

FOOD, FEEDING, AND FEMALE SEXUAL AROUSAL

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ABSTRACT

Food, Feeding, and Female Sexual Arousal

Feederism is a fat fetish subculture that eroticizes eating, feeding, and gaining weight. This thesis attempts to explain the practice of Feederism using an evolutionary approach. Chapter one examines the historical and cross-cultural meaning of fat and its association with fertility, health, and beauty. Chapter one also reviews the current literature on fat admiration and Feederism, and introduces some possible explanations for what Feederism is, and how it can be conceptualized. Chapter two describes a case study that was conducted on a female member of the Feederism community. The results of this case study add support to the hypothesis that Feederism is paraphilic. Chapter three describes a psychophysiological study that tested how members of the general population respond to and rate feeding stimuli. This study was conducted to determine whether Feederism is an exaggeration of a more normative and functional mate selection strategy. The results of this study demonstrate that males and females both respond to and rate feeding stimuli similarly. No definitive conclusions were drawn with respect to the exaggeration hypothesis, because, although participants did subjectively rate the feeding stimuli as more sexually arousing than neutral stimuli, they did not genitally respond to the feeding stimuli significantly more than to the neutral stimuli. Chapter four summarizes the results of the two studies and discusses how these findings might inform future research on paraphilias, courtship, and intimacy.

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CHAPTER ONE

The Origins of Feederism

ABSTRACT

According to the World Health Organization (WHO; 2009), fat is an “epidemic.” Cross-cultural studies indicate that in many parts of the world overweight and obese females are considered to be more beautiful and desirable than average sized or thin females. In Western societies, most females struggle to embody a very different idea of beauty. Tall and thin are the standards of beauty dictated by the media in North America. However, a small group of males and females in Western society have come together to form what is known as the fat admiration community. These individuals are preferentially sexually attracted to fat individuals and/or accept their own fat bodies. Feederism is a fat fetish sub-culture of the fat admiration community that focuses on feeding and erotic weight gain. Possible explanations for why individuals who participate in the Feederism community associate sexual arousal with eating, being fed, and gaining weight are explored.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO; 2009), fat is an “epidemic.” Globally, there are approximately one billion overweight people, 300 million of which are clinically obese. Body Mass Index (BMI) is calculated by dividing an individual’s weight by the square of their height. A BMI over 25 kg/m² is defined as overweight and a BMI of over 30 kg/m² is defined as obese (Bray, 1998; WHO, 2009). James (2004) reported that in the previous decade, the prevalence of obesity in Western and Westernized countries had more than doubled. With obesity on the rise, it is becoming more important to understand this unique population for possible future clinical purposes.

Cross-cultural studies indicate that in many parts of the world overweight and obese females are considered to be more beautiful and desirable than average sized or thin females (Furnham & Baguma, 1994; Nelson & Morrison, 2005; Popenoe, 2004; Singh, 1994; Swami & Tovee, 2007). The desire for fat females in these cultures appears to be correlated with historical resource scarcity (Nelson & Morrison, 2005). As a result, fat females are considered wealthier (Harter, 2004), healthier, and more fertile (Brown & Konner, 1987). Indeed obesity is positively correlated with socio-economic status in non-western cultures (Nelson & Morrison, 2005; Furnham & Baguma, 1994), and it has been suggested that the fattening of young girls hastens the onset of puberty and makes them more docile (Harter, 2004; Popenoe, 2004). Many young girls in the Saharan desert actively try to gain weight or are forced to gain weight by their female relatives to prepare them for marriage (Popenoe, 2004). Mauritania, a small northern country in Africa, is an example of a country where fat females are considered more desirable (Harter, 2004; Soares, 2006). The force feeding practiced in Mauritania is known as gavage, derived from the French word *foie gras*, a process used to fatten geese (Soares,

2006). Females, aged 4 to 19, are force fed bowls of cous cous, and forced to drink litres of camel's milk, often until they vomit (Medina, 2007; Popenoe, 2004). Similar practices exist in the Fat Houses of Nigeria, a country also in Northern Africa (Brink, 1995). Young females are discouraged from engaging in any unnecessary movement, are assigned "tutors" who prepare seven to eight meals a day for them to eat, and who massage their bodies to ensure the fat is distributed appropriately in the desired areas (Popenoe, 2004). It has been reported that the act of fattening females arouses male desire while suppressing a female's own desires (Popenoe, 2004).

In contrast, most females in Western societies struggle to embody a very different idea of beauty. Tall and thin are the standards of beauty dictated by the media in North America (Miller, Rothblum, Felicio, & Brand, 1995). Indeed, some clinicians call it a "culture of slenderness" (Gamman & Makinen, 1994). To be a fat female in Western society is to be culturally deviant (Kulick, 2005). Research conducted in Australia has shown that females are more vulnerable to criticisms about their weight and appearance. Consequently, they tend to be more critical of themselves and try to exercise more control over their weight (Murray, Touyz, & Beaumont, 1995). Rothblum (1992) reported that females in Western societies often go to great lengths to avoid becoming fat. For example, many females develop eating disorders such as bulimia nervosa and anorexia nervosa. Both bulimia nervosa and anorexia nervosa are characterized by an intense fear of becoming fat and a disturbance in the perception of body weight or shape. Females with bulimia often induce vomiting or use laxatives to expel any food they eat. In cases of anorexia, females limit the amount of food they eat or, in the most extreme cases, refuse to eat anything at all (American Psychiatric Association, 1994). Ninety

percent of all eating disorders occur among females and approximately 0.5-3% of all females will have an eating disorder during their lifetime (APA, 1994).

Research on females with anorexia nervosa has found that in addition to their aversion to food they also exhibit an aversion to sex (Leon, Lucas, Colligan, Ferdinande, & Kamp, 1985; Morgan, Wiederman, & Pryor, 1995; Wiederman, 1996; Wiederman, Pryor, & Morgan, 1996). It has been suggested that their intense body dissatisfaction results in them feeling less sexually appealing to potential partners and, therefore, less interested in sexual activity (Wiederman, 1996). Wiederman (1996) argued that this concern may be very realistic given the emaciated state of many anorexic female bodies.

Obesity is more prevalent among females than males (Brooks & Maklakov, 2010). Obese females are judged more negatively than obese males (Crandall, 1994; O'Brien, Hunter, Halberstadt, & Anderson, 2007). Research on attitudes about obesity and sexuality has shown that people from Western cultures rate obese females as less sexually attractive, less likely to engage in sexual activity, and less sexually responsive than their normal-weight counterparts (Regan, 1996). Researchers suggest that such beliefs result in self-fulfilling prophecies in which male partners of obese females behave in a sexually indifferent manner based on the beliefs mentioned above, causing the obese females to internalize sexual unresponsiveness and undesirability as part of their self-concept (Regan, 1996). It has been found that obese females who undergo weight loss procedures (i.e., gastric banding) report an improvement in both body image and sexual functioning, such as sexual satisfaction and frequency (Kinzl et al., 2001; Werlington, King, Clark, Pera, & Wincze, 1997). There is currently little research on the sexual functioning of obese females who have a positive body image (Wiederman, 1996).

The Fat Admiration Community

The fat admiration community is a group of males and females in Western society who are preferentially sexually attracted to fat individuals and/or accept their own fat bodies (Gates, 2000). Among heterosexual individuals, there are several labels that participants in this community may adopt. Fat Admirers (FAs) are typically averaged sized males who are sexually attracted to fat females, approximately 250 pounds or heavier (Gates, 2000; Kulick, 2005; Swami & Furnham, 2007). There is a small subset of female FAs (FFAs); however, there are significantly more male FAs (Monaghan, 2005; Swami & Furnham, 2007). Females in this community typically call themselves Big Beautiful Women (BBW) or Super-sized BBW (SSBBW; a woman whose dress size exceeds 28) and are desired by the FAs (Gates, 2000). Conversely, males who identify as Big Handsome Men (BHM) are desired by FFAs (Monaghan, 2005). Female members of the fat admiration community who identify as BBW or SSBBW describe the lifestyle as liberating (Gates, 2000) and liken it to a parallel universe where their weight is accepted and desired (Manhiem, 1999). One woman interviewed by Gates (2000) said that it took her a year after learning about the fat admiration community to get over the idea that she needed to lose weight and accept herself at the size she was meant to be.

Very little research has been conducted on the fat admiration community (Swami & Furnham, 2007; Swami & Tovee, 2009). The research that has been conducted demonstrates that male FAs rate overweight and obese females as more attractive and less healthy compared to thin or normal-weight females (Swami & Furnham, 2007). This research suggests that male FAs are making informed decisions about attractiveness ideals, independent of possible health concerns. Other research has shown that male FAs

consider a wider variety of body types physically attractive compared to a control sample of males (Swami & Tovee, 2009). It has been suggested that male FAs' attraction to overweight and obese females challenges the socio-cultural norms of attractiveness as a result of male FAs' low internalization of media ideals and their adoption of more flexible norms of beauty (Swami & Tovee, 2009).

The National Association to Advance Fat Acceptance (NAAFA) was established in 1969 to fight for the civil rights of fat people and end size discrimination (NAAFA, 2009a). In addition to acting as an advocacy group, NAAFA also provides opportunities for FAs and overweight individuals to meet and form relationships (Swami & Furnham, 2007). NAAFA supports the fat admiration community, arguing that in a society in which 65% of the population is considered fat, an attraction to fat people should be viewed as normal, and just as valid as a preference for a particular hair color or height (NAAFA, 2009b; Swami & Furnham, 2007).

The Feederism Community

Feederism is a fat fetish sub-culture of the fat admiration community that focuses on feeding and erotic weight gain (Bestard, 2008; Gates, 2000; Giovanelli & Peluso, 2006; Kulick, 2005; Murray, 2004). Among its members, it has been described as a fetish, a lifestyle, an identity, a sexual preference, and an orientation (Bestard, 2008; Giovanelli & Peluso, 2006). Among heterosexuals, members of this community self-identify as either Feeders or Feedees. Feeders are individuals who claim to become sexually aroused by feeding their partners and encouraging them to gain weight (Bestard, 2008; Kulick, 2005; Swami & Tovee, 2009). Conversely, Feedees are individuals who claim to become sexually aroused by eating, being fed, and the idea or act of gaining

weight (Bestard, 2008; Kulick, 2005; Swami & Tovee, 2009). The scant evidence that is available suggests that Feederism may be more prevalent among heterosexuals, with males assuming the Feeder role and females assuming the Feedee role (Bestard, 2008; Gates, 2000; Kulick, 2005; Swami & Tovee, 2009). Bestard (2008) suggested that the pleasure Feeders experienced in response to Feederism activities was not limited to sexual pleasure but also included, joy and satisfaction in nurturing, providing for, and caring for their growing feedee. Feedees' reports of sexual arousal to eating and weight gain suggest that aversion to food and sex may exist on a continuum, ranging from aversion to sexual arousal.

Involvement in the Feederism community exists on a continuum as well; some members simply enjoy reading fantasy stories and viewing images of others' progressive weight gain, while others actively gain weight with the goal of achieving immobility (i.e., the inability to move as a result of excessive weight; Bestard, 2008). Feeders and Feedees sometimes connect via personal ads and form relationships with each other in real life. However, involvement in the larger Feederism community is predominately limited to the internet (Giovanelli & Peluso, 2006; Ludwig, 2008; Swami & Furnham, 2007). Members communicate through chat rooms and message boards on community websites such as FantasyFeeder.com, and DimensionsMagazine.com. Members provide each other with weight gaining advice and encourage one another to meet their weight gaining goals. In addition to the community websites, there are also personal sites that feature individuals or small groups of individuals documenting their progressive weight gain. These sites also provide links to feeding videos depicting individuals eating food, and some even give viewers the option to order food to be delivered to the featured model,

with the guaranteed incentive that any food delivered will be featured in a future feeding video.

Members of the Feederism community engage in three different types of feeding behaviors: hand feeding, funnel feeding, and tube feeding (Murray, 2004). Hand feeding is when an individual feeds another person using only his or her hands, no utensils.

Funnel feeding is when an individual places a funnel (a pipe with a wide, often conical mouth and a narrow spout) in their partner's mouth and then pours a solution (i.e., blended food or protein shake) through the funnel into their mouth. Tube feeding requires an individual to attach a tube to the small spout of a funnel and insert the tube down into their partner's stomach. The individual then pours a solution down the funnel directly to their partner's stomach. Individuals may also engage in these various types of feeding on their own. Of the three forms of feeding, tube feeding is the most invasive.

Other activities that are prevalent in the Feederism community include documenting weight gain through measuring, weighing, and photographing (Gates, 2000). Some Feedees will measure several parts of their body (e.g., waist, bust, thighs) in order to document the changes in these areas as a result of weight gain. Participants will also take pictures of themselves or their partner over time in the same pose in order to document weight gain (Optomen Television, 2003). Another common activity among Feederism participants is body massages and belly jiggling.

Feederism is a controversial topic in the fat admiration community (Gates, 2000). Some describe it as "the blight... on the size acceptance community" (Yohannon, 1997). Others describe the practices of Feederism as abusive and derogatory (Optomen Television, 2003; Murray, 2004). Murray (2004) described the Feeder/Feedee

relationship as “a brutal and degrading courtship in which the male Feeder force-feeds his female Feedee into immobility and then abandons her for another willing participant.” Blank, a fat admiration author, said Feederism practices could be considered a form of captivity, stating, “You can hold someone prisoner in a house or a cellar, or you can hold them prisoner in their own body” (Optomen Television, 2003). Another critic wrote, “There is no goal in gainer fantasies. It’s an open ended system being applied to human physiology, something essentially close ended in nature...Feeding is essentially a form of time delayed snuff...” (Yohannon, 1997). Not surprisingly, NAAFA also condemns the practice of Feederism, or erotic weight gain (Manheim, 1999; Kulick, 2005; NAAFAc, 2009). Despite these criticisms, immobility has been reported to be a fantasy for many Feeders and Feedees (Bestard, 2008; Gates, 2000). In fact, immobility seems to be coveted within the Feederism community. If a female wishes to be taken to immobility, she often reserves her immobility for a special relationship, often following marriage (Gates, 2000; Kulick, 2005).

Aphrodisiacs and the Food-for-Sex Link

Food and sex have been linked for centuries through the concept of aphrodisiacs (Thakur, Chauhan, Bhargava, & Dixit, 2009). Aphrodisiacs are substances that are believed to influence an individual’s sexuality, and are grouped according to their “mode of action” (Sandroni, 2001). There are three modes of action; the aphrodisiac can either (1) increase libido (i.e., sexual desire), (2) increase potency (i.e., effectiveness of erection), or (3) increase sexual pleasure (Haber, 1998; Sandroni, 2001). Many different foods and plants have been suggested to be aphrodisiacs throughout history, most as a result of their natural resemblance to the male and female genitalia, known as the Law of

Similarities, such as rhino horn and oysters, respectfully (Crumpacker, 2006; Johnstone & Dodd, 1999). Other aphrodisiacs were selected following the Law of Rarity, which, as it suggests, were foods that were hard to acquire, such as truffles and globe artichokes. Some other types of foods that have been suggested as aphrodisiacs include, but are not limited to, crab, passion fruit, ginger, curry, cinnamon, dates, figs, garlic, honey, mint, peaches, chillies, pomegranate, prawns, strawberries, Spanish fly, and, of course, chocolate (Johnstone & Dodd, 1999). Despite what seems like an endless list of orgasmic victuals, very little research has shown that any foods actually have an effect on libido, potency, or sexual pleasure (Sandroni, 2001; Thakur et al., 2009). In fact, the United States Food and Drug Administration denies any scientific evidence that aphrodisiacs exist (Haber, 1998).

The small body of existing research on aphrodisiacs has suggested that certain plants (i.e., shatavari (*Asparagus racemosus*), safed musli (*Chlorophytum borivilianum*), orchid palm grass (*Curculigo orchiodes*), nutmeg (*Myristica fragrans* Houtt), passion flower (*Passiflora incarnata*), clove (*Syzygium aromaticum* [L] Merr. & Perry)), may target the central nervous system by influencing testosterone and androgen levels (Dhawan, Kumar, & Sharma, 2003; Tajuddin, Ahmad, Latif & Qasmi, 2003; Thakur, et al., 2009) and are, therefore, more effective, if not exclusively effective, for *males* (Sandroni, 2001). A meta-analysis conducted by Jang, Lee, Shin, Lee, and Ernst (2008) found that red ginseng was more effective than a placebo in treating erectile dysfunction, according to self reports. However, direct measurements of testosterone concentrations did not support the hypothesis that the effect was a result of fluctuating testosterone levels. It is possible that various types of aphrodisiacs affect individuals' bodies

differently. In sum, there is very little evidence that any of the foods that are widely recognized as aphrodisiacs induce any physiological effects in women and, as such, it is highly unlikely that they account for the sexual arousal that female Feedees report in response to eating, being fed, and gaining weight.

Is Feederism a Paraphilia?

Based on the limited information available on Feederism and its practices, it is possible that Feederism could be an example of a paraphilia. The *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM-IV-TR; American Psychiatric Association, 2000) defines paraphilias, in part, as conditions that "...are characterized by recurrent, intense sexual urges, fantasies, or behaviors that involve unusual objects, activities, or situations..." (p. 535). Paraphilias are often co-morbid, in that, if an individual has one paraphilia it increases their chances of having a second one, and so on (Langstrom & Seto, 2006). Paraphilias can be divided into two classifications: (1) unusual activities of attraction, and (2) unusual objects of attraction. Feederism appears to incorporate attraction to both unusual activities *and* unusual objects.

In Feederism, male and female participants experience sexual arousal by engaging in unusual activities, such as eating, feeding, and gaining weight. These activities often involve elements of domination, humiliation, and loss of freedom, which members of this community describe as sexually arousing. These elements raise the possibility that Feederism is simply one expression (albeit, an unusual one) of sadomasochistic interactions. Sadomasochism is a paraphilic dynamic in which one partner, the Sexual Sadist, inflicts harm or humiliation on their partner, the Sexual Masochist, while both participants derive sexual pleasure from their respective roles.

Although paraphilias are overwhelmingly a male-typical phenomenon (American Psychiatric Association, 2000; Laws & O'Donohue, 1997; Weideman, 2003), some evidence suggests that Sexual Masochism is the only paraphilia with a substantial number of female participants (Abel & Osborn, 1992; American Psychiatric Association, 2000). Although it is true that female Feedees are sometimes described as powerful goddesses who deserve to be pampered and catered to by their male Feeder (Murray, 2004), the male Feeders' control over their female Feedees' bodies are highly salient aspects of these relationships (Swami & Tovee, 2009). Such a dynamic suggests that a Sadomasochistic quality characterizes Feedee/Feeder relationships. Kulick (2005) alluded to this when he proposed that both sadomasochistic sex and fat pornography redirects erotic pleasure from the genitals and disperses it to other parts of the body. If Feederism is simply an unusual manifestation of Sexual Masochism, then this could explain largely why Feederism, like Sexual Masochism, appears to have a relatively substantial number of female participants.

Feederism might also be considered paraphilic because it involves preferential attraction to an unusual object. In Feederism, the unusual object of attraction appears to be human body fat. Feederism, therefore, may be a variation of Morphophilia, paraphilia characterized by the peak arousal in response to a particular body characteristic (Laws & O'Donohue, 1997). As such, it is similar to, but distinct from, Partialism, which is the peak erotic focus on a particular body part(s) (i.e., legs, feet, breasts or buttocks; DSM-IV-TR, American Psychiatric Association, 2000). Morphophilia is a more appropriate descriptor of Feederism because Feederism focuses on the physical characteristic of fat, which does not necessarily have to be associated with a particular body part.

Finally, it is possible that Feederism is not a variation of an established paraphilia, such as Sexual Masochism or Morphophilia, but rather, is a distinct paraphilia in which the sexual arousal associated with it stems from the taboo nature of weight gain and unhealthy eating in Western society (Kulick, 2005). According to Bordo (2003), it is not surprising that in a culture in which food and sex are deviant desires and taboo for females, that females would then turn to food for pleasure and sexual gratification. Overweight individuals are considered deviant in today's society, particularly in Western societies. Therefore, those who adore them are deviant in their desires (Goode & Preisler, 1983; Ludwig, 2008). Indeed, it has been found that fat is associated with more negative characteristics than any other stigma, and that the stigmatization of fat is more extreme for females than for males (Allon, 1982; Crandall, 1994; Crandall & Biernat, 1990; Regan, 1996; Weiner, 1986).

As mentioned, paraphilias are more prevalent among males. The majority of females who do participate in paraphilic behaviors may do so for reasons other than their own intrinsic sexual satisfaction. Research has shown that females have a greater erotic plasticity than males, in that they are more susceptible to social and cultural influences with respect to their sexuality. Vohs, Catanese, and Baumeister (2004) suggested that as a result of this greater degree of erotic plasticity, females are more open to trying new sexual behaviors than males, more likely to be persuaded into participating in new sexual behaviors, and that males are more likely to stay with females who are willing to participate in sexual behaviors they find most appealing. To support this idea of erotic plasticity, Vohs et al. (2004) referred to evidence that supports females' greater discrepancy between their attitudes about sexual behavior and the way they actually

behave in a given situation (i.e., condom use, infidelity, and homosexual activity; Baumeister, 2000). Based on the finding that female genital and subjective sexual arousal is discordant, Chivers (2005) suggested that among females the motivation for engaging in sexual behaviour is also less dependent upon exposure to preferred sexual stimuli. Furthermore, research on female fantasies has demonstrated that females place more emphasis on relationship themes and romance than sexual behaviors (Ellis & Symons, 1990). Therefore, females may be more willing to engage in paraphilic behaviors for the pleasure of their partner or in order to retain their partner. That is not to say that no females experience sexual pleasure from paraphilic behaviors or that this is not a primary motivation for some, however, previous research suggests that females who are motivated by intrinsic sexual arousal to engage in paraphilic behaviors are among the minority.

Is Feederism an Exaggerated Manifestation of Normative Mating Patterns?

It has been suggested that paraphilias are exaggerated manifestations of more normative and functional mate selection strategies (Quinsey & Lalumière, 1995). For example, males prefer youthfulness in post-pubertal female mates and research suggests that youthful appearance in these women is positively correlated with fertility and reproductive potential (Buss & Schmitt, 1993; Geary, Vigil, & Byrd-Craven, 2004). It has been hypothesized that Pedophilia is an exaggeration of the male-typical preference for youthful post-pubertal mates, but one that results in males having preferential attractions to infertile and non-reproductive individuals (Quinsey & Lalumière, 1995). Implicit in this evolutionary perspective is the notion that paraphilic orientations are sub-

optimal or even maladaptive by-products of functional normophilic sexual orientations that have been selected for over evolutionary time.

Research suggests that teleiophilic¹ males demonstrate some sexual arousal to nude images of female children that is significantly greater than the sexual arousal they demonstrate in response to neutral images. This arousal occurs despite teleiophilic males' subjective and genital preference for adult female stimuli (Freund & Costell, 1970). As such, this research indicates that normophilic individuals in the general population are capable of some degree of sexual arousal in response to paraphilic stimuli (Green, 2002; Quinsey & Lalumière, 1995).

Comparative lines of research raise the possibility that female Feederism may also be an exaggeration of functional mate selection patterns. A robust body of cross-cultural research indicates that females have evolved to prefer male mates who are able to provision them with resources, which enhance their survival and the survival of any resulting offspring (Buss & Schmitt, 1993; Frisch, 1994; Geary, Vigil, & Byrd-Craven, 2004; Smith, 2004). With respect to female reproductive success, food is arguably the most basic resource. Females require a certain percentage of body weight to withstand the energy demands of reproduction and lactation (Frisch, 1994). Indeed, if a female does not build up enough fat reserves she will become infertile as a result of amenorrhoea (i.e., the discontinuation of menstruation; Frisch, 1987). It has been found that among contemporary hunter-gather societies males increase food provisioning to female mates during the later stages of pregnancy and nursing because females are unable to gather as

¹ Teleiophilia refers to sexual attraction to adults. Gynephilia refers to sexual attraction to females. Androphilia refers to sexual attraction to males (Blanchard et al., 2000).

much food for themselves during these periods of heightened need (Smith, 2004). This enhanced provisioning allows females to maintain a weight that is conducive to the birth of healthier offspring. It has been argued that although male food provisioning does not lower offspring mortality rates within the first year, it is beneficial around the time of weaning (Marlowe, 2001). Furthermore, male food provisioning has been linked to female fertility, suggesting that although food provisioning may have little effect on rates of offspring mortality, females may be able to increase their reproductive success by having more offspring overall (Marlowe, 2001).

Primatological work has shown that female chimpanzees (*Pan troglodytes*) and orangutans (*Pongo pygmaeus*) are more likely to mate with males that have shared food with them in the past as part of a “food-for-sex” exchange (De Waal, 1995; Gomes & Boesch, 2009; van Noordwijk & van Schaik, 2009). Similar observations have been made within different bird species, such as northern harriers (*Circus cyaneus*; Simmons, 1988), the greater ani (*Crotophaga major*; Logue, 2007), and peregrine falcons (*Falco peregrinus*; Carlier & Gallo, 1995). However, the temporal sequence of the food-for-sex exchange varies across these species significantly. Among some species the transaction may be delayed for days, weeks, or even months (e.g., chimpanzees), while in other species the transaction occurs simultaneously (e.g., the greater ani).

Baumeister and Vohs (2004) described the exchange of resources for sexual access among humans as a form of sexual economics. They argued that female sexuality (e.g., virginity and fidelity) has been endowed a greater value than that of male sexuality across many cultures. This, they reason, is a reflection of the disproportionate sex difference in parental investment, in that, females invest more heavily in offspring at all

stages of reproduction and rearing than males. As such, sexual intercourse is not an equal exchange. Females are also given additional power in a sexual relationship because research has shown that females have a weaker sex drive than males (Baumeister, Catanese, & Vohs, 2001). As a result, females act as a gatekeeper to their sexuality. Males must provision females with resources to equalize the exchange and persuade them to engage in sexual activity.

Taken together, this cross-cultural and cross-species evidence underscores the salience of eating and feeding within mating contexts. Hence, eating or being fed may be experienced by females as sexual on either a cognitive or physiological level, or both. Conversely, provisioning food to female mates may be experienced by males as sexual on either a cognitive or physiological level, or both. As such, I speculate that female Feederism may represent an exaggerated expression of a normative and functional link between eating, being fed, and sexual arousal in females. Conversely, male Feederism may represent an exaggerated expression of a normative and functional link between food provisioning to female mates and sexual arousal in males. Females who participate in Feederism are often infertile and/or unable to have penile-vaginal intercourse because of their weight. Consequently, I further speculate that, when viewed from an evolutionary perspective, female and male manifestations of Feederism may reflect a sub-optimal or even maladaptive exaggeration of normative, functional mate preferences/behaviors, and sexual arousal patterns.

CHAPTER TWO

Feederism in a Woman: A Case Study

ABSTRACT

Feederism is a fat fetish sub-culture in which individuals eroticize weight gain and feeding. *Feeders* are individuals who claim to become sexually aroused by feeding their partners and encouraging them to gain weight. Conversely, *Feedees* are individuals who claim to become sexually aroused by eating, being fed, and the idea or act of gaining weight. Very little is known about this population. This report describes a woman who self-identified as a Feedee. It is unclear, at present, whether female Feederism represents a unique paraphilia, or a thematic variation of morphophilia or sexual masochism.

INTRODUCTION

The *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM-IV-TR; American Psychiatric Association, 2000) defines paraphilia, in part, as conditions which “...are characterized by recurrent, intense sexual urges, fantasies, or behaviors that involve unusual objects, activities, or situations...” (p. 535). Paraphilias are overwhelmingly a male-typical phenomenon (American Psychiatric Association, 2000; Laws & O’Donohue, 1997) and there is no evidence that any of the 48 paraphilias listed in the *DSM-IV-TR* are predominately exhibited by females. Sexual Masochism appears to be the only paraphilic activity in which an appreciable number of women engage and report sexual arousal (Abel & Osborn, 1992; American Psychiatric Association, 2000). The present case study investigated an unusual pattern of female sexual arousal to gaining weight and being fed.

Feederism is a fat fetish sub-culture, focused on erotic eating, weight gain, and feeding (Gates, 2000; Giovanelli & Peluso, 2006; Kulick, 2005; Murray, 2004). Among heterosexuals, members of this community self-identify as either Feeders or Feedees. Feeders are individuals who claim to become sexually aroused by feeding their partners and encouraging them to gain weight (Kulick, 2005). Conversely, Feedees are individuals who claim to become sexually aroused by eating, being fed, and the idea or act of gaining weight (Kulick, 2005). The scant evidence that is available suggests that Feederism may be more prevalent among heterosexuals, with men assuming the Feeder role and women assuming the Feedee role (Gates, 2000; Kulick, 2005). There is also a small gay male Feederism community in which members identify as gainers, encouragers, mutual gainers, or belly builders (Gates, 2000; Monaghan, 2005).

Feeders and Feedees sometimes connect via personal ads and form relationships with each other in real life. Involvement in the larger Feederism community is predominately limited to the internet, with members communicating through chat rooms and message boards. Members often provide each other with weight gaining advice and encourage one another to meet their weight goals. Involvement in this community also exists on a continuum; some members simply enjoy reading fantasy stories and viewing images of others' progressive weight gain while, at the other extreme, some individuals actively gain weight with the goal of achieving immobility. There have been virtually no empirical investigations of this population (Swami, & Furnham, 2007). In this report, I present a detailed case study of a self-identified female Feedee.

CASE REPORT

The informant, Lisa, was a 30-year-old, right-handed, married Caucasian woman. She was contacted through a Feederism website called *FantasyFeeder.com*. I initially emailed Lisa and 12 other women who self-identified as Feedees in October 2008 to ask whether they would be interested in participating in a study on female sexuality. Of these women, Lisa agreed to participate because of her own curiosity about her sexual arousal to food, eating and gaining weight. I interviewed Lisa via email over the course of four months (January-April 2009). I began by asking very broad questions (e.g., When did you first learn about Feederism? What behaviors do you engage in that you would consider part of Feederism?), and then went on to ask more specific questions based on her responses. Lisa reviewed the completed manuscript to ensure our description of her was accurate.

Lisa was the eldest of two children, born to a mostly agnostic/atheist middle-class family in eastern Canada. She was born weighing just over 8 lbs, by way of an uncomplicated vaginal delivery, although her mother was given an epidural during the procedure to reduce natural discomfort. She reported that she was the result of a full term pregnancy with no abnormalities detected at birth. She was told, however, that she choked during the first night (post-natal), but knew very little about the cause or resolution of this event. She indicated that she met most of her developmental milestones, such as walking and talking, within the normal span of time.

Lisa described her mother as very loving, but sometimes viewed her as unreasonable when she was a young adolescent. Her mother was a homemaker and was not overly strict but made it clear what was expected. Growing up, Lisa considered her mother's disappointment the worst possible form of punishment. Lisa described her relationship with her mother as fairly close and most of their earlier arguments arising from puberty-related conflicts (such as clothes and makeup). Lisa's mother stood 5'8" and weighed 190 lbs, which equals a Body Mass Index (BMI, kg/m^2) of 28.9, classifying her as overweight or pre-obese (World Health Organization, 2009). Lisa recalled her mother often trying to diet in order to lose the extra 50 lbs she put on as the result of quitting smoking when Lisa was 11.

Lisa described her father as a very intelligent man who suffered from depression. His depression created distance between him and her mother and also created problems with her younger brother. She described her own relationship with her father as distant and indicated that, despite frequent arguments, they generally coexisted peacefully. Her father worked as a civil servant of the Canadian government and was a brawny man,

standing 6'2" and weighing approximately 200-225 lbs, giving him a BMI between 25.7 and 28.9 (Overweight; WHO, 2009). Her parents are still married.

Lisa said she was not popular while growing up, but she had a small group of good friends. She received good grades (high school average: 88%) and was involved in a lot of extra-curricular activities. Lisa described herself as a very active child, participating in school sports, such as basketball, and enrolling in modeling courses in the eighth grade.

Although her modeling classes emphasized the importance of being thin, she did not recall ever being told she needed to lose weight or that she needed to improve her body in any way. At approximately 13 years of age, she described herself as having a mild preoccupation with her weight. At that time, she was already her full height (5'11") and weighed 120-130 lbs, giving her a BMI of 16-18 which is considered underweight (WHO, 2009). However, she viewed herself as fat and became self conscious about her hips, thighs, and belly. She indicated that her feelings arose from being taller than most girls her age, which required that she wear larger clothes, which, in turn, she equated with being fatter. She began to eat as little as she could get away with, which Lisa said gave her a sense of accomplishment and success. Her parents and school guidance counsellor stepped in approximately a year or two after she began her radical diet. She was never diagnosed with an eating disorder, but her mother began exercising control over her eating habits (e.g., watching her eat breakfast to make sure she consumed her food). Lisa indicated that she recovered quickly from eating as little as possible because her mother made it impossible for her not to eat and her attempts to force herself to throw-up after eating were unsuccessful.

With regard to Lisa's sexuality, she experienced erotic thoughts about weight gain and fat from a very young age. When she was approximately 7 or 8 years old, she became fascinated with larger people and would pretend her Barbie dolls were gaining weight. When she was 13 years old, she had a dream of a fat woman wearing a crop top (i.e., a t-shirt or blouse with the lower portion cut off, resulting in the exposure of some of the wearer's abdomen) dancing when she experienced her first orgasm in her sleep. Lisa also fantasized about being forced to gain weight and being teased for being overweight. Because of her sexual arousal to fantasies of fat women, Lisa experienced some confusion surrounding her sexual orientation during early adolescence. When she was 18 years old, she began identifying as a heterosexual, because she realized she was sexually attracted to men and not sexually interested in women beyond looking at pictures and fantasizing. She never experienced a sexual encounter with another girl nor has she ever desired one. She dated boys frequently throughout high school from the age of 16, but did not become sexually active until she was 18. She has had sex with five different men over the course of her life. When Lisa was 19 years old, she began dating a 24-year old man, who helped her explore her sexuality by experimenting with positions, sex-toys, bondage, and masturbation. He taught her how to masturbate to orgasm and subsequently, for the first time, she began masturbating in private regularly while looking at pornographic images of fat women on the internet. Lisa dated this man for five months before she moved away to attend university. Lisa had been married to a man for 18 months at the time of our interview. They had been together for a total of 11 years and during that time she did not engage in any physical extra-pair relationships. She had sought internet-companionship in the Feederism community, because her

husband was not a member of that community and, until her participation in this case study, he was unaware of her involvement. Her online companions participated with her in role-playings, sexual storytelling, the exchange of weight gaining tips, and tips on how to “come out” to loved ones.

At the time of our interview, Lisa still reported sexual arousal in response to fat women but that it was limited to visual images found on the internet. She said that she was not aroused by fat women she saw in the “real world.” Her sexual arousal to the internet women had also become more specific in that she was aroused by seeing changes in a woman’s body as she gained weight and preferred to look at attractive fat models. Lisa’s ideal website would have several pictures of the same woman over the course of the model’s weight gain so that she could see the progressive changes in the model’s shape and size. She said she was aroused “by the shapes of their bodies (fullness, large bellies, etc.).” Lisa reported she looked at these types of sexual pictures several times a week while she masturbated.

Lisa also enjoyed reading stories posted on Feederism websites. She provided the following description of the type of stories that gave her the most sexual arousal.

“The stories I enjoy most tend to involve some combination of realistic weight gain, vivid description of the body at different stages of the gain, a second person who is either actively encouraging or observing the gain, and mild domination or humiliation.”

Similarly, most of Lisa’s sexual fantasies revolved around weight gain, and of being made fun of, and called names in response to her weight gain. As she stated:

“I fantasized about gaining weight and being made fun of for being overweight....being called names like fatty or pig, or someone pointing out how big I am or how much I had gained, drawing attention to or describing different body parts, for example ‘look how flabby your belly is getting.’”

Lisa also fantasized about being forced to gain weight by a dominant male who also became sexually aroused by making her gain weight.

“Gaining weight is what I find most arousing. Being fed or overeating is also arousing to me and I enjoy the sensation of being “stuffed,” but part of that arousal is knowing that it will lead to weight gain later...The power dynamic in force feeding is appealing to me. I am interested in the stuffing and gaining aspects, but also in being under someone else’s control... I am aroused by the idea of being under the control of someone who wants me fatter.”

In order to make sure we were tapping into Lisa’s true sexual desires, I gave her the following scenario:

Interviewer: If I offered you a million dollars if you could have an orgasm in the next 60 seconds, what would you do or fantasize about in order to achieve that orgasm as quickly as possible?

Lisa: I would use my vibrator and probably run the other hand over the thicker parts of my stomach and sides. I would likely imagine being fatter than I am, with a feeder telling me how fat I had gotten and how much bigger he was going to make me.

When I asked Lisa to describe her sexual arousal in response to being fed and gaining weight in comparison to the sexual arousal she experienced during regular intercourse, she responded as follows:

“The major difference is the intensity. While I get aroused and enjoy regular sex, I get far more aroused by the idea of being fed/gaining. I have to fantasize about it [i.e., being fed/gaining weight] in order to have a clitoral orgasm.”

Lisa indicated that almost all of her orgasms have involved fantasizing about some form of Feederism activity and that sometimes all she required to achieve orgasm was to fantasize about being a little bit heavier.

Lisa had never been in a feedee/feeder relationship because she did not want to deal with the negative health consequences of becoming extremely overweight.

Moreover, she always wanted to conceal her sexuality from others and she felt that by

being in a feedee/feeder relationship would make concealment more challenging. Although Lisa did fantasize, from time to time, about being in such a relationship, it is noteworthy that she never dwelled on the details of the relationship during these fantasies. Rather, she liked the idea of being involved with someone who was as interested in, and aroused by, her weight gain as she was. She considered Feederism a “pretty self-centered fetish” in which her fantasies revolve around changes to her body more so than her relationship with another person.

Beyond fantasies, Lisa had also practiced more active forms of Feederism, such as actively gaining weight. Over the course of four months in 2008, Lisa actively gained 35 lbs, taking her from 165 lbs to 200 lbs. In terms of her BMI, she went from 23 (normal/healthy) to 27.9 (pre-obese, WHO, 2009). She gained weight by increasing her calorie intake, often planning meals ahead of time and making changes to ensure she maximized her caloric and fat intake. Lisa kept a diary of her eating habits over the course of her weight gain. Some types of food she ate on regular bases during this four month period included: beef burgers, bacon, pastries, donuts, pizza, cookie dough, milk shakes, and cream (often 1 L in a day). Lisa described this active weight gain as very sexually arousing. She singled out specific activities, such as weighing and measuring herself, as well as taking pictures to document her progressive weight gain as being particularly sexually arousing. She stated that:

“While I was actively gaining, I really enjoyed weighing myself and found it very sexually arousing. The arousing part was finding out how much I had gained and, after a certain weight, knowing that I was bigger than ever before.”

After her active weight gain, Lisa reported that she began to feel the health effects of Feederism. I inquired about how she felt about Feederism as a lifestyle and the health risks associated with being overweight:

Interviewer: Many advocates of the fat admiration movement say you can be healthy at any size. Do you agree?

Lisa: No, I do not.

Interviewer: Why?

Lisa: Though people could probably be active, eat relatively well, and still be overweight, the health risks associated with being overweight are well documented. Even in my own short time of being overweight, I had a noticeable decrease in energy and my immune system was weakened... it was eye-opening.

Interviewer: Do you think the general practice of Feederism is healthy?

Lisa: Absolutely not. Health concerns are one of several reasons I would hesitate to enter a long-term feeder/feedee relationship. However, people take risks for things that bring them enjoyment: backcountry skiing, taking drugs, bringing a stranger home from the bar. I think most gainers/feedees have probably considered the degree of risk they are assuming and decided it was worthwhile.

Despite Lisa's obvious awareness of the risks involved in Feederism, it seemed like the "unhealthy" behavior of actively gaining weight to the point of being overweight is what is most sexually arousing to her.

Interviewer: Despite the health risks involved, would you find it more arousing to actively gain weight from 130 lbs to 150 lbs or 150 lbs-170 lbs?

Lisa: 150 lbs-170 lbs

Interviewer: Why is that?

Lisa: For me, 130 lbs-150 lbs is the difference between extremely skinny and skinny. Toward 170 lbs, I start looking a bit heavier.

Lisa also indicated that her sexual arousal declined significantly when she lost weight after her four months of actively gaining weight. I then asked her if she would find other changes to her body sexually arousing, such as watching her belly grow as the result of being pregnant, to determine if it was the type of weight gain or method of gaining weight she found sexually arousing. She indicated that she would not find

watching her belly grow as the result of pregnancy as sexually arousing because her arousal stemmed from the idea of actively gaining weight in order to become fatter.

Interestingly, throughout the interview, Lisa constantly referred to her Feedee-self and her Non-Feedee-self. She indicated that her Feedee-self was constrained by the real world consequences of Feederism and she mostly limited her Feedee-self to the internet and fantasies. Among the real world consequences she listed were: the obvious health risks, becoming less attractive to her husband, having different erotic desires than her partner, and being treated differently by others, in both private and professional social settings. Her Non-Feedee-self was happily married in a “normal” sexual relationship, exercised 4-5 times a week for 40-60 minutes, and ate healthy. When I asked her what she would do if there were no longer any real world consequences to Feederism, she said she would actively gain weight again until she was approximately 250 lbs, putting her BMI to 34.9 (on the cusp of being Obese Class II). The reason Lisa put a limit on her weight, even if there were no real world consequences, was because she did not want to become immobile and lose her freedom. I then asked her to indicate her ideal body type for her Non-Feedee-self, as well as, her Feedee self relative to her current body type on a Figure Rating Scale (Stunkard, Soensen, & Schulsinger, 1983). She indicated that her current body type was a 4 (BMI 23.1), that her Non-Feedee-self would like to be a 2 (BMI 19.3), and that her Feedee-self would like to be a 6 (BMI 29.9; Bulik et al., 2001; see Fig. 2.1).

Lisa reported that she was never criticized about her weight by anyone, and that she did not recall any other children that were overweight that she envied or admired. There were several members of her family and neighbourhood that were overweight, but

she did not feel that her relationships with them influenced her perception of herself. In fact, Lisa reported that, in general, her perception of fat people was rather derogatory. She said that she did not consider fatness to be a character flaw, but that most people were fat because they choose not to do anything about it. She indicated that she would get annoyed when she heard fat people lament about their weight and then see them making bad decisions about their health. She felt that these people had the power to change their bodies if only they tried. On an Antifat Attitudes scale (Morrison & O'Connor 1999), Lisa indicated that, on average, she agreed that fat people were lazier than thin people, less active, to blame for their weight, and could not be as attractive as thin people. However, Lisa also reported that she had both thin and fat friends; she thought that fat people were just as intelligent and trustworthy as thin people, and that, if she were an employer, she would have no problems hiring someone who was fat. Lisa made it clear that she understood the prejudices against overweight people and made the point that there were often social consequences to being overweight: "Case in point, I have not met a lot of obese CEOs." I also presented Lisa with a male version of the Figures Rating Scale (Stunkard et al., 1983) and asked her to indicate what body type she found most attractive. She indicated figure 4 (BMI-23.6, normal/healthy) and 5 (BMI-25.8, Pre-obese) as the most attractive to her. Her husband was 6'1" and weighed 200 lbs, which gave him a BMI of 26.4 (Pre-obese; WHO, 2009), placing him between a 5 and a 6 on the Figure Rating Scale (Bulik et al., 2001; see Fig. 2.2).

Lisa presented as a very pleasant, intelligent, and articulate woman. She reported no history of serious illnesses or mental health problems. She had no significant history of substance use or abuse. Lisa completed a bachelor's degree and worked full-time in a

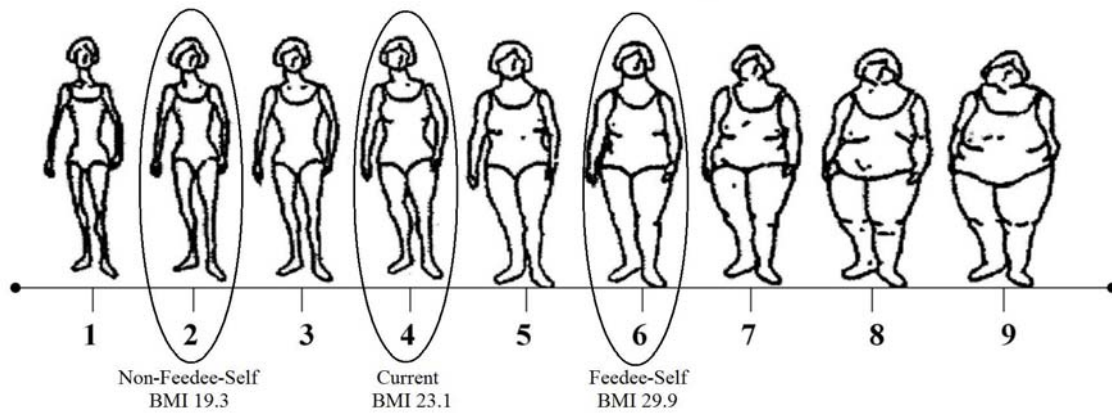


Figure 2.1. Self selected Non-Feedee-self and Feedee-self relative to current body type.

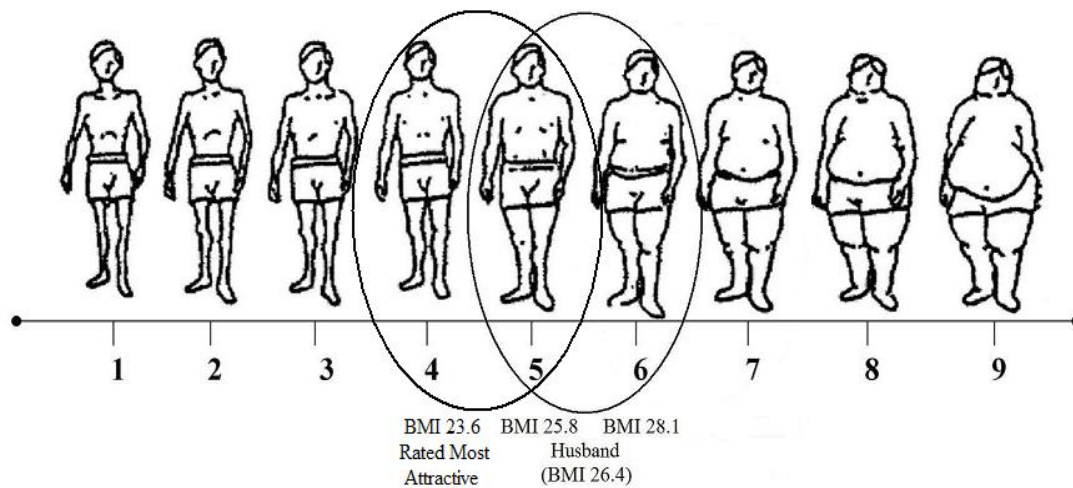


Figure 2.2. Ratings for most attractive male body type compared to husband's body type.

managerial-level position. She lived with her husband and at the time had no children. Her hobbies included travel, exercise, and browsing the internet. When I asked why her sexuality was characterized by Feederism, she said “I am honestly not sure.”²

DISCUSSION

Like many paraphilic sexual activities, Lisa’s pattern of sexual arousal was characterized by recurrent and intense sexual urges, fantasies, and behaviors that involved unusual activities. Given that much of Lisa’s sexuality was focused on eroticizing body fat, the question arose as to whether it represented a form of Morphophilia (Laws & O’Donohue, 1997). Morphophilia is the peak erotic focus on a particular body characteristic. As such, it is similar to, but distinct from, Partialism, which is the peak erotic focus on a particular body part(s) (i.e., legs, feet, breast or buttocks). Morphophilia is more appropriately connected with Feederism because Feederism focuses on the physical characteristic of fat, which does not necessarily have to be associated with a particular body part. This is clearly demonstrated by Lisa’s description of her lifelong sexual arousal to fat bodies, in general, as opposed to fat body parts. At the same time, however, Feederism appears to involve the integration of an erotic focus on unusual activities (i.e., eating and/or being fed and/or gaining weight), in addition to an erotic focus on particular body characteristics (i.e., fat). This raises the possibility that Feederism might be a paraphilic form of sexuality that is taxonomically distinct from Morphophilia.

² Lisa was re-contacted as this article went to press, at the request of our reviewers, in order to acquire additional information. She indicated that she had nearly lost all of the weight she had gained during her active weight gain of 35 lbs. She is now 168 lbs and stated that she will probably actively gain weight again at some point, but has no plan to gain in the near future.

Classic Freudian theory posits that children develop through a series of phases in which the child progresses until they reached a “normal sexual life” (Freud, 1930). Each phase is characterized by the sexualized pleasure derived from different erogenous zones. If a child experienced trauma at any stage, they would become fixated on that phase, unable to develop any further. The first psychosexual phase is the oral phase, in which sexual pleasure is not separated from the ingestion of nourishment. Viewed from this perspective, it is possible that Lisa was traumatized during the oral phase when she choked in her sleep during her first night after birth, resulting in her becoming orally fixated. However, Lisa did not gain sexual pleasure from the ingestion of food, in and of itself, but to the idea that eating would lead to weight gain. Furthermore, Lisa did not exhibit any other adult behaviors that are associated with an oral fixation (i.e., smoking or a preference for oral sex). Therefore, it seems Freud’s (1930) classic theory of psychosexual development does not provide any insight into Lisa’s Feederism behaviors.

In a somewhat similar vein, Stoller (1975) believed that paraphilias arose from traumatic experiences during childhood that are then relived and overcome by the victory of achieving orgasm. He felt it was no coincidence “that the fantasy picks out the moment of greatest trauma for what is now its moment of greatest thrill” (p. 80). Viewed from this theoretical perspective, one could speculate that being “forced” to eat by her mother, during a time when she felt fat, was traumatic and humiliating for Lisa. Subsequently, she may have fantasized in adulthood about being forced fed, and being fat, to achieve sexual satisfaction. However, Lisa’s description of this period of her life leads us to conclude that this theory is of limited explanatory value. Reflecting on this

teenage conflict with her mother, Lisa recalled that she felt angry at the loss of her independence and her mother's trust, but she did not feel traumatized or humiliated.

Research has indicated that paraphilias are often comorbid (Cantor, Blanchard, & Barbaree, 2009; Langstrom & Seto, 2006). Not surprisingly then, Lisa's sexual fantasies of being fed and gaining weight often involved clear masochistic themes of control, dominance, and humiliation. The co-occurrence of Lisa's Feederism with traits of sexual masochism added further support for our argument that Feederism has paraphilic elements. It is interesting that Lisa did not report high levels of sexual arousal to various types of sexually masochistic activities. In fact, she reported that a number of masochistic sexual activities were "repulsive." This reinforced our impression that those elements of sexual masochism that Lisa exhibited were highly focused on Feederism activities.

The power dynamic of the Feeder/Feedee relationship has been commented upon by previous researchers. In the Feederism community, female Feedees are represented as powerful goddesses who deserve to be pampered and catered to by their Feeder (Murray, 2004). Equally, however, the Feeder's control over the Feedee's body is a prominent aspect of these relationships and, in its most extreme manifestation, involves the force feeding of an immobile Feedee (Gates, 2000; Kulick, 2005). Kulick (2005) indicated that perhaps sexual masochism and Feederism co-occured because both sadomasochistic sex and fat pornography redirect erotic pleasure from the genitals and disperses it to other parts of the body.

The question then arose as to whether Lisa's Feederism represented a unique paraphilia or simply a novel manifestation of sexual masochism. Our interviews with

Lisa clearly indicated that she experienced peak sexual arousal to fantasies of being controlled, dominated, and humiliated during Feederism role play. Paradoxically, however, she reported that, as an adolescent, she was underweight, but viewed herself as fat and went on a “radical” diet to lose weight by “eating as little as possible.” On the basis of this information, I wondered if, for Lisa, the most humiliating and degrading experience, and therefore the most sexually arousing one, was to be fat and have attention drawn to it. Viewed from this perspective, becoming fat through actively gaining weight and having others call attention to that fact could simply be expressions of sexual masochism. A number of thematic variations of sexual masochism are known, such as “Pony Play”, a type of sadomasochistic activity involving equestrian gear, in which partners take on roles such as “trainers” and “ponies” (Gates, 2000). As such, Feederism might be viewed as one more thematic variation on sadomasochism.

Baumeister (1988) interpreted sexual masochism using his Escape From Self Theory. He speculated that Western culture’s emphasis on the autonomous self, with its accompanying responsibilities, is sometimes experienced as burdensome, leading to a desire to escape from the oppressive aspects of self. This, he reasoned, could be achieved via Sexual Masochism because such acts involve loss of control (e.g., being force fed) and humiliation (e.g., being called piggy), which are inconsistent with the maintenance of normal identity, autonomy, and self-esteem. As such, meaningful aspects of self can be stripped away through sexually masochistic acts, thereby reducing the self to a mere sexual object, by focusing on their immediate sensations and relinquishing power and control (Baumeister, 1988). The sexual aspects of these interactions rendered them particularly effective in facilitating escape from self because

it diminished the individual's abstract sense of self by channelling their focus onto low-level awareness of physical sensations.

In Western cultures, slenderness is widely represented as *the* feminine ideal and one which is equated with beauty, intelligence, status, and virtue (Jutel, 2005; Meadow & Weiss, 1992). As such, for most women living in Western cultures, weight gain is inconsistent with the maintenance of normal self esteem (O'Brien et al., 2007). Consequently, for women such as Lisa, Feederism role play may reflect a form of Escape From Self in which they are able to relinquish the burdensome aspects of their non-Feedee identities (which are required to eat well, exercise regularly and remain thin), and become temporarily reduced to the minimal "here-and-now" sensations (e.g., eating, sexual arousal) associated with their Feedee-selves. In this regard, Feederism as a form of Escape From Self may be especially effective because it focuses the individual on *two* corporal sensations: consumption/satiation and sex.

Conclusion

It is generally held that the scientific value of case studies is not only their usefulness in showcasing rare phenomena but also their usefulness in generating hypotheses (Kazdin, 1998). This is certainly the spirit in which I have presented this case study. With this in mind, I wish to remind readers that Lisa represents a single case of Feederism and, as such, is not representative of the entire community. It is entirely possible that different developmental pathways result in Feederism and this case study simply illustrates one of these. It would be interesting if future research could identify cases of Female Feederism in which the participants do not exhibit elements of sexual masochism. Such cases might provide more definitive evidence that Female Feederism

represents a unique paraphilia distinct from Sexual Masochism. More research could also be done to ascertain if, and how, Feederism is taxonomically distinct from various forms of Morphophilia. In conclusion, the current case report provides compelling evidence that, for some women, subjective sexual arousal to eating, being fed, and gaining weight is a real sexual phenomenon that appears to fall within the paraphilic realm.

CHAPTER THREE

Feederism: An Exaggeration of a Normative Mate Selection Strategy?

ABSTRACT

The *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* defines paraphilias, in part, as conditions that "...are characterized by recurrent, intense sexual urges, fantasies, or behaviors that involve unusual objects, activities, or situations..." Paraphilias are overwhelmingly a male-typical phenomenon. Sexual masochism appears to be the only paraphilia that has a substantial number of female participants. A possible thematic variation of sexual masochism, which also appears to have a high prevalence of female participants, is Feederism. Feederism is a fat fetish sub-culture, focused on erotic eating, feeding, and gaining weight. Quinsey and Lalumière (1995) suggested that paraphilias are exaggerated manifestations of more normative and functional mate selection strategies. The present study tested whether Feederism is an exaggeration of a sexual arousal pattern common among the general population. Participants in the current study did not genitally respond to feeding related stimuli more than neutral stimuli. However, both males and females subjectively rated feeding stimuli as more sexually arousing than neutral stimuli. The results are discussed both in terms of evolutionary theory and courtship theory.

INTRODUCTION

The *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM-IV-TR; American Psychiatric Association, 2000) defines paraphilias, in part, as conditions that “...are characterized by recurrent, intense sexual urges, fantasies, or behaviors that involve unusual objects, activities, or situations...” (p. 535). Paraphilias are overwhelmingly a male-typical phenomenon (American Psychiatric Association, 2000; Laws & O’Donohue, 1997). However, there is some evidence that sexual masochism is exhibited by a substantial number of female participants (Abel & Osborn, 1992; American Psychiatric Association, 2000). The case study I conducted on a female member of the Feederism community suggested that Feederism could be a thematic variation of Sexual Masochism, the only paraphilia that appears to have a high prevalence of female participants. Feederism is a fat fetish sub-culture, focused on erotic eating, feeding, and gaining weight (Bestard, 2008; Gates, 2000; Giovanelli & Peluso, 2006; Kulick, 2005; Murray, 2004).

It has been suggested that paraphilias are exaggerated manifestations of more normative and functional mate selection strategies (Quinsey & Lalumière, 1995). For example, in females, a youthful appearance is associated with fertility and reproductive potential. As such, males value female mates that have a youthful appearance because it is to their reproductive benefit to mate with fertile females (Buss & Schmitt, 1993; Geary, Vigil, & Byrd-Craven, 2004). It has been hypothesized that pedophilia is an exaggeration of this male preference for youthful female mates (Quinsey & Lalumière, 1995). Implicit in this evolutionary perspective is the notion that paraphilic orientations are sub-optimal or even maladaptive exaggerations of functional normophilic sexual

orientations that have been selected for over evolutionary time (i.e., gynephilia in adult males and androphilia in adult females).

Research suggests that teleiophilic³ males demonstrate some sexual arousal to nude images of female children that is significantly greater than the sexual arousal they demonstrate in response to a neutral image. This arousal occurs despite teleiophilic males' subjective and genital preference for adult female stimuli (Freund & Costell, 1970). As such, this research indicates that normophilic individuals in the general population are capable of some degree of sexual arousal in response to paraphilic stimuli (Green, 2002; Quinsey & Lalumière, 1995).

Comparative lines of evidence raise the possibility that Feederism may also be an exaggeration of a more normative and functional mate selection strategy. A robust body of cross-cultural research indicates that females prefer male mates who provision them with resources. Researchers have argued that these preferences have evolved because, in theory, they should enhance female survival and the survival of any resulting offspring (Buss & Schmitt, 1993; Frisch, 1990; Geary et al., 2004). Primatological work has shown that female chimpanzees (*Pan troglodytes*) and orangutans (*Pongo pygmaeus*) are more likely to mate with males that have shared food with them in the past as part of a “food-for-sex” exchange (Gomes & Boesch, 2009). Food-for-sex exchanges are phylogenetically widespread outside of primates. For example, research on northern harriers has shown that males use food provisioning to gain access to multiple females

³ Teleiophilia refers to sexual attraction to adults. Gynephilia refers to sexual attraction to females. Androphilia refers to sexual attraction to males (Blanchard et al., 2000).

prior to, and during egg-laying. However, after the eggs were laid, males would revert food resources back to their primary female partner (Simmons, 1988).

Taken together, this cross-cultural and cross-species evidence underscores the salience of eating and feeding within mating contexts. This, in turn, raises the possibility that eating and being fed may be experienced by females as sexual on either a cognitive or physiological level, or both. This also raises the possibility that provisioning food to female mates may be experienced by males as sexual on either a cognitive or physiological level, or both. As such, we speculate that female Feederism may represent an exaggerated expression of a normative and functional link between eating, being fed, and sexual arousal in females. Conversely, male Feederism may represent an exaggerated expression of a normative and functional link between mate provisioning and sexual arousal in males. Females who participate in Feederism are often infertile and/or unable to have penile-vaginal intercourse because of their weight (Gates, 2000). Consequently, I further speculate that, when viewed from an evolutionary perspective, female and male manifestations of Feederism may reflect a sub-optimal or even maladaptive exaggeration of normative, functional mate preferences/behaviors and sexual arousal patterns.

In this study, I examined whether Feederism is an exaggeration of a sexual arousal pattern common among individuals from the general population. The purpose of the current study was twofold: (1) to determine whether members of the general population are more sexually aroused to feeding stimuli than neutral stimuli on measures of genital arousal and subjective arousal, and (2) to determine whether there is a sex difference in genital arousal and subjective arousal ratings in relation to these stimuli.

METHODS

Participants

Fifteen males and 17 females were recruited from the University of Lethbridge and the broader community of Lethbridge using online advertisements, posters (Appendix A), and visits to university classes. To be eligible to participate in the study, participants had to meet the following inclusion criteria as set by previous human sexuality research conducted at the University of Lethbridge (Suschinsky, Lalumière, & Chivers, 2009): 18 to 35 years old; self-identification as predominantly or exclusively attracted to members of the opposite sex; no history of mental illness, substance abuse, chronic sexual arousal problems, or sexually transmitted infections; not using any medications to treat mental illnesses or high blood pressure; no children; able to read and write English fluently; and sexually experienced (i.e., participants must have had sexual intercourse and have been exposed to sexually explicit materials). Also, females must have had a regular menstrual cycle and could not be pregnant, trying to become pregnant, or menstruating at the time of testing. The inclusion criteria were used to ensure a degree of homogeneity among participants, especially for characteristics that have been shown to affect sexual arousal (e.g., age, sexual experience); to ensure that participants were capable of completing the different experimental tasks (e.g., English fluency, no sexual arousal problems); and to ensure participants would be comfortable during the experiment (e.g., previous exposure to erotica, previous sexual intercourse experience; Suschinsky et al., 2009).

Due to technical malfunctions, two females were excluded from the sample. The final sample included 15 males and 15 females. The mean (*SD*) ages of the 15 males and

15 females with valid data were 23.93 (5.2) and 21.40 (2.7) respectively. There was no significant sex difference with respect to age ($t[28] = 1.7, p = .102$). The majority of males and females (86.7% and 73.3%, respectively) were Caucasian and had completed or were completing post-secondary education at the time of testing (80% and 93.3%, respectively). There were no statistically significant sex differences in respect to ethnicity, $\chi^2(2, N = 30) = 1.70, p = .428$. There was a significant sex difference in education level, with females tending to be slightly more educated than males, $\chi^2(3, N = 30) = 6669.52, p < .001$.

Using the Kinsey Scale, mean scores were calculated for lifetime sexual contact, romantic attractions, sexual attractions, and sexual fantasies. The scale ranges from 0 (exclusively female) to 6 (exclusively male; Kinsey, Pomeroy, & Martin, 1948; Kinsey, Pomeroy, Martin, & Gebhard, 1953). Males were classified as predominantly or exclusively heterosexual based on their lifetime sexual contact (i.e., Kinsey 0 or 1). Most males reported that their romantic attractions and sexual attractions were exclusively towards females ($n = 13$). Similarly, the vast majority of males reported that their sexual fantasies were directed exclusively toward females ($n = 14$).

Females were also were classified as predominantly or exclusively heterosexual based on their lifetime sexual contact (i.e., Kinsey 5 or 6; Kinsey, Pomeroy, & Martin, 1948; Kinsey, Pomeroy, Martin, & Gebhard, 1953). Females were more variable than males in their reports of romantic attractions, ranging from exclusively interested in males ($n = 11$) to mostly males but frequently females ($n = 1$). Females also appeared to be more variable than males in their sexual attraction. Using the Kinsey Scale, two females indicated equal interest in males and females; two females indicated interest in

males mostly, but occasionally females; and 11 females indicated exclusive interest in males. Fewer females reported sexual fantasies toward males only ($n = 6$). The remaining female participants fantasized about other females at least occasionally ($n = 7$) or equally as much as they fantasized about males ($n = 2$). It is important to note that none of the females who reported having sexual attractions or fantasies toward females stated that these were more frequent than attractions or fantasies toward males.

Stimuli

The experiment included both audio and visual stimuli. Audio recordings of short stories were approximately two minutes in length describing neutral, sexual, and feeding related scenarios. The neutral and sexual short stories were taken from Suschinsky and Lalumière, 2010 and are based on recordings used in previous research (e.g., Côté, Earls, & Lalumière, 2002; Lalumière, Quinsey, Harris, Rice, & Trautrimas, 2003; Suschinsky et al., 2009). All stories were read by a woman from her point of view and followed a standard format: a few sentences to set the scene, description of the initial contact, the female's reaction, the male's response, the female's experience of the encounter, the male's final acts, and the female's final impressions of the encounter. The feeding stories were written by the primary investigator based on the format of the standardized neutral and sexual stimuli. All feeding stories included a few lines to set the scene, a detailed description of food, a male feeding a female three times throughout the scene, and the female's impression of the interaction. There were six slightly different short stories for each of the three audio stimulus categories. See Appendix B for the complete collection of neutral, sexual, and feeding stories.

Each story was presented with either a neutral (i.e., male and female talking), sexual (i.e., explicit heterosexual sex), or feeding (i.e., male feeding female) still image (see Table 3.1). See Appendix C for the complete collection of neutral, sexual, and feeding still images. The experimental stimuli were presented in a randomized order for all participants. Prior to listening to the experimental stimuli, each participant was presented with two warm-up stories, in order to acquaint him or her with the research setting. One warm-up depicted a neutral interaction between a male and female (i.e., no sexual content or feeding) and the other warm-up depicted a sexual interaction between a male and a female.

Female Genital Arousal Measurement

A vaginal photoplethysmograph was used to assess genital arousal in females. It is a clear, tampon-shaped acrylic-plastic cylinder that contains a light source (a light emitting diode) and a photosensitive light detector (Sintchak & Geer, 1975). The light source is used to illuminate the capillary bed of the vaginal wall and the blood circulating within it. The amount of back scattered light present serves as an indirect measurement of vasoengorgement, as the amount of light varies in relation to the transparency of the vaginal tissue. The device is approximately 5 cm in length and 1.2 cm in diameter. A cord is attached to the blunt end of the probe and connects to the data acquisition system. A placement device made of flexible acrylic plastic was placed 5 cm below the light detector to standardize depth and orientation of the gauge. The participant inserted the gauge herself, in private. Genital arousal was assessed via changes in vaginal pulse amplitude. Vaginal pulse amplitude reflects changes in vaginal engorgement with each heart beat. Higher amplitudes signal higher blood flow and thus higher levels of arousal.

Table 3.1. 3 (Image: sexual, feeding and neutral) X 3 (Story: sexual, feeding and neutral) experimental design.

Images Stories	Sexual	Feeding	Neutral
Sexual	SS	SF	SN
Feeding	FS	FF	FN
Neutral	NS	NF	NN

Male Genital Arousal Measurement

Male genital arousal was measured penile plethysmograph. It is the most commonly used method to measure penile erection and has been well validated (Janssen & Geer, 2000). The device consists of a mercury-filled hollow rubber tube that is sealed at the ends with platinum electrodes that are inserted into the mercury. Changes in the circumference of the penis cause the rubber tube to either stretch or shorten, changing electrical resistance. The participant applied the gauge himself, in private.

Self-Report Response Keypad

Throughout the presentation of the experimental stimuli, participants continuously rated their subjective arousal by pressing a button on a keypad. Participants were able to see their subjective ratings change throughout the story on a computer monitor that was positioned five feet in front of them (i.e., a vertical bar on the left side of the monitor increased or decreased in height with each button press). Increases in subjective arousal were indicated by an increase in the height of the bar, and decreases in arousal were indicated by a decrease in the bar's height.

After the presentation of each story/still image pairing, the participants were presented with post-stimulus questions (see Appendix D). Participants were asked to rate how sexually arousing the story was, how sexually arousing the still image was, how sexually aroused their genitals felt in response to the story and how sexually aroused their genitals felt in response to the still image. One question was presented at a time. The questions were presented in a fixed order, due to the nature of the software being used for the experiment. Questions were presented with unipolar response scales that ranged from 1 to 9, with 1 indicating no sexual arousal to the stimuli and 9 indicating

strong sexual arousal to the stimuli. Participants used a button press to report their level of arousal.

Data Acquisition and Stimulus Presentation Apparati

All psychophysiological data were sampled using a Limestone Technologies Inc. (Kingston, ON) DataPac_USB adapted for vaginal photoplethysmographic data acquisition and Prefest software, Version 10 (Limestone Technologies Inc.). The vaginal photoplethysmograph signal was sampled at a rate of 10 samples/second, band-pass filtered (.5 Hz to 10 Hz), and digitized (40 Hz). The penile plethysmograph signal was sampled at a rate of 10 samples/second, low-pass filtered (to .5 Hz), and digitized (40 Hz). The signal was transformed into millimeters of circumference change from baseline (Suschinsky et al., 2009). Participants wore headphones to hear the auditory stimuli and the still images and post-stimulus questions were presented on a monitor placed in front of them.

Questionnaires

Participants were asked to complete a questionnaire package following the first phase of the study. The questionnaires listed below were included in the package. See Appendix E for the complete questionnaire package.

Biographic Information (BQ). Participants responded to items assessing age, marital status, birth order, education, household income, ethnicity, employment status, medication, and psychotropic substance use.

Sexual History Questionnaire (SHQ). Adopted from Suschinsky et al., (2009). The SHQ includes questions that assessed an individual's sexual attractions, sexual orientation (Kinsey, Pomeroy, & Martin, 1948; Kinsey, Pomeroy, Martin, & Gebhard,

1953), past sexual experiences, and frequency of sexual activity. These questions aided in determining whether participants had sexual dysfunctions and/or sexual fetishes, which may influence their genital and subjective responses.

Food and Sex Questionnaire (FSQ). The FSQ is a 17-item questionnaire designed by the primary investigator that assessed the participants use of food in erotic sexual activity and thought. Thirteen of the 17 items are scale items, to which participants had to indicate on a scale of 1-6 how often they engaged in or experienced sexual arousal in response to a series of situations (1 being never, 6 being always).

PROCEDURE

All experimental procedures discussed below were approved by the Human Subject Research Committee at the University of Lethbridge.

Screening

Prospective participants responded to advertisements by telephone or email, and received preliminary information about the study over the phone (see Appendix F). Eligibility was determined by listing a set of exclusion criteria and asking each potential participant whether any of the criteria applied to them. If none of the criteria applied, a more detailed description of the experimental procedure was provided. Participants were given the opportunity to ask any clarifying questions and then if they were still interested in participating, an appointment was scheduled. Females were scheduled such that they were not menstruating. Because most research indicates that the menstrual cycle phase does not influence sexual arousal in females (Morrell, Dixen, Carter, & Davidson, 1984), females were not tested during a specific phase of their menstrual cycle. Participants were asked to not to engage in any type of sexual activity for 24 hours and to refrain

from all types of physical exercise for one hour before testing, because exercise results in sympathetic nervous system arousal that can influence genital responses (Meston & Gorzalka, 1996). Participants were also asked not to eat for two hours before testing in order to standardize degree of hunger, and were asked to refrain from using alcohol, tobacco, caffeine, cold medications, and recreational drugs on the day of testing because these substances may influence both physiological and psychological sexual arousal (Crenshaw & Goldberg, 1996).

Experimental Session

Participants were tested individually. Participants were greeted by the female experimenter (LLT) in the participant room. The experimenter reviewed the purpose of the experiment, outlined the experimental procedure, provided instructions on how to apply or insert the genital gauges, and answered any questions the participants had (see Appendix G). Participants signed the informed consent form (see Appendix H) if they agreed to participate.

Participants were given the opportunity to use the restroom prior to beginning the experimental session. When the participants were ready to begin, the experimenter turned off the overhead lights, leaving a small table lamp on, and left the room. Once the participant was alone in the room, he or she undressed from the waist down. The participants attached or inserted the genital gauge while reclined in a comfortable linen-lined recliner. Participants were provided a light sheet to cover his or her legs. When the participants were comfortable he or she placed the headphones on his or her head and indicated to the experimenter that he or she was ready by using an intercom system.

Participants were then instructed to focus on the still images and auditory stories as they were presented. Still images were presented on a 17-inch monitor positioned approximately 5 feet from the participant. Participants were asked to respond to the stimuli as naturally as possible, and to avoid contracting their genitals, touching themselves, moving, or talking during the stimuli presentation because these activities could disrupt the measurements (Suschinsky et al., 2009). The self-report keypad was on the right arm of the recliner and participants were allowed to move it as desired.

Two warm-up presentations were used to familiarize the participant with the experimental procedure. Data collected during the warm-up presentations were not used in the analyses reported below. One of the warm-up presentations was a neutral story and neutral still image describing/depicting a male and a female having a conversation. The other warm-up presentation was a sexual story and sexual still image that described/depicted a male and a female engaging in explicit sexual activity. Following the two warm-up presentations, all participants were presented with 18 stimulus pairings (i.e., audio story, still image). The order of the stimulus pairings was randomized for each participant, as was the image and story from each stimulus category. Participants whose genital arousal levels did not return to baseline within a few minutes were instructed to complete a distracter task to lower their arousal levels (e.g., read out loud from a scientific magazine or count backwards from 100). If arousal did not return to baseline levels after a maximum of five minutes, the next stimulus was presented regardless. Inter-stimulus interval was determined by genital response levels, meaning that if genital response levels were low and stable, the next stimulus was presented (after

a minimum of 30 seconds). This procedure was followed to avoid fatigue in participants, as the experimental procedure was quite lengthy (Suschinsky et al., 2009).

After all experimental stimulus pairings were presented, participants were instructed to remove the genital gauge, place it into a sealable bag provided and redress. Once the participant was redressed, he or she would indicate to the experimenter that it was alright for her to enter the participant room. Participants were allowed to take a short break, and use the washroom before moving on to the next portion of the experiment. Participants then completed the questionnaire package in private. When the participant completed the questionnaire package, the experimenter re-entered the participant room and debriefed the participant (see Appendix I), answered any questions, thanked him or her for participating, and compensated the participant with \$50.00 for their time. The entire experimental session took approximately two and a half hours.

Data Analysis

Peak minus baseline (at stimulus onset) scores for each stimulus pairing were calculated for genital and continuous subjective responses. These scores were then standardized (i.e., transformed into *z*-scores) within subjects for each type of response to eliminate any effect of individual variation in responsiveness (Harris, Rice, Quinsey, Chaplin, & Earls, 1992). The *z*-scores were then averaged to produce mean scores for each stimulus pairing category (i.e., SS, SN, SF, etc.). To test whether males and females responded differently to different stimulus types, separate 2 (sex: male or female) X 3 (stories: sexual, neutral, and feeding) X 3 (still images: sexual, neutral, and feeding) mixed-measures ANOVAs were conducted for genital and continuous subjective arousal responses. Inter-item reliabilities for responses to each of the post-stimuli questions were

calculated using Cronbach's alpha to determine the degree to which each question was assessing subjective arousal to either the story or the image presented in each stimulus pair (see Table 3.2). Mean scores were then calculated by averaging the responses to the post-stimuli questions related to the stories for each stimulus category (i.e., mean sex story score, mean neutral story score, mean feeding story score) and by averaging the responses to the post-stimuli questions related to the still images for each stimulus category (i.e., mean sex image score, mean neutral image score, mean feeding image score). To test whether males and females rated different stimulus categories differently by stimulus types, separate 2 (sex: male or female) X 3 (category: sexual, neutral, and feeding) mixed-measures ANOVAs were conducted for both story and image post-question ratings of sexual arousal. Because I hypothesized a sex difference may exist in genital and subjective arousal to feeding stimuli, planned *t*-tests were used to compare differences in responses to the sex, neutral, and feeding stimuli. Only significant results will be reported below with the exception of any statistics involving sex comparisons or feeding stimuli because such results are pertinent to the main hypotheses of the current study.

RESULTS

The Influence of Stimulus Type on Genital and Subjective Sexual Arousal Responses

Genital Responses

Figure 3.1 shows the standardized mean genital responses for males and females according to each stimulus pairing. A 2 (sex) X 3(stories) X 3 (still images) mixed-measures ANOVA was conducted to determine if stories or images significantly

Table 3.2. Inter-item reliabilities (Cronbach's alpha) for responses to each of the post-stimuli questions.

Story Post Stimuli Questions		Males	Females	Combined
Story	Image			
Sex	Sex	.931	.964	.964
	Neutral	.900	.942	.958
	Feeding	.932	.960	.973
Neutral	Sex	.914	.922	.973
	Neutral	.673	.725	.936
	Feeding	.847	.888	.908
Feeding	Sex	.946	.934	.962
	Neutral	.848	.910	.964
	Feeding	.894	.958	.973
Image Post Stimuli Questions				
Image	Story			
Sex	Sex	.952	.971	.974
	Neutral	.938	.969	.969
	Feeding	.947	.967	.968
Neutral	Sex	.795	.916	.801
	Neutral	.904	.773	.951
	Feeding	.731	.852	.919
Feeding	Sex	.927	.947	.916
	Neutral	.881	.918	.976
	Feeding	.917	.979	.979

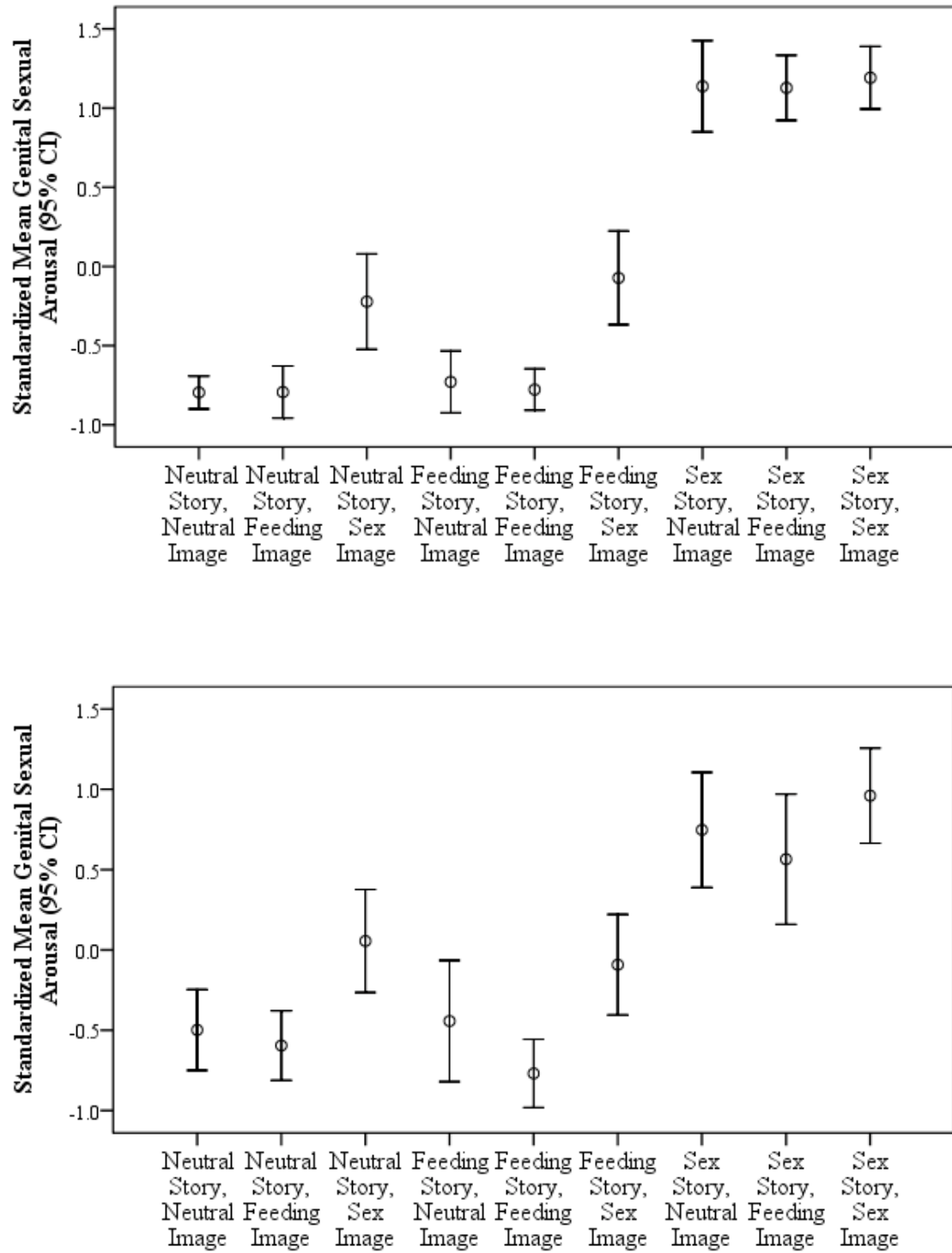


Figure 3.1. Standardized mean genital responses in males (top portion) and females (bottom portion) as a function of stimuli pairing.

influenced genital responses. An interaction between sex and stories was found, $F(2, 56) = 11.66, p < .001, \eta^2 = .29$. No significant sex difference was found because scores were standardized within subjects.

To determine whether genital response to different stimuli categories varied within both sexes, two one-way repeated-measures ANOVAs were conducted. There was a significant effect of story among both males and females (see Table 3.3). To determine which story stimulus category caused the significant difference in genital arousal three paired *t*-tests were conducted for each sex. Male responses to sex and neutral stories were significantly different, $t(14) = 21.49, p < .001$, Cohen's $d = 3.01$. Likewise, male responses to sex and feeding stories were significantly different, $t(14) = 20.65, p < .001$, Cohen's $d = 9.41$. There was no significant difference in males' genital response to the neutral versus feeding stories, $t(14) = 1.42, p = .179$, Cohen's $d = 7.79$. Female responses to sex and neutral stories were significantly different, $t(14) = 9.83, p < .001$, Cohen's $d = 4.11$. Likewise, sex and feeding stories were significantly different, $t(14) = 9.22, p < .001$, Cohen's $d = 4.40$. There was no significant difference in females' genital responses to the neutral versus feeding stories, $t(14) = 0.77, p = .457$, Cohen's $d = 0.38$.

To determine whether there was a significant sex difference in the degree to which genital responses differed between stimuli categories, three independent *t*-tests were conducted on calculated difference scores. Difference scores were calculated by subtracting the mean genital arousal in response to the neutral stories from the mean genital arousal in response to the sex stories, the mean genital arousal in response to the feeding stories from the mean genital arousal in response to the sex stories, and the mean genital arousal in response to the neutral stories from the mean genital arousal in

Table 3.3. Male and female mean (*SD*) genital arousal by story category.

Sex	Story Category			$F_{(2,28)}$	p	η^2
	Sex	Neutral	Feeding			
Male ($n = 15$) ^{a,b}						
Mean (SD)	1.15 (.21)	0.60 (.15)	-0.53 (.14)	362.65	.001	.96
Female ($n = 15$) ^{a,b}						
Mean (SD)	0.76 (.28)	-0.35 (.26)	-0.45 (.27)	61.80	.001	.82

^a Statistically significant difference ($p < .001$) between sex and neutral stories

^b Statistically significant difference ($p < .001$) between sex and feeding stories

response to the feeding stories. There was a significant difference between male and female difference scores calculated for genital responses to sex ($M = 1.76$, $SD = 0.32$) and neutral stories ($M = 1.10$, $SD = 0.43$), $t(28) = 4.70$, $p < .001$, Cohen's $d = 1.74$. Likewise, difference scores calculated for genital arousal to sex and feeding stories ($M = 1.63$, $SD = 0.31$ and $M = 1.19$, $SD = 0.50$, respectively) differed significantly between males and females, $t(28) = 3.18$, $p = .004$, Cohen's $d = 1.06$. There was no significant difference in male ($M = .21$, $SD = 0.05$) and female ($M = -0.09$, $SD = 0.45$) difference scores for feeding and neutral stories, $t(28) = 1.30$, $p = .206$, Cohen's $d = 0.94$.

Continuous subjective arousal

Two participants (one male and one female) did not report any changes in subjective arousal to any stimulus pairing categories. Data from these two participants were not included in analyses of continuous subjective arousal. Figure 3.2 presents the standardized mean subjective arousal responses of males and females. A 2 (sex) X 3 (stories) X 3 (still images) mixed-measures ANOVA showed a significant interaction of story by image, $F(4,52) = 6.08$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = 0.19$. No significant sex difference was found because scores were standardized within subjects.

To determine whether the continuous subjective arousal ratings were dependent on the story or the image, three 1 (story category) X 3 (image categories) repeated measures ANOVAs were conducted for each story category (i.e., sex, neutral, food; see Table 3.4). Likewise, three 1 (image category) X 3 (story categories) repeated measures ANOVAs were conducted for each image category (i.e., sex neutral, food; see Table 3.5). The subjective ratings, when analysed by story category (i.e., sex, neutral, food), varied significantly depending on the image they were paired with: sex story by sex, neutral,

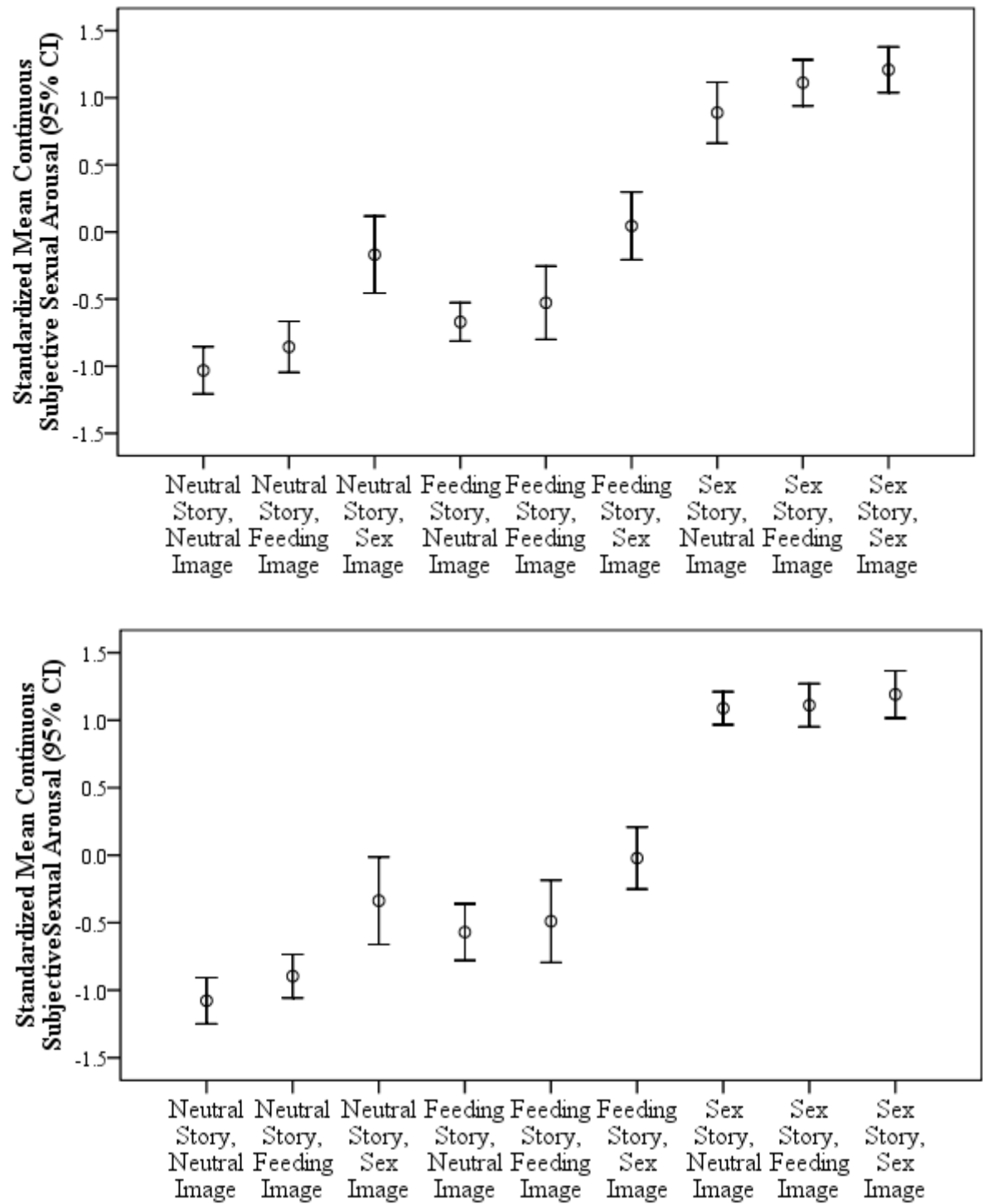


Figure 3.2. Standardized mean continuous subjective ratings of arousal in males (top portion) and females (bottom portion) as a function of stimuli pairing.

Table 3.4. Combined (i.e., male and female) mean (*SD*) subjective arousal by story category.

Story Category	Image Category						$F_{(2,54)}$	p	η^2
	Sex		Neutral		Feeding				
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD			
Sex ^a	1.24	.27	1.00	.32	1.11	.27	5.31	.008	.16
Neutral ^{a, b, c}	-.27	.52	-1.02	.28	-.87	.28	28.15	.001	.51
Feeding ^{a, c}	.01	.40	-.64	.30	-.55	.43	22.49	.001	.45

^a Statistically significant difference ($p < .001$) between sex and neutral images

^b Statistically significant difference ($p < .05$) between neutral and feeding images

^c Statistically significant difference ($p < .001$) between sex and feeding images

Table 3.5. Combined (i.e., male and female) mean (*SD*) subjective arousal by image category.

Image Category	Story Category						$F_{(2,54)}$	p	η^2
	Sex		Neutral		Feeding				
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD			
Sex ^{a, b, c}	-1.24	.27	-.27	.52	-.01	.40	114.56	.001	.81
Neutral ^{a, b, c}	.99	.32	-1.02	.05	-.64	.30	349.84	.001	.93
Feeding ^{a, b, c}	1.11	.27	-.87	.28	-.55	.43	258.94	.001	.91

^a Statistically significant difference ($p < .001$) between sex and neutral images

^b Statistically significant difference ($p < .05$) between neutral and feeding images

^c Statistically significant difference ($p < .001$) between sex and feeding images

and feeding images, neutral story by sex, neutral, and feeding images, and feeding story by sex, neutral, and feeding images. Likewise, it was found that the subjective ratings, when analysed by image category (i.e., sex, neutral, feeding), varied significantly depending on the story they were paired with: sex image by sex, neutral, and feeding stories, neutral image by sex, neutral, and feeding stories, and feeding image by sex, neutral, and feeding stories.

To determine which image influenced the subjective arousal ratings within each story category and vice versa, 18 paired sample *t*-tests were conducted. Within sex stories, sex images were found to elicit a significantly higher rating of arousal than neutral images, $t(27) = 3.79, p < .001$, Cohen's $d = 0.81$. There was no significant difference in how participants rated neutral versus feeding images within sex stories, $t(27) = 1.47, p = .154$, Cohen's $d = -0.37$, or feeding and sex images within sex stories, $t(27) = -1.60, p = .121$, Cohen's $d = -0.48$. Within neutral stories, all three image categories, sex, neutral, and feeding, elicited unique subjective arousal responses, sex image versus neutral image, $t(27) = 6.37, p < .001$, Cohen's $d = 1.80$, neutral image versus feeding image, $t(27) = 2.19, p = .037$, Cohen's $d = 0.54$, and sex versus food image, $t(27) = -4.89, p < .001$, Cohen's $d = -1.44$. Sex images elicited the highest ratings, neutral images the lowest ratings and feeding images were rated intermediately. Within feeding stories, sex images were found to elicit a significantly higher rating of arousal than neutral, $t(27) = 6.33, p < .001$, Cohen's $d = 1.84$, or feeding images, $t(27) = 4.48, p < .001$, Cohen's $d = 1.35$. There was no significant difference in how participants rated neutral or feeding images within feeding stories, $t(27) = 1.08, p = .288$, Cohen's $d = 0.24$.

Subjective arousal ratings differed between all three story categories in each image category. Among sex images, sex, neutral, and feeding stories were rated significantly different (sex story versus neutral story, $t[27] = -13.16, p < .001$, Cohen's $d = -2.34$; neutral story versus feeding story, $t[27] = 2.76, p < .01$, Cohen's $d = 0.56$; sex story versus feeding story, $t[27] = 11.95, p < .001$, Cohen's $d = 3.60$). Within neutral images, sex, neutral, and feeding stories were rated significantly different (sex story versus neutral story, $t[27] = 28.35, p < .001$, Cohen's $d = 8.78$; neutral story versus feeding story, $t[27] = 4.20, p < .001$, Cohen's $d = 1.77$; sex story versus feeding story, $t[27] = -20.36, p < .001$, Cohen's $d = -5.26$). Within feeding images, sex, neutral, and feeding stories were also rated significantly different (sex story versus neutral story, $t[27] = 28.93, p < .001$, Cohen's $d = 7.20$; neutral story versus feeding story, $t[27] = 3.06, p < .005$, Cohen's $d = 0.88$; sex story versus feeding story, $t[27] = -16.10, p < .001$, Cohen's $d = -4.62$).

Post-Stimuli Questions of Subjective Arousal

Inter-item reliability was calculated on the four post-stimuli questions related to the subjective arousal in relation to the story, as well as, the four post-stimuli questions related to subjective arousal in relation to the image. Each cluster was analyzed by stimuli pairing (e.g., sex story and feeding image or feeding story and neutral image, etc.) to determine whether all four post-stimuli questions were tapping into the same phenomenon. All reliability tests determined that the four post stimuli questions targeting either a story or an image could be collapsed into one overall rating of subjective sexual arousal in response to either the story or the image for each stimulus category under consideration.

A 2 (sex) X 3 (stories) repeated measures ANOVA was conducted to determine whether males and females rated stories significantly different in terms of how sexually arousing they found them in response to the post-stimuli questions. A significant main effect of stories was found, $F(2, 56) = 332.77, p < .001, \eta^2 = 0.92$, but no significant difference was found between males and females, $F(2, 56) = 1.66, p = .199, \eta^2 = 0.06$. To determine which story ratings differed from one another, paired t -tests were conducted. The ratings for the sex ($M = 6.66, SD = 1.36$) and neutral ($M = 1.76, SD = .68$) stories significantly differed, $t(29) = 21.95, p < .0001$, Cohen's $d = 4.56$. The ratings for the neutral ($M = 1.76, SD = .68$) and feeding ($M = 2.71, SD = 1.23$) stories also significantly differed, $t(29) = 6.29, p < .001$, Cohen's $d = 0.96$. The ratings for the sex ($M = 6.66, SD = 1.36$) and feeding ($M = 2.71, SD = 1.23$) stories also significantly differed, $t(29) = -17.33, p < .001$, Cohen's $d = -3.05$.

A 2 (sex) X 3 (image) mixed-measures ANOVA was conducted to determine whether males and females rated image categories significantly different in terms of how sexually arousing they found them in response to the post-stimuli questions. A significant interaction of sex and image was found, $F(2, 56) = 3.55, p = .035, \eta^2 = .84$. To determine whether males and females rated image categories differently, two one-way repeated-measures ANOVAs were conducted (see Table 3.6). Males rated image categories as significantly different from one another in terms of how sexually arousing they found them. Similarly, females rated image categories as significantly different from one another in terms of how sexually arousing they found them. To determine which images differed among males and females, six paired t -tests were conducted (i.e., 3 for males, 3 for females). Males rated sex images significantly more sexually arousing than neutral

Table 3.6. Male and Female Mean (*SD*) post-stimuli questions by image category.

Sex		Image Category				
	Sex	Neutral	Feeding	$F_{(2,28)}$	p	η^2
Male ($n = 15$) ^{a, b, c}						
	Mean (SD)	4.76 (1.66)	1.39 (.34)	1.85 (.91)	74.56	.001
Female($n = 15$) ^{a, b, c}						
	Mean (SD)	6.13 (1.86)	1.41 (.56)	2.46 (1.32)	71.66	.001

^a Statistically significant difference ($p < .001$) between sex and neutral stories

^b Statistically significant difference ($p < .001$) between sex and feeding stories

^c Statistically significant difference ($p < .05$) between neutral and feeding stories

and feeding images, $t(14) = 8.72, p < .001$, Cohen's $d = 2.81$; $t(14) = 9.99, p < .001$, Cohen's $d = 2.17$, and they rated feeding images as significantly more sexually arousing than neutral images as well, $t(14) = 2.46, p = .028$, Cohen's $d = 0.67$. Females rated sex images as significantly more sexually arousing than neutral, $t(14) = 10.36, p < .001$, Cohen's $d = 3.44$, and feeding images, $t(14) = 7.62, p < .001$, Cohen's $d = 2.28$, and they rated feeding images as significantly more sexually arousing than neutral images, $t(14) = -3.86, p = .002$, Cohen's $d = -1.04$.

To determine whether the sexes differed in their difference ratings between stimuli categories, three independent t -tests were conducted on calculated difference scores (e.g., sex-feeding). The difference scores calculated for the post-stimuli question ratings to sex and neutral stories were not significantly different between males ($M = 4.98, SD = .97$) and females ($M = 4.82, SD = 1.46$), $t(8) = 0.37, p = .716$, Cohen's $d = 0.13$. There was no significant difference in male ($M = .68, SD = .76$) and female ($M = 1.22, SD = .83$) difference scores for feeding and neutral stories, $t(28) = -1.85, p = .075$, Cohen's $d = -0.68$. There was also no significant difference in male ($M = 4.30, SD = 1.04$) and female ($M = 3.60, SD = 1.37$) difference scores for sex and feeding stories, $t(28) = 1.58, p = .125$, Cohen's $d = 0.58$.

Food and Sex Questionnaire

To determine if males and females responded significantly different to any of the 13-scale items on the 17-item questionnaire, 13 independent t -tests were conducted. There was no significant difference between male and female responses for items 1-7 or 10-13. There was a significant difference in how males and females responded to items 8 and 9 (see Table 3.7). Inter-item reliability (Cronbach's alpha) was calculated for the first

11 scale items involving food, eating, being fed and sexual arousal. Items 12 and 13 were not included because they assess sexual arousal associated with belly rubbing, which is a common erotic activity within the Feederism community that is distinct from eating and being fed. The reliability test determined that all 11 items could be collapsed into a single score. The Cronbach's alpha for males, females and the combined sample were as follows, .794, .725, and .750, respectively. There was no significant sex difference in how participants responded to these items overall (see Table 3.7).

DISCUSSION

Results from the current study suggest that feeding stimuli do not elicit genital arousal in males or females above and beyond neutral stimuli. Nevertheless, participants' continuous and post-stimuli subjective ratings of the experimental stimuli indicated that both males and females rated feeding stimuli as more sexually arousing than neutral stimuli.

In the current study, neither females or males exhibited genital responses to food stimuli that were concordant with their subjective ratings of food stimuli. These findings are in keeping with previous research that has shown that female genital responses are not concordant with their subjective ratings of sexual stimuli (Laan & Everaerd, 1995; Suschinsky et al., 2009; Wincze, Venditti, Barlow, & Mavissakalian, 1980). Researchers have suggested that sexual discordance in females results from female reliance on contextual cues (as opposed to physiological cues) when assessing their sexual arousal (Heiman, 1980; Laan, & Janssen, 2007; Suschinsky et al., 2009). Males have a more obvious indicator of sexual arousal (i.e., an erect penis), whereas female arousal is more concealed (Heiman, 1977; Suschinsky et al., 2009). Increased reliance on contextual cues

Table 3.7. Mean (*SD*) and *t*-tests for sex differences for the Food and Sex Questionnaire (FSQ) scale items.

FSQ Item	Male (<i>n</i> = 15)		Female (<i>n</i> = 15)		<i>t</i> (28)	<i>p</i>	Cohen's <i>d</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>			
1. How often do you use food during sexual activity?	1.67	.72	1.80	.86	-0.46	.650	-.16
2. Does using food during sexual activity increase your sexual arousal?	1.80	1.08	2.20	1.26	-0.93	.360	-.34
3. How often do you eat when you are sexually aroused?	1.93	.80	2.40	.91	1.49	.147	-.55
4. How often are you sexually aroused by eating?	1.60	.99	1.87	.92	-0.77	.449	-.28
5. How often do you feel sexually satisfied after eating?	1.67	.82	1.73	.88	-0.22	.832	-.07
6. How often do you eat food as an alternative to sex?	1.40	.74	1.53	.64	-0.53	.601	-.19
7. How often do you find the feeling of being full sexually satisfying?	2.40	1.68	1.53	.92	1.75	.091	.64
8. How often are you sexually aroused by being fed?	1.53	.83	2.40	.99	-2.60	.015	-.95
9. How often do you find the idea of being fed sexually arousing?	1.73	.80	2.87	1.19	-3.07	.005	-1.12
10. How often are you sexually aroused by gaining weight?	1.07	.26	1.00	.00	1.00	.326	.38
11. How often do you find the idea of gaining weight sexually arousing?	1.07	.26	1.00	.00	1.00	.326	.38
12. How often are you sexually aroused by rubbing your belly?	1.53	1.13	1.33	.72	.58	.567	.21
13. How often are you sexually aroused by having your belly rubbed by someone else?	2.93	1.75	2.13	1.73	1.26	.218	.46
Mean	1.62	.51	1.85	.45	-1.27	.214	-.48

necessitates increased cognitive processing of relevant information in the environment (Heiman, 1977; Vohs, Catanese, & Baumeister, 2004). Given the widely recognized link between feeding and sexual arousal in popular culture, it is hardly surprising that females were evaluating feeding stimuli as sexual.

Given females' subjective evaluation of feeding stimuli as sexual, it is surprising that their genitals did not respond in a concordant manner. The Walen and Roth (1987) cognitive model of positive sexual experience holds that individuals have to first perceive a potential sexual stimulus and evaluate it positively before they can move on to experiencing sexual arousal. Furthermore, it has been suggested that the positive assessment of a stimulus as indicative of relationship intimacy *precedes* physiological sexual arousal in females (Basson, 2000; 2001). Basson indicated that the evaluation of cues of relationship intimacy are linked to a more cognitive process than the evaluation of sexual desire, which she considered to be more of a biological drive. Previous research by Miller, Rozin, and Fiske (1998) has shown that study participants identify images of individuals engaged in food sharing, and to an even greater extent feeding, as a sign of relationship intimacy. Males and females depicted sharing food and feeding each other were also more likely to be described by study participants as serious lovers. Moreover, study participants indicated that individuals depicted feeding each other were more likely to be sexual partners. The subjective sexual arousal reported by our female participants to feeding stimuli could reflect the positive cognitive evaluation of contextual cues to relationship intimacy, which precedes any actual genital arousal.

Previous research has consistently shown that male subjective sexual arousal is concordant with their genital arousal (Chivers, Seto, Lalumière, Laan, & Grimbos, 2010;

Heiman, 1977; Laan & Janssen, 2007; Suschinsky et al., 2009). Our finding that male subjective sexual arousal is not concordant with their genital arousal to feeding stimuli stands in contrast to this previous research. Kaplan (1979) indicated that cognitive evaluation of sexual desire precedes physiological sexual arousal in males. I speculate that male participants may have evaluated the feeding stimuli employed in our study as typifying courtship interactions which normally precede genital arousal and actual sexual activity. Indeed, Murray (2004) described the Feeder/Feedee relationship as “a brutal and degrading *courtship* in which the male Feeder force feeds his female Feedee into immobility and then abandons her for another willing participant (emphasis added).” Various researchers have outlined how human courtship is a process of negotiation that progresses through a hierarchical series of stages (Freund, 1990). For example, the first stage involved in normative courtship involves the location and appraisal of suitable mates. The second phase involves pre-tactile interactions, such as eye-contact, smiling, talking, and posturing. The third phase involves tactile contact involving, touching, embracing, and fondling. Following these courtship phases, individuals may then proceed to engaging in genital sex. Because courtship is a type of sexual interaction, but one that involves, first and foremost, negotiation between the partners prior to genital contact, it seems reasonable to suggest that the sexual cues characterizing courtship would be carefully evaluated on a cognitive level, not a physiological one, as partners proceed through the courtship interaction (or abandon it) and modify their behaviour in a contingent manner. Freund (1990) identified four paraphilias (i.e., voyeurism, exhibitionism, frotteurism, and non-sadistic preferential rape) as possible courtship disorders that represented exaggerations of or fixations on one of the four courtship

phases. Feederism could be another courtship disorder that straddles the pre-tactile and tactile phases.

Taken together, the results of this study provide limited, but suggestive, evidence that Feederism may be an exaggeration of a more normative pattern of subjective sexual arousal in response to feeding stimuli that exists in the general population.

Limitations

There are a number of limitations associated with the current study. The first involves the stimuli used. The auditory and visual feeding stimuli portrayed a male feeding a female. Our aim at the outset of the study was to construct feeding stimuli that were devoid of sexual connotations. The work of Miller et al. (1998), which I became aware of following the study, clearly indicates, however, that depictions of food sharing, and especially feeding, are inextricably linked to judgements that the individuals depicted are involved in intimate, even sexual, relationships. As such, it may well be impossible to construct feeding stimuli that are not interpreted as sexual by research participants. Second, it is also unclear what aspect of the stimuli males and females focused on (i.e., feeding versus being fed). Therefore, it is difficult to distinguish the source of the subjective arousal reported in the current study. However, based on the cross-species research on the food-for-sex exchange, mentioned above, coupled with the sex difference found in responses to the Food and Sex Questionnaire items associated with sexual arousal to being fed, we would predict males would be more aroused by the feeding and females by being fed.

Third, previous research has suggested that video stimuli elicit greater subjective and genital responses than still images or other forms of media (Heiman, 1980).

Therefore, it is possible that the feeding stimuli used in the current study (i.e., still images and short stories) were not strong enough to elicit genital arousal.

Fourth, the current study may be limited in its generalizability. There is a selection bias in sexual psychophysiology research, such that individuals who volunteer to participate in sexual psychophysiology experiments are typically more sexually experienced, less concerned about their performance, and have been exposed to more erotica than individuals who do not volunteer to participate (Wolchik, Braver, & Jansen, 1985). That being said, Chivers, Rieger, Latty, and Bailey (2004) suggested that although volunteers differ from non-volunteers in terms of sexual experience, it does not mean that people who volunteer have significantly different patterns of arousal. Indeed, Chivers et al. found that correlates of willingness to participate in sexual arousal studies were not associated with arousal patterns in females, providing indirect evidence that arousal patterns of volunteers and non-volunteers are likely not different.

The current study raises the question as to whether courtship behaviors of varying intensity lead to subjective sexual arousal or possibly genital sexual arousal, and how the former might influence the latter. It would be interesting to assess male and female subjective and genital arousal to stimuli depicting a variety of non-tactile and tactile courtship interactions that normally precede genital interactions. In particular, it would be interesting to examine whether other forms of resource provisioning and acquisition (e.g., gift exchange) elicit subjective or genital sexual arousal. To the best of my knowledge, there have been no other psychophysiology studies that have examined subjective and genital responses to stimuli depicting courtship interactions.

CHAPTER FOUR

Conclusion

The studies presented in this thesis were exploratory, and attempted to provide insight on the practice of Feederism. To determine whether Feederism could be classified as a paraphilia, a case study was conducted on a female member of the Feederism community. To determine whether Feederism might reflect a paraphilic (i.e., dysfunctional) exaggeration of normative mating patterns, a psychophysiological study was conducted on individuals from the general population.

What Evidence is there that Feederism is a Paraphilia?

The case study revealed that Feederism had an early onset in the female participant. She reported experiencing fantasies from a very young age of being force fed and teased about being fat. She also reported having a fixation on fat people, describing their bodies as sexually arousing. She described her experiences of Feederism as intense, recurrent sexual urges and fantasies. She also described a level of sexual dependence on Feederism related behaviors and fantasies. For example, she indicated that she needed to fantasize about being fatter or being teased about being fat in order to achieve clitoral orgasm. There were also several masochistic elements involved in the subject's Feederism fantasies, namely, domination and humiliation. As such, Feederism could be co-morbid with masochism or a thematic variation of masochism. Although the case study subject did not report distress over her sexual urges and fantasies involving Feederism themes, she was curious about why she experienced them and she recognized that they were unusual. All of these elements (i.e., early onset, intense, recurrent sexual

urges and fantasies, sexual dependence and co-morbidity) are characteristics of many well known paraphilias (Wiederman, 2003).

Another criteria, set by the *DSM-IV-R*, for classifying paraphilias is that the behaviour must result in some level of dysfunction (e.g., interpersonal, physical). In the case study, the participant reported being happily married and that she enjoyed having sex with her husband, despite the enhanced intensity she experienced when she incorporated Feederism fantasies. Therefore, Feederism did not appear to impair her functioning with respect to her sexual arousal or her relationship with her husband. However, other reports of Feederism activity have noted that when taken to an extreme, Feederism often results in severe physical dysfunction (i.e., deformity), loss of freedom (i.e., mobility), and in some cases even death. Based on this knowledge, it would be negligent to suggest that Feederism does not lead to dysfunction in many. Therefore, I concluded that Feederism is, indeed, a paraphilia. More research will be needed before definitive statements can be made as to whether Feederism represents a paraphilic disorder.

In addition, it is important to note that the sexual arousal the subject experienced in relation to Feederism was specifically focused on gaining weight; eating and being fed was simply a means to this end. As such, it seems reasonable to conclude that the sexual arousal our case study subject experienced in relation to Feederism was not likely due to the ingestion of aphrodisiacs.

Is Feederism an Exaggeration of a More Normative Mate Selection Strategy?

Quinsey and Lalumière (1995) suggested that paraphilias could be exaggerated manifestations of more normative and functional mate selection strategies, which have

been advantageous throughout evolution (i.e., pedophilia as an exaggeration the preference for youthfulness). We suggested that ancestral females may have been selected over evolutionary time to experience weight gain as erotic, at least in part, because of females' dependence on fat for reproductive success. Similarly, we suggest that ancestral males may have been selected over evolutionary time to experience mate provisioning as erotic, at least in part, because they routinely exchange resources (i.e., food) for sexual access. I hypothesized that Feederism could be an exaggeration of the normative food-for-sex exchange courtship phenomenon that has been observed across species, cultures, and time.

In order to test whether the exaggeration hypothesis could be applied to Feederism, individuals from the general population were recruited, and their genital and subjective sexual arousal were measured in response to feeding stimuli. The participants' genital and subjective responses to the feeding stimuli were then compared to their responses to neutral stimuli to determine whether the feeding stimuli elicited a greater sexual response. Although participants did not show a greater genital response to the feeding stimuli compared to the neutral stimuli, they did subjectively rate the feeding stimuli as more sexually arousing. Because the exaggeration hypothesis was intended to explain paraphilias that are predominately a male phenomenon, it is possible that males and females must meet different criteria that reflect the differences in male and female arousal patterns (i.e., concordance) in order to support this hypothesis. Although, support for the exaggeration hypothesis would have been more convincing if participants showed greater genital response to feeding stimuli, it cannot be completely discarded in light of

the subjective sexual arousal that was reported by participants in response to the feeding stimuli.

Why is Feeding Stimuli Subjectively Sexually Arousing?

The subjective sexual arousal reported by participants in the second study could have been influenced by several factors. For example, in most cultures, food and sex have been inextricably linked for centuries. Numerous cultures have suggested that a variety of foods have aphrodisiac qualities that augment sexual arousal (Sandroni, 2001). For example, crab, passion fruit, oysters, ginger, curry, cinnamon, dates, figs, garlic, honey, mint, peaches, chillies, pomegranate, prawns, strawberries, and chocolate have all been identified as aphrodisiacs (Johnstone & Dodd, 1999). Not surprisingly then, the link between (aphrodisiac) food and sex is a recurrent theme in popular culture (Bartky, 1988; Bordo, 2003; Gamman & Makinen, 1995). The idea of chocolates in a heart shaped box as the ideal gift for your lover on Valentine's Day is entrenched in our culture and relationship schemas. The food-sex link has also been a central theme in many popular films (e.g., *Chocolat*, *9 ½ Weeks*, and *Babette's Feast*). Although the act of eating or being fed may elicit little or no physiological sexual arousal, humans may have incorporated the relationship between food and sex into their cognitive appraisal of sexual arousal by relying on contextual cues to indicate that sexual arousal is appropriate or imminent.

Recognizing the cultural link between food and sex still leaves open the question as to why such a relationship originated to begin with. The cross-cultural and cross-species evidence reviewed above highlights the salience of eating and feeding within mating contexts. On the basis of this evidence, psychologists and anthropologists

working within an evolutionary framework have suggested that male hunters who were more generous in their provisioning of meat were preferred by females as mates because increased meat intake would have benefited females and their offspring. Some research on contemporary hunter-gatherers has shown that males who display a strong ability to provide food (i.e., good hunters) have greater reproductive success as a result of higher status, greater access to mates, and higher offspring survival (Kaplan & Hill, 1985; Smith, 2004). Furthermore, female fitness is also enhanced by choosing to mate with a male who demonstrates food provisioning ability. This is especially important during periods of critical need (i.e., late pregnancy and immediately following child birth) when females are less able to acquire food independently. As a result of male provisioning during this time, females are able to maintain a sufficient body weight, which correlates with a healthier birth weight in offspring (Frisch, 1994; Smith, 2004). It has been argued that although male food provisioning does not lower offspring mortality rates within the first year, it is beneficial around the time of weaning (Marlowe, 2001). Furthermore, male food provisioning has been linked to female fertility, suggesting that although food provisioning may have little effect on rates of offspring mortality, females may be able to increase their reproductive success by having more offspring overall (Marlowe, 2001). Buss and Schmidt (1993) showed that traits such as generosity are considered universally desirable by females during mate selection. The intimate relationship between feeding (provisioning) and eating within a mating context may explain, in part, the lack of sex differences in subjective sexual ratings of feeding stimuli observed in the psychophysiological study.

Baumeister and Vohs (2004) suggested that the food-for-sex exchange is still a salient part of modern courtship behaviour. For example, males will often buy females dinner as part of a dating scenario in order to gain future sexual access, and not the other way around. I suggest that feeding (or food sharing) is a courtship behavior that straddles the boundary between non-tactile and tactile courtship. Males may be able to cognitively assess relatively low intensity courtship displays, such as feeding, as sexual cues that warrant further pursuit without exhibiting physiological sexual arousal in response to such stimuli. Instead, sexual arousal would occur once the tactile phase had been established because actual sexual activity is more likely at that point. Research on chimpanzees and orangutans indicates that males who share food with females have higher rates of copulation with those females, but often they do not have immediate sexual access to those females following food sharing (Gomes & Boesch, 2009; Noordwijk & van Schaik, 2009). In other words, the link between food sharing and sex is not temporally immediate; rather, it is often delayed. This delay in the food-for-sex exchange may necessitate a more cognitive evaluation of the relative value of food sharing as a potential courtship strategy by males. Furthermore, the act of eating, being fed, or feeding another person may not elicit sexual arousal in isolation. However, because it is part of a courtship cycle that typically progresses to sexual activity, the anticipation of this potential sexual activity *is* perceived as sexually arousing. This example again focuses the sexual arousal on a more cognitive level, not a genital one.

Previous research has shown that food sharing and feeding are perceived as cues of intimacy and indicative of a sexual relationship (Miller et al., 1998). It is possible that participants in the psychophysiological study perceived the feeding stimuli in a similar

manner. If they were given the option to rate how intimate versus sexually arousing the feeding stimuli were they may have rated it as more intimate. Furthermore, participants may be misidentifying something they consider sexual as being sexually arousing, when in fact it is only sexual or intimate in nature. This disconnection between subjective sexual arousal and physical sexual arousal requires additional research.

Future Directions

If eating and feeding can be linked to courtship and be considered subjectively sexually arousing, perhaps other low intensity non-tactile and tactile courtship behaviours (e.g., holding hands, touching, hair tossing) can also elicit subjective sexual arousal. Future research could examine whether the various behaviors that are involved in courtship interactions, and the various courtship phases (i.e., non-tactile, tactile) elicit subjective or genital sexual arousal.

Additional research is also needed to determine whether feeding stimuli are perceived as more intimate, sexual, or sexually arousing. This line of research may also be able to reveal how individuals perceive these different states and how they are related or interconnected with one another. For example, if something is considered intimate, is it inherently sexual? Conversely, if something is considered sexual, is it inherently intimate? Or, if something is considered subjectively sexual does that necessarily mean that it will lead to physical sexual arousal? Researchers could attempt to hone in on what elements of stimuli drive each of these perceptions and whether there are common cues that trigger two, or all three of these states.

Based on the psychophysiological study presented here, it is possible that feeding may not elicit sexual arousal independently, but nevertheless increases sexual arousal

when paired with explicitly sexual stimuli. It would be interesting for future research to use a single stimulus (i.e., audio or visual) that combined both sexual activity and feeding and compare participants' genital and subjective sexual arousal to exclusively sexual, feeding, and neutral stimuli. It is possible that participants would perceive and experience the stimulus including food or feeding as well as sex, as more erotic or sensual and, therefore, more sexually arousing.

As outlined in the limitations of the second study, it is possible that despite my attempts to create feeding stimuli void of any sexual connotation, the feeding stimuli may still have been perceived as overtly sexual. Future research should attempt to isolate a pure feeding stimulus and test how individuals respond to it in comparison to other explicitly sexual and neutral stimuli. This being said, it is entirely possible that feeding and sex will prove nearly impossible to tease apart. As mentioned, feeding and sex have been linked cross culturally for centuries. Therefore, the link between feeding and sex may be engrained into our cognitive appraisal of what is sexual.

Finally, the case study indicated that the idea or act of gaining weight is what individuals in the Feederism community find most sexually arousing. Therefore, future research should measure the effects of stimuli featuring weight gaining in addition to feeding stimuli to determine whether it elicits a subjective and/or genital sexual arousal. Researchers should also attempt to recruit members from the Feederism community to determine what stimuli elicit the greatest response. This will allow researchers to develop salient stimuli to further test the exaggeration hypothesis among members of the general population.

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APPENDIX A:

Recruitment Poster

Call for Participants

We are looking for:

- **Men & Women**
- **Age 18—35**



To:

- **Listen to stories**
- **Measure sexual arousal**
- **Complete questionnaires**



Participation is individual, confidential, and anonymous.

Participants will be reimbursed for their time.

For more information contact:

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APPENDIX B:

Complete Collection of Neutral, Sexual, and Feeding Short Stories

Neutral Story 1

The baseball game was about to begin. I checked my ticket and headed for the nearest gate. The spectators were slowly making their way to their seats and I stopped to buy a large cold drink. As the guy behind the cash handed me my change I gave him a smile and thanked him. I made my way to my seat just in time to see the home team begin their warm up. "Good morning. How do you think the team will do today?" asked the guy next to me as I took my seat. I smiled at him but the loud crack of a bat drew my attention. A high fly ball arched towards the outfield. One of the fielders called for it and made an easy catch. As I sipped my drink, I watched the home team complete their warm up. The large electronic screen displayed a series of team statistics. Grabbing my hat, I said to the guy next to me. "It's going to be hot today." He nodded in agreement. By the time I had finished my drink the teams were set to begin. After striking out the first two batters, the third finally managed to get a hit deep into right field. The fielder was a fast runner so he held to just a single. However, the next batter flew out to the third baseman which retired the side. The other team was up to bat and did not waste time getting some hits. Before the inning was over, the visiting team had a two run lead. The home team countered with some of their own hits but unfortunately, a double play kept the score at two to nothing. By the fifth inning, the home team had managed to score a couple of runs but the visiting team had remained ahead by smacking a home run. For the remainder of the game the teams were held pointless until the last inning when the home team scored a two run homer to win the game. A loud cheer exploded into the air as the ball soared over the left field fence.

Neutral Story 2

Sleet lightly patters against the window of the travel agency on a gray January day. There's a gust of cold air as the door swings open. I recognize him immediately. He's a steady customer who likes to book some kind of big trip every year. I greet him cheerfully. I'm glad because this commission may be just what I need. I have accumulated a lot of bills lately. There have been a lot of unplanned expenses because my car is getting quite old. In addition, my house has required a lot of repair in preparation for the onslaught of cold weather. "Where can I send you this winter?" I ask expectantly. He says he wants something different. We discuss all-inclusive resorts in the Caribbean but he says he's a little bored with that scene. I suggest two weeks in the Mediterranean – the French Riviera, southern Italy, or Greece. He looks thoughtful and asks about typical temperatures in February. He's disappointed when I tell him the results of a quick check in the reference book. He says he's looking for something with sun and really warm temperatures. Then I suggest the Pacific – Hawaii or Tahiti perhaps. That intrigues him and he asks about prices. It takes me several minutes on the computer to get the information about the available airfares and resorts. I'm glad because any trip to the south pacific will be quite expensive. This may be an excellent commission!

However, when I tell him my estimated total, he looks grim and says simply, “Too much.” I don’t want to lose this sale so I reassure him that we will be able to find something of interest which is within his budget. Next, I propose that he consider taking a tropical cruise. That does it! He looks over several brochures and picks a premium package. I happily clip his sizeable deposit cheque to his file as he cheerfully heads out the door into the blustery street.

Neutral Story 3

Warm sunshine makes me squint as I open my door. I look down at my garden and decide it is the perfect day to work on it. It is only a short drive to the greenhouse and I take the time to enjoy the fresh spring weather. Once inside the store, I collect a cart and head for the flower section. I’m delighted to see that several prices have been reduced. I see the manager emerge from the back room. “Good morning. Nice to see you again” he says as we pass in the aisle. Having selected an assortment of perennials and annuals, I head to the fertilizer section. I have been shopping in this greenhouse for many years and so the employees are familiar to me. I greet the sales person and listen while he recommends several new types of fertilizer. Although I had one in mind, I decide to take his advice and purchase one that is on sale and promises to give new life to my garden. Next I push my cart up and down the aisles while I periodically check my list. I notice that there is a sale on the garden lanterns I have been eyeing. Taking advantage of this, I load my cart with three large and two medium sized lanterns. Carefully, I position them in the cart so I do not break or scratch the glass. By the time I have found everything on my list, my cart is quite full. As I head to the cash, I notice that the stepping stones I purchased last spring are available again and I decide to buy three to replace some that broke during the spring thaw. “Hi, how are things?” greets the cashier as I begin placing my items on the counter. “Lovely” I reply “just grabbing a few things.” As I continue unloading my cart, we chat briefly about the balmy spring weather that we’re having and my plans to revamp my garden. I pay for my items with cash, and put the stones and flowers into my trunk and head back home.

Neutral Story 4

As I walk into the art gallery the new display captivates me. I approach the first oil painting and I examine the use of color and texture created with the different strokes. I am not a huge art buff but I have a sincere appreciation for creativity. Especially, since I have never been able to successfully complete a color by number painting properly. I visit this gallery at least once during each new exhibit but it is not uncommon for me to visit two or three times if I really like the artist. When that happens I tend to bring different people with me, I like to share my great discoveries. I am familiar with the curator and he usually comes over and greets me. I don’t see him today so he must be out back cataloguing art work or off meeting some new interesting artist that he is hoping to showcase. As I move to the second painting I hear a door open. I turn and see him emerging from the back room. He walks over to me. “Hello again” he says in his usual jolly way “what do you think of the new paintings.” “They are lovely” I reply “I like his use of green throughout the series.” He nods and looks around the room. “Me too” he

says. We stand in silence admiring the large canvas. “Well, I’ll leave you to look around” he says “let me know if you have any questions.” “I will thank you” I say as I move on to the next painting. So far it is my favourite. The paintings aren’t really of anything and I like to think of them as clouds. Everyone that looks at them will see something different. This one looks like a woman dancing in a green dress. I glance at the name plate to see the title. Marine Utopia. “Hmm” I ponder “to each their own.”

Neutral Story 5

It is a crisp fall afternoon as I walk through the park. The sun is warm on my face and streaks through the trees. I head for a bench and pull out my book. I sit and look around at the people strolling along walking their dogs and a group of kids playing Frisbee. I smile and open the book to where I last stopped and continue on. I finish the fourth chapter and turn the page to find out how the protagonist will overcome her recent debacle, when a small dog rushes towards me after a ball. I recognize him and his owner. We often make small chat when he passes by with his dog. He comes over and apologizes for disturbing me. “Not at all” I say. He grabs the ball and tosses it away. His dog turns and goes bounding after it. “Lovely weather we’ve been having eh?” he says with a smile. “Yes,” I reply “won’t be long now before the leaves change color and start to fall.” “Indeed” he says looking up at the trees above us. “How is your book going” he asks. “Good” I reply. I tell him about my fondness of the author and her ability to describe scenes and people to give you a real mental image of the setting and characters. He shares his favourite author with me and suggests a book that I might like. I make a mental note of it and thank him. His dog returns with the ball and drops it at his feet and barks. “I better get back to our game of catch before he loses his patience with me” he says as he turns and picks up the ball “see you around.” I watch him and his dog dash off into the park and return to my book. I read a few more pages until a cloud moves in overhead and I feel the chill of the wind no longer counter balanced by the suns warm glow. I close my book and return it to my purse. I walk out of the park and head home.

Neutral Story 6

It is a dark, gloomy day as I drive to work. There is a road block up ahead and I prop myself up to see what is going on. The roads are damp and I suspect an accident. But when I don’t see any signs of one, I lean back in my seat and conclude it is a routine registration check. I sigh because I am running late and it is my second week on the job. As I get closer in the line up I recognize the officer conducting the checks. He plays poker with my dad every Friday night and is very friendly. I glance at the clock and hope he is not in the mood to be chatty. He waves for me to pull ahead and leans down to my window. “Well, hi there” he says with a smile “I didn’t realize you were already old enough to drive, wow, that makes me feel old.” I smile and choose not to tell him I have had my licence for over three years now. “How are the folks?” he asks. “Good” I reply as I hand him my licence and registration. He laughs, hands them back and says “oh, I trust you have your affairs in order. Where are you headed anyways?” I explain that I just recently started working at the bank as a teller and was hoping to move up to an account manager position within the next year or two. “Good for you” he replied “I wish my kid

would figure out what she wanted to do with her life and stop looking for allowance every week; she's gonna be 18 next month." I know his daughter and I feel the urge to stick up for her but I bite my tongue and thank him for his praise. There is a pause of silence and then he says "well, we don't want you to be late do we? You better get going. Say hi to your dad for me." I bid him farewell and finish my journey to work.

Neutral Story 7

I return to my desk after lunch to find a post-it stuck to my computer screen. It is from my boss he needs a projection report done off in three hours outlining the company's proposed budget for the next year. I sit down and get to work. An hour passes and he stops by my desk. "Hey, did you get that note I left for you?" he asks. "Yes, I did" I reply "I'm working on it right now. You don't need until it 3:00 right?" He explains that it is for a meeting that came up for later in the afternoon but that he would like to look over it before he presents it to the board. I assure him that I will have it done within the next hour or so and that I will bring it by his office when it is complete. He thanks me and heads off towards the coffee room. I work away on the report for the rest of the afternoon and print off a copy. I take it into his office and set it down on his desk. "Thanks" he says as he types hastily on his laptop. I turn to leave, when he asks me if I could sit and go over the report with him in case there are any errors or changes that need to be made. "Sure" I say as I take a seat across from him at his desk. He flips through the pages asking me to explain different points along the way. He makes notes in the margins and checks some of the figures on his computer. "This looks great" he says "can you make ten copies and put them in some sort of folder?" "Sure, no problem" I say "do you want me to leave them in the conference room?" "That would be great" he says as he goes back to his computer. I turn and leave the room.

Sexual Story 1

It's nearly dawn. The campground for our company retreat is quiet. We're walking back to my trailer. I've asked him back to my place for a nightcap. He works in another department and I've gotten to know him a little. We shared a drink and he has been telling me stories. We walk in silence and he places his hand in mine. Once inside my trailer, he begins kissing me softly. We tumble back onto the couch in an embrace. I feel his gentle hands caress my hair. I savour the caress of his soft hands. Together we snuggle. He kisses me affectionately again. I enjoy the feel of his tongue as it hungrily searches my mouth. As my passion mounts, he grinds his hardening cock against me. Quickly we ease out of our clothes and he begins kissing and licking my entire body. "Yes, yes, yes, please," I moan. I gasp with delight as he takes my nipples into his warm mouth. My body begins to tremble excitedly as he sucks my hardening nipples. He cups my heaving breasts in his soft hands as he gently tickles each nipple with his tongue. It feels so good. My entire body is tingling with delight. He continues licking and sucking my throbbing nipples while I stroke his thick hair. I moan as he sucks harder. With a groan of passion, he spreads my legs and eases his hard erection deep inside me. I arch my back and feel the delight of his throbbing cock slipping inside me. Together, we begin moving in unison. He fucks with more and more intensity as our embrace reaches a

fevered pitch. I enjoy the feel of his strong body as he cradles me in his arms. It feels so good; I'm so excited. Wrapping my legs tightly around him, I gasp as he thrusts deeper inside me. "Yes, yes!" I moan. His tender fingers gently caress my aroused nipples. My breasts are flushed and swollen with desire. Gasping with delight, he thrusts powerfully as he reaches orgasm and we curl up together.

Sexual Story 2

We're strolling through the park. We work at the same company but we have gotten to know each other at this employee picnic. He has been attentive to me. Together, we enjoyed the recreational activities. As we reach a secluded area, he presses his face close to mine and looks deep into my eyes. I wondered if he would try to kiss me, but he just smiled and hugged me tightly. He encourages me to sit down with him. He takes my hand and we sit together in the cool grass. He holds me in his arms and kisses my cheek. I smile. He kisses me full on the lips. He gently strokes my shoulder as we lay back. His tongue explores my mouth with mounting passion. I arch my back as his fingers slip under my sweater and unfasten my bra. I groan softly as I feel his gentle fingers explore my nipples. Soon, they are erect with arousal. "Oh yes, yes," I moan softly. Quickly, I peel off my sweater and straddle him, allowing him to begin licking and sucking my heaving breasts. My head is swimming with delight. Reaching down, he unzips his pants and then reaches for my clothes. Gently, he eases a finger under my clothes and begins to undo them. With an exciting moan, I grind into him. Our passion is mounting. "Take me now!" I insist. Frantically we tear off each other's clothing. I'm completely wet and aroused. He moans softly as my mouth begins sucking his nipples. I shudder with delight as I feel him gently caress my entire body. My clitoris swells with pleasure. Gently he moves his hands down my back onto my ass, then tenderly squeezes it. Frantically, I guide his stiff dick deep into my hot pussy. We fuck together in an ecstatic frenzy. I hear him moan and his whole body shudders as he explodes deep inside me. It feels great! I move my hips faster and faster as his orgasm peaks. Gently we hold each other as we recover our senses.

Sexual Story 3

The evening stars sparkle overhead. In the moonlight, we can barely find our way back to his car. We were introduced by friends a few days ago and we have enjoyed getting to know each other better during dinner. I enjoyed his sense of humour and accepted a ride home from him. Once inside his car, he begins hugging me gently. It feels nice, so I hug him back. We search each other's eyes and begin kissing with a passion that gradually builds. I am delighted by his touch. His arms encircle me as we lay back together. I wrap my legs around his waist and he begins gently grinding against me. I can feel his cock harden through his jeans. Excitedly, he presses his body against me. He begins kissing my neck. Pulling off my sweater and bra, I feel his hot tongue caress my breasts. "Make love to me now," I beg. I gasp in delight as he takes my nipples into his mouth and begins gently kissing and sucking them. It feels fantastic as they swell with arousal. Sliding off my pants and underwear, I feel his hot breath as he savours my body and begins kissing me all over. My throbbing pussy moistens as his lips reach

everywhere. I moan in delight. Filled with desire, he pulls down his jeans and slips his hard erection deep inside me. "That feels so good," I murmur. We begin moving together in wild abandon. The car begins to rock as our passion quickly increases. Our hungry mouths meet and we kiss passionately. Our tongues entangle with yearning kisses. I raise my legs higher and he plunges deeper into me. Our bodies begin moving together faster and faster as passion mounts. His cock feels fantastic as it slides in and out of me again and again. I feel his warm fingers as they fondle my heaving breasts. His hungry mouth finds my heaving breasts and I encourage him to suck and lick my aroused nipples. As I moan, "Oh, yes!" I feel him come inside me. We snuggle together.

Sexual Story 4

Today, while doing my shopping, I ran into a guy from work. We just started working together recently. He invited me in for a coffee so I took the opportunity to get to know him. As we listen to music, he begins kissing me gently. His hands lightly stroke my neck and shoulders. I enjoy letting him thrust his tongue deep into my mouth. This encourages him to ease me back onto the sofa and lay on top of me. I can feel his cock harden against me as our bodies entwine. I can feel my nipples swell excitedly. His hot mouth kisses my neck. "Oh yes, I want you now," I moan. We excitedly slip out of our clothes. I gasp with delight as his tongue playfully licks and sucks my breasts. I squirm with delight as his fingers sensually explore my excited cunt. I feel that my clitoris is throbbing and my pussy moistens. He slides a soft hand onto my heaving breast. As his fingers massage my nipple, I tingle with arousal. I feel it harden with delight. I stroke his soft hair and press his face firmly into me, urging his mouth to gently suck each hard nipple in turn "Yes, yes, please!" I encourage him. Gently, I reach for his beautiful stiff cock. As his tongue gently tickles each nipple, I begin stroking his erect penis. Then I gently lick and kiss his huge erection. After his cock is completely wet from my kisses, I take him into my mouth and ease his prick back and forth, further and further into the back of my throat. He moans with sheer pleasure. Our bodies melt together and his strong arms encircle me in a powerful embrace. I feel myself getting more and more excited. From his trembling, I can tell he's getting close to coming. With a moan, he climaxes and I feel his semen filling my mouth and throat. I gently lick and suck to get every drop. Unbelievable! We gently kiss and hold each other, sharing the warmth of our intimacy.

Sexual Story 5

My favourite store is about to close. I have just bought a couple of sweaters from him. He has been selling me clothes for several years now. He tells me that he is locking up but would like me to stay and visit for a while. He takes my hand and leads me into the back room. We sit together on a couch and talk. As he speaks, he strokes my hair. I look up at him and he bends to kiss me. Our lips caress excitedly. As our kisses grow more passionate, his fingers glide from my neck down onto my breasts. Gently he strokes them until my nipples stand out with arousal. My body trembles with the delight of his touch. Slipping out of our clothes, we tumble together onto the deep carpet. As I kiss his face and neck, I feel his cock harden against me. "You feel so good," I moan. His hot

tongue slides over my breasts and begins licking me all over. I squirm passionately. Gently, he slides a finger inside my wet vagina. It feels great. I roll onto my hands and knees and urge him to slide his erection deep inside my eager asshole. "Fuck my ass now," I plead. Encouraged by my grinding hips, he plunges into me with one gentle thrust. It feels so good. Our bodies begin moving together in unison. I moan excitedly as I feel his hot tongue begin caressing my neck and earlobes. I arch my back to take him ever deeper inside me. His strong body grinds into me faster and faster. My entire body feels consumed by our passion. His hands gently caress my tingling nipples. As my body shudders with delightful excitement, he thrusts more slowly but deeper into me. I'm thrilled by the way he's penetrating me. I enjoy his weight pressing down on my back. In our fury of lovemaking, my breasts swing vigorously back and forth, the nipples just lightly brushing against the soft carpet. Finally, with a passionate moan, he explodes deep inside me and we collapse together, sharing our newfound intimacy.

Sexual Story 6

We met last year in stats class and we began studying together regularly. We are both stressed about tomorrow's midterm and we are comparing answers to the study questions. So far we are 5 for 5. We are sitting on my bed, due to a lack of any other furniture in my room and he starts to rub my back and then takes his hand away. "Actually, that felt good" I say "my back it killing me from leaning over books all day". He slips his hand under my shirt and resumes rubbing my back, firmly and slowly. His hand is warm. I turn and start to kiss his lips and neck. He pushes me down and gets on top of me. We kiss passionately as we pull on each others' clothes. He starts to unbutton my blouse and I reach up in eagerness and rip my shirt open, buttons hit the wall and floor. He is kissing my breasts and hard nipples. I feel his tongue sliding down my side. He pulls off my pants and slips his fingers into my wet vagina. I push myself down on his fingers and I feel his penis harden against my leg. He pulls a pillow under my ass and spreads my legs wide. He drops his pants around his ankles and enters me hard and fast. I moan with pleasure and close my eyes. I grind my hips against him as he thrusts deeper and deeper inside of me. He reaches and grabs my breasts, and rolls my hard nipples between his two fingers. I pull him down on top of me by his neck and kiss him hard on the mouth. He is breathing heavy and I begin to quiver with ecstasy. "I'm close" I pant, "cum with me." My words arouse him further and he starts to enter me in long, deep thrusts. I cry out in pleasure and I feel him pulsate inside me. He squeezes my thighs and I moan with pure satisfaction. He lies down beside me, out of breath and I curl in under his arm.

Sexual Story 7

It is almost sunrise and we have about 50 meters left of our run. We met at the marathon sign up and we began training together two weeks ago. He is very nice and keeps me focused. When we reach the water fountain my thighs are on fire and I can't catch my breath. I go over and take a big drink of cold water. I turn and face him. He smiles and walks toward me. He wipes some water from my chin with his hand and suggests we sit for a minute and stretch. We walk off the trail and sit on the cool grass.

He tells me to lie back and put my right leg up. He pushes against it and tells me to breath. He slides his hands over my thigh and then starts to kiss up along my shin. He pushes my leg down and lies on top of me. I kiss him and taste the salty sweat from his upper lip. He is exploring my body with his hands. He caresses my breasts through my sports bra. My nipples harden with arousal and he kisses them gently. I moan with pleasure. I reach down and feel his hard cock through his shorts. "Fuck me," I whisper in his ear. My pussy is wet and aching to be touched. I kick off my shorts and bring my knees to my chest. He pushes his hard dick deep into me and I moan with pleasure. My tits rock up and down with each thrust. He grabs my hands and holds them over my head. "Yes, harder" I pant. I close my eyes I am consumed by our passion. I feel his weight and strength against me. He feels amazing. He is thrusting vigorously and we are both breathing heavily. He reaches up and squeezes my firm breasts and then throws his head back and lets out a deep moan. All of his muscles tense and I can feel him explode inside of me. I grind my pelvis hard against him as he shudders and then we hold each other close.

Feeding Story 1

We met a month ago at the office when he started as the new account manager. We occasionally made small chat in passing and I was surprised when he invited me over for dinner. As I enter his apartment the smell of fresh bread and spice overwhelms me. He rushes back to the kitchen where he is stirring a pot. He smiles and asks me to come in and sit while he finishes up. He is making pasta and homemade sauce. I walk over and peer into the pot he is stirring. The deep red sauce is thick and I can see that he has laced it with fresh herbs and meat as it laps against the sides of the pot with each stroke. He turns and cuts another Italian sausage. The knife pierces the skin and juice runs onto the cutting board as he masterfully cuts it into equal disks. He holds a piece on a fork out to me "Careful it's hot". I pull it off with my teeth and the juice runs over my tongue as I chew. He tosses the rest into the pot and stirs it a bit more. Cupping his hand under it, he holds up the spoon and brings it to me. I taste the spicy sauce as I slip it off the spoon into my mouth. It is delicious. I try to decipher the different spices he has used, basil, garlic, and something else... He takes a taste as well and closes his eyes. He looks at me and smiles "It's ready!" He goes to the sink and drains the pasta and the steam swells up over him. He places my meal down on the table in front of me and I hold back the urge to devour it instantly. He quickly turns and goes back to the kitchen and pulls out the fresh bread from the oven. I am delighted. He brings it to the table and breaks it open. Steam escapes from the ends. He sits beside me and smiles. He lifts his fork with pasta and sausage on it and puts it to my lips, "Bon appétit!" he says.

Feeding Story 2

We met at a conference last month and I was delighted when he invited me out for a quick bite one afternoon. He suggested a small pizza shop near my work and I agreed to meet him there on my lunch break. As we walk into the pizza shop I smell the pepperoni and cheese and my mouth starts to water. I walk up to the counter without hesitation. "One large meat lovers pizza, please" I say then turning to him I ask "and

what are you having?" He smiles and places his order. We take a seat in a booth where I can watch pizzas be prepared. The fresh dough is thrown into the air and drops down onto a firm fist. It is spun and then tossed up again. The crust is flipped onto a pan where it is layered with sauce and then loaded with pepperoni and sausage. Finally, a mound of shredded cheese. My pizza is picture perfect when it is delivered to our table. The pepperoni and sausage are only visible by the crisp edges that have curled with the heat of the oven under a blanket of cheese that is still sizzling. I grab a piece ignoring the warm grease on my fingertips and slowly pull the piece away from the pan. The smooth cheese stretches across the void I have created and begins to tug on my toppings. I hold my finger over the slice and he cuts the strands with a knife. I smile at him and say "My hero" in all sincerity. A piece of pepperoni was lost in the struggle; he picks it up and holds it up to me. I hesitate then bite it from his fingers. The spicy taste tingles my tongue. He skillfully detaches a slice from his pizza and holds a strand of cheese up for me. I pull it in to my mouth, nibbling quickly. He holds up his slice to me and grins. I look at my own then decide to surrender to the game and take the bite he is offering. He smiles as he wipes sauce from the corner of my mouth.

Feeding Story 3

I have never been to this restaurant before but I have heard great reviews. My colleague invited me to join him for a late lunch so we could discuss our presentation for the board. We had been working together on this campaign for weeks but I had never seen him outside the office and he appeared more at ease. I perused the menu reading the descriptions in my head, wild duck stuffed with ham, shredded bacon and cheese on a bed of avocado, pepper steak in cream sauce. It all sounds so tempting. I finally decide on the maple glazed pork chops and I am delighted when he orders my second choice the fried chicken breast with pineapple salsa. We make small chat as we wait for our orders and glance curiously at the manicured plates that flutter down to the tables around us. Finally our waiter returns and lowers our dishes gracefully down in front of us. I bite my lip and then lean in and smell the sweet, spicy food. I can see the fresh pork is perfectly cooked through the glossy coating of the marinade. I take a bite and it is amazing. I close my eyes and concentrate on the soft textures and sharp seasonings. I look across the table and his dish looks even better. He takes a bite and then looks up at me and says "You've gotta try this." He cuts a piece of the moist chicken and dips it in the golden salsa. He brings it to my lips and I delicately slip it from the fork. It is delicious. The juicy chicken seems to melt in my mouth as I chew. The tangy pineapple salsa adds a pleasurable bonus to the dish. I am still enjoying the morsel when I notice he has extended another bite. I take it greedily. He smiles and says "...and you said you weren't hungry." I return to my own meal and resume the conversation. He smiles and says "I'm only teasing here have another bite" as he lifts his fork. I smile, shift my chair closer and open my mouth.

Feeding Story 4

We met a couple of times through friends, and I agreed to meet him for a date at a coffee shop which I know as having the best desserts in town. I arrive first and go up to the dessert case and gaze at the delicious selection. They all look so beautiful. Warm

tangy lemon tarts, chocolate mousse with a generous drizzling of chocolate syrup, cheesecake with a berry sauce and fresh whipped cream. When he arrives he apologizes for being late and asks what he can order to make it up to me. I smile and ask “I can only choose one?” “Well, you know what? I don’t know what I want either, how about we get a few things and share” he says. A choir in my head starts to sing “Halleluiah”. “Sure” I say, trying to sound passive, “surprise me!” He orders and the waitress brings over a piece of turtles chocolate cake with caramel drizzle and whipped cream, a strawberry custard tart with a fresh strawberry on top with a dusting of icing sugar and a piece of carrot cake with a thick layer of cream cheese icing and pecans. I am very pleased by his choices. I am trying to decide which to try first when he picks up his fork and lets it glide through the chocolate cake. He holds it up to me “Ladies first” he says with a smile. I close my eyes and I place my lips around the fork. As I pull the cake off into my mouth its rich and moist texture melts and causes my mouth to water longing for more. He follows my gaze to the tart and lifts it to my lips. I obligingly open and feel the pastry gently flake and break into my mouth. The custard oozes over my tongue and lips. I taste the fresh strawberry juice burst and mingle with the tangy custard. I swallow and lick my lips. “Last one” he says as he lifts his fork with the carrot cake. I slide it from the fork and the rich creamy icing stimulates my taste buds in an explosive burst of flavor.

Feeding Story 5

We met last week at a friend’s party and I invited him out for Mexican food. When we walk into the restaurant I can smell the spicy beef and salsa. We order soft shell tacos and fajitas. The beef and chicken are served on skillets and the flat bread is in a covered dish to keep it warm. There are also dishes of salsa and sour cream, diced tomatoes, onion, and lettuce. We smile at one another. The spicy beef is moist and drips with grease as I spoon it onto the warm flat bread. I load the cheese, salsa, and sour cream on top and try to fold it closed. It is ready to burst when I shove it into my mouth. The blends of seasonings mingle and tantalize my tongue. I look over and he is enjoying his fajita just as much. He says “You have to try the chicken.” He picks up a strip of chicken from the skillet and blows on it, “careful it’s hot.” He dangles the chicken over my mouth; I open wide and eat it in delight. It is tender and spicy. I can taste the chilli peppers and cayenne. “That’s delicious” I say with a smile. “It’s even better all put together, here” he says as he holds up his fajita. It is more neatly wrapped than mine and I can easily fit it into my mouth. I take a bite and he is right. It’s amazing. The cool spicy salsa and the tangy sour cream combine with the chicken to create a savory taste that I never want to fade. I hold it in my mouth and move my tongue to explore the flavors further. I swallow and smile, “That tastes incredible. Can you make me one just like it?” He smiles and sets to work. He holds up the finished product and I go to reach for it he pulls it away and smiles. I catch on to his game and lean in and close my eyes he brings the fajita to my mouth and I bite down. He smiles and says “Wouldn’t want you to get your hands dirty.”

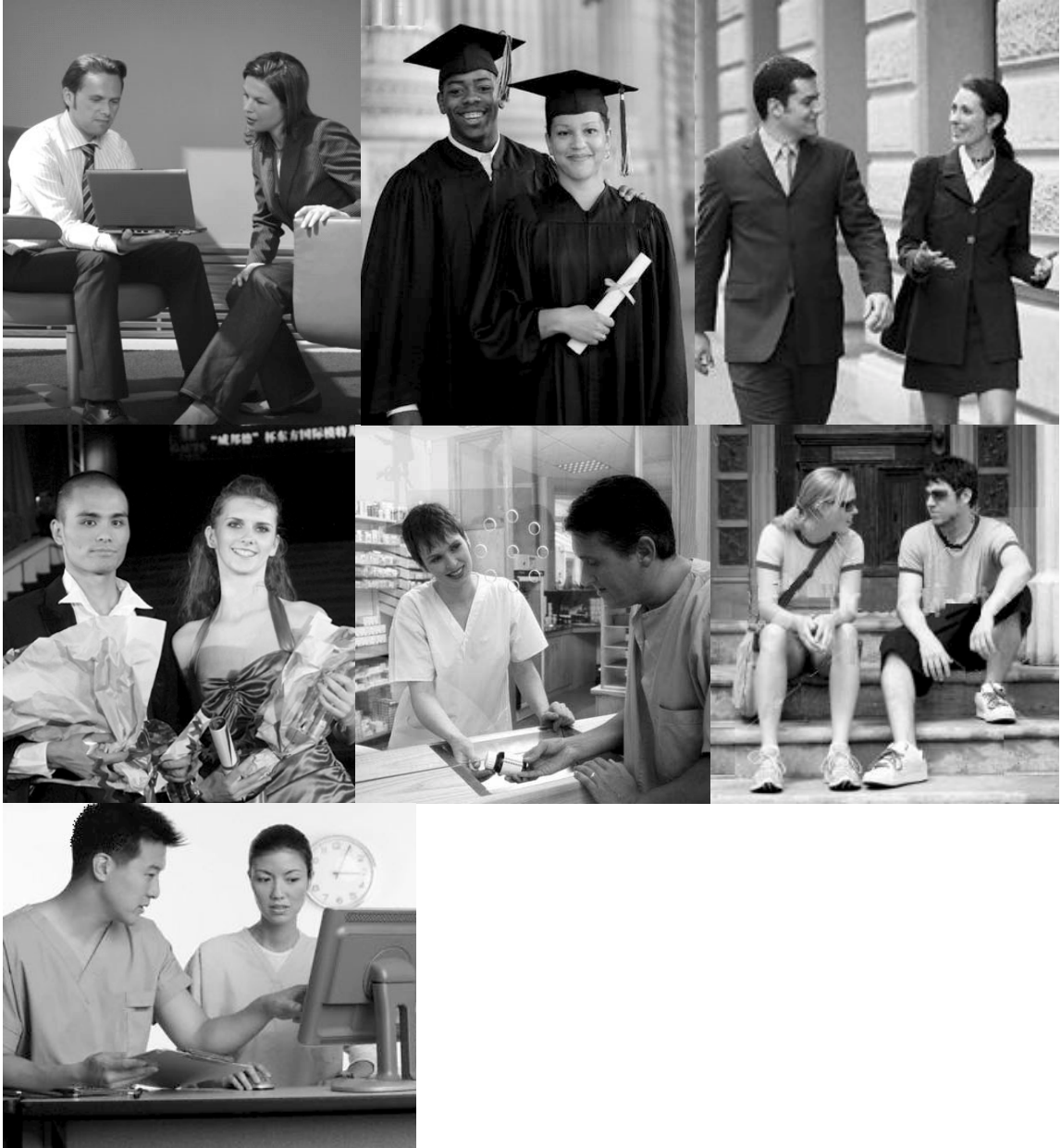
Feeding Story 6

We have used the same laundry mat for the past two years and we recently started to make small chat over the murmur of the machines. I was delighted when he asked me to meet him for wings the following week. As we walk into the dimly lit bar, I can smell the deep fried wings and the mingle of many sauces in the air. We take a seat in a leather covered booth and I order a dozen sea salt and pepper wings, another dozen of honey garlic with extra sauce on the side and a pitcher of beer to drink. He smiles with approval as he places his order. The waitress quickly returns with our four baskets and two pitchers. "You have to try the hot sauce, it's the best" he says. He takes a crisp wing from his basket and dips it in the tub of hot sauce. I cup my hand under his and bite through the tender chicken. The sauce overwhelms my mouth with intense flavors of cayenne, jalapeño and garlic. The chicken's moist, tender flesh releases another wave of savory flavor into my mouth as my teeth bear down upon it. I exhale strongly. "It's got some kick!" I say, "What's that?" gesturing to his second basket. "Five Spice wings" he says with a smile, "my favorite." He picks up a wing and swipes it against the paper in the basket to ensure it is sufficiently coated. I move closer and let him place the side of the wing in my mouth. I bite down and lick the sauce from the corner of lip. My mouth is inundated by flavors of sweet, sour, bitter, and salty. Good?" he asks. "It's amazing!" I reply. "What about yours?" he asks gesturing to my side of the table. I look down bewildered I had almost forgotten I had ordered anything at all. "Oh, I dip the sea salt and pepper wings into the honey garlic sauce" I say. He pauses to consider this, then reaches across the table and dips the wing in the sauce and holds it up for me. I take a bite and smile "my favorite."

APPENDIX C:

Complete Collection of Neutral, Sexual, and Feeding Still Images

Neutral



Sexual



Feeding



APPENDIX D:

Post-Stimuli Questions

The following questions were presented in a fixed order to participants after the presentation of each narrative. Participants were asked to use a scale of 1 through 9, with 1 indicating the lowest level of response and 9 indicating the highest level of response. For example, if a participant was asked the question “How sexually aroused do you feel?”, a response of 1 would mean that he or she was not sexually aroused at all and 9 would mean that he or she was extremely sexually aroused. Participants will respond to questions using a small keypad.

How sexually aroused did you feel during the story?

How sexually aroused did your genitals feel during the story?

How pleasant did you find the story?

How aversive did you find the story?

How anxious did you feel during the story?

How calm did you feel during the story?

APPENDIX E:

Questionnaire Package

Biographical Questionnaire

The following questions ask about your personal information. Please read each question carefully and either place a checkmark next to the answer that best describes you, or write your answer in the space provided. Remember, all of your answers are completely confidential.

1. Age: _____
2. Date of Birth (DD/MM/YY): _____
3. Relationship Status:

Single	Engaged
Married	Divorced
Dating	Widowed
Common Law	
4. If you are currently in a relationship please state the length of that relationship:
_____ years OR _____ months
5. How many children do you have? _____
6. Ethnic Background:

Caucasian	Asian
African American	Other (specify) _____
First Nations	
7. Highest Level of Education Completed:

Completed Grade 8	University – currently attending or completed bachelor's degree
Some high school completed (grades 9-11)	Graduate or professional school (M.A., Ph.D., M.B.A., M.D.) – currently attending or completed degree
Graduated from high school, or equivalent	
Vocational, trade or business school completed	
Community college – currently attending or completed diploma	
8. University/College Major _____ Year of Study _____ Overall GPA _____
9. Sexual Orientation:

Heterosexual	Homosexual
Bisexual	Other (please specify) _____
10. Which hand do you use predominantly to write with? Left Right
11. How many of the following do you have:

a. older brothers _____	b. younger brothers _____
c. older sisters _____	d. younger sisters _____

12. How many of the following are you **biologically** related to through your **mother**:
- a. older brothers _____ b. younger brothers _____
- c. older sisters _____ d. younger sisters _____

13. Are you currently employed at a paid job?

Yes, full-time

No, full-time homemaker

Yes, part-time

No, retired

No, full-time student

No, currently unemployed

If yes, what is your current position/title? _____

14. What is the total amount of money your household earned last year?

Less than \$10 000

\$40 001 to \$50 000

\$10 001 to \$20 000

\$50 001 to \$75 000

\$20 001 to \$30 000

\$75 000 to \$100 000

\$30 001 to \$40 000

More than \$100 000

15. What are your parents' occupations: Father _____ Mother _____

16. Did you use any of the following substances or beverages today? Please check all that apply.

Beverage containing caffeine
(e.g., coffee, tea, Coke,
Mountain Dew)

Alcohol

Marijuana

Tobacco

Other recreational drug

I did not use any of these
substances/beverages

17. Do you engage in regular physical activity?

Yes

No

18. If yes, how many times per week? _____

19. Did you engage in physical exercise today?

Yes

No

20. If Yes, how many hours did you exercise before coming into the laboratory today?

21. Do you have a history of mental illnesses?

Yes

No

22. If Yes please list them:

23. Do you currently have a sexually transmitted disease?

Yes

No

24. If Yes please list them:

25. Did you take any medications today?

Yes

No

26. If yes please list what you took:

Sexual History Questionnaire

The following questions ask about your romantic and sexual attractions, sexual contacts, and sexual identity, at various stages of your life. “Sexual contact” here refers to heavy petting, oral sex, and/or sexual intercourse. Please read each question carefully and read the options presented after each question. Please check the circle next to the response that best describes you. Remember, all of your answers are completely confidential.

Questions 1 through 3 are based on attractions, experiences, and fantasies you experienced between 12 and 18 years of age ONLY. When choosing your responses, please consider the response that best reflects how you would have answered the question when you were between 12 and 18 years of age.

1. Please think about the people you were typically romantically attracted to when you were between the ages of 12 and 18. By “romantically” attracted we mean a deep emotional connection that is more than friendship. Would you say that your romantic attractions are toward:

- Women only
- Women mostly, but men occasionally too
- Women mostly, but men frequently (but not more than toward women)
- Women and men about equally
- Men mostly, but women frequently (but not more than toward men)
- Men mostly, but women occasionally too
- Men only

2. Please think about the people you were typically sexually attracted to when you were between the ages of 12 and 18. By “sexually” attracted we mean you experience sexual desire or interest in someone. Would you say that your sexual attractions are toward:

- Women only
- Women mostly, but men occasionally too
- Women mostly, but men frequently (but not more than toward women)
- Women and men about equally
- Men mostly, but women frequently (but not more than toward men)
- Men mostly, but women occasionally too
- Men only

3. Please think about the people you typically had sexual fantasies about between the ages of 12 and 18. By a “sexual fantasy” we mean sexual scenarios or daydreams you think about, and may use when masturbating and/or having sex with a partner. Would you say your sexual fantasies are about:

- Women only
- Women mostly, but men occasionally too
- Women mostly, but men frequently (but not more than about women)

Women and men about equally
Men mostly, but women frequently (but not more than about men)
Men mostly, but women occasionally too
Men only

Questions 4 through 6 are based on attractions, experiences, and fantasies you experienced after the age of 18 ONLY. When choosing your responses, please consider the response that best reflects how you would have answered the question after the age of 18.

4. Please think about the people you were typically romantically attracted to when you were over the age of 18. By “romantically” attracted we mean a deep emotional connection that is more than friendship. Would you say that your romantic attractions are toward:

Women only
Women mostly, but men occasionally too
Women mostly, but men frequently (but not more than toward women)
Women and men about equally
Men mostly, but women frequently (but not more than toward men)
Men mostly, but women occasionally too
Men only

5. Please think about the people you were typically sexually attracted to when you were over the age of 18. By “sexually” attracted we mean you experience sexual desire or interest in someone. Would you say that your sexual attractions are toward:

Women only
Women mostly, but men occasionally too
Women mostly, but men frequently (but not more than toward women)
Women and men about equally
Men mostly, but women frequently (but not more than toward men)
Men mostly, but women occasionally too
Men only

6. Please think about the people you typically had sexual fantasies about when you were over the age of 18. By a “sexual fantasy” we mean sexual scenarios or daydreams you think about, and may use when masturbating and/or having sex with a partner. Would you say your sexual fantasies are about:

Women only
Women mostly, but men occasionally too
Women mostly, but men frequently (but not more than about women)
Women and men about equally
Men mostly, but women frequently (but not more than about men)
Men mostly, but women occasionally too
Men only

Questions 7 through 9 are based on attractions, experiences, and fantasies you experienced in the past 6 months ONLY. When choosing your responses, please consider the response that best reflects how you would have answered the question in the past 6 months.

7. Please think about the people you were typically romantically attracted to in the past 6 months. By “romantically” attracted we mean a deep emotional connection that is more than friendship. Would you say that your romantic attractions are toward:

- Women only
- Women mostly, but men occasionally too
- Women mostly, but men frequently (but not more than toward women)
- Women and men about equally
- Men mostly, but women frequently (but not more than toward men)
- Men mostly, but women occasionally too
- Men only

8. Please think about the people you were typically sexually attracted to in the past 6 months. By “sexually” attracted we mean you experience sexual desire or interest in someone. Would you say that your sexual attractions are toward:

- Women only
- Women mostly, but men occasionally too
- Women mostly, but men frequently (but not more than toward women)
- Women and men about equally
- Men mostly, but women frequently (but not more than toward men)
- Men mostly, but women occasionally too
- Men only

9. Please think about the people you typically have sexual fantasies about in the past 6 months. By a “sexual fantasy” we mean sexual scenarios or daydreams you think about, and may use when masturbating and/or having sex with a partner. Would you say your sexual fantasies are about:

- Women only
- Women mostly, but men occasionally too
- Women mostly, but men frequently (but not more than about women)
- Women and men about equally
- Men mostly, but women frequently (but not more than about men)
- Men mostly, but women occasionally too
- Men only

10. Now, please think about having sexual contact with a man. How sexually interested or excited do you feel by the thought of having sex with a man?

- | | |
|--------------|------------|
| Not at all | Definitely |
| A little bit | Extremely |
| Somewhat | |

11. Keep thinking about having sexual contact with a man. How “turned-off” or disgusted do you feel by the idea of having sex with a man?

Not at all

Definitely

A little bit

Extremely

Somewhat

12. Now, please think about having sexual contact with a woman. How sexually interested or excited do you feel by the thought of having sex with a woman?

Not at all

Definitely

A little bit

Extremely

Somewhat

13. Keep thinking about having sexual contact with a woman. How “turned off” or disgusted do you feel by the idea of having sex with a woman?

Not at all

Definitely

A little bit

Extremely

Somewhat

14. Do you define your sexual identity as...

Homosexual

Asexual

Bisexual

Other, please

Heterosexual

specify _____

15. Have you ever had sexual contact with a man? Yes No

16. If yes, with how many men have you had sexual contact? _____

17. How old were you when you first had sexual contact with a man? _____

18. Have you ever had sexual contact with a woman? Yes No

19. If yes, with how many women have you had sexual contact? _____

20. How old were you when you first had sexual contact with a woman? _____

21. My longest relationship (including current) lasted _____ years OR _____ months

22. What is your current sexual relationship status?

I’m in an exclusive or monogamous sexual relationship

I’m in a non-exclusive or non-monogamous sexual relationship

I’m not in a sexual relationship

23. Is your current sexual partner... A woman A man No current sexual partner

24. What best describes your gender? Masculine Feminine Other _____

25. How often do you look at sexual pictures or films? (please select only one)

I have never seen sexual
pictures or films

Once per month

I have seen sexual pictures or
films once or twice but do not
use them regularly

Once per week

Once a day

Several times a week

Less than once per month

Several times a day

26. Have you seen sexual pictures or films depicting a woman and man having oral and vaginal sex? Yes No
27. Have you seen sexual pictures or films depicting two women having oral and vaginal sex? Yes No
28. Have you seen sexual pictures or films depicting two men having oral and anal sex? Yes No
29. How many days or hours has it been since you last had sexual contact with a partner?
 ____ days OR ____ hours
30. How many days or hours has it been since you last masturbated? ____ days OR
 ____ hours

For questions 31 and 46, please consider an average month from the past year.

31. How many times, per month, do you typically desire sexual contact with partner?

32. How many times, per month, do you typically have sexual contact with a partner?

33. How often do you find yourself thinking about sex with interest or desire?
- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| Never | Several times a week |
| Less than once per month | Once per day |
| Once per month | Several times per day |
| Once per week | |
34. How often do you have trouble becoming or staying mentally sexually aroused?
- | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Never | About half of the time |
| Less than half of the time | More than half of the time |
| | All of the time |
35. How often do you have trouble becoming or staying physically sexually aroused?
- | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Never | About half of the time |
| Less than half of the time | More than half of the time |
| | All of the time |
36. How happy are you with the quality of your sex life? By “sex life” we mean all your sexual outlets, both with partners and without.
- | |
|-------------------------|
| Very unhappy |
| Somewhat unhappy |
| Neutral – neither happy |
| nor unhappy |
| Somewhat happy |
| Very happy |

The following questions ask about your sexual interactions in the *past month* (i.e., 30 days). Please list the number of times you engaged in each behavior or activity.

37. You engaged in penile-vaginal intercourse _____ times.
38. You achieved an orgasm from penile-vaginal intercourse (in the absence of other stimulation) _____ times.
39. You achieved an orgasm from penile-vaginal intercourse (in the presence of other stimulation) _____ times.
40. You engaged in anal sex _____ times.
41. You achieved an orgasm from anal sex (in the absence of direct vaginal stimulation) _____ times.
42. You achieved an orgasm from anal sex (in the presence of direct vaginal stimulation) _____ times.
43. You engaged in non-coital partnered sexual activities (e.g., receiving or giving oral sex, receiving or giving manual sex, etc.) _____ times.
44. You achieved an orgasm from non-coital partnered sexual activities _____ times.
45. You masturbated _____ times.
46. You achieved an orgasm from masturbating _____ times.

Food & Sex Questionnaire

How often do you use food during sexual activity?

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6
Never Rarely Sometimes Often Usually Always

Does using food during sexual activity increase your sexual arousal?

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6
Never Rarely Sometimes Often Usually Always

How often do you eat when you are sexually aroused?

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6
Never Rarely Sometimes Often Usually Always

How often are you sexually aroused by eating?

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6
Never Rarely Sometimes Often Usually Always

How often do you feel sexually satisfied after eating?

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6
Never Rarely Sometimes Often Usually Always

How often do you eat food as an alternative to sex?

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6
Never Rarely Sometimes Often Usually Always

How often do you find the feeling of being full sexually satisfying?

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6
Never Rarely Sometimes Often Usually Always

How often are you sexually aroused by being fed?

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6
Never Rarely Sometimes Often Usually Always

How often do you find the idea of being fed sexually arousing?

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6
Never Rarely Sometimes Often Usually Always

How often are you sexually aroused by gaining weight?

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Usually Always

How often do you find the *idea* of gaining weight sexually arousing?

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6
Never Rarely Sometimes Often Usually Always

How often are you sexually aroused by rubbing your belly?

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6
Never Rarely Sometimes Often Usually Always

How often are you sexually aroused by having your belly rubbed by someone else?

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6
Never Rarely Sometimes Often Usually Always

How much do you currently weigh? _____ lbs

How much would you like to weigh (goal weight)? _____ lbs

What foods do you use during sexual activity, if any?

Do you identify as any of the following? Circle all that apply.

Fat admirer Feedee Feeder Foodee

(BBW) Big Beautiful Woman (BHM) Big Handsome Male

APPENDIX F:
Telephone Script

Screening Procedure

Preliminary information:

“The purpose of this study is to investigate women and men’s sexual arousal, more specifically the relationship between sexual arousal in response to different sexual and food stories. If you decide to participate in this study, you will come to a laboratory at the University of Lethbridge. In the laboratory, you will complete several questionnaires and listen to several stories while your sexual arousal is measured using medical instruments. Would you be interested in finding out more about the study?”

(if no): The individual will be thanked for his or her interest in the study.

(if yes): “To make sure you are eligible to participate in this study, I am going to read a list of things that must be true for you in order to be eligible to participate. If one or more of these criteria is not true for you, then you are not eligible to participate in this study. You do not need to tell me which one is not true, just let me know at the end of the list if you are or are not eligible. Do you understand?”

List of statements:

(W) = questions only women are asked

(M) = questions only men are asked

(*) = questions both women and men are asked

- 1.(*) You are between 18 and 35 years of age.
- 2.(W) Your menstrual cycle is regular (longer than 25 days and shorter than 32 days).
- 3.(W) You are not currently pregnant or trying to conceive a child.
- 4.(*) You have NO children.
- 5.(W) Your sexual attractions are most often directed toward men.
- 6.(M) Your sexual attractions are most often directed toward women.
- 7.(*) You do not have a history of serious mental illness.
- 8.(*) You do not have a history of substance abuse.
- 9.(W) You do not have difficulty becoming sexually aroused (lubricated or “wet”) more than half of the time.
10. (M) You do not have difficulty having or keeping an erection more than half of the time.

11. (*) You are not currently taking any of the following types of medications:
medications to treat a mental illness, medications to treat high blood pressure,
medications to treat a cold or allergy, or medications to treat sexual dysfunctions.
12. (*) You do not have a sexually transmitted disease.
13. (*) You speak or write English fluently.
14. (*) You have had sexual intercourse before.
15. (*) You have watched erotic movies or looked at erotic magazines.

“Are all of these statements true for you?”

If no (the individual meets one or more exclusion criteria), s/he will be thanked for their interest in the study.

If yes (the individual does not meet any exclusion criteria), the following will be read:

Detailed study information:

“Now I’m going to tell you more about the study so you can decide if you want to participate. If you participate in this study, you will listen to several stories while your physical sexual arousal and your feelings of sexual arousal are measured.

(for men) We will measure your physical sexual arousal while you listen to the stories using a penile gauge. This instrument is a small rubber band that goes around the middle of your penis. It measures changes in the penis during erection. In a private room, you will undress from the waist down and put on the gauge yourself. Most men say the gauge is not uncomfortable and that they can’t tell they are wearing the gauge once it is on. You will rate your subjective sexual arousal, or how “turned on” you feel by the stories by pressing a button on a computer keypad.

(for women) We will measure your physical sexual arousal while you listen to the stories with an instrument called a vaginal gauge. This instrument is a small, plastic, tampon-shaped probe about 5cm long and 1.2 cm wide. In a private room, you will undress from the waist down and insert the gauge into your vagina yourself. Most women say the probe is not uncomfortable and that they can’t tell they are using the gauge once they have inserted it. You will rate your subjective sexual arousal, or how “turned on” you feel by the stories by pressing a button on a keypad.

The stories you will listen to describe a male and a female interacting in a variety of scenarios. In some of the stories, the man and woman are engaging in sexual activities. In other stories, you will hear descriptions of a man and a woman eating food together.

After each story, you will answer questions asking about your sexual and emotional reactions to the story.

When you've finished listening to all of the stories, you will be asked to complete several questionnaires, in private, asking about your sexuality and personality.

Even if you agree to participate and come to our lab, you are free to change your mind at any point. The whole procedure takes about one and a half hours. As a thank you for your time, you will receive \$50.

All the information that you provide during the study is strictly confidential and we have safeguards in place to protect your anonymity. Are you interested in participating?"

For women – determining menstrual cycle

"I need to ask you some questions about your menstrual cycle so you aren't having your period when you participate in the study. Is that okay?"

- 1) How long (in days), on average, is your monthly cycle? (From the beginning of one period to the next?)
- 2) How many days do you typically menstruate/bleed for?
- 3) When did your last period begin?

Restrictions

On the day of testing, please avoid the following:

- 1) physical exercise of all types for one hour.
- 2) using alcohol, tobacco products, caffeine, cold medications, or recreational drugs.
- 3) do not eat for two hours before testing session.

Also, please refrain from engaging in sexual activity of all types for 24 hours prior to the testing session.

APPENDIX G:

Room Script

The purpose of the experiment is to look at sexual arousal. While you are listening to a variety of short stories, your physical and self-reported sexual arousal will be measured.

WOMEN – This is the device that will be used to measure your physical sexual arousal. It is called a vaginal probe. You will insert the probe into your vagina in private. The vaginal probe measures the amount of blood that is flowing in your genitals, as the amount of blood that is flowing in that area is determined by how aroused you are. There is a tiny light that lights up the vaginal wall and the blood that is flowing within the vaginal wall. This light is then reflected back to a small light detector in the probe, depending on how dark the vaginal wall is with blood, and is a measure of how aroused you are.

MEN – This is the device that will be used to measure your physical sexual arousal. It is called a penile gauge. You will place the gauge onto the middle of your penis in private. The penile gauge measures changes in the penis that occur during erection.

Description of Procedure

The experiment is broken into two parts. During the first part of the study, you will listen to various short stories while your physical and emotional sexual arousal are measured. During the second part of the study, you will complete several questionnaires that ask about your personality and sexual history.

This room will be locked while the experimental procedures are going on. There are no mirrors or cameras in the room. There is one window at the back of the room with a set of blinds on both sides that will remain down at all times. Throughout the experiment I will be in a separate room. You can ask me questions throughout the experiment through an intercom system. You do not have to push a button for the intercom to work, just simply say something out loud, and I will be able to hear you. I will respond to your questions using text messages that will appear on the computer monitor. I may not be able to answer you immediately after you ask a question or say something to me, but I will always be in the room next to you, and will respond as soon as possible. Please note that you are allowed to stop the experiment at any time you would like to.

DESCRIPTION OF PART ONE – LISTENING TO THE STORIES

Before the experiment begins, I will ask you to use the washroom down the hall. After you have returned and are seated in the recliner, you will put on these headphones and insert/attach the genital gauge. Once you are comfortably seated in the recliner with the headphones and gauge in place, you will listen to a variety of stories, each two minutes

long, and answer a series of questions after each story. This portion of the experiment will take approximately one hour to complete.

The stories that you will listen to all describe interactions between a man and a woman. Some of these stories describe sexual interactions between the man and the woman and in other stories, the man will be feeding the woman a variety of foods.

While you are listening to the stories, please rate your mental sexual arousal or how “turned on” you feel by pressing a button on the keypad that is on the arm of the chair. If you are feeling more aroused as the story progresses, then you will press the up button, indicating that you are more aroused, and if you are feeling less aroused, then you will press the down button. Please remember to continually rate your mental sexual arousal throughout the whole story. You can think of the lowest level of the bar to be 1 and the highest level to be 9. 1 reflects no arousal at all and 9 is equal to the level of arousal you associate with orgasm. Please remember that there is no correct response, and just try to respond as honestly as possible.

At the end of each story, you will be asked several questions about your responses to the story. You will use the same keypad that you used to rate your emotional sexual arousal during the stories to answer these questions. To answer these questions, you will use a scale of 1 to 9. 1 is the lowest level of response, meaning that the emotion or feeling is not at all present. 5 is the moderate or average level of response, meaning that the emotion or feeling is present, but not extremely high or low. 9 is the highest level of response, meaning that the emotion or feeling is definitely present. For example, if you were asked how pleasant you found the story, and you thought it was very pleasant to listen to, you would respond with an 8 or 9, because those numbers mean that you thought the story was very pleasant to listen to. To answer, press a number on the keypad and then hit OK. The instructions for these questions are also on the poster beside the monitor.

Here are the questions that you will be asked. Do you have any questions about them? (show participant a list of question to make sure they make sense)

Please remember that there are no right or wrong answers to these questions. Try to answer the questions as honestly as possible. Also, after you have finished answering the questions for a story, please return the subjective sexual arousal bar to the starting position.

Between stories you may be asked to complete simple tasks, like read from a magazine out loud, or count backwards from 100. Sometimes there is a lot of time between stories and we don’t want you to get bored.

WOMEN- After you have heard all of the stories, a message will appear on your screen telling you that this portion of the experiment is over. You can remove the probe and place it in the re-sealable plastic bag that is in the black case. After you have removed the probe, you can get dressed and sit down at the black desk.

MEN- After you have heard all of the stories, a message will appear on your screen telling you that this portion of the experiment is over. You can remove the gauge and place it in the re-sealable plastic bag that is in the black case. After you have removed the gauge, you can get dressed and sit down at the black desk.

DESCRIPTION OF PART TWO – QUESTIONNAIRES AND OTHER MEASURES

Once you have re-dressed, I will enter the room with your permission and ask you if you would like to use the washroom or take a short break. If you wish to use the washroom and/or take a short break you may do so. When you return, I will explain the next portion of the experiment to you, and leave while you complete the questionnaire package. After you have finished the questionnaire package, we will go to the experimenter room where you will receive \$50 as a thank you for your time.

Inserting/Attaching the Gauge

WOMEN- Before I leave the room and lock the door, I will turn off the overhead lights, as the light may interfere with the signal from the vaginal probe. It is all right to leave the small lamp on. Once I have left the room, please undress from the waist down, leaving your underwear around your ankles. After you have undressed, please sit in the recliner in the fully reclined position. To do this, you will need to pull on the handle on the right hand side of the chair, and then grip the arms (while seated in the chair) and push backwards. Once you have the chair in the fully reclined position, you can take the probe out of the black case on the table beside the chair. To insert the probe, lie back in the recliner and gently insert the probe so that the curved part of the placement device is facing up. Your labia should be touching the placement device. After you have inserted the probe, carefully pull your underwear up, but please don't sit up fully, as this can reposition the probe. There is a light blanket that you can use to cover your legs with for this portion of the experiment. Place the headphones on your ears and say "ready" when you are ready to begin the experiment.

MEN- Before I leave the room and lock the door, I will turn off the overhead lights. It is all right to leave the small lamp on. After I leave, please undress from the waist down. After you have undressed, please sit in the recliner in the fully reclined position. To do this, you will need to pull on the handle on the right hand side of the chair, and then grip the arms (while seated in the chair) and push backwards. Once you have the chair in the fully reclined position, you can take the penile gauge out of the black case on the table beside the chair. To attach the gauge, lie back in the recliner and gently stretch the

rubber and place it directly on the midshaft of your penis. Do not roll the gauge down as this will damage the gauge. Please try to place the cable from the penile gauge on your leg, so that there is no stretch in the cable. There is a light blanket that you can use to cover your lower legs with for this portion of the experiment. Place the headphones on your ears and say “ready” when you are ready to begin the experiment.

How to Sit

While you are listening to the stories, you should be fully reclined in the recliner with your legs about shoulder-width apart and covered with a blanket. It is important that you try to sit as still as possible throughout this portion of the experiment, as movements can interfere with the measurements I am taking. If you have to move during this part of the experiment, please try to avoid doing so during the stories. Also, please try to avoid any voluntary genital contractions as they will interfere with the device.

Please try to avoid talking or coughing during the stories, as well, as this can interfere with the measurements I am taking. If you do need to move or cough, please let me know, and I will make a note of it. If you are uncomfortable and wish to stop the experiment, however, please let me know immediately and we will stop.

Cleaning of the Gauge/Room

The instruments that we use to measure sexual arousal are re-used. Each device goes through a thorough high-level disinfectant process that is identical to the process used to clean plastic medical devices in a hospital. This vigorous cleaning process virtually eliminates any chance of contracting a disease.

Likewise, all surfaces that participants come into contact with are wiped with hydrogen peroxide swabs that kill any bacteria present. This includes the recliner (arms, seat, back, lever), headphones, keypad, desk, doorknob, etc. The sheets and blankets are washed after every use.

Overview of Procedure

- Consent
- Rest room
- experimenter leaves room
- undress from the waist down
- attach/insert genital gauge while reclined in chair
- cover up with blanket
- say ready
- listen to stories, rate emotions/arousal
- re-dress
- experimenter re-enters room with permission; offers participant a break and then discusses questionnaires

- complete questionnaire package
- experimenter re-enters room with permission and escorts participant to experimenter room
- debriefing/compensation

Explanation of Questionnaire Package (to be completed once all stories have been presented and the participant has had a chance to use the washroom).

There is an envelope with a questionnaire package inside of it on the desk. Please complete the questionnaires as honestly as possible. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask me through the intercom system and I will answer them using text messages that will appear on the computer screen. If there are questions that you do not feel comfortable answering, I will ask you to place a star by them or put a slash through them, to signal that you have seen the question, but did not want to answer it. After you have finished the questionnaires, you will place the questionnaire package into the envelope you found it in, seal it, and place the sealed envelope into a box underneath the desk.

APPENDIX H:

Consent Form

Primary Researcher: Lesley Terry, BA (MSc Candidate)

Co-researcher: Dr. Paul Vasey (Supervisor)

You are being invited to take part in a research study that involves measuring your genital sexual arousal and your feelings of sexual arousal to a variety of stories. The study involves answering questionnaires about your sexuality, as well as answering questions about your reactions to the stories. Your participation in the study will inform researchers about the nature of sexual arousal in women and men.

What will happen

Before you complete this consent form you will have a chance to look at the testing room and the genital gauges and to ask any questions.

You will be able to do both parts of this study in about 2 hours. We are looking for 15 men and 15 women to participate in this study.

The first part of the study involves measuring your genital and emotional sexual arousal responses to a variety of stories. The stories describe interactions between a man and a woman. Some of the stories are sexual while others describe a man and a woman eating a variety of foods.

The experimenter will explain how to use the equipment to measure your genital responses. Once you understand how to do this, you will be left alone in a private testing room, undress from the waist down, and attach the genital gauge. If you are male, you will put the strain gauge on the shaft of your penis. If you are female, you will insert the device into your vagina. The experimenter will guide you through the first part of the study from a separate room, using an intercom and text messages that will appear on the monitor in front of you. You will listen to 18 stories that are about two minutes long each. After each story, you will be asked to answer questions regarding your sexual arousal and responses to the story. After you have listened to all of the stories, you will remove the genital gauge, place it in a plastic bag, and re-dress.

The second part of the study involves completing questionnaires about yourself, including your sexuality. You will complete questionnaires asking about your personal information (age, marital status, etc.), sexual experiences, sexual behaviours, sexual relationships, sexual orientation, typical relationship with food, and various personality traits. You will complete these questionnaires in a private room.

Compensation

You will be reimbursed for your time. You will receive \$50 to reimburse your travel costs to the university and your time during the questionnaires and arousal assessment.

Risks

You may feel awkward using the genital gauge, especially if you are not comfortable touching your genitals and/or if you do not use menstrual tampons (women). You may feel uncomfortable listening to the stories, especially if you find sexually explicit content unappealing.

The genital gauges are reused and go through an extensive cleaning and high-level disinfection process between uses. High-level disinfection is a common and safe way of disinfecting instruments made of plastics (it is the same procedure used to disinfect vaginal ultrasound probes in hospitals and gynecological clinics). This procedure virtually eliminates all risks of transmission of infections.

Right to Withdraw

Your participation in the study is completely voluntary. If at any point in the study you wish to stop participating, simply tell the researcher and the experiment will be stopped. You will not experience any negative consequences for your withdrawal. You will be compensated in full. Any data that was collected up until you decided to withdraw will be destroyed.

Possible benefits

There are no direct benefits to you from participating in this study. Your participation will, however, inform future research in the study of sexual arousal.

Privacy and confidentiality

Only the experimenters will have access to information about your identity. All of the information that you have given during the experiment will be stored anonymously. When you entered the study, you were assigned a participant identification number and all information you provided is only identified by this number, not your name. All electronic records will be stored on a non-network computer (i.e., not connected to the internet), and any paper records will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in a locked office. Your name will never be mentioned in any publications, papers, or presentations that come from this study. Only the investigators will have access to your data.

Dissemination of Results

The data from this study will likely be presented in group form, but possibly in individual form, as well. Regardless of the form of presentation, the data will never be presented with personal information, such as your name. The results from the study will likely be presented in several formats, including journal articles, oral presentations, and poster presentations.

If you have other questions

If you have any questions about this study or would like information about the results of the study, please contact the researcher in charge of the study, Lesley Terry, at the University of Lethbridge, (403) 317-5029. Questions regarding your rights as a participant may be addressed to the Office of Research Services, University of Lethbridge (403) 329-2747.

Signatures

To be entered into the study, you must indicate your consent below.

- ☐ I have received answers to all of my questions to my satisfaction,
- ☐ I understand that I may freely choose to stop being a part of this study at any time,
- ☐ I agree to be part of this research study and to follow the study procedures.

and am showing my consent to participate by signing here:

_____	_____
Name of participant (please print clearly)	Date

Signature of participant	
_____	_____
Signature of individual obtaining consent	Date

APPENDIX I:

Debriefing Form

Purposes of the Study

The link between food and female sexuality is widely represented in popular culture. It has been examined through a variety of disciplines (i.e., history, mythology, biology, bio-chemistry, pharmacology, sociology and psychology). However, despite the overwhelming interest and acceptance of the interaction between food and arousability, there has never been a study that has examined the relationship between food and female sexual arousal using psychophysiological measures. The main purpose of this study is to determine whether or not such a relationship does in fact exist by testing whether women will exhibit similar genital responses to stories about food as they do in response to stories about sexual activity.

As a bonus to our primary purpose, this study will also provide insight about a small group of women known as “Feedees”, who claim explicit sexual arousal in response to food and food activities (i.e., eating and being fed). If women from the general population do not exhibit sexual arousal in response to food then this would require further research to explain the unique relationship between food and sex among “Feedees” as a unique population. However, if we can demonstrate that it is possible for women from the general population to exhibit sexual arousal in response to food we may be able to conclude that “Feedees” simply have a hyperactive sexual preference or fetish specific to food. Furthermore, this may be the first example of a female fetish where there is concordance between their subjective and physical arousal. Concordance was tested by having you rate your subjective arousal during and after the presentation of the stories and comparing those responses to the measures of your physical arousal to see if they are consistent.

In conclusion, the results of the current study will examine a new area of female sexual arousal that has never been examined. The findings of this study may be used in the future to inform theories that explain patterns in female sexual arousal, fetishism, concordance and eating disorders. If you would like the results of the current study please email the primary researcher indicating your request or leave your email address with the primary researcher prior to leaving the lab.

Note:

Please note that the stories that you listened to in the experiment were not based on real events. The stories were constructed to test specific scientific questions. If you are upset or disturbed by the stories that you’ve heard, please do not hesitate to contact the researchers. **LIKEWISE, IF YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT YOUR RESPONSES TO THE VARIOUS STORIES THAT YOU HAVE HEARD, PLEASE CONTACT THE RESEARCHERS. SEE THE CONTACT INFORMATION BELOW.**

Also if you would like to speak to a trained professional about any of the topics involved in this study please contact any of the following helplines:

Womanspace Resource Centre	403-329-8338
Women's Emergency Shelter	403-320-1881
Lethbridge Family Services	403-327-5724
Multicultural Women's Centre	403-329-3960
BC Eating Disorders Help Line	1-800-665-1822
Canadian Mental Health 24 Hr Distress Line	403-327-7905

Thank you

Thank you for participating in this study. Your time and effort is greatly appreciated. Because the study is ongoing, we ask you not to tell others about the specific research questions of the study.

If you have any further comments or questions about this research project, please contact Lesley Terry by e-mail at lesley.terry@uleth.ca or by telephone at (403) 524-3706 or (403) 317-5029 or Dr. Paul Vasey by e-mail at paul.vasey@uleth.ca or by telephone at (403) 329-2407.