how to communicate with the therapist and each other about sexual matters, particularly if they have inhibitions connected with religious teachings. Counselors can help by normalizing the experience of feeling inhibited until practice has routinized the ability of partners to communicate their needs and desires more comfortably and openly.

#### Sex Assault and Abuse Incidence

Respondents were asked to indicate any incidence of having sexual contact forced against their will while in a dating relationship. All males denied any incidence. Ten percent of the females reported instances of attempted forcible intercourse, touching, or attempted forcible oral-genital contact. In all these cases, the females did not report the incident, one stating she felt responsible somehow for the incident.

When asked whether anyone 5 years or older had inappropriate sexual contact with them while growing up, 19% of males and 30% of females said yes. The following were the respective molesting behaviors described by different respondents: unwanted suggestive

remarks, kissing of lips, hugs, caressing and fondling of breasts and genitals, stalking behaviors, imitating intercourse movements while clothed, exposing genitals/flashings, and inviting sex while undressed.

The perpetrators against females included a father, sister, male cousin, uncle, male family friend, a male stranger, a church deacon, and a boy at church. In only one instance was the perpetrator a stranger to the respondent. In 5 of the 9 incidences, the females reported the behavior, and in only two cases did females feel the contact had any long term consequences for their ability to feel safe or trust men.

The perpetrators against males included a sister, male cousin, female family friend, a male teacher, and the son of the church preacher. Two of the incidences were reported, and none of the males felt they had any long term negative consequences from the behavior.

The incidence rates reported above should serve as a reminder that no population is safe from unwanted sexually assaultive behaviors. It is always the case that families, churches, and community groups can do more to educate themselves and their children about good touch/bad touch and how children can help keep themselves safe by reporting bad touch.

The reporting rates were similar to those found in the

general population (Bass & Davis, 1988; Courtois, 1988), especially for situations where the children are afraid they won't be believed or have been threatened with harm if they tell anyone. Parents and church leaders should weigh carefully the pros and cons in deciding to press charges against offenders, rather than turn the other cheek and hope the problem will go away.

Somewhat surprising and reassuring were the comments by some respondents, who reported that, with only a few exceptions, they were not negatively affected in their marital and sexual relationships by the history of abuse. One respondent commented "I had not really considered I was sexually abused until reading the questionnaire and giving more thought to what had happened to me".

### **Implications for Education and Training**

#### Education

Given the strong support of respondents for more study about sexuality, it seems apparent that christian churches could do more to sponsor and train parents how to talk in open and healthy ways with each other and their children about normal sexual growth and development. A more proactive stance toward sexuality by church leaders would communicate to lay members the relative importance of education. Such a position by church leaders would help

promote open discussion to end the silence in churches about sexuality. If parents and churches don't take the lead, their children will be left to their own devices for yet another generation, and school teachers, nurses, and peers will continue to be the leading source of sex education for young people.

### Training

More training could be done in the church-affiliated colleges and universities, especially those with training programs for psychology, counselor education, social work, and marriage and family therapy. Campuses could promote seminars for church leaders and educators, and begin offering courses which would include content on human sexuality and family life. Courses like these have been offered on secular university campuses for years. It seems a shame that the church-affiliated schools seem to run 10-20 years behind the rest of the culture in such fundamental issues.

Furthermore, given the publicity in recent years concerning sex offenses perpetrated by church ministers, it would seem crucial to address training opportunities toward church ministers, preachers, and others who are often in positions of authority and power to give pastoral counseling to vulnerable church members.

### Implications for Research

As noted earlier, additional research needs to be conducted with religiously conservative populations. Given the availability of several other church-affiliated universities and their alumni, the research presented above should be replicated fairly easily.

Given the apparent concern of many in churches about protecting confidentiality and avoiding discomfort about research on sexual behaviors, it might be appropriate to attempt sex research with religiously conservative populations by phone, thus avoiding face-to-face discomfort and the transmission of data through the mail.

Finally, an under-utilized source of information would appear to be the students at the dozens of church-affiliated universities across the country. More data collection might also be attempted in churches by enlisting the help of church ministers and other leaders.

### Conclusions

The present study has described a sample of married individuals, not married to each other, who have enjoyed marital relationships of high quality. This can be said for apparent levels of marital stability, marital sexuality, affection and intimacy, and overall marital satisfaction. The respondents have

described their marital successes as substantially connected to the shared values of beliefs informed by their religious and philosophical belief systems.

The research findings presented above demonstrate that it is possible to be extremely religious and also enjoy high levels of marital and sexual satisfaction. Participants in the study had much lower incidences of premarital coitus, and tended to experience first coitus several years later than the general population. At the same time, the sample was more permissive than the general religious population regarding the practice of masturbation, and their reported participation in a variety of premarital and marital sexual behaviors was higher than might have been expected for such a religiously conservative sample. The same could be said for their attitudes about the importance of orgasm for both spouses in the marital relationship.

Subsequent research with this population needs to gather qualitative responses to questions about how couples made the transition from a family of origin which was non-communicative about sexuality, to a marriage of more and improved communication about sexuality. The present research seems to demonstrate that one's level of religiosity need not interfere with nor limit the growth and enjoyment of healthy marital sexual relationships.

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APPENDIX A  
DEFINITION OF CONCEPTSSEXUAL ATTITUDES

55. How important was it that you marry someone who had not experienced sexual intercourse prior to marriage with anyone other than YOURSELF? (CIRCLE ONE)
1. Very important
  2. Quite important
  3. Somewhat important
  4. Slightly important
  5. Not at all important
57. Two people should be able to live together in a sexual relationship without being married. (CIRCLE ONE)
1. Strongly agree
  2. Agree
  3. Disagree
  4. Strongly disagree
58. A person should avoid having oral-genital sex with a member of the OPPOSITE sex. (CIRCLE ONE)
1. Strongly disagree
  2. Disagree
  3. Agree
  4. Strongly Agree
59. A person should experience an orgasm in a majority of the times s/he engages in sexual intercourse. (CIRCLE ONE)
1. Strongly disagree
  2. Disagree
  3. Agree
  4. Strongly Agree
60. A person should avoid having anal intercourse with a person of the OPPOSITE sex, even if a condom is used. (CIRCLE ONE)
1. Strongly disagree
  2. Disagree
  3. Agree
  4. Strongly Agree

61. There should be no sexual intercourse without love.  
(CIRCLE ONE)
1. Strongly disagree
  2. Disagree
  3. Agree
  4. Strongly Agree
62. Homosexuals should not be permitted to serve as priests, ministers, or rabbis. (CIRCLE ONE)
1. Strongly disagree
  2. Disagree
  3. Agree
  4. Strongly Agree
64. How would you rate your current level of comfort with your sexuality? (CIRCLE ONE)
1. Always comfortable
  2. Almost always comfortable
  3. Sometimes comfortable
  4. Rarely comfortable
  5. Never comfortable
80. It is necessary for a person to achieve orgasm in a majority of the times when experiencing masturbation, petting and/or sexual intercourse in order to be considered as sexually adjusted. (CIRCLE ONE)
1. Strongly agree
  2. Agree
  3. Disagree
  4. Strongly Disagree

86. IF YOU NEVER MASTURBATE WHILE ALONE—What do you consider the THREE most important reasons for your decision not to engage in masturbation while alone? Rank these THREE reasons in degree of importance with 1 = most important, and 3 = third most important. (RANK ONLY YOUR THREE MOST IMPORTANT REASONS)

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Against my religious teachings
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Fear of discovery
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Social disapproval
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Abnormal behavior
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Against my personal values
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Feeling of disappointment after reaching orgasm through masturbation
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Spouse would disapprove or feel hurt if ever found out
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Causes me to feel uncomfortable or ashamed
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. It's wrong to fantasize about persons other than spouse
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Concern about frequency/Unable to control my desire
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Other \_\_\_\_\_ (PLEASE SPECIFY)

87. A married person masturbating to orgasm while alone is a sign of poor sexual adjustment. (CIRCLE ONE)

- 1. Strongly agree
- 2. Agree
- 3. Disagree
- 4. Strongly Disagree

SEXUAL BEHAVIORS:

63. BEFORE you were married, which of the following petting and/or foreplay activities did you engage in with ANY person of the OPPOSITE sex with the intent of sexual arousal and/or orgasm? (CHECK ALL APPLICABLE CATEGORIES)

---

Prior to Marriage      Petting and/or Foreplay Activities

---

1. Kissed on the lips  
 2. Tongue kissed  
 3. Your breasts/chest area fondled through clothes  
 4. Your bare breasts/chest area fondled and/or kissed  
 5. Your bare breasts and/or nipples kissed/orally stimulated  
 6. Your genitals caressed WITH clothes on  
 7. Your genitals caressed WITHOUT clothes on  
 8. Your genitals stimulated orally by another person  
 9. Fondled the covered breasts/chest area of another person  
 10. Fondled the bare breasts/chest area of another person  
 11. Kissed/orally stimulated another's bare breasts/chest area  
 12. Stimulated another person's covered genitals  
 13. Stimulated another person's bare genitals  
 14. Orally stimulated the genital organs of another person  
 15. Lain together with another person while fully or partially clothed and engaged in sexual intercourse movements  
 16. Lain with another person with your genitals bare and engaged in intercourse movements but with no sexual intercourse  
 17. Other \_\_\_\_\_ (PLEASE SPECIFY)  
 16. NONE

64. How did you first experience orgasm? (CIRCLE ALL APPLICABLE CATEGORIES)
1. Never have experienced orgasm
  2. While masturbating alone
  3. While petting with person of opposite sex
  4. During vaginal/penile intercourse
  5. Other \_\_\_\_\_ (PLEASE SPECIFY)
65. Have you ever engaged in petting and/or foreplay activities with a person of the SAME SEX with the intent of sexual arousal and/or experiencing orgasm? (CIRCLE ONE)
1. Yes
  2. No
78. Which of the following petting and/or foreplay activities do you engage in with your spouse with the intent of sexual arousal and/or orgasm? (CHECK ALL APPLICABLE CATEGORIES)

---

Marital Petting and/or Foreplay Activities

---

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Kissing on the lips
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Tongue kissing
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Spouse caresses your breasts/chest area
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Spouse kisses/orally stimulates your breasts/chest area/nipples
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Spouse caresses your genitals
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Spouse orally stimulates your genitals
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Spouse manually stimulates your anal area
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. You fondle and/or kiss spouse's breasts/chest area
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. You kiss/orally stimulate spouse's breasts/chest area/nipples
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. You caress spouse's genitals
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. You orally stimulate spouse's genitals
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. You manually stimulate spouse's anal area
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. Other \_\_\_\_\_ (PLEASE SPECIFY)

79. Indicate the frequency of the following behaviors in your marital relationship by putting a number in the blank corresponding to each behavior:

- 1 - Daily
- 2 - 3-5 times weekly
- 3 - 2-3 times weekly
- 4 - Once a week
- 5 - 2-3 times monthly
- 6 - Once a month
- 7 - Few times a year
- 8 - Never

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Mutual kissing/hugging
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Mutual petting/caressing
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Vaginal/penile sexual intercourse
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Receive oral-genital stimulation
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Give oral-genital stimulation
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Manual genital stimulation/mutual masturbation
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Other \_\_\_\_\_ (PLEASE SPECIFY)

82. Indicate, by putting a number in each blank, how often you experience orgasm while engaging in the following behaviors

- 1-Always
- 2-Almost always
- 3-Frequently
- 4-Sometimes
- 5-Rarely

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Mutual kissing/hugging
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Mutual petting/caressing
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Vaginal/penile sexual intercourse
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Receiving oral-genital stimulation
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Giving oral-genital stimulation
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Masturbating alone
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Other \_\_\_\_\_ (PLEASE SPECIFY)

83. How often does your spouse ask whether or not you have experienced an orgasm during sexual intercourse?  
(CIRCLE ONE)

- 1. Never
- 2. Rarely
- 3. Sometimes
- 4. Almost always
- 5. Always

RELIGIOSITY:

23. How often have you attended religious services during the past year?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Total number of times
24. Which of the following best describes your practice of prayer or religious meditation? (CIRCLE ONE)
1. Prayer is a regular part of my daily life.
  2. I usually pray in times of stress or need but rarely at any other time.
  3. I pray only during formal ceremonies.
  4. Prayer has little importance in my life.
  5. I never pray.
25. When you have a serious personal problem how often do you take religious advice or teaching into consideration?
1. Almost always
  2. Usually
  3. Sometimes
  4. Rarely
  5. Never
26. How much of an influence would you say that religion has on the way you choose to act and the way you choose to spend your time each day?
1. No influence
  2. A small influence
  3. Some influence
  4. A fair amount of influence
  5. A large influence

27. Which of the following statements comes closest to your belief about God?
1. I am sure that God exists and that He is active in my life.
  2. Although I sometimes question His existence, I do believe in God and believe He knows of me as a person.
  3. I don't know if there is a personal God, but I do believe in a higher power of some kind.
  4. I don't know if there is a personal God or a higher power of some kind, and I don't know if I will ever know.
  5. I don't believe in a personal God or in a higher power.
28. Which of the following statements comes closest to your belief about life after death (immortality)?
1. I believe in a personal life after death, a soul existing as a specific individual.
  2. I believe in a soul existing after death as a part of a universal spirit.
  3. I believe in a life after death of some kind, but I really don't know what it would be like.
  4. I don't know whether there is any kind of life after death, and I don't know if I will ever know.
  5. I don't believe in any kind of life after death.
29. During the past year, how often have you experienced a feeling of religious reverence or devotion?
1. Almost daily
  2. Frequently
  3. Sometimes
  4. Rarely
  5. Never
30. Do you agree with the following statement? "Religion gives me a great amount of comfort and security in life."
1. Strongly disagree
  2. Disagree
  3. Uncertain
  4. Agree
  5. Strongly agree

31. In comparison to other persons of your same religious preference and age, how religious do you consider yourself to be? (CIRCLE ONE)
1. More religious than others
  2. About as religious as others
  3. Less religious than others

MARITAL SATISFACTION:

18. CIRCLE the number which best describes your level of satisfaction with your husband or wife AS A SPOUSE.
1. Extremely Satisfied
  2. Satisfied
  3. Unsatisfied
  4. Extremely Unsatisfied
19. CIRCLE the number which best describes your level of satisfaction WITH YOUR MARRIAGE.
1. Extremely Satisfied
  2. Satisfied
  3. Unsatisfied
  4. Extremely Unsatisfied
56. CIRCLE the number which best describes your level of satisfaction, everything considered, of your present relationship with your spouse.
1. Extremely Satisfied
  2. Satisfied
  3. Unsatisfied
  4. Extremely Unsatisfied

SEXUAL SATISFACTION:

106. How would you rate your overall personal level of PHYSIOLOGICAL (physical) sexual satisfaction? (CIRCLE ONE)
1. Very Satisfied
  2. Satisfied
  3. Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
  4. Dissatisfied
  5. Very dissatisfied

107. How would you rate your overall personal level of PSYCHOLOGICAL (emotional) sexual satisfaction? (CIRCLE ONE)

1. Very Satisfied
2. Satisfied
3. Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
4. Dissatisfied
5. Very dissatisfied

108. CIRCLE the number which best describes your level of satisfaction, everything considered, of your present sexual relationship with your spouse.

1. Very Satisfied
2. Satisfied
3. Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
4. Dissatisfied
5. Very dissatisfied

80. Which of the behaviors in question #79 would you prefer MORE OFTEN? (PLEASE CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY)

1. Kissing/hugging
2. Petting/caressing
3. Vaginal/penile sexual intercourse
4. Receive oral-genital stimulation
5. Give oral-genital stimulation
6. Masturbating alone to orgasm
7. Other \_\_\_\_\_ (PLEASE SPECIFY)

81. Which of the behaviors in question #79 would you prefer LESS OFTEN? (PLEASE CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY)

1. Kissing/hugging
2. Petting/caressing
3. Vaginal/penile sexual intercourse
4. Receive oral-genital stimulation
5. Give oral-genital stimulation
6. Masturbating alone to orgasm
7. Other \_\_\_\_\_ (PLEASE SPECIFY)

MARITAL CONVENTIONALITY:

88. My spouse and I understand each other completely.  
(CIRCLE ONE)
1. True
  2. False
89. My marriage could be happier than it is. (CIRCLE ONE)
1. True
  2. False
90. My spouse has all of the qualities I've always wanted in a mate. (CIRCLE ONE)
1. True
  2. False
91. I don't think anyone could possibly be happier than my spouse and I when we are with one another. (CIRCLE ONE)
1. True
  2. False
92. My spouse completely understands and sympathizes with my every mood. (CIRCLE ONE)
1. True
  2. False
93. I have some needs that are not being met by my marriage. (CIRCLE ONE)
1. True
  2. False
94. My marriage is not a perfect success.
1. True
  2. False

95. There are times when I do not feel a great deal of love and affection for my spouse.
1. True
  2. False
96. If my spouse has any faults, I am not aware of them.
1. True
  2. False
97. I don't think any couple could live together with greater harmony than my spouse and I.
1. True
  2. False
98. If every person of the opposite sex in the whole world had been available and willing to marry me I could not have made a better choice than my spouse.
1. True
  2. False
99. I have never regretted my marriage, not even for a moment.
1. True
  2. False

## APPENDIX B

## SYSTEMS THEORY DEFINITIONS

- System: a set of elements that are so arranged and so interrelated that change in any one of the parts in the system activates reaction and change in all of the other parts
- Homeostasis: the dynamic balance and ordering of parts which was successful in the past for maintaining the system, and which the system strives to maintain (i.e. use of rules): steady state/dynamic equilibrium suggests that systems resist radical change
- Boundaries: the repeatedly occurring patterns of behavior which characterize the relationships within a system and give the system its identity; diffuse=disengaged, semipermeable=engaged, rigid=enmeshed,
- Open System: exchanges new information relatively easily across the system's boundaries
- Closed System: tends to inhibit any flow of new information across the system's boundaries: tends to become rigid and atrophy

## SYSTEMS THEORY DEFINITIONS, continued

Subsystem:	a secondary or subordinate system within the larger system
Input:	occurs when matter, energy, and/or information enters the system
Output:	occurs when matter, energy or information which entered the system is processed; systemic change occurs, and the system produces changed information or resources
Feedback:	the conveyance of information back to the point of input to determine whether the desired change has occurred; positive feedback says the system is behaving correctly, calls for more behavior of the same quality, while negative feedback says the behavior will keep the system from achieving it's goal(s)
Change:	occurs if there is input, if there is process to alter the input, if output occurs to change information or resources, or there is feedback to the point of input to determine if the desired change has occurred

## SYSTEMS THEORY DEFINITIONS, continued

Entropy:	tendency of all systems to run down or become disorganized
Negentropy:	forces that preserve a system's organization and promote it's growth and development toward increased order and complexity
Equifinality:	a given effect may result from multiple causes
Multifinality:	a single action may produce multiple different outcomes
Interface:	overlapping of two or more systems

APPENDIX C  
Questionnaire & Mailed Documents

[The following appendices contain material which has been changed from original research format to conform with manuscript specifications]

RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE ON MARITAL SEXUALITY

Dear Alumnus:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. Your candid, honest responses are a vital contribution toward increasing what we know about marital sexuality.

The questionnaire asks about your attitudes and behaviors related to individual and marital sexuality. It should take about 45 minutes to complete.

Please begin and end your answer time in one session with no outside interruptions. It is important that you answer every question. Please do not discuss the questions or your answers with anyone until after you have finished and mailed the questionnaire back to the researcher. You are welcome to make notes or copy questions if you would like to discuss them later with your spouse or others.

You are welcome to add your written comments in the margins if necessary to clarify your responses. Please feel free call me if you have any questions or concerns about the questionnaire. My daytime phone number is (703) 343-0004.

If you would like to receive a copy of the results of this study, please complete the enclosed REQUEST FOR COPY and mail it separately to:

Alan Beach, LCSW  
308 Fincastle Drive  
Blacksburg, VA 24060

Thank you again for your participation.

Sincerely,

Alan Beach

1. What is your sex? (CIRCLE ONE)
  1. Female
  2. Male
  
2. What is your age? (PLEASE SPECIFY)  
\_\_\_\_\_ years
  
3. What was your class/graduation year? (PLEASE SPECIFY)  
19\_\_\_\_\_
  
4. While growing up, how many siblings were in your family? (PLEASE SPECIFY)  
\_\_\_\_\_ Sisters                      \_\_\_\_\_ Brothers  
\_\_\_\_\_ Stepsisters                  \_\_\_\_\_ Stepbrothers
  
5. What was your birth order in your family? (PLEASE CIRCLE ONE)
  1. ONLY child
  2. 1st child
  3. 2nd child
  4. 3rd child
  5. 4th child
  6. 5th child
  7. 6th child
  8. 7th child
  9. 8th child
  10. Other \_\_\_\_\_ (PLEASE SPECIFY)
  
- 5A. In which type of community were you raised? (CIRCLE ONE)
  1. Urban
  2. Rural
  3. A mixture of both
  4. Other \_\_\_\_\_

- 5B. In what type of community do you live today?
1. Urban
  2. Rural
  3. A mixture of both
  4. Other \_\_\_\_\_
6. How old is your spouse? (PLEASE SPECIFY)
- \_\_\_\_\_ years
7. How many years have you been in your current marriage?  
(PLEASE SPECIFY)
- \_\_\_\_\_ years
8. Concerning your marital history, CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY TO YOU:
1. Current marriage is my first and only marriage.
  2. I was married once and divorced before my current marriage.
  3. I have been married two or more times before my current marriage.
  4. I was widowed or widower prior to current marriage.
  5. My spouse and I lived together prior to marrying (how long? \_\_\_\_\_ months)
9. Your race/ethnic background: (PLEASE CIRCLE ONE)
1. African American
  2. Asian American
  3. Caucasian
  4. Hispanic
  5. Native American
  6. Other \_\_\_\_\_
10. Your educational level: (PLEASE CIRCLE ONE)
1. 1-2 years of college or Associate of Arts degree
  2. 4 year Bachelors degree
  3. Masters degree
  4. Doctoral degree
  5. Other \_\_\_\_\_

11. In an average week how many hours do you work FOR PAY:  
(PLEASE SPECIFY)
- \_\_\_\_\_ hours outside the home  
\_\_\_\_\_ hours at home
12. In an average week how many hours does your spouse work FOR  
PAY: (PLEASE SPECIFY)
- \_\_\_\_\_ hours outside the home  
\_\_\_\_\_ hours at home
- 13A. What is your average annual FAMILY (combine yours and  
spouse's income) income? (CIRCLE ONE)
1. less than \$20,000
  2. \$20,001 to 30,000
  3. \$30,001 to 40,000
  4. \$40,001 to 50,000
  5. \$50,001 to 60,000
  6. over \$60,000
- 13B. What is your occupation? (PLEASE  
SPECIFY) \_\_\_\_\_
- 13C. What is your spouse's occupation?  
\_\_\_\_\_
14. Are you/your spouse currently pregnant? (CIRCLE ONE)
1. Yes
  2. No

IF YOU DO NOT HAVE CHILDREN, GO TO QUESTION 16.
---

## 15. IF YOU HAVE CHILDREN:

Describe the sex, birth order, and age of your children:  
(CIRCLE ALL APPLICABLE CATEGORIES)

	<u>SEX</u>		<u>AGE</u>
First child	Male	Female	- _____ years
Second child	Male	Female	- _____ years
Third child	Male	Female	- _____ years
Fourth child	Male	Female	- _____ years
Fifth child	Male	Female	- _____ years
Sixth child	Male	Female	- _____ years

(please write in additional entries to the side)

16. Which form(s) of birth control do you/your spouse use?  
(CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY)

1. Condoms
2. Pill
3. Diaphragm
4. IUD
5. Spermicidal jelly
6. Rhythm
7. Abstinence
8. Tubal ligation
9. Vasectomy
10. Other \_\_\_\_\_ (PLEASE SPECIFY)
11. None

## 17. Please describe any positive or negative effects of birth control on your marital sexual behaviors and/or attitudes:

## 18. CIRCLE the number which best describes your level of satisfaction with your husband or wife AS A SPOUSE.

1. Extremely Satisfied
2. Satisfied
3. Unsatisfied
4. Extremely Unsatisfied

19. CIRCLE the number which best describes your level of satisfaction WITH YOUR MARRIAGE.
1. Extremely Satisfied
  2. Satisfied
  3. Unsatisfied
  4. Extremely Unsatisfied
20. In what church or religious denomination were you REARED?  
(PLEASE SPECIFY EITHER **EXACT** CHURCH NAME, DENOMINATION NAME, or NONE)
- 
21. During what you consider your "formative growing up years", how often did you usually attend religious services?  
(PLEASE WRITE **NUMBER** FOR ONLY ONE CATEGORY OR CHECK DID NOT ATTEND)
- \_\_\_\_ 1. Times per week  
or  
\_\_\_\_ 2. Times per month  
or  
\_\_\_\_ 3. Times per year  
or  
\_\_\_\_ 4. **Did not attend religious services**
22. How have your religious beliefs and practices changed since your college years? (use back of page if necessary)
23. How often have you attended religious services DURING THE PAST YEAR?
- \_\_\_\_ Total number of times
24. Which of the following best describes your practice of prayer or religious meditation? (CIRCLE ONE)
1. Prayer is a regular part of my daily life.
  2. I usually pray in times of stress or need but rarely at any other time.
  3. I pray only during formal ceremonies.
  4. Prayer has little importance in my life.
  5. I never pray.

25. When you have a serious personal problem how often do you take religious advice or teaching into consideration?
1. Almost always
  2. Usually
  3. Sometimes
  4. Rarely
  5. Never
26. How much of an influence would you say that religion has on the way you choose to act and the way you choose to spend your time each day?
1. No influence
  2. A small influence
  3. Some influence
  4. A fair amount of influence
  5. A large influence
27. Which of the following statements comes closest to your belief about God?
1. I am sure that God exists and that He is active in my life.
  2. Although I sometimes question His existence, I do believe in God and believe He knows of me as a person.
  3. I don't know if there is a personal God, but I do believe in a higher power of some kind.
  4. I don't know if there is a personal God or a higher power of some kind, and I don't know if I will ever know.
  5. I don't believe in a personal God or in a higher power.
28. Which of the following statements comes closest to your belief about life after death (immortality)?
1. I believe in a personal life after death, a soul existing as a specific individual.
  2. I believe in a soul existing after death as a part of a universal spirit.
  3. I believe in a life after death of some kind, but I really don't know what it would be like.
  4. I don't know whether there is any kind of life after death, and I don't know if I will ever know.
  5. I don't believe in any kind of life after death.

29. During the past year, how often have you experienced a feeling of religious reverence or devotion?
1. Almost daily
  2. Frequently
  3. Sometimes
  4. Rarely
  5. Never
30. Do you agree with the following statement? "Religion gives me a great amount of comfort and security in life."
1. Strongly disagree
  2. Disagree
  3. Uncertain
  4. Agree
  5. Strongly agree
31. In comparison to other persons of your same religious preference and age, how religious do you consider yourself to be? (CIRCLE ONE)
1. More religious than others
  2. About as religious as others
  3. Less religious than others
32. At what age did you FIRST receive information about where babies come from? (PLEASE SPECIFY)
- \_\_\_\_\_ years
33. Who was your FIRST source of information about where babies come from? (CIRCLE ONE)
1. Mother
  2. Father
  3. Parents together
  4. Grandparent
  5. Peer
  6. Sibling
  7. Teacher
  8. School nurse
  9. Mass media
  10. Church minister
  11. Other \_\_\_\_\_ (PLEASE SPECIFY)

34. What was the form of your FIRST information about where babies come from? (CIRCLE ONE)
1. Book - popular
  2. Book - school
  3. Book - library
  4. Classroom lecture
  5. Magazine - popular
  6. Film - educational
  7. Television
  8. Movie - popular
  9. Pamphlet - popular
  10. Pamphlet - educational
  11. Conversation
  12. Other \_\_\_\_\_ (PLEASE SPECIFY)
35. At what age did you FIRST receive information about sexual intercourse? (PLEASE SPECIFY)
- \_\_\_\_\_ years
36. Who was your FIRST source of information about sexual intercourse? (CIRCLE ONE)
1. Mother
  2. Father
  3. Parents together
  4. Grandparent
  5. Peer
  6. Sibling
  7. Teacher
  8. Sex partner
  9. School nurse
  10. Family physician
  11. Mass media
  12. Other \_\_\_\_\_ (PLEASE SPECIFY)

37. What was the form of your FIRST information about sexual intercourse? (CIRCLE ONE)
1. Book - popular
  2. Book - school
  3. Book - library
  4. Classroom lecture
  5. Magazine - popular
  6. Film - educational
  7. Conversation
  8. Pamphlet - popular
  9. Pamphlet - educational
  10. Television
  11. Movie - popular
  12. Other \_\_\_\_\_ (PLEASE SPECIFY)
38. Overall, how adequate was the sexuality education that you received from your PARENT(S) while growing up? (CIRCLE ONE)
1. Very inadequate
  2. Inadequate
  3. Somewhat inadequate
  4. Neither inadequate nor adequate
  5. Somewhat adequate
  6. Adequate
  7. Very adequate
39. Overall, how adequate was your preparation for being a sexual partner when you got married? (CIRCLE ONE)
1. Very inadequate
  2. Inadequate
  3. Somewhat inadequate
  4. Neither inadequate nor adequate
  5. Somewhat adequate
  6. Adequate
  7. Very adequate
40. What is your current sexual orientation: (CIRCLE ONE)
1. Heterosexual
  2. Gay or Lesbian
  3. Bisexual (enjoy sexual activity with same & opposite sex)

NOTE: THE TERMS "MOTHER" AND "FATHER" REFER TO THE FEMALE AND/OR MALE ADULT(S) WHO PROVIDED PARENTAL GUIDANCE WHILE YOU WERE GROWING UP.

41. What was the marital status of your mother FOR THE LONGEST PERIOD OF TIME while you were growing up? (CIRCLE ONE)
1. Married to my father
  2. Separated
  3. Divorced
  4. Widowed
  5. Widowed and remarried to person other than my father
  6. Never married
  7. Divorced and remarried to person other than my father
42. How would you describe your feelings toward your mother while you were growing up? (CIRCLE ONE)
1. Very attached
  2. Attached
  3. Somewhat attached
  4. Neither attached nor unattached
  5. Somewhat unattached
  6. Unattached
  7. Very unattached
43. How often did your mother seem overly strict with regard to enforcing various rules of conduct for you? (CIRCLE ONE)
1. Never
  2. Seldom
  3. Occasionally
  4. Frequently
  5. Very frequently
44. How often did your mother seem uncommunicative toward you? (CIRCLE ONE)
1. Never
  2. Seldom
  3. Occasionally
  4. Frequently
  5. Very frequently

45. How often were sexually-related topics the subject of conversations between you and your mother while you were growing up? (CIRCLE ONE)
1. Very frequently
  2. Frequently
  3. Occasionally
  4. Seldom
  5. Never
46. With whom did you live MOST of the time while growing up? (CIRCLE ONE)
1. Mother
  2. Father
  3. Both mother and father
47. What was the marital status of your father FOR THE LONGEST PERIOD OF TIME while you were growing up? (CIRCLE ONE)
1. Married to my mother
  2. Separated
  3. Divorced
  4. Widowed
  5. Widowed and remarried to person other than my mother
  6. Never married
  7. Divorced and remarried to person other than my mother
48. How would you describe your feelings toward your father while you were growing up? (CIRCLE ONE)
1. Very attached
  2. Attached
  3. Somewhat attached
  4. Neither attached nor unattached
  5. Somewhat unattached
  6. Unattached
  7. Very unattached

49. How often did your father seem overly strict with regard to enforcing various rules of conduct for you? (CIRCLE ONE)
1. Never
  2. Seldom
  3. Occasionally
  4. Frequently
  5. Very frequently
50. How often did your father seem uncommunicative toward you? (CIRCLE ONE)
1. Never
  2. Seldom
  3. Occasionally
  4. Frequently
  5. Very frequently
51. How often were sexually-related topics the subject of conversations between you and your father while you were growing up? (CIRCLE ONE)
1. Very frequently
  2. Frequently
  3. Occasionally
  4. Seldom
  5. Never

IF MOTHER AND FATHER WERE NOT MARRIED OR NOT LIVING TOGETHER DURING YOUR GROWING UP YEARS, GO TO QUESTION 54.

52. IF MOTHER AND FATHER WERE MARRIED TO EACH OTHER:

While you were growing up, how frequently did you observe your mother and father displaying affection toward each other such as hugging and kissing? (CIRCLE ONE)

1. Very frequently
2. Frequently
3. Occasionally
4. Seldom
5. Never

53. How would you rate the quality of the marriage between your mother and father while you were growing up? (CIRCLE ONE)
1. Extremely happy
  2. Happy
  3. Somewhat happy
  4. Average in happiness
  5. Somewhat unhappy
  6. Unhappy
  7. Extremely unhappy
54. How many people in your sex and age group do you think engaged in sexual intercourse before they were married? (PLEASE SPECIFY A PERCENT)
- \_\_\_\_\_ %
55. How important was it that you marry someone who had not experienced sexual intercourse prior to marriage with anyone other than YOURSELF? (CIRCLE ONE)
1. Very important
  2. Quite important
  3. Somewhat important
  4. Slightly important
  5. Not at all important
56. CIRCLE the number which best describes your level of satisfaction, everything considered, of your present relationship with your spouse.
1. Extremely satisfied
  2. Satisfied
  3. Unsatisfied
  4. Extremely unsatisfied
57. Two people should be able to live together in a sexual relationship without being married. (CIRCLE ONE)
1. Strongly agree
  2. Agree
  3. Disagree
  4. Strongly disagree

58. A person should avoid having oral-genital sex, even if it is with their spouse. (CIRCLE ONE)
1. Strongly disagree
  2. Disagree
  3. Agree
  4. Strongly agree
59. A person should experience an orgasm in a majority of the times s/he engages in sexual intercourse. (CIRCLE ONE)
1. Strongly disagree
  2. Disagree
  3. Agree
  4. Strongly agree
60. A person should avoid having anal intercourse with their spouse, even if a condom is used. (CIRCLE ONE)
1. Strongly disagree
  2. Disagree
  3. Agree
  4. Strongly agree
61. There should be no sexual intercourse without love. (CIRCLE ONE)
1. Strongly disagree
  2. Disagree
  3. Agree
  4. Strongly agree
62. Homosexuals should not be permitted to serve as priests, ministers, or rabbis. (CIRCLE ONE)
1. Strongly disagree
  2. Disagree
  3. Agree
  4. Strongly agree

63. BEFORE you were married, which of the following petting and/or foreplay activities did you engage in with ANY person of the OPPOSITE sex with the intent of sexual arousal and/or orgasm? (CHECK ALL APPLICABLE CATEGORIES)

---

Prior to  
Marriage      Petting and/or Foreplay Activities

---

1. Kissed on the lips  
 2. Tongue kissed  
 3. Your breasts/chest area fondled through clothes  
 4. Your bare breasts/chest area fondled and/or kissed  
 5. Your bare breasts and/or nipples kissed/orally stimulated  
 6. Your genitals caressed WITH clothes on  
 7. Your genitals caressed WITHOUT clothes on  
 8. Your genitals stimulated orally by another person  
 9. Fondled the covered breasts/chest area of another person  
 10. Fondled the bare breasts/chest area of another person  
 11. Kissed/orally stimulated another's bare breasts/chest area  
 12. Stimulated another person's covered genitals  
 13. Stimulated another person's bare genitals  
 14. Orally stimulated the genital organs of another person  
 15. Lain together with another person while fully or partially clothed and engaged in sexual intercourse movements  
 16. Engaged in sexual activities with two or more persons at the same time  
 17. Other \_\_\_\_\_ (PLEASE SPECIFY)  
 18. NONE

64. How did you first experience orgasm? (CIRCLE ALL APPLICABLE CATEGORIES)

1. Never have experienced orgasm  
 2. While masturbating alone  
 3. During petting/foreplay with person of opposite sex  
 4. During vaginal/penile intercourse  
 5. Other \_\_\_\_\_ (PLEASE SPECIFY)

65. Have you ever engaged in petting and/or foreplay activities with a person of the SAME SEX with the intent of sexual arousal or experiencing orgasm? (CIRCLE ONE)

1. Yes
2. No

66. In a dating situation before you were married, did a dating partner ever have any sexual contact with you AGAINST YOUR WILL? (CIRCLE ONE-IF YES, BRIEFLY DESCRIBE WHAT HAPPENED)

1. Yes \_\_\_\_\_
2. No

---

IF ANSWER TO 66 WAS NO, GO TO QUESTION #68.

---

67. IF A DATING PARTNER EVER FORCED SEXUAL CONTACT WITH YOU:

Who did you tell about it? (CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY)

1. Close friend
2. Parent(s)
3. Teacher
4. Counselor
5. Law enforcement personnel
6. Other \_\_\_\_\_

7. Nobody, because \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please specify reason)

68. At what age did you experience sexual intercourse for the FIRST time? (PLEASE SPECIFY)

\_\_\_\_\_ years

69. How old was the person with whom you experienced sexual intercourse for the FIRST time? (PLEASE SPECIFY OR GIVE APPROXIMATE AGE)

\_\_\_\_\_ years

70. Did you consent to have sexual intercourse the FIRST TIME, i.e., was there an absence of physical force/threat of physical force? (CIRCLE ONE)
1. Yes - implied consent
  2. Yes - verbal consent
  3. No - against my will
  4. Do not remember
  5. Do not remember, was under the influence of alcohol and/or mind altering substance.
  6. Other \_\_\_\_\_ (PLEASE SPECIFY)
71. When you first experienced sexual intercourse, what was the relationship of your sex partner to you AT THAT TIME? (PLEASE CIRCLE ONE)
1. Spouse, after marriage
  2. Fiance
  3. Cohabitation partner
  4. Committed love relationship partner
  5. Steady dating partner
  6. Occasional dating partner
  7. Friend
  8. Casual acquaintance
  9. Person you had just met
  10. Cousin
  11. Brother
  12. Sister
  13. Stepbrother
  14. Stepsister
  15. Father
  16. Mother
  17. Stepmother
  18. Stepfather
  19. Uncle
  20. Aunt
  21. Nephew
  22. Niece
  23. Sister-in-law
  24. Brother-in-law
  25. Prostitute
  26. Unknown person (i.e., rapist)
  27. Other \_\_\_\_\_ (PLEASE SPECIFY)

72. Was engaging in sexual intercourse the first time a satisfying PHYSIOLOGICAL (physical) experience for you? (CIRCLE ONE)
1. Very Satisfying
  2. Satisfying
  3. Neither satisfying nor unsatisfying
  4. Unsatisfying
  5. Very unsatisfying
73. Was engaging in sexual intercourse the first time a satisfying PSYCHOLOGICAL (emotional) experience for you? (CIRCLE ONE)
1. Very Satisfying
  2. Satisfying
  3. Neither satisfying nor unsatisfying
  4. Unsatisfying
  5. Very unsatisfying
74. How often do you feel guilty when remembering your first sexual intercourse experience? (CIRCLE ONE)
1. Never
  2. Seldom
  3. Occasionally
  4. Frequently
  5. Very frequently
  6. Always
75. Have you ever had extramarital sexual contact with someone (i.e., an affair) while you were married to your current spouse or a former spouse? (CIRCLE ONE)
1. Yes
  2. No
76. Does your spouse know about your premarital sexual experiences and/or extramarital sexual behavior? (CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY)
1. Yes—knows about PREMARITAL
  2. Yes—knows about EXTRAMARITAL
  3. No—doesn't know about premarital
  4. No—doesn't know about extramarital
  5. Question doesn't apply to me

77. How would you rate your current level of comfort with your sexuality? (CIRCLE ONE)

1. Always comfortable
2. Almost always comfortable
3. Sometimes comfortable
4. Rarely comfortable
5. Never comfortable

78. Which of the following petting and/or foreplay activities do you engage in with your spouse with the intent of sexual arousal and/or orgasm? (CHECK ALL APPLICABLE CATEGORIES)

---

Marital Petting and/or Foreplay Activities

---

1. Kissing on the lips
2. Tongue kissing
3. Spouse caresses your breasts/chest area
4. Spouse kisses/orally stimulates your breasts/chest area/nipples
5. Spouse caresses your genitals
6. Spouse orally stimulates your genitals
7. Spouse caresses/stimulates your anal area
8. You fondle and/or kiss spouse's breasts/chest area
9. You kiss/orally stimulate spouse's breasts/chest area/nipples
10. You caress spouse's genitals
11. You orally stimulate spouse's genitals
12. You caress/stimulate spouse's anal area
13. Give and/or receive full body massage
14. Reading/viewing Playboy/Playgirl-type magazines with spouse
15. Watching X-rated/Adult sexual movies or videos with spouse
16. Bondage/fantasy activities including any of the above
17. Sado-masochistic activities
18. Other \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE SPECIFY)

79. Indicate how often you engage in the following behaviors by putting a number in each blank corresponding to each behavior:

- 1 - Daily
- 2 - 3-5 times weekly
- 3 - 2-3 times weekly
- 4 - Once a week
- 5 - 2-3 times monthly
- 6 - Once a month
- 7 - Few times a year
- 8 - Never

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Mutual kissing/hugging
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Mutual petting/caressing
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Vaginal/penile sexual intercourse
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Receive oral-genital stimulation
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Give oral-genital stimulation
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Masturbating alone to orgasm
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Reading/viewing Playboy/Playgirl-type magazines alone
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Reading/viewing Playboy/Playgirl-type magazines with spouse
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Watching X-rated/Adult sexual movies or videos alone
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Watching X-rated/Adult sexual movies or videos with spouse
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Other \_\_\_\_\_ (PLEASE SPECIFY)

80A. Which of the behaviors in question #79 would you prefer MORE OFTEN? (PLEASE CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY)

- 1. Kissing/hugging
- 2. Petting/caressing
- 3. Vaginal/penile sexual intercourse
- 4. Receive oral-genital stimulation
- 5. Give oral-genital stimulation
- 6. Masturbating alone to orgasm
- 7. Reading/viewing Playboy/Playgirl-type magazines alone
- 8. Reading/viewing Playboy/Playgirl-type magazines with spouse
- 9. Watching X-rated/Adult sexual movies or videos alone
- 10. Watching X-rated/Adult sexual movies or videos with spouse
- 11. Other \_\_\_\_\_ (PLEASE SPECIFY)

80B. Which of the behaviors in question #79 would your spouse prefer MORE OFTEN? (PLEASE CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY)

1. Kissing/hugging
2. Petting/caressing
3. Vaginal/penile sexual intercourse
4. Receive oral-genital stimulation
5. Give oral-genital stimulation
6. Masturbating alone to orgasm
7. Reading/viewing Playboy/Playgirl-type magazines alone
8. Reading/viewing Playboy/Playgirl-type magazines with spouse
9. Watching X-rated/Adult sexual movies or videos alone
10. Watching X-rated/Adult sexual movies or videos with spouse
11. Other \_\_\_\_\_ (PLEASE SPECIFY)

81A. Which of the behaviors in question #79 would you prefer LESS OFTEN? (PLEASE CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY)

1. Kissing/hugging
2. Petting/caressing
3. Vaginal/penile sexual intercourse
4. Receive oral-genital stimulation
5. Give oral-genital stimulation
6. Masturbating alone to orgasm
7. Reading/viewing Playboy/Playgirl-type magazines alone
8. Reading/viewing Playboy/Playgirl-type magazines with spouse
9. Watching X-rated/Adult sexual movies or videos alone
10. Watching X-rated/Adult sexual movies or videos with spouse
11. Other \_\_\_\_\_ (PLEASE SPECIFY)

81B. Which of the behaviors in question #79 would your spouse prefer LESS OFTEN? (PLEASE CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY)

1. Kissing/hugging
2. Petting/caressing
3. Vaginal/penile sexual intercourse
4. Receive oral-genital stimulation
5. Give oral-genital stimulation
6. Masturbating alone to orgasm
7. Reading/viewing Playboy/Playgirl-type magazines alone
8. Reading/viewing Playboy/Playgirl-type magazines with spouse
9. Watching X-rated/Adult sexual movies or videos alone
10. Watching X-rated/Adult sexual movies or videos with spouse
11. Other \_\_\_\_\_ (PLEASE SPECIFY)

82. Indicate, by putting a number in each blank, how often you experience orgasm while engaging in the following behaviors

- 1-Always
- 2-Almost always
- 3-Frequently
- 4-Sometimes
- 5-Rarely

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Mutual kissing/hugging
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Mutual petting/caressing
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Vaginal/penile sexual intercourse
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Receiving oral-genital stimulation
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Giving oral-genital stimulation
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Masturbating alone
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Other \_\_\_\_\_ (PLEASE SPECIFY)

83. How often does your spouse ask whether you experienced an orgasm during sexual intercourse? (CIRCLE ONE)

1. Never
2. Rarely
3. Sometimes
4. Almost always
5. Always

84. How often do you pretend having an orgasm during sexual intercourse? (CIRCLE ONE)
1. Never
  2. Rarely
  3. Sometimes
  4. Almost always
  5. Always
85. To be considered sexually well adjusted, it is necessary for each spouse to experience orgasm the majority of the times they engage in sexual intercourse. (CIRCLE ONE)
1. Strongly agree
  2. Agree
  3. Disagree
  4. Strongly Disagree
86. IF YOU NEVER MASTURBATE WHILE ALONE—What do you consider the THREE most important reasons for your decision not to engage in masturbation while alone? Rank these THREE reasons in degree of importance with 1 = most important, and 3 = third most important. (RANK ONLY YOUR THREE MOST IMPORTANT REASONS)
1. Against my religious teachings
  2. Fear of discovery
  3. Social disapproval
  4. Abnormal behavior
  5. Against my personal values
  6. Feeling of disappointment after reaching orgasm through masturbation
  7. Spouse would disapprove or feel hurt if ever found out
  8. Causes me to feel uncomfortable or ashamed
  9. It's wrong to fantasize about persons other than spouse
  10. Concern about frequency/Unable to control my desire
  11. Other \_\_\_\_\_ (PLEASE SPECIFY)

87. A married person masturbating to orgasm while alone is a sign of poor sexual adjustment. (CIRCLE ONE)
1. Strongly agree
  2. Agree
  3. Disagree
  4. Strongly disagree

READ THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS AND INDICATE WHETHER THEY ARE TRUE OR FALSE AS APPLIED TO YOU, YOUR SPOUSE, OR YOUR MARRIAGE.

88. My spouse and I understand each other completely. (CIRCLE ONE)
1. True
  2. False
89. My marriage could be happier than it is. (CIRCLE ONE)
1. True
  2. False
90. My spouse has all of the qualities I've always wanted in a mate. (CIRCLE ONE)
1. True
  2. False
91. I don't think anyone could possibly be happier than my spouse and I when we are with one another. (CIRCLE ONE)
1. True
  2. False
92. My spouse completely understands and sympathizes with my every mood. (CIRCLE ONE)
1. True
  2. False
93. I have some needs that are not being met by my marriage. (CIRCLE ONE)
1. True
  2. False

94. My marriage is not a perfect success.
1. True
  2. False
95. There are times when I do not feel a great deal of love and affection for my spouse.
1. True
  2. False
96. If my spouse has any faults, I am not aware of them.
1. True
  2. False
97. I don't think any couple could live together with greater harmony than my spouse and I.
1. True
  2. False
98. If every person of the opposite sex in the whole world had been available and willing to marry me I could not have made a better choice than my spouse.
1. True
  2. False
99. I have never regretted my marriage, not even for a moment.
1. True
  2. False
- 100A. Rank in the order of their importance the following factors for creating healthy sexual harmony between you and your spouse—with 1 = most important, and 5 = least important.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Social & recreational compatibility
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Physical appearance and personal grooming
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Knowledge of sexual techniques
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Positive self-esteem of both partners
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Effective communication techniques
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_ (PLEASE SPECIFY)

Please give an example or description of what you mean by the #1 ranked factor for question #100A.

100B. Please describe any counseling or therapy you have received for individual, marital, or family problems:

101. While you were growing up, did anyone who was 5 or more years older than you engage in inappropriate sexual behavior with you? (CIRCLE ONE)

1. Yes
2. No

---

IF NO, NEVER EXPERIENCED INAPPROPRIATE SEXUAL BEHAVIOR WHILE GROWING UP, GO TO QUESTION 105.

---

102A. IF YES, EXPERIENCED INAPPROPRIATE SEXUAL BEHAVIOR WHILE GROWING UP:

What was the relationship of the other person(s) to you AT THE TIME of the inappropriate sexual behavior? (CIRCLE ALL APPLICABLE CATEGORIES)

1. Mother
2. Father
3. Stepmother
4. Stepfather
5. Sister
6. Brother
7. Stepsister
8. Stepbrother
9. Cousin, FEMALE
10. Cousin, MALE
11. Aunt
12. Uncle
13. Grandmother
14. Grandfather
15. Sister-in-law
16. Brother-in-law
17. Neighbor, FEMALE
18. Neighbor, MALE
19. Family friend, FEMALE
20. Family friend, MALE
21. Stranger, FEMALE
22. Stranger, MALE
23. Teacher, FEMALE
24. Teacher, MALE
25. Scout leader, FEMALE
26. Scout leader, MALE
27. Minister, Priest, or Rabbi
28. Other \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE SPECIFY)

102B. Please describe as briefly as you wish the nature of the inappropriate sexual behavior:

103. Have you ever told anyone that you experienced inappropriate sexual contact while growing up? (CIRCLE ONE)

1. Yes
2. No

104. How has this inappropriate sexual contact affected your marital sexual relationship?

105. Sexual Conservatism Level:

The following questions measure sexual conservatism in your sexual relationship with your spouse. There are no right or wrong answers. Please circle the number which most accurately describes you.

	NEVER	RARELY	SOMETIMES	ALWAYS	ALMOST ALWAYS
	1	2	3	4	5
a. I feel uncomfortable talking during sex.				1	2 3 4 5
b. I feel that I am shy when it comes to sex.				1	2 3 4 5
c. I approach my spouse for sex when I desire it.					1 2 3 4 5
d. I think I am open with my spouse about my sexual needs.					1 2 3 4 5
e. I enjoy sharing my sexual fantasies with my spouse.					1 2 3 4 5
f. I feel uncomfortable talking to my friends about sex.					1 2 3 4 5
g. I communicate my sexual desires to my spouse.					1 2 3 4 5
h. It is difficult for me to touch myself during sex.					1 2 3 4 5
i. It is hard for me to say no even when I do not want sex.					1 2 3 4 5
j. I am reluctant to describe myself as a sexual person.					1 2 3 4 5
k. I feel uncomfortable telling my spouse what feels good.					1 2 3 4 5
l. I speak up for my sexual feelings.					1 2 3 4 5
m. I am reluctant to insist that my spouse satisfy me.					1 2 3 4 5
n. I find myself having sex when I do not really want it.					1 2 3 4 5
o. When a technique does not feel good, I tell my spouse.					1 2 3 4 5
p. I feel comfortable giving sexual praise to my spouse.					1 2 3 4 5
q. It is easy for me to discuss sex with my spouse.					1 2 3 4 5
r. I feel comfortable in initiating sex with my spouse.					1 2 3 4 5
s. I find myself doing sexual things that I do not like.					1 2 3 4 5
t. Pleasing my spouse is more important than my pleasure.					1 2 3 4 5
u. I feel comfortable telling my spouse how to touch me.					1 2 3 4 5
v. I enjoy masturbating myself to orgasm.					1 2 3 4 5
w. If something feels good, I insist on doing it again.					1 2 3 4 5
x. It is hard for me to be honest about my sexual feelings.					1 2 3 4 5
y. I try to avoid discussing the subject of sex.					1 2 3 4 5

\* \* \* \* \*

106. How would you rate your overall personal level of PHYSIOLOGICAL (physical) sexual satisfaction? (CIRCLE ONE)
1. Very Satisfied
  2. Satisfied
  3. Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
  4. Dissatisfied
  5. Very dissatisfied
107. How would you rate your overall personal level of PSYCHOLOGICAL (emotional) sexual satisfaction? (CIRCLE ONE)
1. Very Satisfied
  2. Satisfied
  3. Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
  4. Dissatisfied
  5. Very dissatisfied
108. CIRCLE the number which best describes your level of satisfaction, everything considered, of your present sexual relationship with your spouse.
1. Very Satisfied
  2. Satisfied
  3. Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
  4. Dissatisfied
  5. Very dissatisfied
109. How has your sexual relationship with your spouse changed since the beginning of your marriage?
110. What has helped most to improve your sexual relationship with your spouse:
111. What has interfered most with developing a more satisfying sexual relationship with your spouse:
112. What are your thoughts and/or feelings about answering this questionnaire?

If there is anything else you wanted to say which you were unable to express in your questionnaire responses, please share it in the space below:

THANK YOU for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the researcher, Alan Beach, at (703) 343-0004 during office hours (9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Eastern time).

If you want a copy of the findings of this study, complete the enclosed Request for Copy of Study Results and return it in a separate envelope to protect the confidentiality of your questionnaire answers.

This questionnaire contains selected items from "Sexual Attitudes and Behavior of College Women and Men" by J. Kenneth Davidson, Sr., University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire and Nelwyn B. Moore, Southwest Texas State University and "Self-Perceptions of Female Sexuality" by J. Kenneth Davidson, Sr. which are being used by permission of the authors.

Request for a Copy of Study Results

Yes, I would like a copy of the results of this study.  
Please mail my copy to:

---

Name

---

Address

---

City

State

Zip

To help ensure the confidentiality of your questionnaire answers, return this form in a separate envelope to:

Alan Beach, LCSW  
308 Fincastle Drive  
Blacksburg, VA 24060

## LETTER OF INVITATION, DETAILS SHEET &amp; INFORMED CONSENT

Date

Dear fellow Alumnus:

My name is Alan Beach, and I graduated in 1978. I am married, the father of two children (13 & 11), and self-employed as a marriage and family therapist. I am a doctoral candidate in the Marriage and Family Therapy program at Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University (Virginia Tech) in Blacksburg, Virginia. This letter is your invitation to participate in the first known study of marital sexuality specifically focused on alumni of a church-affiliated university.

Recently some married friends told me "Our relationship would have been better earlier if we had known how to communicate about sexuality when we first married!" I suspect they spoke for many who grew up learning to be silent rather than ask questions about sex.

My doctoral dissertation is a study which focuses on the overall sexual satisfaction of married persons. I am studying the relationship between family background, religiosity, premarital sexual experiences, and current marital sexual relationship (see the enclosed page titled "DETAILS" for more information about question content).

Your participation is critical because very little is known about the relationship between religiosity and marital sexuality. We don't know how religious couples experience, manage or prevent sexual problems, nor how they educate their children for sexuality. We need facts to challenge or confirm what our culture and media sometimes say is necessary to be sexually well-adjusted adults.

You are one of 100 men and women whose names were randomly chosen from the 1990 alumni catalog. Your participation in the study will be kept completely confidential. Your name will not be on the questionnaire--code numbers will be used to ensure privacy of responses. The master code list and mailing addresses will be kept separate from the questionnaires and locked in a bank safe deposit box for the duration of the study, and destroyed after data collection is finished. The study is completely independent of the University Board of Trustees, administration, and faculty, and will strictly follow the research protocol of Virginia Tech.

To participate, you must meet the eligibility criteria and sign and return the enclosed consent form in the envelope provided. The questionnaire will be mailed to the address you specify within a few days of receiving your consent to participate. It has 112 items, and will take 30-45 minutes to complete. A postage paid return envelope will be provided.

I appreciate your time and consideration of this opportunity. Please respond within 10 days of your receipt of this letter.

Sincerely,

Alan Beach, MSW, LCSW

PS: I'll gladly answer your questions if you'll call me at (703) 343-0004 between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. (Eastern time). Please return the INFORMED CONSENT even if you choose not to participate.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### DETAILS

Due to the personal and private nature of the information requested in this study, every effort is being made to avoid unnecessary embarrassment or offense of participants. The following information is shared to ensure that you are sufficiently informed prior to consenting to participate.

This study focuses on the sexual attitudes, sexual behaviors, and overall sexual satisfaction of married persons. The questionnaire has been designed to gather information about your family background, religiosity, premarital sexual experiences, and current marital sexual relationship. The following are the content areas of the questionnaire:

**DEMOGRAPHICS:** Age, gender, current marital history, educational level, career information, income level, and so forth.

**RELIGIOSITY:** Attendance, prayer life, religious beliefs concerning God and life after death, influence of religion in daily life, etc.

FAMILY OF ORIGIN: Sibling number and birth order, relationship with parent(s), parental marital satisfaction, family sex education experiences.

SEXUAL ATTITUDES: Questions asking for your opinions about sexual behaviors before and after marriage, types of sexual behaviors acceptable to you, and comfort level with your sexuality.

SEXUAL BEHAVIORS: Questions which ask about sexual experiences before and after marriage, such as date rape or sexual assault, petting and foreplay, masturbation, intercourse, orgasm, and other marital sexual behaviors.

MARITAL & SEXUAL SATISFACTION: Questions which ask about your overall level of satisfaction with your marriage, spousal relationship, and sex life.

BENEFITS FROM PARTICIPATION include:

- 1) helping parents and teachers know how to provide better sex education for children;
- 2) helping inform church ministers, counselors and therapists about the need for premarital counseling to help prevent sexual problems in marriages;
- 3) providing valuable information about the status of marital sexuality to christian teachers in Marriage & Family Therapy training programs at church-affiliated universities;
- 4) identifying the strengths in couples who report satisfied and adjusted marital relationships;
- 5) informing the public about marriage and sexuality within a religious culture;
- 6) generating valuable data needed to plan future studies of marriage and family life; and
- 7) personal satisfaction from responding to a unique opportunity.

## INFORMED CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN STUDY

1. Alan Beach, a Ph.D. candidate in Marriage and Family Therapy at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University is conducting a study on sexual attitudes and behaviors of married persons who attended the university. To participate, you must be able to answer "YES" to the following statements:
  - a. I attended for at least three semesters (full-time summer school counts as one semester). (CIRCLE ONE)  

YES    NO
  - b. I am married and have been married to my current spouse for at least 3 years.  

YES    NO
  
2. I have been informed about and invited to participate in this study and if I consent, the following will occur:
  - a. I will receive a questionnaire which asks about my family background, religiosity, premarital sexual experiences, and current marital sexual relationship. The questionnaire will be sent to the address I specify below.
  - b. I will not be identified in any presentation of this research. Questionnaires will be kept on file only for the minimum time period required by research ethics. The answers of my research questionnaire will be kept strictly confidential. At no time will the researcher release the contents of my questionnaire without my written consent.
  - c. Risks I incur by participating in this study include:  
1) Some questions may trigger painful or embarrassing memories; 2) questions may raise issues that generate difficult discussions between myself and my spouse, friends, relatives, or other persons.
  - d. I am free to withdraw from this study at any time without any penalty. I have the right to not answer any question in the survey or stop at any time during my participation in this project.

3. If while answering the survey I find some of the questions to be disturbing, I can contact the researcher at (703) 343-0004 to talk about my concerns. If I want professional help to deal with these issues, the researcher will help me find a qualified professional counselor.
4. If I have other questions about this research project, I can call the Faculty Chairman of this dissertation, Dr. Joseph Maxwell, at (703) 231-4794, or the Director of the Virginia Tech Institutional Research Review Board, Dr. Janet Johnson at (703) 231-9359.

-over-

Informed Consent, page 2

I have read and understand the invitation letter, details sheet, and informed consent form, and I understand the conditions of this research project. I meet the eligibility criteria stated above and would like to participate in the study. I understand that I have the responsibility to complete the questionnaire appropriately and to the best of my knowledge.

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
PARTICIPANT SIGNATURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

After completing the above information and signing your name, please return this page in the enclosed postage-paid envelope. You will receive the questionnaire 7-10 days following receipt of your signed consent form.

**IF YOU CHOOSE NOT TO PARTICIPATE:**

Please answer the following questions and return this page in the return envelope. **You will not be contacted for any other information if you return this page.**

What is your age? \_\_\_\_\_

Your sex? (Circle One) Male Female

What year did you last attend the university? 19\_\_\_\_\_

Please share your reason for not participating:

Thank you for your time and willingness to help by sharing the above data.

## APPENDIX D-Tables

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for Nonparticipants

N = 56

Age

2 were in their 20s  
 9 were in 30s  
 9 were in 40s  
 9 were in 50s  
 10 were in 60s  
 6 were in 70s  
11 did not say their age  
 56

Gender

33 females  
 21 males  
 2 did not indicate gender

Classyear

2 from 1930s  
 8 from 1940s  
 7 from 1950s  
 13 from 1960s  
 9 from 1970s  
 5 from 1980s  
 12 did not give classyear

Reasons for not participating

9 content too personal/invasion of privacy  
 20 not interested/no reason given  
 6 too busy to participate/travelling  
 11 did not qualify (not married, divorced, dead)  
 10 incomplete consent form/did not return questionnaire after agreeing to participate

Table 2

Reasons For Not Participating in Study as Function of Gender and Age

Reasons(n)	FEMALES (n=30)					MALES (n=26)				
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
27-39 yrs	3	2	2	2	4			1	2	4
40-49 yrs	2	3				1	3			
50-59 yrs	1	1		2		1	3	1		
60-69 yrs	1	2	2	2			2			2
70-78 yrs		2		2					1	1
TOTALS	7	10	4	8	4	2	8	2	3	7

Reasons:1=too personal, 2=not interested/no reason, 3=too busy, 4=don't qualify, 5=other/failed to return Q

Table 3

## Sample Characteristics

	Female n=30	Male n=26	Total (N=56)
Gender (%)	54	46	100
Age group (%)			
29-39 years	40	27	34
40-49 years	27	23	25
50-59 years	23	23	23
60-69 years	10	19	14
70-79 years	0	4	2
80-89 years	0	4	2
Race: (%)			
Caucasian	93	100	96
Native American	7	0	4
African American	0	0	0
Hispanic	0	0	0
Sexual Orientation: (%)			
Heterosexual	100	100	100
Homosexual	0	0	0
Bisexual	0	0	0
Years Married:			
Mean	20.1	25.1	22.4
SD	11.2	15.3	13.4
Range	4-42	5-54	4-54
Education: (%)			
Associate's	10	4	7
Bachelor's	60	42	52
Master's	27	31	29
Doctoral	3	15	9
other (EdS, etc.)	0	8	4

Table 3, continued

## Sample Characteristics

	Female n=30	Male n=26	Total (N=56)
Occupation: (%)			
Tech-professional	13	38	25
Teacher	27	8	18
Skilled trade	10	15	13
Healthcare	13	8	11
Homemaker	17	0	9
Minister	0	8	4
Office worker	3	4	4
Salesperson	3	0	2
Unemployed	0	8	4
Retired	13	12	13
# paid work hours/week: (%)			
0	20	19	20
1-10	13	4	9
11-20	13	0	7
21-39	20	0	11
40-49	30	31	30
50-61	3	46	23
Mean	22.7	37.7	
SD	17.7	21.3	
Range	0-50	0-61	
Total Family Income (%)			
\$20,001-\$30,000	13	4	9
\$30,001-\$40,000	17	27	21
\$40,001-\$50,000	17	19	18
\$50,001-\$60,000	23	12	18
over \$60,000	27	35	30
# of children: (%)			
None	13	0	
One	0	8	
Two	50	54	
Three	17	27	
Four	10	4	
Five	10	8	

Table 3, continued

Sample Characteristics

	Female n=30	Male n=26	Total (N=56)
Community type: (%)			
While growing up:			
Urban			39
Rural			36
Mix of both			25
Living today:			
Urban			63
Rural			21
Mix of both			16
Family-of-Origin			
# of siblings: (%)			
None	0	8	
One	20	12	
Two	30	31	
Three	40	12	
Four	0	15	
Five+	10	23	
Birth order: (%)			
Only child	0	8	
1st born	37	39	
2nd oldest	37	27	
3rd oldest	10	8	
4th oldest	10	8	
other	6	10	
Church Raised In: (%)			
Church of Christ	87	81	
Baptist	7	8	
Methodist	3	8	
Lutheran	0	4	
None	3	0	

Table 4

Responses to Attitude Questions

QUESTION CONTENT (%)	Female		Male		Total	
	A	D	A	D	A	D
No sex without love	80	20	89	11	84	16
Living together prior to marriage is not OK	97	3	81	19	89	11
Important to marry virgin	43	56	62	38	52	48
Should orgasm most of time w/intercourse	70	30	92	8	80	20
Healthy sex=both spouses orgasm when having sex	93	7	73	27	59	41
Ok if you masturbate alone	57	43	15	85	79	21
Mast. alone is sign of poor sex adjustment	17	83	27	73	21	79
Oral-genital sex with spouse is OK	80	20	85	15	82	18
Should avoid anal sex w/spouse, even w/condom	80	20	84	16	82	18
Feel comfortable with my sexuality	80	20	89	11	84	16
Bar homosexuals from church leadership	83	17	89	11	86	14

A=Agree, D=Disagree

Table 5

Description of Petting & Foreplay Behaviors Premaritally and Postmaritally, by Gender

Petting/foreplay Behaviors: (%)	PreMarital			PostMarital		
	F	M	Tot	F	M	Tot
1. Kissed on the lips	93	96	95	97	100	98
2. Tongue kissed	87	85	86	87	89	88
3. Clothed breasts/chest area fondled	87	58	73	93	62	79
4. Bare breasts/chest area fondled and/or kissed	60	46	54	didn't ask		
5. Bare breasts/nipples kissed	60	42	52	93	58	76
6. Genitals caressed with clothes on	70	73	71	didn't ask		
7. Genitals caressed without clothes	53	58	55	90	85	88
8. Genitals stimulated orally	27	35	30	70	62	66
9. Fondled another's covered breasts	50	85	66	didn't ask		
10. Fondled the bare breasts/chest area	37	73	54	67	92	79
11. Kissed/orally stimulated another's bare breasts	40	58	48	70	85	77
12. Stimulated another's covered genitals	57	65	61	didn't ask		
13. Stimulated another's bare genitals	50	58	54	93	85	89
14. Orally stimulated another's genitals	20	35	27	67	69	68

Table 5, continued

Description of Petting & Foreplay Behaviors Premaritally and Postmaritally, by Gender

	PreMarital			PostMarital		
	F	M	Tot	F	M	Tot
15. Engaged in intercourse movements clothed	60	65	63	didn't ask		
16. Engaged in intercourse movements w/bare genitals	0	0	0	didn't ask		
17. Engaged in sex w/two or more people at same time	0	0	0	didn't ask		
18. Spouse caresses your anal area				13	19	16
19. Caress spouse's anal area				10	12	11
20. Give/receive full body massage				40	39	39
21. Viewing Playboy/Playgirl magazines with spouse				0	0	0
22. Viewing sex videos w/spouse				3	4	4
23. Bondage/fantasy activities				0	0	0
24. Sado-masochistic activities				0	0	0
25. Other *				13	4	9

\* = 1 Male: reading erotic literature together;  
4 Females: 1-tickling and roughhouse play, 1-sexy conversation, 1-using vibrator, 1-telling mutual sexual fantasies

Table 6

Same Sex Contacts

Have you ever engaged in petting/foreplay with person of the same sex with the intent of sexual arousal and/or experiencing orgasm?

1. Yes	7	15
2. No	93	85

Table 7

Ages of Respondents & First Sexual Intercourse Partners**Age at First Intercourse (%)**

	Females	Males
15-17 years	20	12
18-22 years	53	77
23-28 years	20	11
29-42 years	7	0
Mean	22.4	20.2
SD	5.36	2.76
Range	15-42	15-28

**Age of First Sex Partner (%)**

	Females	Males
15-17 years	11	10
18-22 years	50	33
23-28 years	27	40
29-44 years	12	17
Mean	24.7	21.5
SD	6.41	5.92
Range	17-44	16-40

Table 8

Relationship of Respondent to First Sex Partner (%)

	Females	Males
Spouse, after marriage	57	42
Fiance	27	12
Steady dating partner	10	12
Committed love relationship	7	8
Casual acquaintance		8
Prostitute		8
Dating partner		4
Person you just met		4
Mother of close friend		4

Table 9

Feelings About First Sexual Experience

	Females	Males
<b>Was first sex satisfying physically?</b>		
Satisfying	50	81
Neither	30	12
Unsatisfying	20	8
<b>Was first sex satisfying emotionally?</b>		
Satisfying	53	73
Neither	17	12
Unsatisfying	30	15
<b>Have guilt about first sex?</b>		
Never	64	62
Seldom	16	12
Occasionally	9	15
Frequently	7	8
Always	4	4

Virtually 100% of females and males gave verbal consent or implied consent to have sexual intercourse the first time. There was no report of having sex against one's will.

Table 10

## Frequency of Postmarital Sexual Behaviors by Age for Females

	FEMALES							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<b>Kissing/hugging(%)</b>								
29-39 years (n=12)	92				8			
40-49 years (n=8)	88	12						
50-59 years (n=7)	71	14			14			
60-69 years (n=3)	100							
70-89 years (n=0)								
<b>Petting/caressing(%)</b>								
29-39 years (n=12)	25	58	8		8			
40-49 years (n=8)	25	38	13	13	13			
50-59 years (n=7)	14	29	14	14	14		14	
60-69 years (n=3)				33				67
70-89 years (n=0)								
<b>Vaginal/penile sex(%)</b>								
29-39 years (n=12)		17	50	25	8			
40-49 years (n=8)			25	50	13		13	
50-59 years (n=7)			14	43	29			14
60-69 years (n=3)				33		33		33
70-89 years (n=0)								
<b>Receive oral-genital(%)</b>								
29-39 years (n=12)			8	17	17	25	8	25
40-49 years (n=8)					25	38	13	25
50-59 years (n=7)			14	14	14	14		43
60-69 years (n=3)							33	67
70-89 years (n=0)								

1=Daily, 2=3-5X weekly, 3=2-3X weekly, 4=Once a week, 5=2-3/mo, 6=1X/mo, 7=Few times a year, 8=Never

Table 10, continued

Frequency of Sexual Behaviors by Age for Females

	<b>FEMALES</b>							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<b>Give oral-genital(%)</b>								
29-39 years (n=12)			17	17		8	33	25
40-49 years (n=8)				13	25	25	25	13
50-59 years (n=7)			14	14	14			57
60-69 years (n=3)							33	67
70-89 years (n=0)								
<b>Masturbating alone(%)</b>								
29-39 years (n=12)			8	8	8		17	58
40-49 years (n=8)			13			13	13	63
50-59 years (n=7)							43	57
60-69 years (n=3)						33		67
70-89 years (n=0)								
<b>Sex magazines alone(%)</b>								
29-39 years (n=12)								100
40-49 years (n=8)								100
50-59 years (n=7)								100
60-69 years (n=3)								100
70-89 years (n=0)								
<b>Sex mag. w/spouse(%)</b>								
29-39 years (n=12)								100
40-49 years (n=8)								100
50-59 years (n=7)								100
60-69 years (n=3)								100
70-89 years (n=0)								
<b>Sex movies(%)</b>								
29-39 years (n=12)							8	92
40-49 years (n=8)								100
50-59 years (n=7)							29	71
60-69 years (n=3)								100
70-89 years (n=0)								

1=Daily, 2=3-5X weekly, 3=2-3X weekly, 4=Once a week, 5=2-3/mo, 6=1X/mo, 7=Few times a year, 8=Never

Table 11

## Frequency of Sexual Behaviors by Age for Males

	MALES							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<b>Kissing/hugging(%)</b>								
29-39 years (n=7)	71	14		14				
40-49 years (n=6)	67	33						
50-59 years (n=5)	80			20				
60-69 years (n=5)	80		20					
70-89 years (n=2)	50	50						
<b>Petting/caressing(%)</b>								
29-39 years (n=7)	14	57	14	14				
40-49 years (n=6)	33		33			33		
50-59 years (n=5)	17		50	33				
60-69 years (n=5)	40		40	20				
70-89 years (n=2)	50	50						
<b>Vaginal/penile sex(%)</b>								
29-39 years (n=7)			57	29	14			
40-49 years (n=6)		33	33		17	16		
50-59 years (n=5)			33	67				
60-69 years (n=5)				60	20	20		
70-89 years (n=2)		50		50				
<b>Receive oral-genital(%)</b>								
29-39 years (n=7)					14	14	43	29
40-49 years (n=6)						17	50	33
50-59 years (n=5)				17		17	17	50
60-69 years (n=5)							20	80
70-89 years (n=2)								100
<b>Give oral-genital(%)</b>								
29-39 years (n=7)			29		14	29	29	
40-49 years (n=6)						17	50	33
50-59 years (n=5)					17		17	67
60-69 years (n=5)					20	20		60
70-89 years (n=2)								100

1=Daily, 2=3-5X weekly, 3=2-3X weekly, 4=Once a week, 5=2-3/mo, 6=1X/mo, 7=Few times a year, 8=Never

Table 11. continued

## Frequency of sexual behaviors by Age for Males

	MALES							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<b>Masturbating alone(%)</b>								
29-39 years (n=7)		14	14		29	14	14	14
40-49 years (n=6)			17		33		50	
50-59 years (n=5)		17	17	33	17			17
60-69 years (n=5)				20		20	20	40
70-89 years (n=2)						50		50
<b>Sex magazines alone(%)</b>								
29-39 years (n=7)							43	57
40-49 years (n=6)							17	83
50-59 years (n=5)							33	67
60-69 years (n=5)							20	80
70-89 years (n=2)								100
<b>Sex mag. w/spouse(%)</b>								
29-39 years (n=7)							14	86
40-49 years (n=6)								100
50-59 years (n=5)								100
60-69 years (n=5)								100
70-89 years (n=2)								100
<b>Sex movies(%)</b>								
29-39 years (n=7)							14	86
40-49 years (n=6)							17	83
50-59 years (n=5)						17	17	67
60-69 years (n=5)								100
70-89 years (n=2)								100

---

1=Daily, 2=3-5X weekly, 3=2-3X weekly, 4=Once a week, 5=2-3/mo, 6=1X/mo, 7=Few times a year, 8=Never

---

Table 12

First Orgasm Experience

How you first experienced orgasm(%)	Females	Males
1. Never have experienced orgasm	3	0
2. While masturbating alone	40	81
3. Petting/foreplay	23	12
4. Vaginal/penile intercourse	30	0
5. While dreaming	3	8

Table 13

Frequency of Orgasm by Behavior for Females

	FEMALES				
	1	2	3	4	5
1. Mutual kissing/hugging		3	3	80	13
2. Mutual petting/caressing	17	7	20	47	10
3. Vaginal/penile intercourse	53	7	17	17	7
4. Receiving oral-genital stimulation	37	3	23	7	30
5. Giving oral-genital stimulation	7		7	50	37
6. Masturbating alone	30	3	7	13	47
7. Manual/vibrator stimulation	10				

---

1=Almost Always, 2=Frequently, 3=Sometimes, 4=Rarely, 5=Never

---

Table 14

Frequency of Orgasm by Behavior for Males

	MALES				
	1	2	3	4	5
1. Mutual kissing/hugging			4	62	35
2. Mutual petting/caressing			19	62	19
3. Vaginal/penile intercourse	89	8		4	
4. Receiving oral-genital stimulation	8	4	15	35	39
5. Giving oral-genital stimulation		8	4	46	42
6. Masturbating alone	65	4	4	4	23
7. Dreams	4		4		

---

1=Almost Always, 2=Frequently, 3=Sometimes, 4=Rarely, 5=Never

---

Table 15

Frequencies of Spouse Asking about Orgasm/Pretending Orgasm

	Females	Males
<b>Spouse asks whether you had orgasm during sexual intercourse?</b>		
1. Never	40	50
2. Rarely	17	23
3. Sometimes	23	12
4. Almost always	20	27
<b>Do you ever pretend to orgasm?</b>		
1. Never	67	96
2. Rarely	30	4
3. Sometimes	3	0
4. Almost always	0	0

Table 16

Frequency of Extramarital Contact by Gender and Age

Ever had extramarital sexual contact (n)	Females		Males	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
29-39 years	0	12	1	6
40-49 years	0	8	3	3
50-59 years	1	6	1	6
60-69 years	0	3	1	4
70+ years				
TOTAL (%)	3	97	27	73

Spouse knows about premarital  
and/or extramarital behaviors (%)

Yes	33	39
No	7	15
Doesn't apply	60	46

Table 17

Sex Behaviors Preferred More Often by Age and Gender:

	FEMALES		MALES	
	Self	Spouse	Self	Spouse
<b>Kissing/hugging(%)</b>				
29-39 years	67	33	29	71
40-49 years	38	25	83	83
50-59 years	29	0	33	17
60-69 years	67	33	60	60
70-89 years			50	100
TOTAL	50	23	50	62
<b>Petting/caressing(%)</b>				
29-39 years	58	33	43	57
40-49 years	25	13	83	67
50-59 years	86	14	50	17
60-69 years	100	33	60	60
70-89 years			100	50
TOTAL	60	23	62	50
<b>Vaginal/penile sex(%)</b>				
29-39 years	42	50	71	43
40-49 years	38	38	100	33
50-59 years	14	57	50	0
60-69 years	0	67	60	20
70-89 years			50	0
TOTAL	30	50	69	27
<b>Receive oral-genital(%)</b>				
29-39 years	25	58	86	43
40-49 years	0	50	67	17
50-59 years	0	14	50	0
60-69 years	0	33	80	0
70-89 years			0	0
TOTAL	10	43	65	15

Table 17, continued

Sex Behaviors Preferred More Often by Age and Gender:

	FEMALES		MALES	
	Self	Spouse	Self	Spouse
<b>Give oral-genital(%)</b>				
29-39 years	8	25	43	14
40-49 years	0	13	83	17
50-59 years	0	0	33	0
60-69 years	0	33	40	0
70-89 years			0	0
TOTAL	3	17	46	8
<b>Masturbating alone(%)</b>				
29-39 years	0	0	0	0
40-49 years	0	0	0	0
50-59 years	0	0	0	0
60-69 years	0	0	0	0
70-89 years			0	0
TOTAL	0	0	0	0
<b>Magazines/movies (%)</b>				
29-39 years	0	0	14	0
40-49 years	13	0	0	0
50-59 years	0	0	0	0
60-69 years	0	0	0	20
70-89 years			0	0
TOTAL	3	0	4	4

Table 18

Summary of Sex Behaviors Preferred More Often by Gender

	FEMALES		MALES	
	Self	Spouse	Self	Spouse
Kissing/hugging(%)	50	23	50	62
Petting/caressing(%)	60	23	62	50
Vaginal/penile sex(%)	30	50	69	27
Receive oral-genital(%)	10	43	65	15
Give oral-genital(%)	3	17	46	8
Masturbating alone(%)	0	0	0	0
Magazines/movies (%)	3	0	4	4

Table 19

Current Sexuality Comfort Level by (n)

	FEMALES (n=30)				MALES (n=26)			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
29-39 years	9	3	0	0	6	1	0	0
40-49 years	6	2	0	0	6	0	0	0
50-59 years	6	0	1	0	6	0	0	0
60-69 years	3	0	0	0	4	1	0	0
70+ years					1		1	
TOTAL (%)	80	17	3		88	8	4	

1=Almost Always Comfortable, 2=Sometimes Comfortable, 3=Rarely Comfortable, 4=Never Comfortable

Table 20

Report of Sexual Satisfaction: Physical, Emotional & Overall**Overall Physical Sex Satisfaction (%)**

	Females	Males
Satisfied	73	73
Neutral	20	19
Dissatisfied	7	8

**Overall Emotional Sex Satisfaction (%)**

	Females	Males
Satisfied	73	77
Neutral	10	12
Dissatisfied	17	12

**Total Satisfaction with Sexual Relationship (%)**

	Females	Males
Satisfied	73	77
Neutral	17	8
Dissatisfied	10	15

Table 21

Correlation Coefficients of Gender, Age, Years Married, and  
Satisfaction with Marital Sex

Gender	1.000			
Age	0.179	1.000		
YrsMar	0.190	0.925**	1.000	
SexSat	-.040	0.084	0.242	1.000
n=56	Gender	Age	YearsMarried	SexSatisfaction

\* -  $p < 0.05$ , \*\* -  $p < 0.01$ , (2-tailed)

Table 22

Correlation Coefficients of Premarital Sexual Behaviors and Religiosity, Sexual Satisfaction, Marital Satisfaction, and Conventionality

	RELIG	SEXSAT	MARSAT	CONV
PET631	-.121	0.218	0.164	-.046
PET632	-.089	-.029	0.057	-.217
PET633	-.140	0.037	0.030	-.133
PET634	-.242	0.111	0.120	-.084
PET635	-.193	0.003	0.065	-.101
PET636	-.194	0.033	0.183	-.132
PET637	-.231	0.008	0.173	-.109
PET638	-.317*	-.030	-.005	-.063
PET639	-.211	0.024	0.184	-.013
PET6310	-.160	-.136	0.117	-.082
PET6311	-.286*	-0.073	0.257	-.008
PET6312	-.148	0.123	0.210	-.073
PET6313	-.172	0.076	0.140	-.150
PET6314	-.288*	-0.077	0.019	-.157
PET6315	-.199	-.091	0.047	-.079

RELIG = religiosity, SEXSAT = overall sexual satisfaction, MARSAT = overall marital satisfaction, CONV = marital conventionality.

\* -  $p < 0.05$  (2-tailed test)

PET631 Kissed on lips	PET639 fondled breasts, clothed
PET632 Tongue kissed	PET6310 bare breasts fondled
PET633 breasts fondled, clothed	PET6311 kissed bare breasts
PET634 bare breasts fondled	PET6312 oth. genitals, clothed
PET635 bare breasts kissed	PET6313 genitals w/o clothes
PET636 genitals, clothed	PET6314 gave oral-genital
PET637 genitals, w/o clothes	PET6315 simulated sex movement
PET638 received oral-genital	while clothed

Table 23

Correlation Coefficients of Marital Sexual Behaviors and  
Religiosity, Sexual Satisfaction, Marital Satisfaction and  
Conventionality

	RELIG	SEXSAT	MARSAT	CONV
SEX791	.343*	0.335*	0.509**	.141
SEX792	.313*	0.360**	0.450**	.310*
SEX793	.044	0.364**	0.379**	.264
SEX794	.151	0.391**	0.330*	.170
SEX795	.104	0.326*	0.270*	.163
SEX796	-.297*	0.062	0.078	.001
SEX797	-.224	0.027	-.012	-.077
SEX798	-.182	0.009	-.120	-.037
SEX799	-.322*	0.025	0.031	.051
SPASKS83	.174	-.192	-.053	.166
PRETEND84	-.154	0.083	0.140	.189
RELIG	1.000	.188	.174	.062
SEXSAT	.188	1.000	0.579***	.360**
MARSAT	.174	0.579**	1.000	.495***

RELIG = religiosity, SEXSAT = overall sexual satisfaction,  
MARSAT = overall marital satisfaction, CONV = marital  
conventionality.

\* -  $p < 0.05$ , \*\* -  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\* -  $p < .001$  (2-tailed).

SEX791 Kissing & hugging  
SEX792 Petting & caressing  
SEX793 Vag/penile intercourse  
SEX794 Receive oral-genital  
SEX795 Give oral-genital  
SEX796 Masturbating alone

SEX797 Sex magazines alone  
SEX798 Sex mag. w/spouse  
SEX799 Sex movies w/spouse  
SPASKS83 Spouse asks if  
experienced orgasm  
PRETEND84 Pretend to orgasm

Table 24

Multiple Regression Analysis With Overall Sexual Satisfaction as the Dependent Variable

Indep. Variable	Simple R	Beta:/ T	F(5,50)	R <sup>2</sup>
SEX791	.067	.069/ .460	.2116	
SEX792	.111	.065/ .669	.4477	
SEX793	.200	.153/1.288	1.6592	
SEX794	.253	.176/1.596*	2.5457*	
SEX795	.064	.038/ .403	.1623	
				.251

! Beta weight = standard regression coefficient

\* - p < .05 (2 tailed test)

Table 25

Summary of Overall Marital and Sexual Satisfaction Dependent Variables Regressed on Religiosity and Conventionality

Variables:

MARSAT (Overall Marital Satisfaction)

SEXSAT (Overall Sexual Satisfaction)

CONV (Marital Conventionality)

RELIG (Religiosity)

Indep. Variable	Dep. Variable	Beta <sup>1</sup> / T	R <sup>2</sup> / F	DF
CONV	MARSAT	.013/ 4.19**	.245/ 17.51**	1,54
RELIG	MARSAT	.027/ 1.30	.030/ 1.69	1,54
SEXSAT	MARSAT	.317/ 5.22**	.335/ 27.22**	1,54
CONV	SEXSAT	.017/ 2.83**	.129/ 8.02**	1,54
RELIG	SEXSAT	.053/ 1.40	.035/ 1.98	1,54

<sup>1</sup> Beta weight = standard regression coefficient

\* - p < .05; \*\* - p < .01 (2 tailed test)

Table 26

Means and Standard Deviations for Marital Satisfaction, Sexual Satisfaction, and Religiosity

<u>Variable</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Total</u>
Marital Satisfaction			
Mean	1.58	1.42	1.50
SD	.62	.49	.56
Range	1-3.33	1-2.33	1-3.33
Sexual Satisfaction			
Mean	2.08	2.01	2.04
SD	.93	.92	.92
Range	1-4	1-4	1-4
Religiosity			
Mean	29.5	27.7	28.6
SD	1.9	5.5	4.0
Range	25-32	9-32	9-32

KEY

Marital & Sexual Satisfaction: Lowest scores indicate greater levels of satisfaction

- 1 = Very Satisfied
- 2 = Satisfied
- 3 = Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied
- 4 = Dissatisfied
- 5 = Very Dissatisfied

Religiosity:

Scores could range from 0-32, with the highest score indicating highest level of religiosity.

Table 27  
Class Years of Participants & Nonparticipants by Gender

	PARTICIPANTS (N=56)		NONPARTICIPANTS	
	<u>Females</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Males</u>
none given			5	5
1934			1	
1937		1		
1939	0		1	
1940		1	1	2
1946			2	
1947		1		
1948		1	1	
1949	1		1	1
1950		1	1	
1952				1
1953			2	
1954	2	1	1	
1956			1	
1957		1		
1958	2			1
1959	1	1		
1960			1	
1961	1		1	
1962	1	2	3	2
1963		1		1
1964	1			
1965		2		
1966	1			
1967	1	1		2
1968	1	1	1	1
1969	1			1
1970	1			
1972	1	2	2	
1973	3		1	
1975			3	
1976	2	1		
1977	2			
1978		1	2	1
1979	3	1		
1980		1	1	1
1981		1	1	
1982	1			
1984	1	2		
1985	3	1	1	1
1986		1		
Total	30	26	33	21

APPENDIX E  
Qualitative Question Responses (copied verbatim)

How have your religious beliefs and practices changed since your college years?

[na = no answer]

FEMALES—youngest to oldest:

1. not really
2. more open to others beliefs. Realize God made us all different, for different purposes—not just one type of person, job, religious practice is probably acceptable to God. More tolerant.
3. more openminded toward other groups
4. I have switched from attending the church of Christ to attending a "Friends Church" (background of which is Quaker)
5. Become more open-minded or "liberal"—not so stuck in tradition. Realized Church of Christ are not only ones going to heaven!
6. Seen the "real world" with "real problems" and have seen how the world and sin has really worn down many of the many strong christians I've been in contact with. The cliché answers don't always help.
7. na
8. not at all
9. no change
10. My beliefs have deepen in God, as a loving, caring Being, and Jesus as Lord and caregiver, and that the Holy Spirit ctively helps us, giving us strength and interceding in our prayers. My worship is done more freely as an expression of Faith, not an obligation.
11. We attended regularly until 5th grade, then we stopped. Till I started college, I didn't attend. I attended during college and have continued to attend regularly the church of Christ.
12. Yes

How have your religious beliefs and practices changed since your college years? (continued)

13. I am more conservative now. I went through a very liberal period doctrinally in which I questioned everything.
14. They are much the same.
15. Outwardly, very little. Inwardly, somewhat "calmer".
16. na
17. It has become more personal, more a part of me in a conscious way, not just inherited from my parents.
18. I attend three or more times per week. My personal faith has deepened and grown.
19. Yes
20. They haven't
21. They have not changed except that my faith has increased.
22. Have not changed
23. More stable beliefs. Quietly practice now.
24. Not as legalistic in thinking.
25. Now I own my faith.
26. My faith and understanding have grown to believe more in God's grace, to have less prejudice towards those of other races, ethnic groups, etc.
27. Converted to Church of Christ [from southern Baptist]
28. Only slightly
29. Beliefs are much more personal—I am probably very liberal in my spiritual beliefs when compared to conservative "Church of Christ" beliefs and/or dogma.
30. na

How have your religious beliefs and practices changed since your college years? (continued)

Males—youngest to oldest

31. na

32. more involved

33. na

34. no

35. I'm now a member of the Church of Christ [formerly southern Baptist]

36. Less structured, not currently attending church but believe I am more spiritual

37. less rigid, more tolerant and relaxed

38. My beliefs have only become more intense as they have become more personal

39. I have become much more reliant on the Spirit of God to help me learn rather than commentaries and journals. I believe in responsible study more than ever, just not political

40. Go three times per week now [cp to 2X while growing up]. Still Church of Christ

41. I've grown away after first marriage and have grown stronger after remarriage and son.

42. None

43. My feelings on what is acceptable behavior and actions are much more liberal now—I don't do anything differently. I just don't feel guilty about it.

44. Not much

45. Stopped attending church

46. No change

How have your religious beliefs and practices changed since your college years? (continued)

47. na

48. Have become more grace oriented and less legalistic. Have become more dedicated

49. na

50. Considerably less rigid, narrow and legalistic

51. I feel I am more spiritual due to growth

52. Have come to a fuller understanding of the will of God for my life and a deeper understanding of the teachings of scripture.

53. Not significantly

54. Deeper stronger faith

55. None

56. Become more mature

The following sets of responses are clustered by participant to allow for a collective feel of the person's feelings about each of the three questions.

How has your sexual relationship with your spouse changed since the beginning of your marriage?

What has helped most to improve your relationship?

What has interfered most with developing a more satisfying sexual relationship with spouse?

FEMALES—youngest to oldest

1. with kids it's less spontaneous and creative—also it's hard to get out of the "mom" role and into a sexy role—BUT I'd have to say with the time and experience, it's better now

a vibrator—to use w/sex w/spouse. For the first several years ejaculation would come so fast I rarely had orgasms—and I would take too long—then I couldn't stop thinking about how long it took, which made matters worse. The vibrator really speeds things up.

business and him going out of town a lot limits our opportunities

2. More open in talking about sex and our desires

communication

fatigue from children pregnancy & recovery

3. less foreplay/kissing, more quickies

communication

time limits, fatigue

What has changed/helped/interfered most with sexual relationship?

4. less frequent, less variety in when, where & how

talking about masturbation/fantasy/pornography etc even when it was uncomfortable for us. Talking about what each of us likes and dislikes

my husbands past experience viewing pornography. It's impossible for me to live up to what he has seen in magazines & movies (four years ago was very bad-both were masturbating a lot w/o any verbal communication-her counselor told her to talk to husband about her feelings-she did and it helped)

5. more open

loss of weight

lack of orgasm on my part

6. we spend more time and communicate better. We seem to have less time because of job pressure and the kids but our time is more quality

communication and time

I think memories of unwanted advances as a teen and emotional problems with my brother growing up has caused me not to trust or communicate well with men

7. na

na

possibility of pregnancy, lack of common interests, lack of communication, lack of romance and spontaneity

8. I enjoy sex much more. I know what I want and what he wants. We are much more creative in positions and places and we experiment all the time on what feels good.

Time-as I learned to relax and enjoy sex and know its a natural way between husband and wife. Also an open communication with my spouse

when I'm pregnant-we always suffer during this time

What has changed/helped/interfered most with sexual relationship?

9. sex not as often, he is more considerate of me

talking sometimes

I don't enjoy sex that much and so do not pursue the topic—usually not very interested in it. I don't make the effort to improve it because of this, I believe. This is not the most important thing in a marriage to me.

10. because of no concern about pregnancy (he got vasectomy) & without fatigue of caring for babies and preschoolers, it is freer

time together and a "balanced" life schedule

time & tiredness and stress because of "student life" and heavy work schedule of spouse

11. we were very clumsy with each other at first, but we have learned what works with us and how to help each other achieve mutual sexual satisfaction

patience and communication

my reluctance to participate in oral-genital sex and our four children. Ha!

12. we are not as shy.

growth of our love for each other

spouse's personality to be very private and hesitant to communicate

What has changed/helped/interfered most with sexual relationship?

13. no he had difficulty from honeymoon onwards. I am the one who has changed in terms of expectations. I try to accept that frequency is going to be low, and try to make the times we do have sex so wonderful that he will hopefully want it more.

the fact that he is my most wonderful friend and I cannot abandon my friend because of a difficulty he has with sex. In every other area of our lives he has excelled.

having 5 children in the house, fear of interruptions, stress financially, low income fear of losing business. Little time for "just us".

14. better sex, we communicate better though still not enough. more mature giving people. more respect for each other more accepting of each other rather than trying to change each other

practice, better communication

my own inability to communicate my needs stress and fatigue from our professions

15. it has improved a great deal. we are freer, more comfortable with one another. I now enjoy it much more than I did

spouse has gained some self control allowing him to wait for me. I suspect I have increased desire due to my age [42]

does not apply

16. na

time alone with him

too tired, too much to do

17. it's gotten better

we've both gotten more adventurous and trusting and open

fear of pregnancy

What has changed/helped/interfered most with sexual relationship?

18. I have become less interested; my spouse's interest has increased

talking about personal problems and attitudes and reactions towards those problems

my husband was very inhibited when we married—very distant—I could not understand why because he would never discuss it [husband had low esteem and high pride]

19. sexual intercourse is less frequent & that OK. spiritually and emotionally we are closer

emotional maturity

decreased energy level

20. it got better and communication about sex improved

communicating about it

not liking the type of things he wanted to engage in

21. we are much more open and at ease with each other. We are able to communicate our feelings and desires

it seems that as we grow older our sexual relationship improves, maybe because we are each concerned with pleasing each other

nothing, except when we were younger and the childrens interruptions were frequent

22. over the years my husband has become very uninterested in me as a sex partner. He doesn't want to discuss his problem with me

nothing

his inability to discuss our problems or even be concerned about my feelings

What has changed/helped/interfered most with sexual relationship?

23. in the beginning we felt sex meant love—each of us tried too hard to prove how good we were. Now we know many things besides sex means love—our sexual relationship now is comfortable and satisfying rather than fiery.

his quitting drinking, going back to school and getting his masters degree in counseling—now I can talk to him

his years of alcoholism before he quit drinking

24. I've grown more relaxed and communicative

hysterectomy removed fear of pregnancy and offered spontaneity... better health in middle years for me—major problem during working/child-rearing years was being so tired in evenings. Now in mid-life, his physical needs have slowed down enough that we are more compatible

fatigue and day to day differences and problems have interfered with my "romantic desires" toward my husband at times. We continue to work at our marriage and our sexual relationship.

25. we enjoy each other more since there is no fear of pregnancy and we have the house to ourselves

vasectomy

outside pressures, worries

26. the frequency of sex; we are more considerate of each other; it has bonded him to me so very deeply

his getting a vasectomy after the birth of our 5th child

in our early years, the births of 5 children so close together. In the later years of our marriage, my husband's emotional problems over job losses

What has changed/helped/interfered most with sexual relationship?

27. husband is very understanding. both are open to sexual information-willing to discuss openly our sexuality

openess with each other. both determined to have a successful marriage. neither had or has any preconceived "hang-ups" (maturity-both were older when married) Educational background-having had "required" courses of study during college years.

little interference, other than the routine stress of career and family

28. yes, we communicate more openly

honesty and humor

his physical illnesses

29. we have been married 39 years-intercourse is less frequent, but enjoyment has never diminished for me.

having the children (4) out of the house!!

raising a family, its' responsibilities; working to provide for the family

30. It mainly improved until he became impotent-there were times when it showed before this

trying to understand each others problems and stresses and picking up the load when the other is not able to. When you trust and love each other this is not difficult.

in our case it is mainly the physical problem

MALES-youngest to oldest

31. na

planning and forethought

time pressures

What has changed/helped/interfered most with sexual relationship?

32. yes the advent of children has changed it a great deal

better communication of my wife's need to feel good about herself, and feel loved (holding and more foreplay before sex)

my wife has some sexual inhibitions and doesn't always see my sexual needs

33. less frequent since having children

communication and experimentation

interruptions and fatigue, increased work stress

34. she seems less interested in sex than she did in the early part of our marriage

talking, trying to help her understand my need for physical intimacy

impatience. I get tired of waiting for her to respond sometimes [she doesn't seem to understand that nothing would please me more than being able to please her]

35. it has slowed down tremendously over the last 5 years

know the Lord and his will

letting our children stay up and laying down at night with them

36. less passion and frequency

better understanding of each other

responsibilities: children, work, stress

37. has gotten better as the kids got older, were more willing to not knock on the door whenever it was locked. wife's interest in sex is greater than mine due to hormones

talking about what we both like, her willingness to experiment more

fatigue, long work hours

What has changed/helped/interfered most with sexual relationship?

38. the relationship has become less spontaneous, less frequent, less satisfying because of difficulties in communicating about sex has created tension between us in that area

a concern for her as a person; letting her know that she is special, not only on birthdays and anniversaries, but on odd occasions as well. Also trying to be less selfish and more thoughtful, more honest in communicating has helped

mental or physical barriers in my wife, either partly or wholly due to emotional pain she has received in the past in relation to sexual matters. At times when my wife was hurting emotionally, I was inconsiderate of her feelings, creating further pain.

39. longer lasting, more intensity of orgasm. We're busier, so less frequent. With kids around and drop in guests, we are less spontaneous and mostly confined to the bedroom and shower but we manage.

our individual relationships with Christ and mutual respect for each other. We have each had serious extramarital proposals, but our loyalty to God and each other precluded consideration. Passion seemed to rise for me each time the right choice was made.

time and energy. a few days in a motel relaxing and just enjoying each other would probably kill us. What a way to go!

40. it is good to great while on vacation or when the kids are out of the house. Usually our relationship is more a sexual release for me than for my wife. She seems inhibited or something.

a vacation

my spouse will not or doesn't want to make the most of our sex life

41. improved dramatically when vacationing at home began

vacationing at home

my wife's self image concerning her overweight

What has changed/helped/interfered most with sexual relationship?

42. it has become an important part of our relationship

learning together, growing together; relationship books other couples shared with us helped sex become more enjoyable

nothing

43. very good until wife entered menopause

communicating and being open

menopause now. Prior to that, the fact that she is an early to bed early to rise person and tires by the afternoon. I'm a slow starter in the morning and peak late in the evening

44. much better, more knowledge and understanding

practice

lack of time and place

45. more comfortable

being together for so long

old age

46. we don't have intercourse as often

the kids are now grown. Less demands on my wife's time

I'm away from home too many long hours during the farming season (March -November)

47. better

talk about what we like, reading up on the subject, teaching the subject to adults

work stress, getting on each other's nerves, PMS

What has changed/helped/interfered most with sexual relationship?

48. very powerful in 1st 27 years, declining in last 3 since menopause

acting loving, better communication

wife's lack of sexual drive since onset of menopause

49. better

experience, reading, learning how she responds, her needs

reluctance to be open/explicit about my desires

50. has improved in direct proportion to the improvement of our communication, care respect, responsibility, trust commitment accountability and unconditional love

see above

na

51. no problem getting pregnant, can be freer

her willingness to allow me more freedom to satisfy her

having my needs not met as I would like

52. there has been a growth from sexual desire to a fuller love

a growing desire to meet her needs

the slowing down that has come with advancing years.

53. we have grown closer together

a better understanding of what she wants and how she feels

probably health problems

What has changed/helped/interfered most with sexual relationship?

54. more often, more satisfying. For many years I wanted more than she was willing to give. Now we readily satisfy one another. My needs are less

talking about it. Getting out from under the pressure of work and raising a family

nothing now, but over the years there was a difference of opinions about how much and what; family, health, work, hard times financially...my parents did little to prepare me sexually for marriage—they gave me the upbringing they had received.

55. less often as we grew older

love and respect

illness

56. na

na

na

## VITA

Alan E. Beach grew up in a "Christian/Navy" family. He earned the B.S. at Harding University, the M.S.W. at the University of Arkansas-Little Rock, began training in marriage and family therapy at Abilene Christian University, and completed the Ph.D. in marriage and family therapy at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.

He has worked as a caseworker, administrator, counselor, and professor in the fields of child welfare, substance abuse, mental health services, employee assistance, and social work education.

He lives with his wife and children in Blacksburg, Virginia, where he maintains a private practice in child and family therapy, clinical consultation, and community education.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Alan Beach". The signature is written in black ink on a white background.