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Sexual and Other Behaviours Today

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A complete listing of his writings at http://psychologywritings.synthasite.com/.

CONTENTS

1. SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR

1.1. HOOK-UP CULTURE

"Hook-up culture" is "casual sexual contact between non-dating partners without an (expressed or acknowledged) expectation of forming a committed relationship" (Heldman and Wade 2010 p324). Hook-ups include (Heldman and Wade 2010):

- one-time sexual encounters (a "random");
- multiple encounters with the same person, say at weekends, but no contact otherwise (a "regular");
- infrequent sexual encounters with an acquaintance or friend, usually after an "unsuccessful" night of hooking up (a "booty call");
- repeated sex with a friend, but not as a dating relationship ("friends with benefits" or "fuck buddies").

"Hooking up exists within a broader context of shifting heterosexual sex scripts that determine prevailing sexual norms and activities... Contemporary scripts are characterised by a move away from vaginal intercourse with increases in oral and anal sex and the introduction of a new sexual script that places oral sex 'before' intercourse in a hierarchy of intimacy" (Heldman and Wade 2010 p324).

The reported motives for hooking up include physical pleasure, emotional reasons, and to form a relationship. But, at the same time, "much hook-up sex is unpleasurable and coercive" (Heldman and Wade 2010).

Taking a self-reported radical feminist position, Heldman and Wade (2010) commented: "Men's sexual pleasure, as measured by orgasm, appears to take precedence over women's in hook ups. The deprioritisation of women's sexual pleasure is related to the finding that many women consent to sexual encounters and behaviours that they do not desire... These findings mirror those of researchers examining the sexual lives of adolescents, especially adolescent girls, who feel empowered to say 'yes' to sex, but have a difficult time shaping the

trajectory of a sexual encounter once it has begun" (p325). Flack et al (2007), for instance, found coerced sex was common among students hooking up (eg: one-quarter reported being raped) (appendix 1A).

The gender differences in the social consequences of hooking up are summarised by England et al (2008): "women who hook up with 'too many' people, or have casual sex readily, are called 'sluts' by both men and women. While some men who hook up a lot are called 'man whores', such men also encounter accolades from other men for 'scoring' more" (quoted in Heldman and Wade 2010).

Paul (2006) outlined a negative picture generally: "It appears that the social [hook up] context is posing a no-win situation for youth—sexual propaganda is rife in media (albeit the sexual double standard for women persists), there is an increasing trend toward later ages for coupling', dating has become passé, and yet youths crave interpersonal belongingness and seem at a loss as to how to achieve it. Yet another layer is youths' ineffective interpersonal negotiation of sexual and social interactions, exacerbated by the persistent social taboo against open and direct communication about sexuality" (quoted in Heldman and Wade 2010).

More recently, Wade (2017b) asked 101 first-year students in the USA to keep weekly diaries for one term about their sexual behaviour. Wade performed follow-up interviews with twenty-one of them, and also observed behaviour on 24 campuses and collected data from the Online College Social Life Survey (Wade 2017a).

Of the diary-keepers, 36 were ambivalent about hook-ups, 34 had opted out of them, 23 opted in actively, and eight were in monogamous relationships.

Wade (2017a) stated: "Hooking up is immanently defensible in hook-up culture. Students believe, or believe that their peers believe, that virginity is passé and monogamy prudish; that college is a time to go wild and have fun; that separating sex from emotions is sexually liberating; and that they're too young and career-focused for commitment" (p66).

Heldman and Wade (2010) outlined nine factors that may be involved in the development of hook-up culture, particularly in the USA in the last years of the 20th century:

- Co-ed dorms (ie: both sexes housed in same building);
- More women in higher education;
- Increasing alcohol consumption;

- Increased access and consumption of pornography;
- "Pornofication" of mass media;
- Women self-objectifying their bodies as objects of others' desires;
- New narcissism;
- Changes in perception of risk;
- Changing views on marriage.

1.2. "SEDUCTION COMMUNITY"

O'Neill (2015) described ethnographic fieldwork in 2012-13 among the London "seduction community", where "heterosexual men undertake various forms of skills training and personal development in order to gain greater choice and control in their relationships with women" (p1). This is also known as the "pick-up community" or the "pick-up artist industry", and was face-to-face training as well as online forums and other social media sites (eg: YouTube channels).

The "seduction community", O'Neill (2015) argued, is a site of "mediated intimacy" (Tyler and Gill 2013) - ie: how intimacy and sexuality take place in contemporary society (sometimes called "neoliberal rationalities").

Gill (2009) showed this process in her study of women's magazines, and highlighted discursive repertoires, including "'intimate entrepreneurship', whereby sex and relationships are to be meticulously planned for, organised and managed; 'men-ology', where women are given instruction in how to appeal to and please men; and 'transforming the self', which calls on women to remodel how they think and feel about their bodies and desires, the kinds of sexual practices they engage, and the intimate relationships they have with men" (O'Neill 2015 p4). Ultimately, these repertoires "exemplify the operation of neoliberal rationalities within the domain of intimate life, as women are repeatedly exhorted to work on their sexual selves and invest in an intimate skill set" (O'Neill 2015 p4). Interestingly, "activities which might, in a different moment, be understood as enacted to 'please your man' must be re-apprehended in post-feminist terms, as something you are doing 'for yourself'" (Gill 2009 quoted in O'Neill 2015).

O'Neill (2015) noted that the "pick-up" or "game" appealed because "success with women" is presented as "a matter of labour and investment" (what Rogers (2005)

called a "sexual work ethic"). "Adam" (a pick-up trainer or "dating coach" interviewed by O'Neill (2015) [1]) said: "I think what game does, it kind of gives power back to those who are not the biggest, strongest, most athletic. It's a set of skills that can actually be learned, by different people. Which kind of makes it quite accessible to all" (p6). The promise of greater choice and control, and success for hard workers fits with the ideas of neoliberalism. Furthermore, individuals who did not "succeed" were criticised by trainers as not working hard enough, or the individuals blamed themselves (eg: "Anwar": "it's not game's fault, it's my fault for not having the skills and using them properly" (p6).

Another characteristics of neoliberalism is "the distinction between life and work, and work and leisure, has collapsed" (Maddison 2013 quoted in O'Neill 2015). This is seen in trainers sharing their private moments online ("reality media"' Tyler and Gill 2013). For example, the filming of sexual encounters with women, which are consumed by "entrepreneurial voyeurs" (Maddison 2013), and are without the women's knowledge or consent. "In this way, women are not only objectified but made into object lessons" (O'Neill 2015 p8).

Many men involved in the "seduction community" were summed up by "Doug": "I just wanted more casual sex". Though committed relationships were also important. Eck 92014) talked of a "two=phase" masculinity, "where engagement in casual sexual encounters is supposed to eventually give way to monogamous relationships as a sign of heterosexual maturity" (O'Neill 2015 p8).

"Derek" described "pick-up" in this way: "I need to go out there, and do a lot of stuff, before I can commit to anybody. Because I want her to know that I chose her out of thousands, you know. I want her to know that, actually, there was something about her. She wasn't the first thing that I ever got my hands on, you know. She wasn't the first person I ever was with, that I thought 'Wow', you know. I want her to know, definitely, that I had options. I could have had anybody. But I chose her" (p9).

O'Neill (2015) grounded the behaviour of individuals in the "seduction community" in neoliberal society - in "entrepreneurial and commitment modes of sexuality".

1.3. RISKY SEX

Risky sexual behaviours include inconsistent condom use, condomless sex, multiple sexual partners, having sex

[1] O'Neill (2015) interviewed 32 individuals including trainers and participants in courses.

under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol , and initiating sex at a younger age, and all increase the risk of sexually transmitted infections, HIV, and unintended pregnancies (Tsai et al 2019).

Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) are increasing in Australia, England, and the USA in recent years, particularly chlamydia (Klein 2018). This may be because of increased testing (which picks up previously "silent cases", as in chlamydia with few outward symptoms), or increased "hook-ups" based on online and app dating (such individuals are less likely to use condoms) (Klein 2018).

However, online and app dating may be a sign of increased risky sex as much as the cause. Condom use has declined with the reduction of fear in HIV, through the availability of anti-retroviral drugs and pre-exposure prophylaxis medicines (Klein 2018).

Tsai et al (2019) performed a systematic review of 25 studies on heterosexual online dating and risk sexual behaviours. The author concluded that while over half the studies found a positive association between online dating and condomless sex, the inconsistent findings from the other studies "make it difficult to draw a conclusion about the effect of seeking partners online on condom use during sex" (p536).

Note that this is an association, and some authors have argued that "those who were at high risk of engaging in condomless sex offline were selectively using the Internet to look for additional sexual partners, and it was not necessarily the Internet that led to condomless sex" (Tsai et al 2019 p551).

The studies in the review varied in a number of ways, including:

i) Sample - Participants were recruited through schools or health clinics, for example (offline) versus online. Over half of the studies involved 18-25 year-olds, and, in most studies, the samples were "mostly homogeneous - predominantly White, fairly educated, working populations" (Tsai et al 2019 p552).

ii) Comparison groups - eg: two studies had offline dating groups; seventeen studies compared experienced with novice online partner seekers.

iii) Duration of Internet dating - One study controlled for amount of time conversing with partner on the Internet before sex.

iv) Internet modalities - eg: Facebook; dating apps.

v) Context of online dating - To find romantic or sexual partner.

1.4. APPENDIX 1A - RAPE MYTH ACCEPTANCE

Reling et al (2018) commented: "Like the intimacy norms that predated it, hook-up culture disproportionately benefits the privileged (ie: White, heterosexual, able-bodied, middle/upper class men) and helps reproduce pre-existing hegemonic power differentials between men and women across race, class, and other status categories... By reinforcing the perceived naturalness of masculine sexual assertion and feminine passivity/gatekeeping, hook-up culture perpetuates intersectional patterns in gender inequality" (p502).

These authors argued that hook-up culture in reproducing "traditional heteronormative sexual scripts" thus supports rape myth acceptance (RMA). "Rape myth" (Burt 1980) refers to "false beliefs, stereotypes, and (negative/positive) prejudicial thoughts people hold toward rape survivors/offenders" (Reling et al 2018 p502).

Reling et al (2018) surveyed 422 undergraduates at a "US southern flagship university". The online survey called the "Student Perception Survey" included items from the Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance-Short Form (IRMA-SF) (McMahon and Farmer 2011), and the Endorsement of Hook-Up Culture Index (EHCI) (Aubrey and Smith 2011).

The IRMA-SF has 22 items on beliefs about rape survivors and offenders divided into four sub-scales:

- "She Asked for It" - eg: "when girls go to parties wearing slutty clothes, they are asking for trouble";
- "He Didn't Mean To" - eg: "guys don't usually intend to force sex on a girl, but sometimes they get too sexually carried away";
- "It Wasn't Really Rape" - eg: "if a girl doesn't say 'no' she can't claim rape";
- "She Lied" - eg: "girls who are caught cheating on their boyfriends sometimes claim it was rape".

Each item is scored from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (5). Thus, a higher score indicates stronger RMA.

The ECHI has twenty items covering five sub-scales about student hook-ups:

- Harmless - eg: "hooking up is not a big deal";
- Fun - eg: "I hook up to have a good time";
- Status - eg: "Hooking up is a way for me to make a name for myself";
- Control - eg: "I feel powerful during a hook-up";
- Sexual freedom - eg: "Hooking up allows me to be sexually adventurous".

Each item is scored from (1) "strongly disagree" to (5) "strongly agree" to mean that a higher score indicates support for hook-up culture.

Two hypotheses were tested:

1. Hook-up endorsement will predict RMA. This was partly supported by the data. Different sub-scales of the ECHI predicted RMA. High scores on the "harmless" or "status" sub-scales significantly predicted high RMA, while high scores on the "sexual freedom" sub-scale was significantly associated with low RMA. The "fun" and "control" sub-scales had no relationship to RMA.

2. The relationship in hypothesis 1 will be different for male and female students. The data did not support this prediction. For example, "students, regardless of their gender, who reported hook-ups helped to improve social status were more likely to report acceptance of rape myths" (Reling et al 2018 p509).

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2. RELATIONSHIPS AND THE INTERNET

2.1. SELF-GENERATED SEXUAL CONTENT

"Self-generated" sexual content includes "sexting", and, in relation to children, the IWF (2018) highlighted concerns.

Wolak and Finkelhor (2011) categorised two types of "youth-produced sexual images" based on 550 cases obtained by US law enforcement:

- "aggravated" episodes - produced and involving adults;
- "experimental" episodes - child-exchanged images in a romantic context or for attention-seeking.

IWF (2015) analysed over 3800 instances of "youth-produced sexual content" produced by live webcam stream and subsequently distributed online in a three-month period in 2014 [2]. The vast majority depicted individuals aged fifteen years or younger (and less than 10% 10 years or younger).

IWF (2018) analysed "captures of live-streamed child sexual abuse", defined as "mages or videos permanently recorded from a live broadcast stream; in which the child(ren) consciously interacted with a remote other(s); and which met the IWF threshold for action as child sexual abuse material" (p8). Data were collected between August and October 2017 via snowball sampling, and included over 2000 images (produced by up to 16 years olds). The majority of children were categorised as 11-13 years old, and indecent images were most common (as opposed to sexual activity images).

The IWF (2018) summed up that the common scenario was "captures of live-streamed child sexual abuse involving white girls, apparently from relatively affluent Western backgrounds and who are physically alone in a home setting, often their own bedroom. This suggests that traditionally-recognised risks for children to become victims of sexual exploitation offline (for example homelessness or economic vulnerability) may not apply here..." (p1).

Palmer's (2015) work based on children referred to

[2] Youth was defined as under 20.

the charity "Barnado's" suggested that online abuse was younger than offline abuse, with 10-12 years old being "more the norm" (quoted in IWF 2018).

2.2. DATING

Bruch and Newman (2018) made use of online heterosexual dating data from a popular website in January 2014 in the USA. Individuals living in New York, Boston, Chicago, and Seattle were the focus.

Desirability ranking of users was calculated based primarily on number of responses to profile. For example, the most popular individual was a 30 year-old woman in New York who received 1504 messages in the month of the study - "equivalent to one message every 30 min, day and night, for the entire month" (Bruch and Newman 2018 p1).

Both men and women pursued dates with individuals who were about 25% more desirable than themselves on average.

Bruch and Newman (2018) noted: "Our results on aspirational mate pursuit are consistent with the popular concept of dating 'leagues', as reflected in the idea that someone can be 'out of your league', meaning that attractive matches are desirable for but unavailable to less attractive others" (p4).

2.2.1. Assortative Mating

The idea that similarity (eg: in attitudes) is important in attracting romantic partners has been part of social psychology for many years, but recently biological similarity has been added. This is known as "assortative mating", and includes longevity or disease risk, for instance. Put simply, individuals choose romantic partners who will live a similar length of time as themselves.

But how can an individual know such information at the point of meeting? Rawlik et al (2019) argued that the parents of partners is key - "humans choose partners with similar parental history of disease and parental longevity" (p2). Note that this is not a conscious decision, partly because the parents are usually still alive when dating begins. Individuals make their choices of partners based on visible manifestations of the underlying differences - eg: socio-economic status, educational attainment, diet - according to the researchers. So, individuals choose partners with similar social characteristics because of underlying evolutionary mechanisms for similarity of longevity and disease risk.

Rawlik et al (2019) analysed data from the UK Biobank (over 90 000 individuals), and a similar number from the FamiLinx cohort (historical database). Using age

of death, there were significant correlations between the lifespans of the mothers of both partners, and between the lifespans of both fathers. There were also correlations for certain diseases, like stroke and heart disease.

2.3. ONLINE SAFETY

Padgett (2007) surveyed 740 women about their experiences of online dating, sexuality and sexual health. The respondents were recruited from twenty dating websites in 2002. Face-to-face encounters with individuals met on the Internet were described under two main headings - personal safety and sexual safety.

i) Personal safety - Three sub-headings related to checking that a man is safe to meet.

a) Online screening:

- Background checks (on Google).
- Checking for inconsistencies - eg: "When we talked I pumped him for info and then kept asking questions to see if he would slip up and reveal a lie" (p31).
- Instinct and gut feeling - eg: "He gave off a very honest and 'normal' vibe, and I felt like I knew him already" (p31).
- The way they talk (e-mail, phone, chat) - eg: "First, careful reading of the e-mail; second, requiring a photograph; third, talking by telephone and asking enough open questions that I would elicit opinions and interests. I always try to remember to ask in a polite way how many women they have fucked. There is no foolproof method to avoid an axe murderer, but with all that, that was unlikely" (p32).

b) E-mail negotiation:

- Set boundaries - eg: "I let him know that sex wasn't going to be part of our first meeting" (p32).
- Relationship priority - eg: "We talked about the fact that I was not going to have sex with anyone until I took the time to build a relationship with them first" (p32).
- Likes, dislikes and fantasies - eg: "We talked about what we liked and didn't like. I don't like anal sex"

(p32).

- Expectations.

- Sexual history and sexual experience - eg: "We talked about what we would do, and if to use a condom. How experienced we are in sexual matters, and when was the last time we had sex, and about our past sex history" (p32).

c) Face-to-face safety - eg: meet in public place; during daytime.

ii) Sexual safety - eg: Of the women having sex during the first encounter, over three-quarters reported not using a condom.

Padgett (2007) made a general positive conclusion to the findings: "Although e-mail communication can create a sense of accelerated intimacy between people, it can also give women a position of power in a relationship, allowing them to pick, choose, and screen potential partners for similar interests and sexual desires prior to an initial face-to-face meeting. Beyond screening partners, e-mail gave respondents in this study the ability to set sexual boundaries and sexual safety parameters, as well as discuss their sexual likes and dislikes for a prospective relationship before meeting in person. Having this knowledge prior to an encounter gave women important information for making decisions about what, if any, sexual activity should occur with the men they met online" (p36). However, the women spent more time on personal safety issues than sexual safety ones.

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3. THE NEGATIVE SIDE OF ROMANCE AND SEX

3.1. ROMANCE FRAUD

"Romance fraud" (RF) (or dating and relationship fraud or "sweetheart swindles") is "where a person is defrauded by an offender(s) through what the victim perceives to be a genuine relationship" (Cross et al 2018 p1304). It can be "differentiated from a 'bad' relationship by its modus operandi, with the offender explicitly seeking to form a relationship with a person for the sole purpose of deceiving and manipulating them into sending money" (Cross et al 2018 p1304).

Though RF can occur offline, the online environment is the place where the majority of victims are found today. Based on reports to official authorities, there were nearly 4000 victims in the UK in 2016 (who lost around £40 million), and 15 000 victims in the USA (with losses over $230 million) (Cross et al 2018).

The requests for money usually involve "plotlines" (eg: to pay the travel costs to come to the victim; help with paying off debts; medical or legal emergency). In an analysis of 59 emails (both RF and other scams), Gregory and Nikiforova (2012) found that offenders "continue to adapt the format of their letters to appeal to universal themes that touch emotional chords for different reasons within the recipients" (quoted in Cross et al 2018).

Koon and Yoong (2013) analysed emails from a RF perpetrator (n = 15) and their victim (n = 6). The offender built a relationship by emphasising their similarity to the victim (eg: same faith), and by expressing a strong desire for the victim.

Based on interviews with victims, Whitty (2013a; 2013b) outlined seven stages of RF [3]:

i) The victim is motivated to find an ideal partner;

[3] Initially five stages (Cross et al 2018).

ii) The victim is presented with an ideal profile;

iii) The grooming process;

iv) The "sting" (ie: a crisis that requires money);

v) Continuation of the scam;

vi) Sexual abuse;

vii) Revictimisation.

According to the "scammers persuasive techniques model" (Whitty 2013b), sales-based techniques are used - the "foot-in-the-door" technique (ie: ask for a small sum of money and if accepted, ask for a larger amount) (appendix 3A), and "door-in-the-face (or "face-in-the-door") technique (ie: ask for a large sum, which is refused, and then ask for a smaller amount).

Blackmail with sexually explicit webcam footage of the victim ("image based sexual abuse"; Powell and Henry 2017) is also used.

Cross et al's (2018) interviews with 21 victims of RF in Australia to understand further the stages of RF drew a parallel with domestic violence (DV) (ie: "a pattern of coercive and controlling behaviour" by the perpetrator). Tolman et al (1999) distinguished nine categories of psychological maltreatment in DV, of which Cross et al (2018) applied eight to the analysis of their interviews [4]:

1. Economic abuse - In DV this involves using joint financial resources which has a detrimental effect on the victim, for example. "Economic abuse arguably operates differently from DV in romance fraud cases. Rather than being used as a technique to gain or maintain control over a person, acquiring financial resources is the primary goal of romance fraud offenders" (Cross et al 2018 p1310).

2. Creation of fear - Physical violence is central to DV, whereas this is less so with RF. Though the perpetrators of RF may have been overseas, they were still able to create fear as "interviewee 12" said: "I just kept thinking that I am on my own. I come home at night, I don't know if he is out there. I don't know who he is. That is what drove me to leave that place... I moved because I was thinking that I can't stay there... At night I started to leave my lights on at home. I started to get panicky because he knows the time I come

[4] The category "rigid sex role expectations/trivial requests" not used.

home" (p1311).

3. Isolation - Both DV and RF involved isolating the victim from their social networks, and producing dependence on the perpetrator. In the case of RF, this involved moving from the dating website to private phone calls, say, "often couched in terms of the relationship becoming more serious or 'exclusive'" (Cross et al 2018 p1311). For example, "interviewee 3" described how the offender said: "'can you please take your profile off, I'm intending to take my profile off or hide it so that we can be exclusive'... like trying to make you feel special. Because 'I'm going to do this for you, so can you do it for me?'" (p1312).

Also moving to private communication "minimises the chance that the offender will be reported to a dating application, website or social media platform as a fraud since communication rapidly moves away from the site. Furthermore, many victims do not remember the specific location where they originally met the offender since many victims use multiple dating sites at the same time. Once they realise they have been defrauded, they may not be able to successfully report the offender to the dating site" (Cross et al 2018 p1311).

4. Monopolisation - This refers to "behaviours that make the abuser the psychological centre of the victim's perceptions" (Tolman et al 1992 quoted in Cross et al 2018). "Interviewee 12" described their situation: "Sometimes if I am not on the computer and I am doing other stuff, he will ask me, oh were you on Facebook? He appeared on my Facebook, he also got all my details of my Facebook. And also when I am not online sometimes he could see the little light lit up to see if I am in there, so he would ask me, you know what are you doing online?" (p1313).

Possessiveness and jealousy occur in both DV and RF, as "interviewee 12" continued: "He [offender] kept coming online and my daughter was there, and he kept saying who is there with you? Why aren't you responding? Have you got a boyfriend? He was getting nasty. He already knew I was on to him, he was getting nasty" (p1313).

5. Degradation - Tolman et al (1992) defined this as behaviours that make "someone feel less competent, less adequate, or even less human" (quoted in Cross et al 2018) (eg: verbal abuse, insults, name calling). "Interviewee 11", for example, said: "He was very pushy and even abused me on the phone a few times, very upsetting, had me terribly upset. He just kept on until I had nothing left [money] to send him" (p1314).

6. Psychological destabilisation - This refers to tactics that make the victim question their perception of

reality, as described by "interviewee 12": "He [offender] kept messaging it back and saying darling have you got the money, did you put it? And I said 'I have I have put it through. I am sure you have got it'. He was making me believe that my cheque that I deposit that did not go through which it did. And he was making me go stupid and crazy, I made so many calls to a lot of places telling them, look, I have deposited money, I rang up my bank. Can you tell me what is going on; the person did not receive the money where did it go? And then the bank kept checking and they said I am sorry but the bank had got the money, the money has gone through, they gave me the time the dates and everything. And I kept going online telling him, the money is there, what is going on? It is on your end that you are having trouble... I told him everything that the bank told me. You should have had the money. He kept denying it saying no I did not get it can you please check with your bank; he kept asking me over and over. So I kept going crazy and I checked everything... And then like that the money got lost, he reckons. I go, it can't be its impossible" (p1315).

7. Emotional or interpersonal withdrawal - These are used as punishment for failure to do as told. "Interviewee 24" doubted the perpetrator and suffered: "Sometimes I wouldn't hear from him [offender] for a week or so, then he'd be back online again. I could just never ever see him, 'cause I used to keep questioning the trust thing. That's when he used to throw out, 'Don't you trust me? We'll have a life together'" (p1315).

8. Contingent expressions of love - eg: the "if you love me, you will do..." technique. As summed up by "interviewee 24": "He made me feel that I supposedly didn't love him because I wouldn't help him [financially]" (Cross et al 2018 p1316).

Cross et al (2018) observed that the research on "psychological maltreatment against adult intimate partners primarily focuses on negative behaviours such as threats and insults, but this is only one side of the coin. As the interviews with romance fraud victims show, positive forms of manipulation and isolation that many survivors experience as early and intense intimacy are also important to understand. Romance fraud provides an example of how positive and negative forms of manipulation work together to coercively control victims' behaviour even in the absence of physical violence" (p1318).

3.2. SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Kaltiala-Heino et al (2018) defined sexual

harassment (SH) legally as "gender-based discrimination that creates a hostile work/school environment and may seriously impair a victim's performance at work or his/her ability to participate in, and benefit from, education in workplaces or schools, respectively" (p46). It includes gender harassment (eg: gender-related name-calling), unwelcome sexual attention, and sexual coercion" (Kaltiala-Heino et al 2018).

Studies find that between 30-60% approximately of adolescents have experienced SH. It has been "associated with early puberty and advanced pubertal maturation... This seems to highlight the role of emerging sexual desires and increased socialising in mixed-gender peer groups, particularly in early adolescence when sexuality is thought to be confusing and social skills immature, in sexual harassment" (Kaltiala-Heino et al 2018 p47).

Kaltiala-Heino et al (2018) explored the link between sexual behaviour and exposure to SH among 14-18 year-olds in Finland. Data from the School Health Promotion Study (SHPS) 2010-2011 covered over 180 000 individuals.

The outcome measure was experiences of SH, which was scored in five ways (eg: "sexually insulting name-calling such as 'poof' and 'whore'"). Sexual behaviour was the independent variable, measured by four levels of behaviour, from kissing to intercourse.

Girls reported significantly more SH than boys (figure 3.1). For girls, there was an association between more advanced sexual experiences, and gender harassment, unwelcome sexual attention, and sexual coercion. The more partners for intercourse, the stronger the relationship. For boys, there was an association of sexual experiences with unwelcome sexual attention and sexual coercion (figure 3.2).

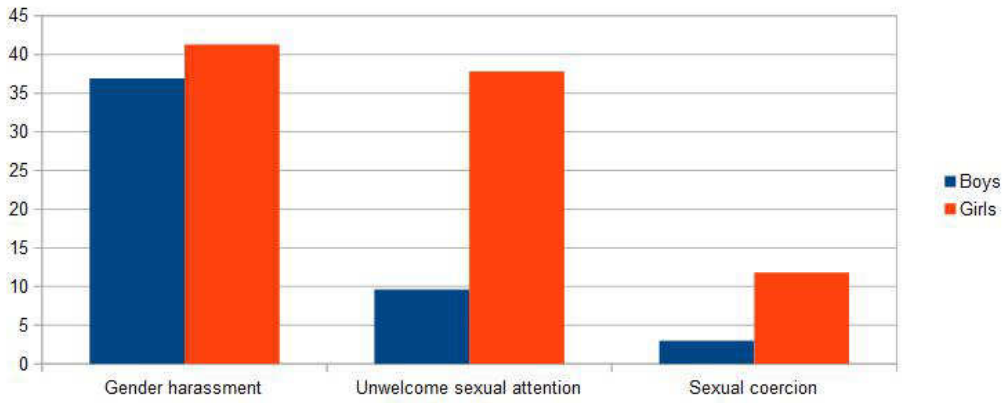
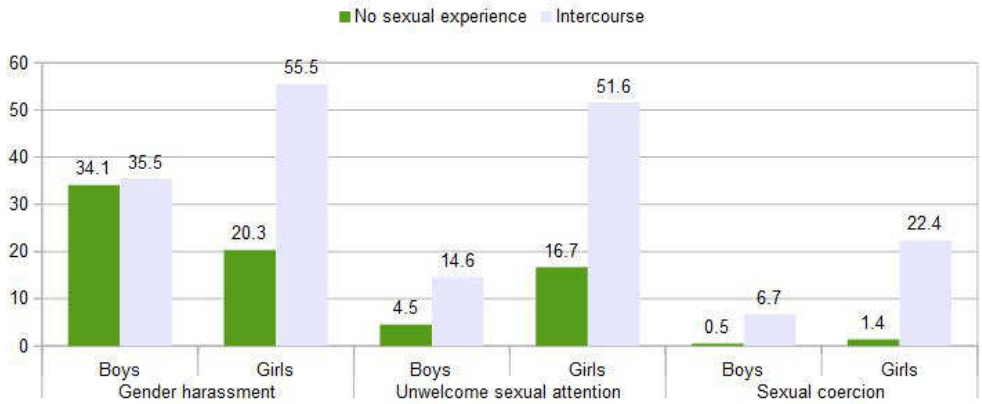


Figure 3.1 - Percentage of respondents reporting three types of SH.



(Data from Kaltiala-Heino et al 2018 table 2 p52)

Figure 3.2 - Percentage of respondents reporting three types of SH based on level of sexual experience.

Kaltiala-Heino et al (2018) stated: "Advancing sexual behaviours were associated with sexual harassment in both boys and girls, but the odds ratios rose more sharply with advancing experiences in girls. This could mean that, at least to some extent, experiencing sexual harassment is a consequence of sexual interest and activity, and, according to the sexual double standard..., being sexually active results in being the target of sexually derogatory interactions among girls more than among boys..." (p53).

In terms of the methodology of this study, the data are from a large population-based sample (which covered around 90% of public schools) (Kaltiala-Heino et al 2018). It did not cover adolescents in schools that chose not to participate in SHPS, individuals absent on the day of the questionnaires, or individuals who did not attend public schools.

The questionnaires were self-reported, and thus depended on the honesty of replies. The questionnaires covered many aspects of the adolescents' lives, and the "experiences of sexual harassment were determined in the series of questions outlined under the section titled Sexual Health, grouped together with questions concerning the respondent's sexual knowledge, sexual behaviour, and his/her use of contraceptives. The questions were not specifically entitled 'sexual harassment'. It has been shown that the context in which experiences of sexual harassment occur influences how they reported... In the present data, we believe that the questions on sexual harassment were posed as neutrally as possible. Both sexual behaviour and experiences of sexual harassment were assessed under the heading of sexual health"

(Kaltiala-Heino et al 2018 p55).

No information was collected on sexual orientation, so it was not possible to know if SH was experienced by heterosexual or non-heterosexual individuals, or in terms of different gender identities (Kaltiala-Heino et al 2018).

It was a cross-sectional study, so causality could not be established.

3.3. INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

It is estimated that one in three females and 1 in 5 males will be a victim of intimate partner violence (IPV) at some time in their lives (Li et al 2019). But this risk is greater for individuals who had experienced childhood maltreatment.

Li et al (2019) confirmed this in a meta-analysis of forty-six studies (up to March 2018) covering any form of childhood maltreatment and adult IPV victimisation in heterosexual relationships. There was a significant correlation overall, and both separately for males and females. Though both significant, the correlation for dating couples was stronger than for married ones. There were significant correlations for four types of childhood maltreatment individually and IPV victimisation - childhood physical abuse, psychological abuse, sexual abuse, and neglect.

The studies in the meta-analysis were mostly based on retrospective data. Types of IPV were not distinguished, and studies including witnessing family violence as a child were excluded.

However, a child's exposure to IPV in the family situation is associated with "the development of serious and persistent social, emotional, and behavioural problems" (Kimber et al 2018 p274). But does that include IPV perpetration as an adult?

The studies are mixed, due to a number of methodological issues, including (Kimber et al 2018):

a) The conceptualisation of IPV in childhood - eg: "witnessing" or "awareness of".

b) What is included as IPV - eg: physical or sexual violence versus emotional or financial violence.

c) Variables and mechanisms explaining the path from exposure as a child to adult perpetrator of IPV.

Kimber et al (2018) attempted to rectify such problems with a systematic review of the literature. Nineteen relevant studies (up to 2016) were found, though the overall methodological quality of the studies was low

(eg: details missing about measure of IPV in adulthood; low response rate; no justification for sample size or statistical analysis used).

Sixteen studies found a significant, positive association between childhood exposure to IPV and adult perpetration of IPV, and the other three studies were not significant. There was ann average risk of 2-4 times more likely to be a perpetrator after exposure than no exposure.

Despite strict inclusion and exclusion criteria, there were still methodological differences between the studies, including:

i) Measurement of child exposure to IPV:

- Validated, established or unvalidated, author-generated measure.
- Operationalisation of "exposure" - eg: "seen" or "seen or heard".
- Recall period - eg: childhood; "while growing up"; age-specific periods.

ii) Measurement of IPV perpetration as adult:

- Questionnaire used.
- Recall period - eg: last year or ten years.

iii) Consideration of variables:

- Witnessing father-to-mother versus mother-to-father IPV.
- Heterosexual families or other family structures.
- Other child maltreatment co-occurring.

iv) Theoretical framework to explain findings (eg: Social Learning Theory).

3.3.1. Sexual Dating Violence

A recent meta-analysis of over 100 studies (Wincentak et al 2017) found that one-fifth of adolescents had been victims of physical "dating violence", and around one-tenth sexual DV.

Fernet et al (2019) found the latter figure to be higher than that in their study of 472 heterosexual 14-25 year-olds in Quebec, Canada in 2016-17. Participants were recruited as part of the Youths' Romantic Relationships Project (YRRP). Sexual DV was self-reported for the last year with the current or former romantic/sexual partner

for three invasiveness levels (kissing and touching, attempted penetration, and sexual activities including penetration).

Nearly 30% of the sample reported at least one episode of sexual DV, with the figures of 32% for females and 11% for males. Fernet et al (2019) commented: "The higher rate of sexual DV observed may be due to the greater proportion of girls and older adolescents in our sample. Past studies indeed reported that girls and older adolescents are at higher risk of experiencing sexual DV... In addition, disparities in rates across studies may be linked to definitional and measurement issues" (p47). Also Wincentak et al's (2017) meta-analysis included studies with rates of sexual DV from <1% to 54%.

The YRRP sample were "educated and from privileged backgrounds" (Fernet et al 2019).

Fernet et al (2019) were interested primarily in help-seeking by those who experienced sexual DV. Friends, family, health professionals, and teachers were reported in that order as sources of help.

One hundred participants were interviewed in-depth, and three themes related to help-seeking emerged:

i) Perceived relationship with social network - Many individuals solved the problem themselves because they did not want to bother others, wanted to keep their experiences private, or feared judgment from others.

ii) Perceptions of formal sources of support - "For some participants (n = 19), the barriers to formal help seeking were firmly attached to their perceptions of formal resources: feeling that it's not bad enough to consult a health professional and believing that consulting means having considerable personal problems" (Fernet et al 2019 p45).

iii) Perceptions of sexual DV - Disclosing was difficult because relationship and sexuality were seen as a private matter, or because of shame, or difficulty recognising acts of sexual DV. "Some (n = 2) also mentioned that they didn't want to talk about sexual DV incidents because they did not want to face that their relationship was abusive. They did not want to feel obligated to end a relationship they felt unprepared to end" (Fernet et al 2019 p46).

3.4. PERSISTENT GENITAL AROUSAL DISORDER

The distinction between conscious desire and sexual behaviour has been noted in restless genital syndrome (ReGS) (or persistent genital arousal disorder (PGAD), or persistent sexual arousal syndrome (PSAS)). Unwanted and

unpleasant genital sensations "which are often felt as feelings of an imminent orgasm in the absence of sexual desire or fantasies and/or are often perceived as a sort of 'restlessness' in and around the genitals" (Waldinger et al 2011 p2) (appendix 3B).

Nerves in the pelvis send signals to the brain that are reported as unpleasant, but drive the individual to sexual behaviour (Bohannon 2016).

Leiblum and Nathan (2001) reported the first cases. ReGS usually occurs in menopausal women, and is associated with restless legs syndrome and overactive bladder syndrome (Waldinger et al 2011)) [5].

The cause is linked to some malfunction in the pudendal nerve complex, which sits in the lower pelvis and controls the anal and urethral sphincter as well as joins to the clitoris or penis (Bohannon 2016).

3.5. APPENDIX 3A - FOOT-IN-THE-DOOR PROCEDURE

The foot-in-the-door (FITD) procedure, which is classed as "compliance without pressure techniques" (Burger 1999), was first demonstrated experimentally by Freedman and Fraser (1966). They telephoned California housewives and asked them questions about their household products. These women who agreed to answer the questions were more likely to also agree to men coming to their houses in a two-hour study of household products (which never happened) than women asked this last request directly.

In a nutshell, the FITD procedure describes how agreement to a simple (initial) request first leads to agreement to a larger request later (known as the target). In experiments, the control group only receives the target request. "Like the proverbial salesperson who sticks a foot in the open door, getting the participant to agree with the easy request paves the way for agreement with the real request" (Burger 1999 p303).

Burger (1999) highlighted two key issues about FITD:

i) Does the FITD procedure always work compared to a target request only?

A "qualified yes" - more often than chance, but not every time.

ii) How does the FITD procedure work?

Psychological processes involved include self-perception, consistency needs, and commitment, which enhance the FITD effect, reciprocity rules, and

[5] Waldinger et al (2011) reported case studies of two men.

psychological reactance (which reduce the effect), and conformity to norm, and attributions (which both enhance and reduce the effect).

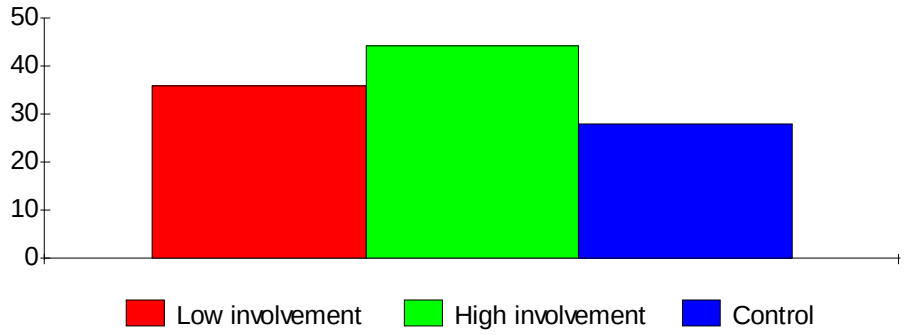
Burger (1999) performed a meta-analysis of FITD studies using the following key criteria - adult participants, including a control group, the target request was much larger than the initial request, and published in English.

Burger (1999) looked at the factors that influence the FITD in relation to the aforementioned psychological processes.

1. Self-perception (Bem 1972) - People infer their attitudes from watching their behaviour. So, agreeing to the initial request, the individual sees themselves as "the kind of person who does this sort of thing, who agrees to requests made by strangers, who takes action on things he believes in, who co-operates with good causes" (Freedman and Fraser 1966 quoted in Burger 1999).

Four factors are linked to this theory, which has received the most research interest of the processes:

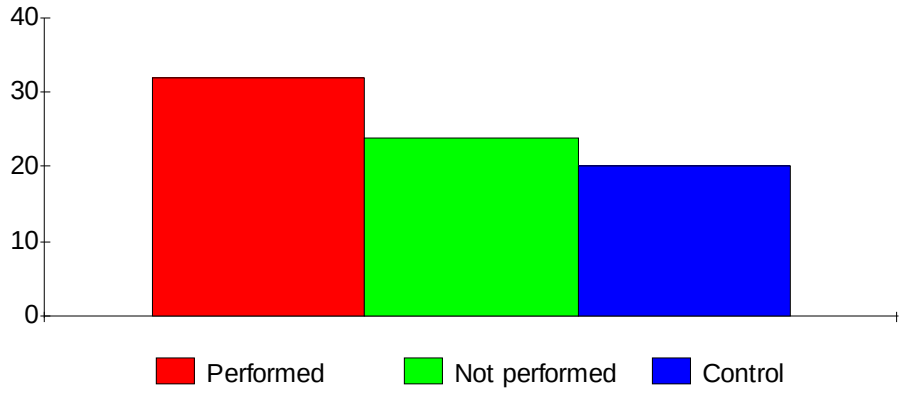
a) Involvement with initial request - Studies showed that high involvement initial requests produced more compliance to the target than low-involvement requests (figure 3.3), as predicted by self-perception theory.



(Data from Burger 1999 table 2 p308)

Figure 3.3 - Combined compliance to target request based on involvement level of initial request.

b) Performance of initial request - Performing the initial request is more effective for target compliance than just agreeing to perform the request (as predicted by self-perception theory) (figure 3.4).



(Data from Burger 1999 table 3 p309)

Figure 3.4 - Combined compliance to target request based on performing initial request or not.

c) Size of the initial request - Smaller initial requests are more effective than larger ones to gain target compliance (as predicted by self-perception theory).

d) Similarity of requests - It was expected that the initial and target requests should be similar rather than different, but Burger (1999) could not find enough data to make a conclusion.

Burger and Guadagno (2003) emphasised that accessibility of self-perception was important (ie: more readily accessible and more compliance).

2. Reciprocity rules - In a social encounter, there is a norm of reciprocity (ie: give and take), and this is not present in the FITD situation.

3. Psychological reactance - This is the perceived threat of pressure (ie: no freedom), and FITD will be reduced by this feeling.

4. Conformity to norm - FITD will be influenced by the perceived norm to help (target response) or not.

5. Consistency needs - People have a need to be consistency, so agreeing to the initial request requires agreement to the target for consistency.
Cialdini et al (1995) developed the Preference for Consistency (PFC) scale, and high scorers on it were more likely to comply.

6. Attribution processes - Individuals make an

attribution for their agreement with the initial request, and depending on the attribution, it can enhance or reduce the target compliance. For example, "labelling the participants' agreement to the initial request as helpful enhances the FITD effect" (Burger 1999 p319), whereas an extrinsic reward for agreement to the initial request can work both ways (depending how the individual attributes that reward).

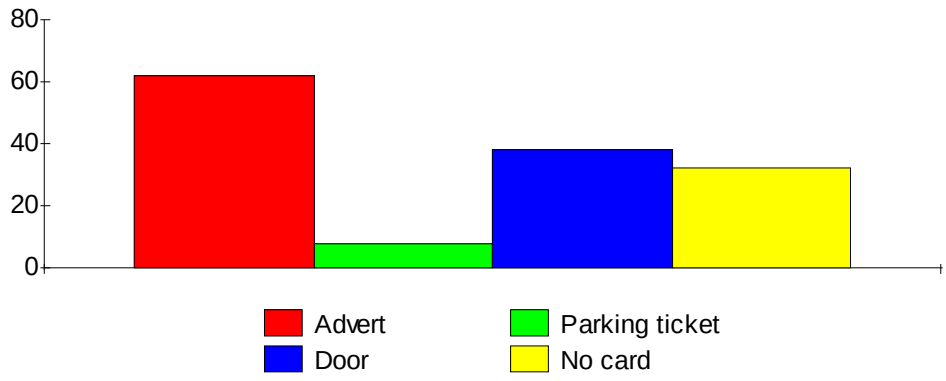
7. Commitment - "Once committed to a decision, individuals often become resistant to altering their movement toward the goal or action to which they are committed" (Burger 1999 p321).

Burger (1999) argued for a combination of these processes to explain the FITD procedure.

3.5.1. Other Ideas

1. The affect infusion model (AIM) (Forgas 1995) proposed that mood mediates the response to requests, such that "the processing of a request will be more sensitive to mood if the appeal is unconventional (requiring more substantive processing), and rather impervious to mood if it is conventional" (Cialdini and Goldstein 2004 p593).

2. Dolinski and Nawrat (1998) showed that individuals who experience "fear-then-relief" (FTR) are more likely to comply with a request (to complete a short questionnaire) than individuals who continue to be anxious or who were not anxious at all (figure 3.5).



(Data from Dolinski and Nawrat 1998 table 3 p34)

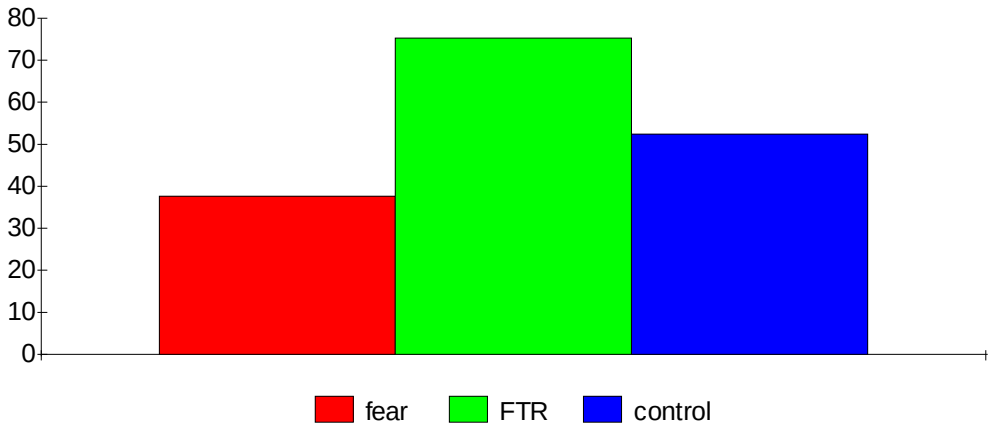
Figure 3.5 - Percentage of participants complying.

Cards looking like parking tickets were placed on cars

illegally parked in Opole, Poland. When the drivers returned to their cars, they were given a simple request. Three conditions of the experiment were used - fake parking ticket on the front windscreen (fear), advertisement looking like parking ticket on front windscreen (FTR), and advertisement on the door (no fear). There was also a control group with no card on the car.

In another experiment, Dolinski and Nawrat (1998) approached individuals in the same city, who had crossed the road in the wrong place. Half of them heard a police whistle when crossing (to create the FTR procedure). There was also another control group of individuals walking down the street who did not cross the road. Compliance (ie: agreement to complete a short questionnaire) was 59% in the FTR group compared to 46% (no whistle) and 41%.

Dolinski and Nawrat (1998) also performed an experiment with psychology students who were told that they would participant in an experiment on punishment and receive a mild electric shock (fear condition), told this but then changed to a perception experiment (FTR condition), or a perception experiment (control) (figure 3.6).



(Data from Dolinski and Nawrat 1998 table 5 p38)

Figure 3.6 - Percentage of participants complying to request to help a charity.

Dolinski and Nawrat (1998) offered this explanation for the FTR procedure - "in the relief state human behaviour is non-reflective to a much greater extent due to cognitive exhaustion, lack of concentration on an external environment, and cancellation of a 'state of emergency'" (p47).

This is the idea of a "temporal mindlessness"

(Dolinski 2001) - ie: "fear invokes a specific program of action, and that when the source of this emotion is suddenly and unexpectedly removed, the program is no longer operative, but the person has not yet invoked a new program. This specific state of disorientation makes compliance more likely" (Dolinski et al 2017 p1).

Dolinski et al (2017) offered another explanation - "It is assumed that the rapid change of emotions is associated with feelings of uncertainty and confusion. The positive response to the request is a form of coping with uncertainty" (p1). So, it was predicted that individuals with a high need for closure (NFC), defined as "an individual's desire for a firm answer to a question and an aversion toward ambiguity" (Kruglanski and Webster 1996), would comply more in a situation of FTR than low NFC individuals.

One hundred and twenty Polish undergraduates completed the 32-item NFC scale (Webster and Kruglanski 1994) individually, and on completion, a confederate said to half of them that they had lost their wallet. The participants checked to find that this was not so (FTR). Then a request was made for help in organising an event. The control group just had the request after completing the NFC scale. High NFC scorers were most likely to agree to help in the FTR condition.

3. Burger (1986) outlined the "that's-not-all" (TNA) technique, where an initial request is followed by a sweetening of the deal before the individual has responded. For example, an offer of a price which is reduced.

TNA has been classed as a "disrupt-then-reframe" (DTR) technique (Davis and Knowles 1999). These techniques operate by "disrupting an individual's understanding of and resistance to an influence attempt and reframing the persuasive message or request so that the individual is left more vulnerable to the proposition" (Cialdini and Goldstein 2004 p594).

Davis and Knowles (1999) went door-to-door selling small items. In the control condition, they stated the price in dollars or cents, but the DTR condition, they stated the price in dollars, then cents (disruptive element), and added "it's a bargain" (reframing element). The latter condition gained greater sales (compliance).

4. The "door-in-the-face" (DTF) technique (Cialdini et al 1975) is the opposite to FITD. Initially, a large request which is refused, followed by a smaller request that is more likely to be accepted.

3.5.2. Lay Theories

In terms of persuasion, physically attractive individuals ("senders") induce more attitude change in others ("receivers") than unattractive individuals. But some receivers are more persuaded than others (eg: easily persuadable) (Vogel et al 2010).

Vogel et al (2010) tested the prediction that "attractive people should try to exploit their attractiveness by seeking social interactions with receivers who are most easily persuaded by it" (p831), using a shoe-selling scenario. This is the layperson's beliefs about persuasion (Douglas et al 2010).

In a pilot study, twenty-one students at the University of Basel, Switzerland, were asked to imagine themselves as an attractive salesperson faced with four customers:

- "M" - deliberates hard before purchases (high processing motivation);
- "T" - impulsive buyer (low processing motivation);
- "L" - shopping with no time pressures (high processing capacity);
- "P" - in a hurry (low processing capacity).

Previous research has shown that individuals with low processing motivation and/or low processing capacity are more easily persuaded.

The participants rated "T" as more persuadable than "M" (mean: 4.2 vs 1.9 out of 5), but there was not difference between "L" and "P" (mean 2.6 for both). This study showed that "people hold theories about who is likely to be persuaded by senders' attractiveness. Receivers who presumably do not engage in careful information processing are perceived as prone to effects of attractiveness. According to these results, low processing motivation especially seems to be a vulnerability factor in lay theories whereas high processing motivation is considered a safeguard from unwanted attractiveness influence" (Vogel et al 2010 p832).

Vogel et al's (2010) Study 1 tested the role of sender's self-perceived attractiveness with thirty-four German undergraduates. The participants' perception of their attractiveness was collected before the scenario in the pilot study (which also varied the gender of the customer). Individuals who perceived themselves as more attractive had a stronger preference for persuading the low processing motivation customers (either gender) than

participants with lower attractiveness self-ratings.

In Study 2, the 53 German undergraduates read the scenarios before giving their attractiveness self-ratings. The findings from the previous study were replicated.

Study 3 with 57 more German undergraduates added an extra variable to the scenarios - preference to sell face-to-face or via the telephone. It was predicted that physically attractive senders would prefer face-to-face contact with easily persuadable receivers so they could "use" their attractiveness. This was found. Also, for receivers with high processing motivation, attractive senders preferred "invisible" contact (ie: telephone).

In the last study, forty-two German undergraduates played the role of a manager of shoe salespersons, and could choose which salesperson (attractive or not) for which customers (low or high processing motivation). The previous findings were confirmed.

Vogel et al (2010) summed up that "senders of persuasive messages do not base expectations about persuasion success on their attractiveness in isolation but assume a dynamic interplay between their attractiveness and receivers' processing characteristics. Specifically, the more attractive people perceive themselves, the more they expect to profit from receivers with low processing motivation in a persuasion situation. Furthermore, we showed that more attractive persons prefer persuasion situations in which they expect physical appearance to contribute to persuasion success. Attractive persons chose situations where they were visible, especially when receivers were expected to be low in processing motivation. No such effects were found for receivers who were supposed to be low in processing capacity" (p839).

3.6. APPENDIX 3B - PHYSIOLOGICAL AROUSAL

Masters and Johnson (1966) described the sexual response cycle from their observations of 382 women and 312 men. The basic physiology involves excitation (eg: erection of the penis), plateau (of full arousal), orgasm, and resolution (ie: return to pre-excitation). Kaplan (eg: 1974) added sexual desire to this cycle to show that psychology is involved in the sexual response. While Basson (eg: 2002) described a more circular sexual cycle, which allowed for individuals to feel satisfaction at any point leading up to orgasm (Portner 2016).

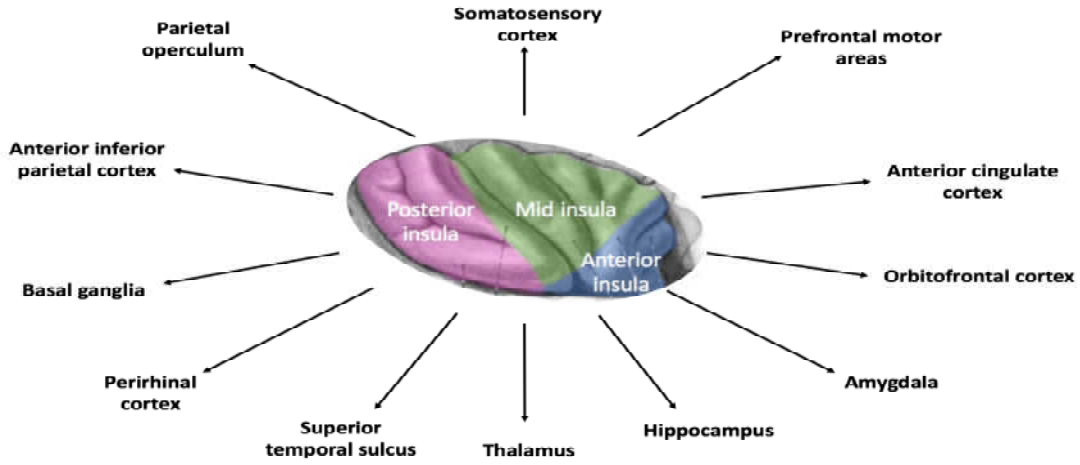
Chivers et al (2007) showed men and women (heterosexual and homosexual) short films of sexual intercourse of various types, nudity, and mating between bonobos. Women were physiological aroused by the

intensity of the sexual activity, whereas men were aroused by their preferred images. "The results, the researchers say, suggest that women are not only aroused by a variety of types of sexual imagery but are more flexible than men in their sexual interests and preferences" (Postner 2016 p7).

Arnow et al (2009) performed functional magnetic resonance scans on women with varying libido while watching erotic material. The entorhinal cortex, which is involved in positive emotional memories, was less active in the low libido group, and this suggested that "women with low desire may be unable to use memories from previous sexual experiences as motivation to initiate or enjoy new sexual experiences..." (Postner 2016 p7).

The relationship between love and lust has been studied with neuroimaging. Some studies suggest that they are completely different with "unique brain signatures", while others "reveal a more complete and synergistic connection between lust and love" (Cacioppo and Cacioppo 2016 p12).

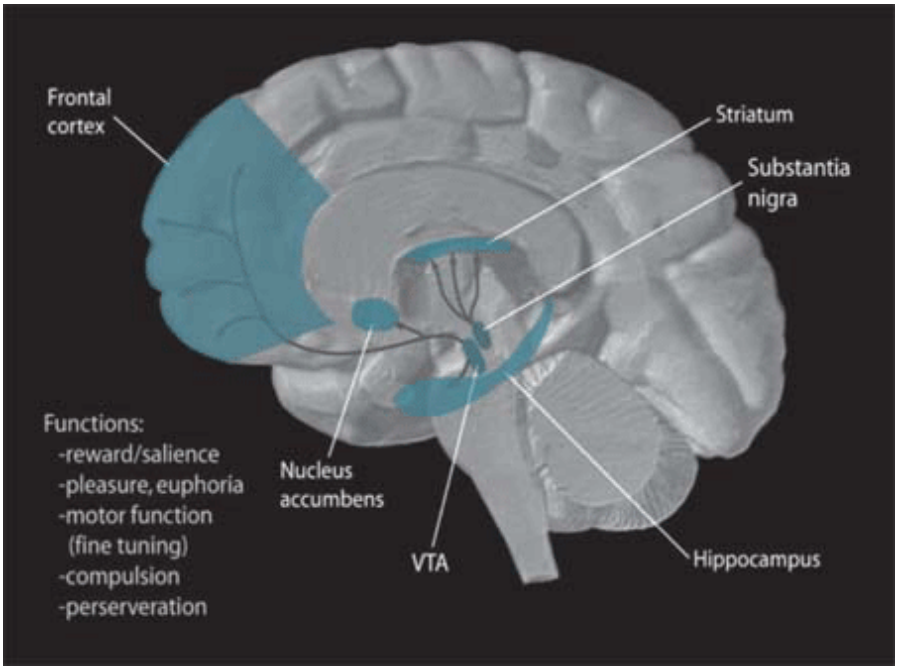
Cacioppo et al's (2012) meta-analysis of twenty functional magnetic resonance imaging studies found differences in the insula, for example - the posterior region, which is linked to sensations, was more active in lust and the anterior area, which is linked to abstract concepts, was more active in love (figure 3.7). Thus, "lust would be grounded in particular sensory and motor experiences, with love as a more abstract, future-oriented gloss on those experiences with another person" (Cacioppo and Cacioppo 2016 p12).



(Source: Schapelle)

Figure 3.7 - Areas of brain that insula connects to.

Fisher et al (2005) found that the right ventral tegmental area (VTA) (figure 3.8) and the right caudate nucleus (figure 3.9) (areas associated with motivation and reward) were particularly active when individuals gazed at pictures of their romantic partner while being scanned.



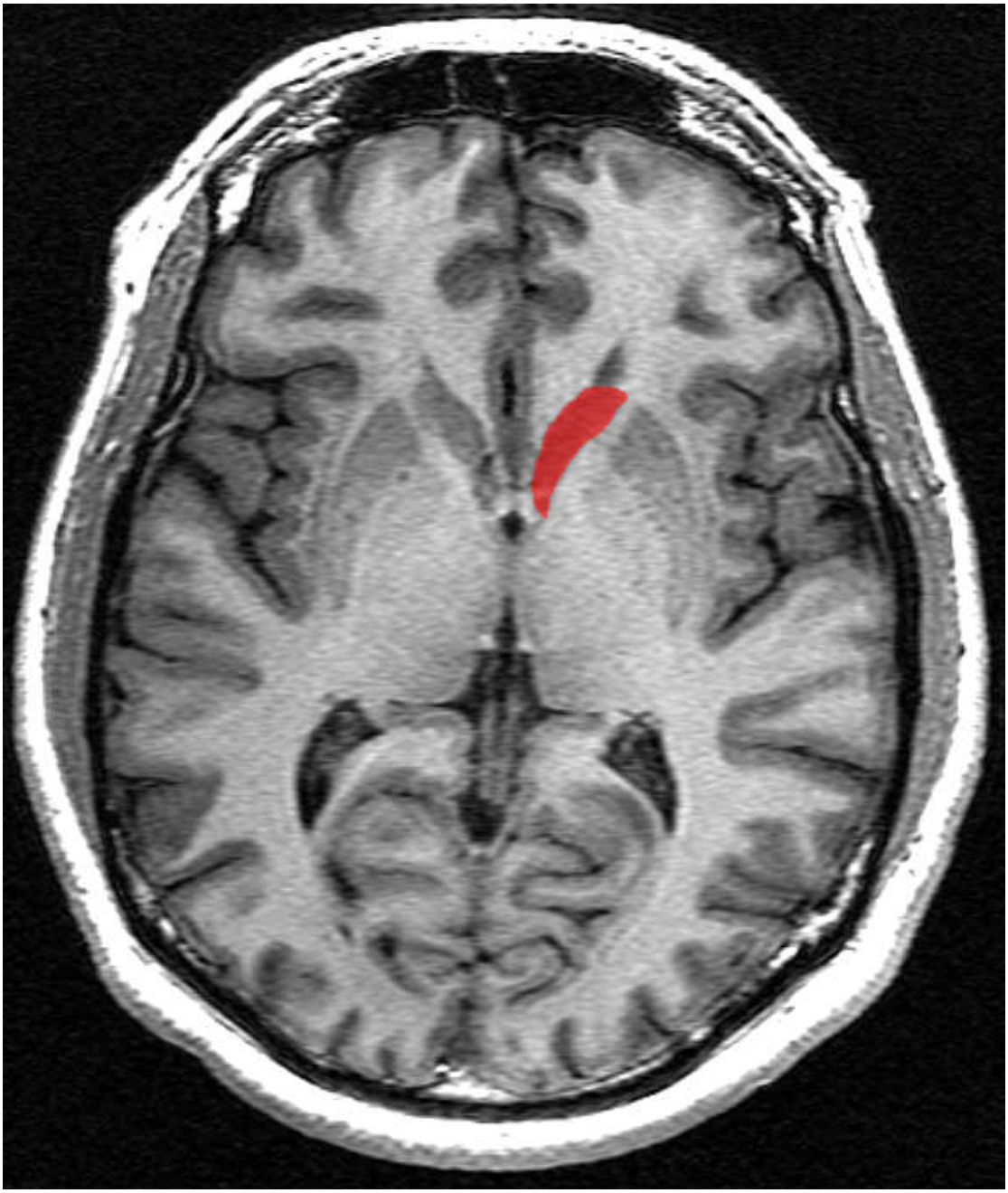
(Source: National Institute of Drug Health "Research Report Series - Methamphetamine Abuse and Addiction"; in public domain)

Figure 3.8 - Position of ventral tegmental area (VTA) in the brain.

3.6.1. Miscellaneous

The appearance of the female external genitalia (vulva) has in the past been linked to theories of female sexuality. For example, in the 1920s, the distance between the clitoris and vagina was linked (incorrectly) to frigidity (Kreklau et al 2018).

In terms of more recently, Kreklau et al (2018) lamented the limited data on the "normal" vulva appearance when the demand for cosmetic surgery is rising. These researchers studied 657 women who visited a uro-gynaecological department of a hospital in Switzerland between 2015 and 2017. The researchers were able to calculate mean lengths for areas of the external genitalia, but also highlighted the variety of size with age, and weight.



(Source: Lindsay Hanford and Geoff B Hall)

Figure 3.9 - Scan showing position of caudate nucleus in the brain.

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4. SELFIES

4.1. PHOTOGRAPHING THE SELF

Photographs of the self, known as "selfies", have grown in popularity in recent years with increased use of smartphones and mobile phones with cameras, and web cameras (appendix 4A).

Lasen (2015) described selfies as "forms of online presentation in front of a mixed audience of strangers, acquaintances and friends. They are gendered personal and public representations and performance of the self for oneself and for the others" (quoted in Grogan et al 2018).

There is a debate as to whether selfies, particularly for women, "encourage body objectification, distorting women's body image and encouraging unhealthy eating", or "boost self-esteem and empower women through enabling control over the body aesthetic and through showcasing variations in beauty and celebrating uniqueness" (Grogan et al 2018 p16).

For example, Tiidenberg and Crux (2015) reported the latter in a study of sexualised selfies in the "Not Safe For Work" (NSFW) community of "Tumblr". On the other hand, "the proliferation of selfies represents an increased exposure to appearance-focused media. This appearance culture may then encourage women to police the bodies of other women through selfie posting and viewing, in line with cultural norms for how women's bodies should be..., acting as a means of self-regulation to ensure that dominant body ideals are maintained" (Grogan et al 2018 p18). Among 130 female college students aged 18 to 32 years old, Wagner et al (2016) found that body dissatisfaction correlated with number of selfies taken, but not with number of selfies uploaded to "Instagram" per month.

But, in a study of female "Instagram" users aged 16 to 62 years old, increased selfie posting was associated with increased body satisfaction (Ridgeway and Clayton

2016).

Grogan et al (2018) attempted to resolve these differences in findings by a qualitative study with eighteen female psychology students at a UK university. The semi-structured interviews revolved around open-ended questions like "do you think that selfies have had an impact on your body image?".

Analysis of the transcripts produced three main themes:

i) The "ideal" body - The interviewees reported "thinspirations" - ie: desires for the ideal, which included "washboard abs" as much as the traditional hourglass-shaped figure, particularly as seen in celebrities. One respondent said: "The ideal body, ideal face perfect hair and stuff like that and I think at some stage in your life you obviously compare yourself to those people and you wanna be like them so much so you pretty much do everything just to look like them" (p23).

There was a negative consequence as reported by another interviewee: "I feel they look stunning with their bodies and they're really confident about it and I see myself and I'm not really confident in my body" (p23).

"One implication of being constantly presented with, and attempting to get, the 'ideal look' in selfies, and the visual media in general, is that some women may be made to feel uncertain about their appearance and body image, where there is a constant need to monitor for imperfections" (Grogan et al 2018 p25).

ii) Identity management - The interviewees had strategies for taking and sharing selfies that encouraged positive responses about their appearance/body, and avoided negative comments. One person said: "I know where my, what my angle looks good, like I know if I take it from this way it wouldn't look good, I would take it from the top and then a different angle" (p26). Editing and manipulating the selfies showed an awareness of the "socially-shared rules of self-presentation" (Grogan et al 2018).

iii) Body exposure - Sexually explicit selfies were more likely to gain "likes", but also judgmental comments like "slut". Ringrose et al (2013) referred to sexual double standards where teenage girls were expected to present as "sexy", but faced "slut shaming" when they did.

Altogether, Grogan et al (2018) saw a "selfie paradox" for the interviewees: "While women seemed to suggest that selfie taking, editing and sharing are processes that are under their control (as they can

decide what and when to post), they were, paradoxically, not completely free to post any selfie they chose. This is because how they presented themselves in their selfies was inextricably associated with notions of the 'ideal' self and body... and prescriptive norms about feminine appearance...; that is, notions of the ideal self as slender, tanned, flaw-free etc, as presented by celebrities and sometimes by their own peers" (p29).

In terms of naked selfies, Hart (2017) interviewed 22 women and three men aged 18-25 years old who repeatedly posted NSFW selfies on "Tumblr". He interpreted the findings through the concept of "edgework" - "a clearly observable threat to one's physical or mental well-being or one's sense of an ordered existence" (Lyng 1990 quoted in Hart 2017).

Lyng (1990) introduced the idea of edgework to explain voluntary risk-taking behaviour after studying sky-diving - "the 'edges' between life and death; consciousness and unconsciousness; order and chaos (Lyng 1990). The 'challenge' of edgework is to get as close to the edge as possible, through utilising skills and knowledge, without suffering fatal injuries, losing one's sanity, or general well-being. The seductive character of edgework, then, stems from the thrill that accompanies successful edgework and the authenticity of need fulfilment" (Hart 2017 p301).

The concept of edgework has subsequently been applied to studies of sado-masochism (Neumahr 2011), and role-playing gamers (Shay 2015), for instance.

Hart's (2017) analysis of the risk selfie sharing included:

a) Boundaries - "Sharing naked images of one's body invites the other to knowing deeply personal things about one's self; their physical flaws, of being objectified, of being recognised and vilified professionally and socially" (Hart 2017 p306).

"Alice's" response is an example of maintaining control (ie: drawing the line between chaos and order): "Mostly I post topless pics... people on tumblr will never see my vagina. Ever. It isn't necessary. I'm not here to make porn. Nude selfies are different to porn in that as women we get to choose what we want to share. You can always say no, you're not being directed by someone else... So if anyone that begs or badgers me for a pic of my pussy gets blocked. I post pics for me, and how it makes me feel" (p306).

Another boundary was between privacy and publicity, as in "Jessica's" quote: "For me, there's always the fear of not being able to procure a job because of someone getting a hold of my nudes. Like my job finding out, and me being fired because I, all of a sudden, don't fit their 'profile' of a respectable employee, or whatever.

Or being slut-shamed by people I know after someone posts my images all over my friends' Facebook walls. I keep my tumblr life and my real life VERY separate" (pp306-307).

b) Preparation - As in the preparation of checking equipment for skydivers, the interviewees invested time and effort in preparing for the image. "Rose" said: "I take time to pick out an outfit that I'm going to strip out of. I play up my makeup, most of which goes unseen – but for me, it makes me feel sexy and confident. I put on red lipstick, squeeze my boobs together, and take a picture. Choosing what outfit or what make up to wear is important, and it takes a lot of time. I make sure I get the lighting and pose right, then upload, and sit back" (p307).

A different preparation was consuming alcohol or recreational drugs to get in the "right mood" or to gain courage to take the selfies.

c) Skill and control - "Edgework involves the use of special knowledge or skills that make a dangerous activity safe enough to be engaged; it requires the 'ability to maintain control over a situation that verges on complete chaos, a situation most would regard as entirely uncontrollable' (Lyng 1990)" (Hart 2017 p308).

Knowing where to share the NSFW selfies was a skill. "Julia", for example, initially shared widely on the Internet and experienced very negative reactions. She learned that "she would need to find a space in which she could have an audience, but not be found so easily. In her own words, tumblr was great because it is 'like hiding in plain sight', the sheer mass of blogs and content on tumblr made finding her blog akin to the proverbial needle in the haystack" (Hart 2017 p308).

Another skill was the use of aliases (or regular name changing), and how the selfies were tagged, "Evelyn" reported: "I don't tag my selfies at all - with the sheer volume of stuff that gets uploaded every minute, no one's really going to have a chance to see my image" (p309).

d) Sensations - The "thrill" of the risk behaviour can be seen in "Beverley's" comment: "I was brought up by parents that believe the body is private, for my eyes only, so it's freeing and adrenalising to put something considered so intimate on the internet of all things for everyone to see... I've always lived a rebellious life... I'm very much the daredevil" (p309).

Hart (2017) summed up: "Posting a naked image of one's self does not carry the same physical intensity or risks as jumping out of an aeroplane high up in the sky, or free-diving with sharks, though there are real-world

risks – in choosing not to crop or censor identifying features, there is a potential for the loss of employment and social standing, or emotional well-being through cyberbullying or stalking. Creating and sharing risky selfies on tumblr can help young people feel empowered, free, and excited or aroused. They experience alterations in the flow of time, losing hours as they pose, capture, and edit their images; find a connection to their bodies that they could not elsewhere; and hold the belief that only other selfie bloggers can truly know or appreciate what it means to do so. While not the same as skydivers, drug-drivers, or motorcycle riders, sexy-selfie bloggers are involved in a more 'everyday' form of intimate edgework" (p311).

4.2. SENSE-MAKING

Selfies can be seen as part of social media use and online participation, which is "'increasingly perceived as normal among young people'. It is 'simply an everyday part of life, akin to watching television and using the phone'" (Boyd 2014 quoted in Tiidenberg et al 2017). This use takes place with cultural narratives that vary from fears of "addiction" and "stranger danger" to enthusiasm and utopianism (Tiidenberg et al 2017).

Tiidenberg et al (2017) were interested in how young adults made sense of the digital world, and analysed written data and videos generated by fifty college students in the USA and Denmark between 2014 and 2016.

The researchers distinguished four "grand narratives" used by the participants to make sense of their experiences:

i) "The internet is 'the' social lifeworld" - The participants "feel compelled to be always online and always available. They also feel it is expected of them" (Tiidenberg et al 2017 p5).

For example: "I post because I just want people to know I'm here, that I exist" ("Simon"); "No matter how much I love my own life, someone's will always be better" ("Tanja") (p5).

ii) "Social media use is pathological and leads to "psychological) problems" - eg: "The control Facebook has over me is like the relationship between drug addict and his drugs" ("Olga"); "At this point my face is in full zombie mode. I am focused only on what my computer screen holds" ("Georgio") (p5).

iii) "We have a true self that becomes less authentic when mediated through networked technologies" - eg: "I would like to look all pretty for Instagram, but some part of me thinks that it's wrong. I edited the

photo a little anyway - even though I think it is wrong" ("Louisa") (p5).

iv) "Efficiency and productivity are valuable and should be strived towards" - eg: "It's kinda scary how much it's overtaken our lives. And of course, I've fallen victim to it" ("Morgan") (p5).

A statement from "Jane" showed the themes together: "I think I use media on a lot of random times. But I think especially at night. Social media is my ultimate procrastination. And I do it a lot! Its kinda stupid actually – a waste of time. Maybe I should start following less people on Twitter and Instagram? Also I could maybe delete some friends on Facebook. I have quite a lot and there is a lot that I never ever would talk to in real life. Maybe I should do a cleaning of my social media accounts. To get less junk and maybe to get shorter newsfeeds so I spend less time on them" (Tiidenberg et al 2017 p6).

Tiidenberg et al (2017) summed up: "In searching for an acceptable or viable way to describe and define their own lives, or more specifically, subjectivities (appendix 4B), the participants, over time, became more tangled, emotionally-laden, and internally contradictory, moving between ready-made interpretations to more granular accounts of their experiences" (p8).

4.3. UNREALISTIC BEAUTY ASPIRATIONS

Coy-Dibley (2016) began: "The female body has continuously been a battlefield of diverging concepts, regulations, values and modifications. It is seen as reproductive, sexual, insatiable, as a commodity, a place of purity, as Mary and Eve, of sin and flesh and monstrous appetites—a map of spatial, temporal and lived female experiences" (p2). The upshot is a selling of female beauty as presented in the media.

Digitally altered images of the body are increasingly common (eg: "Get Instagram ready"), from minor retouching (eg: smoothing wrinkles) to larger modifications (eg: slimming waists). Such images are "an influential route of transmission of cultural ideals of beauty" (MacCallum and Widdows 2018 p236), and can be associated with body image disturbance.

However, Nightingale et al (2015 quoted in MacCallum and Widdows 2018) found that over half of participants could not detect if an image was original or digitally altered.

Furthermore, Bissell (2006) found that photographs of models in swimsuits with the statement "the image

below has been digitally manipulated to enhance the model's appearance" were rated as more attractive by female participants than the same photographs without the disclaimer statement. Tiggemann et al (2013) argued that "warning labels directed greater attention to the model's body, and particularly those areas named as altered" (MacCallum and Widdows 2018 p239), and this increased body dissatisfaction among individuals who had a tendency to compare their appearance to others.

According to social comparison theory (Festinger 1954), individuals compare themselves to others when there are no objective criteria, and "upwards" comparisons "where we perceive the comparator as higher in the particular attribute will lead to more unfavourable self-evaluation" (MacCallum and Widdows 2018 p239).

Alternatively, self-discrepancy theory (Higgins 1987) proposed that dissatisfaction occurs when there is a discrepancy between "the 'actual' self (the attributes we have); the 'ideal' self (the attributes we aspire to have); and the 'ought' self (the attributes we believe we should have)" (MacCallum and Widdows 2018 p240).

MacCallum and Widdows (2018) suggested that "at least for some women in some instances, beauty ideals are functioning as ethical ideals" (p240). They explained that "the extent to which a woman conforms to the beauty ideal determines how morally good she judges herself (and others) and how she evaluates actions as right and good, as opposed to wrong and bad" (MacCallum and Widdows 2018 pp240-241). The "failure" to look beautiful has, thus, become a "deeper" issue. Appearance is a proxy for moral character and worth - "thinness and grooming shows competence and efficiency, and scruffiness and dishevelment reveal inner turmoil or distress, and not dressing appropriately is a failure of respect (for the self or others). Such judgements are routinely and constantly made, read directly from appearance, and are moral. Effectively they are character assessments of virtues and vices. And just as we regard success as virtuous, shame and disgust attach to failure" (MacCallum and Widdows 2018 p242).

4.3.1. Digitised Dysmorphia

What is different today, according to Coy-Dibley (2016), is that "we can digitally alter ourselves through Photoshop and apps such as Perfect365, producing our own notions of normativity. Not only do we critique our bodies in mirrors, but now we can digitise our dysmorphia by virtually modifying what we dislike, creating 'perfect' selves instead" (p1). She used the term "digitised dysmorphia" (DD) to describe the "disparity between female bodies and the images women feel they must

embody" (Coy-Dibley 2016 p1).

DD is on a spectrum with Body Dysmorphia Disorder (BDD). BDD is the preoccupation with an aspect of appearance that is considered "ugly, unattractive or 'not right' in some way" (Phillips 1998).

Add to this the situation described by Orbach (2009): "The numerous industries – diet, food, style, cosmetic surgery, pharmaceutical and media – that represent bodies as being about performance, fabrication and display make us think that our bodies are sites for (re)construction and improvement. Collectively, they leave us with a sense that our bodies' capacities are limited only by our purse and determination" (quoted in Coy-Dibley 2016). Put simply, something can always be improved, and software is now available to do that for digitised images.

Wolf (1990) saw the increasing demands on women's appearance as a backlash to feminism: "The more legal and material hindrances women have broken through, the more strictly and heavily and cruelly images of female beauty have come to weigh upon us. [...] During the past decade, women breached the power structure; meanwhile, eating disorders rose exponentially and cosmetic surgery became the fastest-growing medical speciality" (quoted in Coy-Dibley 2016).

For Coy-Dibley (2016), DD is "in itself a form of negative dysmorphia that has arisen due to the harmful societal pressures placed upon women's bodies to look a certain way and industries have capitalized upon this, manufacturing technology to assist this desire to attain beauty ideals. The fact that women are inclined to alter their body images, due to pressures to look a certain way, one they feel is unattainable within themselves, but is necessary to achieve in order to obtain social acceptance, is a negative, problematic, alienating and socially created relationship between women and their bodies that needs to be further addressed" (pp5-6).

4.3.1. Body Image Flexibility

"Body image flexibility" (BIF) is "how individuals may adaptively respond to body image challenges or threats" (Rogers et al 2018 p44). These challenges may include being teased about weight or comparing the self to a thinner peer or celebrity ("upward social comparisons").

Cash et al (2005) noted three dimensions of coping with body image threats:

- Avoidance of situations where body image threats occur.
- "Appearance fixing".

- Positive rational acceptance - eg: positive self-talk ("eg: reminding oneself of their good qualities and of the time-limited nature of experiencing negative feelings in the aftermath of the threat, minimising the importance of the stressor, encouraging more realistic appraisals..."; Rogers et al 2018 p44).

BIF is linked to the latter as "an individual's ability to willingly embrace the present-moment experience (eg: thoughts, emotions, physical sensations, etc) of their body in a non-judgmental fashion. Further, it also encompasses the capacity to choose the pursuit of living in a manner consistentwith personal values even in the face of experiencing these afore-mentioned unwanted private events regarding the body and/or weight stimulated by body image threats" (Rogers et al 2018 p44).

BIF is a relatively new concept, and Rogers et al (2018) reviewed studies since 2011 (n = 44 articles). Most studies involved only women, but where comparison was made with men, BIF was lower among female participants.

Eating disorder symptoms negatively correlated with BIF, as did body mass index in a weak or moderate relationship. BIF was associated positively with body appreciation, and perceived body acceptance by others, for example, but negatively with body dissatisfaction.

BIF was found to moderate the relationship between body image and eating behaviours. For example, poor body image and low BIF were linked to disordered eating, while "higher levels of body image flexibility may serve as a protective function with regard to guarding vulnerable individuals from engaging in maladaptive coping behaviours. For instance, research demonstrated that individuals with higher levels of body image flexibility may be more able (compared to those with lower levels of body image flexibility) to experience negative evaluation of their bodies and subsequently choose not to engage in maladaptive coping strategies to alleviate this discomfort" (Rogers et al 2018 p56).

The main measure of BIF is the Body Image Acceptance and Action Questionnaire (BI-AAQ) (Sandoz et al 2013). This involves twelve items (table 4.1), each scored 1 (never true) to 7 (always true) [6]. Webb et al (eg: 2015), for instance, has questioned the validity of items of this questionnaire (Rogers et al 2018).

[6] Basarkod et al (2018) produced a five-item version (BI-AAQ-5).

- Worrying too much about my weight makes it difficult for me to live a life that I value.
- To control my life, I need to control my weight.
- I shut down when I feel bad about my body shape or weight.

(Source: Basarkod et al 2018)

Table 4.1 - Example of items from BI-AAQ.

4.4. CULTURAL SEXUALISATION

"Cultural sexualisation" describes "a trend encompassing the sexual objectification of women and girls in mass media, shifts toward more permissive sexual attitudes, and preoccupation with sexual identities" (Blake et al 2018 p8722). There is disagreement about whether this trend "reflects male or female interests" in Western culture, for example (Blake et al 2018).

For example, at "the structural level, appearance-related consumption can be a locus of female individualisation that helps channel women into self-determined individuals" (Blake et al 2018 p8722). On the other hand, "gender oppression is widely seen to create a culture where women are treated as, and treat themselves as, sexual objects valued predominantly for their physical attractiveness and use by others" (Blake et al 2018 p8722).

Wolf (1990), for instance, argued that sexualisation in Western culture has increased as women's equality has been increasing since the 1960s, "erecting standards of attractiveness as a secondary barrier to women's progress" (Blake et al 2018 p8722).

Blake et al (2018) investigated the prediction from this work that sexualisation increases as gender inequity falls with data from social media. "Sexy selfies" posted on Twitter and Instagram in one month in 2016 were geolocated to country, and within the USA to cities and counties. UN data on gender inequality and income inequality were used. The researchers found "only small, inconsistent, and mostly not statistically significant associations between gender inequality and sexy selfies across US cities and counties. Income inequality, however, showed larger, statistically significant associations with sexy-selfie posting" (Blake et al 2018 p8723). The international data confirmed this finding.

The researchers then used data on beauty salons and women's clothing store expenditure in the USA. It was found that "areas with greater income inequality had greater sales in beauty salons and women's clothing stores. In contrast, most gender-inequality variables were not significantly associated with either form of spending" (Blake et al 2018 p8725).

Blake et al (2018) tried to explain their findings

with an evolutionary-based argument: "Conditions in which some men possess a disproportionate share of the wealth may thus incentivise women to sexualise and enhance their physical appearance to out-do their fellow competitors and attract the highest-quality men available at the top of the income distribution" (p8725).

This study did not examine individual-level data, and, as the researchers admitted, there was "no guarantee that measures obtained in different populations reflect the same construct, and cross-national indices are often error prone. Because confounding can occur, and imperfect measurement can affect conclusions drawn after adjusting for confounders, we cannot rule out the presence of heterogeneous effects: The positive relationship between income inequality and sexualisation may not hold for every individual, group of individuals or at every spatial scale" (Blake et al 2018 p8726).

4.5. APPENDIX 4A - SMARTPHONE USAGE

Studies of communication technology use, particularly smartphones, traditionally tend to employ self-reported questionnaires. These are reliable, but Ellis et al (2018) questioned their validity.

These researchers compared ten self-reported smartphone usage scales with an objective measure from the phones themselves over a seven-day period. The participants were 238 students in England who owned an iPhone 5 or above, and the main measure was time spent on the iPhone.

All self-reported scales positively correlated with objective time spent on smartphone, but only modestly. Likewise for average number of pick-ups of the phone per day, but only weakly for average number of notifications. "Every psychometric scale correlated with at least one objective measure, but the strength of these relationships is far from convincing" (Ellis et al 2018).

The participants were divided into two groups based on usage - high (over 300 minutes phone use during the study) and low (less than 200 minutes). Just over half of high users by objective measure self-reported on the ten questionnaires as such.

A key limitation of this study was that the participants could view their objective data in real-time on their iPhone, and this may have influenced their self-reported responses.

4.6. APPENDIX 4B - SUBJECTIVITY

"Subjectivity" is used to refer to "the shared inner life of the subject, to the way the subjects feel, respond, experience" (Luhrmann 2006 p345), to

individuals' "thoughts, sentiments and embodied sensibilities, and, especially, their sense of self and self-world relations" (Holland and Leander 2004 quoted in Luhrmann 2006). Luhrmann (2006) emphasised subjectivity as "the emotional experience of a political subject" (p346) [7].

Ortner (2005) stated that "by subjectivity I will mean the ensemble of modes of perception, affect, thought, desire, fear, and so forth that animate acting subjects. But I will always mean as well the cultural and social formations that shape, organise, and provoke those modes of affect, thought and so on" (quoted in Luhrmann 2006).

Luhrmann (2006) saw "the central puzzle of subjectivity, that people are both formed and free, chosen and choosing, that they have the illusion of agentic determination within the constraint of social determinism" (p347). This highlighted the cultural context of subjectivity [8].

Luhrmann (2006) quoted Ortner (2005): "Cultural forms – discourses, practices – produce a certain kind of cultural mind-set – towards holding people at a distance, towards the ceremonialisation of social intercourse... – and at the same time a set of anxieties about the ability to carry it off. The subjectivity in question has a certain cultural shape, but also a way of inhabiting that shape which is reflexive and anxious concerning the possibilities of one's own failures".

4.6.1. The Self

Gergen (2000), writing nearly 20 years ago, outlined four influences of communication technology on the self:

a) Polyvocality - The multitude of opinions can be confusing, but "turning inwards" to the self for an answer is less useful than "turning outwards" to others. "And in this move from the private interior to the social sphere, the presumption of a private self as a source of moral direction is subverted. If negotiating the

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[7] Good (2012) noted that the use of the term subjectivity "denotes new attention to hierarchy and exclusions, to violence and modes of governance, to new forms of 'citizenship', and to subtle modes of internalised anxieties that link subjection and subjectivity. It indicates the importance of linking national and global economic and political processes to the most intimate forms of everyday experience. It places the political at the heart of the psychological, and the psychological at the heart of the political" (p517).

[8] "The Western philosophical tradition favours the fantasy that this author, the subject of theory, is located outside the object of reflection. This is a voyeuristic tradition. Only from a distance may we hope to tell the truth. Only from a distance may we hope to pass a balanced judgement. Disentangled. Hands behind your back, do not get involved physically with whatever it is that you are theorizing about" (Mol 2008 p32).

complexities of multiplicity becomes normalised, so does the conception of mind as moral touchstone grow stale" (Gergen 2000 p137).

b) Plasticity - The greater range of relationships and the changing responses to them means "concern with the inner life is a luxury" (Gergen 2000).

c) Repetition - Everything the individual does and says is a copy of something in the media. Quoting Umberton Eco [9], Gergen (2000) stated: "how can a man who loves a cultivated woman say to her, 'I love you madly", when 'he knows that she knows (and that she knows that he knows) that these words have already been written by Barbara Cartland'?" (p138).

d) Transcience - "In the techno-dominated world, one must keep moving, the network is vast, commitments are many, expectations are endless, opportunities abound, and time is a scarce commodity" (Gergen 2000 p139).

4.6.2. Myths and Stories

Stories and myths are evident in different human cultures (past and present) in varied forms (Manhart 2005). But Campbell (1991) distinguished three common themes of myths:

i) Existential issues like birth and death.

ii) Human dilemmas and conundrums (eg: good vs bad).

iii) Attempts to reconcile the dilemmas with positive solutions.

Newberg and d'Aquili (2000) concentrated on the sense-making of myths in relation to the "cognitive operators" (analytic functions) of the brain. Eight of them were outlined - causal operator (links causes and effects), holistic operator (see the world as a whole - ie: combine information), reductionist operator (break the whole in parts), abstractor operator (develops general concepts from individual facts), existential operator (a feeling of reality from the information into the senses), emotional operator (links perceptions to feelings), quantitative operator (quantifies the world - eg: distance), and binary operator (imposes order on information). Each operator is based in a different area of the brain (eg: holistic operator - right parietal

[9] In postscript of "The Name of the Rose" (1984).

lobe) (Manhart 2005).

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5. MISCELLANEOUS SEX AND RELATIONSHIPS

5.1. FIRST INTERCOURSE AND SEXUAL COMPETENCE

Studies of first heterosexual intercourse tend to focus on age, but this "neglects individual differences in physical, social and psychological maturity, as well as the emphasis placed by young people themselves on the circumstances in which first sex occurred in evaluating their experiences" (Palmer et al 2019 p127).

Bearing this in mind, the concept of "sexual competence" (SC) has been proposed, and it involves "considering the contextual attributes of the event, rather than simply age at occurrence. This departs from the traditional framing of all sexual activity among teenagers as problematic, and recognises that young age alone does not threaten sexual health, any more than older age safeguards it" (Palmer et al 2019 p127). Wellings et al (2001) were the first to operationalise SC, using four variables - contraceptive protection; autonomy of decision; equal willingness of both partners; occurred at the "right time" (perceived timing).

Palmer et al (2019) investigated SC in 17-24 year-olds in Britain with data from the Third National Survey of Sexual Attitudes and Lifestyles (Natsal-3) (conducted in 2010-12) [10]. It covered over 15 000 16-74 year-olds, but Palmer et al (2019) concentrated on 2825 respondents. SC was defined by endorsing all four criteria proposed by Wellings et al (2001) at first intercourse. Overall, 48% of females and 56% of males were classed as having SC.

Age at first intercourse was key. "Among women, a general pattern was observed whereby those who were younger at first sex more commonly reported adverse contextual factors, with statistically significant trends observed for perceived timing, equal willingness, and non-autonomous decision-making. Among men, such a trend was observed for perceived timing and contraceptive use. Some 77.7% of women and 64.7% of men who reported first intercourse at age 13–14 years were categorised as

[10] Details at http://www.natsal.ac.uk/natsal-3.aspx.

not 'sexually competent', declining to 36.3% and 39.6% among those aged ≥18 years at first intercourse" (Palmer et al 2019 pp129-130).

In terms of each of the four criteria:

- Contraceptive protection - Around 10% of respondents did not use a reliable method.

- Autonomy of decision - One in six females reported a non-autonomous decision, and 12% of males.

- Equal willingness - Similar numbers to the previous category for not equally willing.

- "Right time" - Most commonly reported negative feature of "not the right time" (40% of females and 27% of males).

Lack of SC was associated with a number of variables, including:

- Living in more deprived area (2-3 times more likely to lack SC than low deprived area).

- Lower education level (2-3 times more likely than high education).

- First intercourse before sixteen years old (over twice as likely than over sixteen years old).

- Having an older first sexual partner (nearing twice as likely as partner of same age).

After controlling for factors like socio-demographic background, status of the relationship with the sexual partner was a key variable for SC (ie: "steady" relationship was positive). For females in particular, "just/recently met for first time", and not being in a "steady" relationship with the sexual partner was 3-4 times more likely to be associated with lack of SC.

Further analysis of Natsal-3 data (Palmer et al 2017) has found "lack of sexual competence at first intercourse to be a risk factor for poor subsequent sexual health among young people, independently of age at first sex" (Palmer et al 2019 p8).

Natsal-3 depended on "retrospective self-reports relating to an event that could have occurred up to a decade earlier; therefore, it is important to consider the potential for recall bias when interpreting the results. This could explain the strong association observed between relationship with partner at first sex and sexual competence at first sex; perhaps those who

reflect on the first sexual intercourse positively, and therefore will be classified at sexually competent, will also be more likely to recall that they were in a 'steady' relationship at the time" (Palmer et al 2019 p134).

In terms of the sample, the response rate was 58%, and included a relatively small proportion of non-White individuals (Palmer et al 2019).

5.2. SEX ROBOTS

Sex robots ("sex-bots") are "realistic mannequins with variable ages, appearances and textures, and customisable oral, vaginal and anal openings" (Cox-George and Bewley 2018 p161).

Cox-George and Bewley (2018) identified four key themes in their analysis of the literature on the health aspects of the use of sex robots:

i) Safer sex - "It is speculative whether the development of a sexbot marketplace will lead to lesser risk of violence and infections, or drive further exploitation of human sex workers. Sexual violence survivors and activists already campaign against 'rape culture' - the idea that (overwhelmingly) male violence is regarded as entitled and prosecution is so difficult that perpetrators of sexual abuse act with impunity" (Cox-George and Bewley 2018 p162).

ii) Therapeutic potential - They may be used by psychosexual therapists to help couples or individuals who find intercourse traumatic. "However, it remains unproven that intimacy 'needs' will be satisfied: there could be worsened distress. While a human may genuinely desire a sexbot, reciprocation can only be artificially mimicked" (Cox-George and Bewley 2018 p162).

iii) Potential to treat paedophiles and sexual offenders - There is limited evidence that sex robots, particularly "paedobots" (child-like robotic models), "redirect dark desires" as claimed by their manufacturers.

iv) Changing societal norms - "Sexbots are generally female and 'air-brushed', raising the question of public interest in avoiding gender discrimination and inequality due to the promotion of distorted views of attractiveness that reduce female body confidence. There are worries about blurred boundaries to consent and permission for enacted violence when sexbot 'personalities' can be selected that simulate non-consensual sex - that is, rape" (Cox-George and Bewley 2018 p162).

Cox-George and Bewley (2018) ended: "The overwhelmingly predominant market for sexbots will be unrelated to healthcare. Thus the 'health' arguments made for their benefits, as with so many advertised products, are rather specious. Currently, the 'precautionary principle' should reject the clinical use of sexbots until their postulated benefits, namely 'harm limitation' and 'therapy', have been tested empirically" (p163).

Koverola et al (2018) studied the moral judgments towards sex robots used instead of human sex workers.

In the pilot study, 172 adults in Helsinki, Finland, were recruited to read a science-fiction story, set in 2035, about sex with a robot prostitute, who is the same in appearance to a human. Various questionnaires were subsequently completed, and seven-point scale was used for attitudes towards the behaviour in the story. The condemnation of purchasing sex services was less for a robot than from a human, though married people were condemned more than singles irrespective of the prostitute.

In the main study, 261 more Helsinki residents read a similar story (table 5.1), which varied the purchaser (married or single; female or male) and the prostitute (robot or human). The findings from the pilot study were confirmed - robot prostitute use was less unacceptable than human, and a married purchaser was condemned more than a single person. The female purchaser was condemned more than the male overall.

- "The year is 2035. Various independent human-like robots are common, but still lacking any kind of consciousness or self-awareness. The advance of robotics has not caused much societal change. Anna is a 35-year old civil servant. She is married and in her free time she enjoys trekking in nature and playing a piano. Anna is on a week-long work trip in a city in Central Europe. The days are full of work but the evenings in a foreign city are dull and lonely. Curiosity draws her to explore the so-called Red Lights District, where sex work is visible and fully legal, though firmly controlled and regulated. For example, bordellos are required by law to clearly state whether the companions are human or robotic. A sign stating 'You can't tell our companion robots from real humans' encourages her to step into a bordello. After checking that the place follows impeccable hygienic standards and all official regulations she reserves a room and a robot companion for an hour and pays for the service in cash".

(Source: Koverola et al 2018 appendix A)

Table 5.1 - Example of story used in the study with a married female customer and a robot.

5.3. FORMING IMPRESSIONS OF OTHERS

The face is often key in snap judgments about the

individual's general personality and particular traits.

Todorov et al (2005), for example, found that competence was perceived from facial appearance using pictures of US congressional candidates (2000, 2002, and 2004), and this predicted winners and losers. "This finding suggests that person attributes that are important for specific decisions are inferred from facial appearance and influence these decisions" (Willis and Todorov 2006 p592).

Willis and Todorov (2005) showed how quickly judgments are made by varying the exposure time to faces. Overall, 245 US undergraduates viewed photographs of seventy amateur actors, and rated attractiveness, liking, competence, trustworthiness, or aggressiveness. The exposure to the face was 100, 500, or 1000 ms (or no time limit in the control condition).

Participants formed judgments for all time exposures that were similar, with trustworthiness being the strongest. The confidence in judgment was slightly higher with longer time exposure.

Willis and Todorov (2005) summed up: "Our findings suggest that as minimal an exposure as 100 ms is sufficient for people to make a specific trait inference from a stranger's face. For all five traits, judgments made after 100-ms exposure to a face were highly correlated with judgments made in the absence of time constraints" (p596).

5.3.1. Halo Effect

The halo effect is "the influence of a global evaluation on evaluations of individual attributes of a person" (Nisbett and Wilson 1977 p250). For example, a general perception of an individual as sociable will lead to positive perceptions of individual traits. This can also be seen with ambiguous traits like impetuous. "Thus, if one is told that a warm and friendly person is impetuous, a quite different set of behaviours come to mind from those that occur when one is told that the impetuous person is angry and hostile" (Nisbett and Wilson 1977 p250).

Nisbett and Wilson (1977) investigated whether individuals were aware of the halo effect in their forming of impressions of others.

One hundred and eighteen US college students watched a seven-minute videotaped interview with a teacher who appeared likeable (warm) or unlikeable (cold) (based on his answers) (first independent variable). Afterwards, the teacher was rated on individual characteristics including attractiveness of physical appearance. After the rating, half the participants were asked if the teacher's likeability/unlikability had affected their

ratings of appearance, and the other half the opposite question (second independent variable) [11].

In relation to the first independent variable, the likeable teacher was rated as significantly more physically attractive than the unlikeable teacher. In terms of awareness of the halo effect, the majority of participants if likeability/unlikeability influenced ratings of appearance said "no effect" for both teacher condition. But the participants asked if physical appearance influenced the ratings of likeability chose "decreased rating" for the unlikeable teacher only. "Their liking for the teacher was manipulated, and this affected their ratings of particular attributes. Yet the subjects did not acknowledge this effect, and the subjects who saw the cold teacher actually reported the opposite effect" (Nisbett and Wilson 1977 p255).

The study showed the halo effect, and the lack of awareness by individuals of its influence on impressions of another person.

5.3.2. Mimicking Others

Interacting persons tend to mimic each other in facial expressions and gestures [12], for example, while "individuals like those who mimic them more and that mimicry promotes pro-social or helping behaviours" (Tanner et al 2007 p754).

In three experiments, Tanner et al (2007) examined these social processes in relation to consumer decisions with two models:

a) Mimicking consumer path - Consumer copies the other in product choice.

b) Mimicked consumer path - The mimicked individual responds positively to the mimicker, and likes the product chosen by the mimicker.

In Experiment 1, 113 US undergraduates watched a video of a confederate choosing one of two snacks, which were available to the participants. The participants were more likely to choose the snack consumed by the confederate on the video watched. This supported the mimicking consumer path model.

Experiment 2, with thirty-seven more undergraduates, was set up as a market research interview for a new sports drink called "Vigor". The confederate making the presentation was told to mirror the participant's

[11] Response options were "no effect", "increased rating", or "decreased rating".

[12] This automatic behavioural mimicry has been called "the chameleon effect" (Chartrand and Bargh 1999).

mannerisms or not during their presentation. Participants who had been mirrored (mimicked) rated the drink more positively than non-mimicked participants. This supported the mimicked consumer path model. Experiment 3 confirmed these findings with "market research" on a new snack.

5.3.3. Accurate Personality Judgments

Funder (2012) began: "We all make judgments about our own personalities as well as of the personalities of people we meet, and these judgments are consequential" (p177). How accurate are our judgments here?

The Realistic Accuracy Model (RAM) (Funder 1995) described how accurate personality judgment is achieved. There are four steps (Funder 2012):

i) Relevance - The person being judged does something relevant to the trait being judged (ie: overt behaviour as opposed to thoughts).

ii) Availability - The viewer must see the trait-relevant behaviour (ie: behaviour in public as opposed to in secret).

iii) Detection - The viewer must perceive this behaviour as relevant (eg: viewer not unperceptive).

iv) Utilisation - The trait-relevant behaviour must be perceived "correctly" (eg: a smile as friendly and not as insincere).

There are four mediators of this process (Funder 2012):

a) "Good target" - "some people are easier to figure out than others" (p179).

b) "Good trait" - some traits are more visible than others.

c) "Good information" - more information is better than less (ie: longer interactions).

d) "Good judge" - eg: individuals who are "agreeable, consistent, and content with life, and not narcissistic, anxious, power-oriented, or hostile" (Funder 2012 p180).

Funder (2012) pointed out that "does not describe what always happens in personality judgment, nor does it claim to describe what usually or even often happens. Rather, it describes what must happen for accurate personality judgment to be achieved" (p178).

5.3.4. Handshakes

Impressions are formed of others based on verbal and non-verbal cues. One example of the latter is the firmness of the handshake, and this is particularly important in employment interviews. "Desirable handshakes have been described as firm handshakes that include a strong and complete grip, vigorous shaking for a lasting duration, and eye contact while hands are clasped" (Stewart et al 2008 p1140).

Stewart et al (2008) set up an experiment to test the impression formed from a handshake. The participants were ninety-two US students who underwent a mock job interview with a panel of five interviewees. Each interviewer shook the hand of the participant and rated it on five scales - completeness of grip, strength, duration, vigour, and eye contact while grasping hands. An overall handshake index was created. The interviewers also made a hiring recommendation.

The researchers tested the following hypotheses based on previous work:

1 - Individuals with a more firm handshake will receive a more positive evaluation than individuals with a less firm handshake. This hypothesis was supported, both for overall handshake score and for the five individual ratings.

2 - Handshake ratings will correlate with extraversion, and perception of extraversion. The participants also completed personality questionnaires, which showed that extraversion positively correlated with handshake score, and the interviewers perceived a firmer handshake as a sign of extraversion (but not other key personality traits, like agreeableness).

3 - Female handshakes will be rated lower than men's, and so will the overall evaluation of women. The findings supported the first part of this hypothesis, but not the second. In fact, the female participants received "somewhat higher interviewer ratings" (Stewart et al 2008 p1143).

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