What's Non-Deviant Sex? An Overview of Sexual Development and Adult Sexual Behavior

Michael H. Miner, Ph.D., L.P.
Program in Human Sexuality
Department of Family Medicine and Community Health
University of Minnesota

Goals

- Briefly review expected behaviors during childhood
- Explore adolescent sexual development
- Explore what latest population surveys tell us about normative adult sexual behavior

Children from birth to age 2 may:

- Explore body parts, including genitals
- Positive or negative attitudes about their bodies develop
- Boys have erections and girls lubricate
- Develop a gender identity
- Learn expected roles for boys and girls

Children at ages 3-4 may:

- Become very sexually curious
- Become aware of male and female differences
- Touch themselves and learn how to masturbate
- Play doctor, house and other forms of sexual play with friends, siblings
- Engage in sexual rehearsal play

Children at ages 5-8 may:

- Continue sexual play and masturbation
- Become curious about pregnancy and birth
- Have strong same-sex friendships
- Have “puppy-love” romances
- Sex roles can be very stereotyped
- Develop a basic sexual orientation

Children at ages 8-12 may:

- Enter puberty, especially girls; early development might be perceived more positively by boys than girls
- Development of feelings of modesty
- Have romantic crushes on friends, older teens, pop stars, teachers and doctors
- Experience emotional ups and downs
Children at ages 8-12 may:
- Respond to peer pressure; feelings of difference and awkwardness
- Engage in name-calling and teasing
- Become acutely aware of bodily changes
- Face decision-making regarding sexual activity, alcohol, drug use
- Initiate sexual intercourse - some by 12

Puberty versus Adolescence
- Puberty
  - Secondary sex characteristics
  - Physical maturation
- Adolescence
  - Psychosocial process
  - Mental and social growth
  - Erotic and romantic feelings
  - Interpersonal and relationship skills

Adolescence = Experimentation
- To learn about myself
- To learn about others
- To learn how to be intimate
- To learn to feel sexually competent
- To explore sexuality and intimacy (often through trial and error)

Adolescent Sexual Behavior
Zimmer-Gembeck & Helfand (2008) review
- Age at first intercourse
  - 15-35% initiate intercourse by the end of 8th grade
  - 70-90% of 15-17 year olds have experienced sexual intercourse
  - First intercourse most common between ages 16 and 17. Median just over 16 years.
- Compared to white adolescents:
  - Earlier onset for Black males, not females
  - Earlier onset for Latin Americans
- 5-10% of males and 6% of females report having same sex sexual experiences (Estleman & Friedrich, 2002).

Adolescent Sexual Behavior
Zimmer-Gembeck & Helfand (2008) review
- Early initiation related to peer problem behaviors.
- Peer relationships more positive in girls who have first intercourse in middle adolescence.
- Relationship factors:
  - Sexual intercourse increases 2-5 times when in steady relationship
  - In boys: History of romantic relationship
  - In girls: Frequency of dating without others present
  - In both: Dated more frequently and currently dating
Involvement in Non-Romantic Sexual Behavior (Manning et al., 2004)
- N=7470 of whom 2821 (38%) were sexually active between interview waves
- Of those sexually active:
  - 23.8% had only non-romantic partners
  - 62.5% had only romantic partners
  - 14% had both romantic and non-romantic partners
- Demographics:
  - 54% female
  - Average age: 16.2
  - 84.6% white, 10.6% Black, 10.8% Latino/Latina, 6.3% other
  - 48% intact biological family

Involvement in Non-Romantic Sexual Behavior (Manning et al., 2004)
- Less likely to be sexually active with non-romantic partners:
  - Religion reported as important
  - Older teens
  - Family caring
  - Self esteem

Adult Sexual Behavior
Results from the National Health and Social Life Survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Partners Last 12 Months (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Age at First Intercourse

Note: This includes respondents who had vaginal intercourse but were not yet twenty-five and who have reached their twenty-fifth birthday by the date of the interview. Missing age of onset indicates insufficient number of cases for a particular category (less than 10). Rates computed from cross-sectional sample, not repeated measures of individual respondents.

Michael O'Gara, Laurenzo, & Kikita, 1984
### Number of Partners Since Age 18 (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2-4</th>
<th>5-10</th>
<th>11-20</th>
<th>21+</th>
<th>Median</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Pop.</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>26.1</td>
<td>29.5</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>29.9</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>31.5</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2</td>
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</table>

### Age:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>18-24</th>
<th>25-34</th>
<th>35-54</th>
<th>50-64</th>
<th>55+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>32.1</td>
<td>31.5</td>
<td>33.9</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Comparison of U.S. with Selected European Countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Number of Partners Last 12 Months (%)</th>
<th>Number of Partners Lifetime (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NHSLS</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>68.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.K.</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>73.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>77.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>70.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Simultaneous and One-Time Encounters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of Partners Past 12 months</th>
<th>% with any Simultaneity</th>
<th>% with any One-time partners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6+</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Sexual Behavior of Married Couples

- 40% have sex two or more times per week
- 47% have sex a few times per month
- 80% of women and 65-85% of men of every age report no extramarital sexual partners during their marriage
- Masturbation in the past 12 months
  - 43% of men reported no masturbation
  - 16% reported masturbation at least once per week
  - 63% of women reported no masturbation
  - 5% reported at least once per week

### Percent of First Unions That Were Formal Marriages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cohort</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1933-42</td>
<td>63.6</td>
<td>93.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1943-52</td>
<td>69.7</td>
<td>78.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953-62</td>
<td>46.9</td>
<td>57.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963-74</td>
<td>34.3</td>
<td>36.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Percent Reporting Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual Identity and Same Sex Behavior

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Males</th>
<th></th>
<th>Females</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-Identification</td>
<td>Sexual Behavior-Lifetime</td>
<td>Self-Identification</td>
<td>Sexual Behavior-Lifetime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homosexual</td>
<td>4 (2)</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>2 (9)</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bisexual</td>
<td>6 (6)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>3 (5)</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Selected Sexual Practices (% Lifetime Experience)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Population</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>76.4</td>
<td>69.9</td>
<td>74.2</td>
<td>74.7</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>15.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-24</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>77.1</td>
<td>69.8</td>
<td>75.4</td>
<td>76.2</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-39</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>78.1</td>
<td>73.9</td>
<td>76.4</td>
<td>76.2</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>19.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-59</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>78.9</td>
<td>79.9</td>
<td>81.1</td>
<td>81.3</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>18.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-69</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>79.2</td>
<td>77.4</td>
<td>77.6</td>
<td>77.9</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>22.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-79</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>48.5</td>
<td>59.4</td>
<td>50.6</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-89</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>53.4</td>
<td>38.9</td>
<td>58.0</td>
<td>44.3</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Percent Rating Practice as Very Appealing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practice</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vaginal Intercourse</td>
<td>83.8</td>
<td>78.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching Partner Undress</td>
<td>47.6</td>
<td>26.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receiving Oral Sex</td>
<td>40.4</td>
<td>29.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giving Oral Sex</td>
<td>35.6</td>
<td>18.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Sex</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anus Stimulated by Partner</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stimulate Partner's Anus</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using Dildo or Vibrator</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching Others having Sex</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same-Gender Partner</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex with a Stranger</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active Anal Sex</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passive Anal Sex</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Sexual Fantasy

Leitenberg & Henning (1995)
- 85.9% of men and 68.8% of women said they ever fantasized during masturbation.
- No gender difference in percent reporting fantasizing during intercourse

### Sexual Fantasy

Leitenberg & Henning (1995) Men report 4.5 externally triggered fantasies per day, 2.7 internally triggered fantasies.
- Women report 2.5 externally triggered fantasies, 2.5 internally triggered fantasies
- Data do not indicate an increase in fantasy to compensate for lack of sexual activity

### Sexual Fantasy

- Men's sexual fantasies
  - More active and focus on woman's body
  - Focus on explicit sexual acts, nude bodies and physical gratification
  - More multiple partners and group sex
  - Dominance

- Women's sexual fantasies
  - More passive and focus on men's interest in their bodies
  - Emotion context and romance
  - Submission

Leitenberg & Henning (1995)

### Dominance/Submissive Fantasies

- While difference in men and women, may indirectly serve the same purpose: affirming sexual power and irresistibility.
- For men, force overwhelms the woman so that she cannot resist desiring him.
- For women, physical attributes and personality overwhelm the man so that he cannot resist desiring her.

Leitenberg & Henning (1995)
Summary

- Prior to puberty, there are behaviors that set the stage for appropriate sexual development.
- Sexual behavior is normative in adolescents, with almost all having initiated sexual intercourse prior to age 19.
- Early onset of sexual behavior, before age 16, is associated with other risky behavior, especially in boys and emotional problems in girls.
- Late onset of sexual behavior, after age 18, appears associated with increased anxiety in boys (Causal?)
- While most adolescent sexual behavior occurs within the context of dating/romantic relationships, there is a substantial amount of sexual behavior outside of such relationships.
- Sex outside romantic relationships more likely in boys and clusters with other risk factors.

- Data shows a change in sexual practices between those born prior to 1953 and those born from 1953 on.
- The age of sexual initiation has decreased over time, with women approaching men, at least in non-whites, in age at first sexual intercourse.
- U.S. sexual behavior is more similar, at least in terms of number of sexual partners, to European countries than different.
- Infidelity within relationships is very infrequent.
- There are numerous indications that sexuality differs in men and women.

- It appears that sexual intercourse is preferred over other behaviors in both men and women, although almost all men and women have experienced oral sex.
- Anal sex is not as infrequent as might be expected.
  - The bump seen in men ages 35-50 might reflect changes in attitudes toward homosexuality.
- The data available for adult sexual behavior is over a decade old.

Normative Sexual Behavior appears to be:

- Within a romantic relationship
- Includes sexual intercourse and oral sex
- Median lifetime sexual partners in 9 with very few men having more than 20.
- Very few women have more than 10 lifetime partners.
- As number of partners increases, so does the probability of having concurrent sexual relationships and one-night stands.
- Substantial numbers of men, especially in the 40-44 age cohort, have engaged in anal sex.
- Cohabitation before marriage is the norm, especially in the youngest age cohorts.

Contact Information

- Program in Human Sexuality
  1300 So. Second Street, Suite 180
  Minneapolis, MN. 55454
- Michael Miner: miner001@umn.edu