

Université de Montréal

Sexual Initiation Interaction Among Married and Cohabiting Couples

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*Sexual Initiation Interaction Among Married and Cohabiting Couples*

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## Summary

Sexual initiation affects the quality and quantity of couples' sexual activity. A few studies have investigated sexual initiation behaviors among single college students in mostly fictitious or dating situations. However, empirical knowledge of sexual initiation interactions among married or cohabiting couples is scant. The main focus of this research was to gather empirical information on the sexual initiation process as it relates to couples in long-standing relationships. With this intent, two articles were produced.

The objective of the first article "The Sexual Initiation Scale (S.I.S.)" was to develop and validate the Sexual Initiation Scale (SIS), a self-report measure of sexual initiation strategies and factors facilitating these behaviors in married or cohabiting couples. Article one contains two studies. The first study was designed to collect item content for developing the SIS by means of interview procedure. From a preliminary sample of 10 couples, items were generated reflecting both the strategy patterns used to initiate conjugal sex and the contributors facilitating partners' sexual initiation. The second study was designed to examine the factorial structure, and the reliability of the SIS. Questionnaires were completed by 101 couples (202 partners). The convergence of SIS with concurrent measures of sexual arousability, sexual difficulties and initiation was also examined. Findings showed good factorial structure and excellent reliability and concurrent validity of the SIS.



The objectives for the second article "Determinants of Sexual Quality in Long-term Couples' Relationships" were two-fold. The first objective was to predict the sexual quality of partnered sex using individual and dyadic determinants. The second objective was to examine whether sexual initiation strategies and factors contributing to initiation would further improve the prediction of sexual quality beyond that afforded by individual and dyadic determinants. Hierarchical regression analyses, using sexual quality as the dependent variable, were conducted on the responses of 101 couples in long-standing relationships. Both partners' mean levels of sexual quality and partners' discrepancies in their reports of sexual quality were examined. The overall findings indicated individual and dyadic factors significantly predicted sexual quality and that the initiation variable further predicted sexual quality above that of the individual and dyadic factors. Implications for sex therapy and future research are discussed.

**Key Words :** sexual initiation, sexual quality, long-term couples

## Résumé

La présente thèse examine les interactions d'initiation sexuelle dans des relations amoureuses de longue durée. L'initiation sexuelle est définie comme étant le premier pas fait par un partenaire dans le but de communiquer de façon verbale et/ou non verbale à l'autre partenaire un intérêt ou un désir pour une activité sexuelle et ce, peu importe si une activité sexuelle entre les partenaires en résulte.

Le but principal de la présente recherche est de construire et valider une mesure de l'initiation sexuelle sur la base d'informations empiriques recueillis chez les couples mariés ou qui habitent ensemble. Un second objectif est de déterminer si les stratégies d'initiation et les facteurs identifiés prédisent de façon significative la qualité des relations sexuelles conjugales au-delà de la contribution d'autres facteurs individuels et dyadiques. La thèse présente deux articles sur ces questions. L'échantillon de couples adultes engagés dans une relation stable, utilisé dans les deux articles, corrige les limites des études antérieures dans lesquelles les données sont dérivées d'échantillons d'hommes et de femmes célibataires, la plupart étant des étudiants dont les relations amoureuses sont exploratoires.

Le premier article, intitulé « The Sexual Initiation Scale (SIS) », a comme objectif de développer et de valider le Sexual Initiation Scale (SIS), un questionnaire auto-administré sur les stratégies d'initiation sexuelle et

sur les facteurs facilitant les comportements d'initiation chez les couples mariés ou qui habitent ensemble. Le premier article est composé de deux études. Une première étude consiste à colliger des contenus d'item afin de développer le SIS et ce, au moyen d'une procédure d'entrevue. Dix couples (20 partenaires) sont interviewés par la chercheuse principale. Les partenaires racontent verbalement ce qu'ils ont fait pour initier une relation sexuelle et ce qui a influencé leur initiation sexuelle. Dans un premier temps, chaque membre du couple est interrogé séparément. Par la suite, les deux partenaires sont interrogés ensembles en tant que couple. L'entrevue dure en moyenne 2 heures.

Ces entrevues ont généré 263 items, reflétant les stratégies utilisées par les hommes et les femmes pour initier une relation sexuelle et reflétant les facteurs facilitant leur initiation sexuelle. Une stratégie est définie comme tout acte consciemment utilisé par un partenaire dans le but d'initier une relation sexuelle. Cette stratégie peut être de nature directe (ex. faire des contacts génitaux) ou non directe (ex. situation dans laquelle il y a des contacts physiques de façon impromptue). Un facteur facilitant est défini comme tout contexte qui peut contribuer à l'initiation d'une relation sexuelle avec le-la partenaire (ex. nouveauté, vacances, décor). Le questionnaire final comprend 93 items qui réfèrent aux stratégies d'initiation et 170 items qui réfèrent aux facteurs facilitants. Les items de stratégies sont classifiés a priori en 2 sous-échelles, (a) verbal ou non verbal, (b) direct ou non direct. Par exemple, l'item "préparer un repas" est un item non direct, non verbal. Les items facilitants sont classifiés à priori

en 3 sous-échelles, (a) les items de communication de nature contextuelle (ex. partir en vacances), verbale (ex. le-la partenaire dit des choses drôles ou humoristiques), cognitive (ex. souvenirs nostalgiques), ou sensitive (ex. l'odeur naturelle du corps du-de la partenaire); (b) les items du langage corporel (ex. contact visuel plus long que d'habitude, le-la partenaire touche vos parties génitales); (c) les items reliés à l'état d'âme (ex. vous vous sentez détendu-e; votre partenaire est jaloux-se, etc.). Une série de questionnaires comprenant l'échelle finale d'initiation sexuelle ainsi que d'autres questionnaires qui évaluent des aspects jugés par la littérature et les entrevues comme étant pertinents à l'initiation (informations démographiques, histoire sexuelle, ajustement conjugal, excitation sexuelle) est alors administrée à 10 couples additionnels afin de vérifier la clarté des instructions sur le contenu des items.

La deuxième étude du premier article vise à examiner la structure factorielle et les qualités psychométriques du SIS. La série de questionnaires est remplie par 101 couples adultes (202 partenaires). L'analyse factorielle fait émerger 2 facteurs concernant les stratégies d'initiation (Directes et Non directes) et 2 facteurs concernant les facilitateurs de l'initiation (l'Enthousiasme et l'Intimité). La totalité des items appartenant au facteur de stratégies directes sont manifestement d'ordre physique. Ceci indique que chez les couples non-cliniques mariés ou qui habitent ensemble, une approche physique directe est considérée comme un élément clé de leur interaction d'initiation. En ce qui a trait aux facteurs stratégie indirecte d'initiation, les résultats indiquent que le facteur

Enthousiasme réfère principalement aux sentiments positifs, énergétiques et enthousiastes envers soi-même et le-la partenaire. Le facteur Intimité, deuxième facteur facilitant l'initiation, réfère principalement aux habiletés de communication des deux partenaires.

La convergence du SIS avec des mesures concurrentes d'excitation sexuelle, de difficultés sexuelles et d'initiation sexuelle est examinée. Les facteurs du SIS montrent une bonne validité convergente avec les mesures des construits apparentés. Les quatre facteurs sont associés à l'excitation sexuelle, chez les hommes de même que chez les femmes. De plus, les corrélations entre les facteurs du SIS et l'histoire sexuelle montrent que plus les hommes et les femmes endossent les stratégies directes et l'enthousiasme, moins élevée est la gravité de leurs problèmes sexuels. Par ailleurs, plus les femmes endossent les stratégies directes et l'intimité, plus fréquente est leur initiation et moins fréquente est l'initiation de leur conjoint. De plus, les femmes qui utilisent les stratégies directes sont davantage satisfaites avec leur propre façon d'initier. Cependant, il est important de noter que les facteurs de stratégies et de facilitation sont composés d'items rapportés par des couples qui sont pour la plupart satisfaits de leur vie sexuelle et conjugale, ce qui limite la généralisabilité de ces résultats.

Dans le deuxième article, l'étude vise à évaluer la contribution des caractéristiques individuelles et dyadiques de la relation conjugale à la qualité des relations sexuelles. Nous examinons comment ces

caractéristiques individuelles des partenaires de couple ainsi que les caractéristiques de leur relation conjugale contribuent à leur initiation sexuelle, aux fréquences de leurs activités sexuelles et à leur satisfaction sexuelle. Les variables indépendantes utilisées sont l'ajustement dyadique, le pouvoir, les symptômes psychologiques, l'excitation sexuelle, la santé, l'apparence physique du-de la partenaire et sa propre apparence physique. Dans un deuxième temps, l'étude examine si les stratégies d'initiation sexuelle et les facteurs facilitants de l'initiation augmentent la prédiction de la qualité des interactions sexuelles au-delà de la prédiction obtenue par les déterminants individuels et dyadiques. Plus spécifiquement, nous examinons si le SIS explique une variance unique dans les variables sexuelles après avoir contrôlé l'effet attribuable à d'autres caractéristiques individuelles et dyadiques.

Les analyses de régression hiérarchique, avec la qualité sexuelle comme variable dépendante, sont menées avec les réponses de 101 couples. Dans l'ensemble, les résultats indiquent que les variables individuelles et dyadiques prédisent significativement la qualité des relations sexuelles. De plus, les facteurs du SIS expliquent une portion unique de la variance de la qualité des relations sexuelles. Plus spécifiquement, d'une part, les caractéristiques qui prédisent le mieux la qualité sexuelle des partenaires sont la perception de sa propre apparence, l'excitation sexuelle, l'ajustement dyadique et le facteur facilitant Intimité du SIS. D'autre part, les caractéristiques qui prédisent le mieux les divergences des partenaires dans la perception de la qualité de leurs

relations sexuelles sont les divergences entre les partenaires quant au niveau d'excitabilité, au niveau de l'ajustement dyadique et au niveau du facteur Enthousiasme du SIS.

Ces résultats ont des implications pour la thérapie sexuelle. Nos résultats montrent que l'initiation sexuelle est une partie importante et intégrante des relations sexuelles conjugales, en ce qu'elle affecte la qualité et la quantité des activités sexuelles du couple. La thérapie sexuelle devrait considérer l'initiation sexuelle comme étant un aspect majeur dans le fonctionnement sexuel des partenaires de couple. En ce sens, une échelle comme le SIS, qui mesure l'interaction d'initiation sexuelle chez des couples stables, serait un apport inédit à la pratique clinique. Cependant, il faut tenir compte de la limite concernant la généralisabilité des résultats. Étant donné que notre échantillon est composé de couple non-cliniques qui sont plus âgés, plus éduqués et généralement satisfaits des aspects sexuels et non-sexuels de leur relation conjugale, il serait en effet difficile de généraliser ces résultats à des couples ayant différents profils psychologiques ou démographiques. Les chercheurs ayant l'intention d'utiliser le SIS auraient avantage à inclure un échantillon clinique pour des fins de comparaison et de différenciation.

**Mots-clés :** initiation sexuelle, Sexual Initiation Scale, déterminants, stratégies, facteurs facilitants, qualité des relations sexuelles, relation de couple stable

Key Words : sexual initiation, Sexual Initiation Scale, determinants, strategies, factors facilitating, sexual quality, long-standing couples' relationship



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Dedication

To Danielle Julien for her warm encouragement  
and consistent guidance

To my mother, the memory of my father

And to my children, Sylvia and Thomas, with love



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## Introduction

Sexual initiation interactions in long-term relationships is an under researched area that is deserving of theoretical and clinical attention. We know extremely little about how spouses and cohabitators initiate sexual activity and about which factors facilitate their initiation. Crain (1980) describes sexual initiation as "the social interaction which primarily determines the occurrence of any further sexual interaction as well as the frequency of relations". More recently, Zilbergeld (1992) has pointed out that sexual initiation is the most neglected area in sex research and sex therapy. He states that "the initiation of sex is a topic hardly anyone touches upon" (p.5) even though "how well sex goes is often determined in the first few moments or even before the fact" (p.314). Similarly, Byers & Heinlein (1989) state that we have never investigated individual and dyadic processes which determine whether and how often a couple engages in sexual activity. This lack of empirical knowledge is unfortunate, especially considering that sexual initiation is an important and integral aspect of partnered sex affecting both the quantity and quality of couples' sexual activity (e.g. Apfelbaum, 1988; Brown & Auerback, 1981; Byers & Heinlein, 1989; Frank, Anderson & Rubinstein, 1978; Kaplan, 1974; Leiblum & Rosen, 1988; Maddock, 1975, Zilbergeld, 1992). For example, Frank et al., (1978) examined the frequency of sexual complaints in couples who believed their marriages to be satisfactory. They found that 50 % of the men and 77 % of the women reported difficulties that were not dysfunctional in nature (e.g. partner chooses inconvenient time). In their study, the number of difficulties reported related more than the number of dysfunctions to overall sexual dissatisfaction. Similarly, Brown & Auerback

(1981) found that wives who were not satisfied with sexual frequency (e.g. wanted more sex) listed poor approach by the men as one of the reasons. Byers & Heinlein (1989) showed that both men and women who reported greater marital and sexual satisfaction were more satisfied with how sex was initiated. Despite such pragmatic support for the relevance of sexual initiation, scientific research into sexual initiation of married or cohabiting couples is scant to the point of non-existence. Sex research, with some notable exceptions (e.g. Crain, 1980; Byers & Heinlein, 1989) has never considered sexual initiation as a major aspect of the dyadic interaction of established dyads. Considering that the highest rates of heterosexual sexual activity is among married and cohabiting couples (Laumann, Gagnon, Michael & Michaels, 1994) we have much to learn from studying this population.

In the current research, sexual initiation is defined as a first step taken by one partner to convey verbally/or non-verbally to the other partner an interest or desire for sexual activity, whether or not sexual activity between the partners results. When one reviews the previous research on initiation, it is clear that there are significant substantive and methodological limitations. For example, most of our knowledge about sexual initiation has been derived from studies which have typically sampled unmarried college students in dating or fictitious contexts revealing little about the sexual initiation interactions of adult men and women (e.g. Greer & Buss, 1994; Jessor, 1978; LaPlante, McCormick & Branninngan, 1980; McCormick, 1976, 1979; Perper & Weis, 1987).

Moreover, much of the information on sexual initiation has been derived from the individual and not the couple dyad. For example, Byer & Heinlein (1989) collected responses from samples of husbands and wives who were not married to each other. Thus, there was no cross-validation of partners' responses even though research literature indicates that the perceptions of married partners are often quite different (e.g. Levinger, 1966; Julien, Bouchard, Gagnon, & Pomerleau, 1992). In addition, initiation behaviors have been vaguely or imprecisely defined, often oversimplified. For example, Zilbergeld (1992) added an additional chapter on sexual initiation to his revised edition of "The New Male Sexuality". Much of this chapter is focused on the difficulty of defining initiation. He thus proceeds by deciding to use terms of initiation such as "seduction", "influence", or "invitation" synonymously. While all these terms may indeed be aspects of initiation, not one defines initiation fully. There have also been inadequacies in the instruments used to measure initiation. For example : the study of hypothetical not real situations or forced-choice questions which restrict the range of responses and create artificial patterns of interaction. Finally, individual and dyadic factors (i.e. mood, relationship satisfaction, etc.) have been largely ignored by those researchers who have thus far most directly studied the phenomenon of initiation.

#### Critical review of the literature

Much of the early studies of sexual initiation has focused on the behaviors of initiation and their relevance to gender issues such as the

traditional sexual script which dictates that men should use any strategy to influence a date to have coitus and that women should either passively acquiesce to their date's sexual advances or use any strategy to influence a date to avoid sexual intercourse. For example, Jessor (1978) examined male responses to direct verbal sexual initiatives of female college students. A major thrust of the research concerned the relationship between initiatives and outcomes. He found that the most common initiation strategies were "touching (snuggling, kissing, etc.), "allowing hands to wander" and "ask directly". He also found that over one-half of the females reported directly asking for sex and that these women were no more likely to report being sexually rejected by their male partners. In this study, 153 unmarried college students were recruited and the only instrument of measure was a six-page questionnaire. A major part of the questionnaire dealt with the types of signals partners use as sexual initiatives. Coitally experienced respondents were asked "When you think your partner can be persuaded to have sex, even though s(he) has not yet become aware of your desire, what do you usually do?" A checklist of 20-items, covering direct and indirect, verbal and non-verbal initiatives was provided. Using the same checklist, students were also asked to indicate the types of initiatives employed by their partners, as well as asking for an overall assessment of outcome of both their own and partner's initiatives. A similar checklist approach was used to determine what happens when sex does not occur between partners.

Jesser's checklist of sexual signaling behaviors has been a useful addition to the understanding of initiation behaviors among a select sample of college students. Such a checklist is easy to understand and measure. However, I have some general concerns about the list of questions that I obtained from Jesser. For instance, it can be argued that the use of the word "persuaded" (in the above question), not only implies the possibility of non-rejection but even implies that the process of initiation, if defined in a less narrow sense, has already taken place! One could assume that some kind of information has already been transmitted between the partners and consequently any further acts of initiation would thus be pretense ones! For example, what makes the person think that the partner can be persuaded? Implications are either that the initiator has seen signs consistent with the belief that the partner can be persuaded or no such signs have been seen and this is only subjective speculations on the initiator's part. If the former applies, then the initiator's belief is based on the interpretation of certain clearly definable cues. The question then arises, did the person/partner intend to communicate readiness to be persuaded or did the partner communicate readiness without intention or can the partner be said to be doing the initiating in the first case?

Another of Jesser's questions reads "When your partner thinks you can be persuaded to have sex even though you have not become aware of his/her desire, what does s(he) usually do?" How is the respondent to know that, if by definition s(he) is not aware? It's as if Jesser is asking "does it ever seem to you that your partner out of the blue makes an initiation?" A

person may do different things if he thinks the other is or is not aware. Thus, two things are being contaminated in this question.

Jesser made no attempt to interview couples. His results are interesting but do not help us understand the initiation interactions of long-standing couples, nor do the categories he selected. Clearly, initiation in couples is far more complex. It would be trite to give spouses and cohabitators a similar checklist. Thus, Jesser's findings represent only a fraction of the possible.

Another researcher, McCormick (1976, 1979) studied sexual initiation in a sample of unmarried undergraduates. She chose such a sample because she believed that as a relationship progresses over time, initiations become more routine and consequently, subtle and less accessible to study. This belief and her methodology has set the standard for most of the following research in the area of initiation which has neglected to examine sexual initiation interactions in long-standing relationships. In her study, McCormick investigated how individual college students reported trying to "influence" (i.e. initiate) a date to have or avoid sexual intercourse and how they imagined other males and females would behave in the same sexual influence situation. Her questionnaire study considered 10 initiation strategies. These strategies were characterized as being either direct or indirect. For example, seven strategies (reward, coercion, logic, information, moralizing, relationship conceptualizing, and seduction) were operationally defined as direct because they appeared to depend on



influences' awareness of how power was being used on them. The other three strategies (body language, deception and manipulation) were operationally defined as indirect because they appeared to depend on keeping the influencee ignorant of whether or how power was being used on them. "Seduction" (a step-by-step plan for initiating coitus with a date) was the most frequent strategy for both males and females. Also, women were more likely than men to report using body language (e.g. facial expression, postures, etc.).

As with Jesser (1978), this study is also limited. To start, examples given to support the categories have a questionable "fit". For instance, the manipulation category, operationally defined as indirect, is exemplified by "the lights would be turned down, music put on, I'd probably offer a drink with the atmosphere right". Is the influencee really ignorant in such an approach? Also, McCormick (1976) states that the sexual influence statements did not inform respondents as to which "types" of power they represented. It is possible that if respondents had been directly asked whether they or others used particular "types" (e.g. logic), the results would have been different. Furthermore, in order to assess the students own self-reported strategies, one essay question required the student to imagine being alone with an attractive person of the opposite sex whom they had known for less than three weeks and with whom they had "necked" with but had not yet had sexual intercourse. The other essay question asked students how they would avoid having sex with a "turned-on date". It is important to note that these two essays assessed people's approaches to

hypothetical rather than actual situations. Thus, the essays may measure people's ability to project themselves into sexual influence situations. This includes some of which they have neither experienced nor intend to experience (e.g., only 65 % of the men and 56 % of the women reported ever even having had sexual intercourse). McCormick (1976) herself concluded that "it is impossible to tell whether the essay ratings measure an individual's understanding of socially expected sexual influence behavior, actual sexual influence behavior used in the past, or simple fantasy" (p. 78). Thus, given a different methodology "such as interviewing people about their past influence behavior or asking them to write essays about what they have done on actual rather than on hypothetical dates, the results would have been entirely different!" (p. 78).

Another assessment limitation in the McCormick study relates to the missing data; specifically, the non-scorable essay responses. As McCormick concedes, the large number of non-scorable essay responses challenges the adequacy of the study's coding scheme. For instance, respondents who described an influence technique in their essays which did not appear to reflect any of the 10 a priori strategies considered, were rated as having "non-scorable" responses. Raters were told to use the 10 aforementioned categories in a very conservative manner". This advice helps to produce tidier categories but also serves to eliminate other relevant ones. For example; a response was considered non-scorable if it represented a described strategy which fits more than one of the coding

categories or if it represented a new or unique strategy which was not considered in the study's coding scheme (e.g. humor).

Another assessment limitation is McCormick's forced-choice questions. Although those students who inquired were given the option of answering "either gender" in the perceived gender question the actual questionnaire only asked whether the influencing agent was a male or female. This means that the study's methodology may have encouraged gender-typing and, hence, interfered with respondent's inclination to perceive particular influence approaches as appropriate to both males and females.

The results of both Jesser (1978) and McCormick's (1976, 1979) research indicated few differences between men's and women's initiation strategies. Jesser found that males reported compliance with their female partner's request for sex whether direct or indirect. He also found that over one half of the females reported directly asking for sex. McCormick found that although students stereotyped having sex as a male goal and avoiding sex as a female goal, men and women were actually similar in their personal strategies. For example, both men and women reported using more indirect strategies to have sex and more direct strategies to avoid having sex.

Both Jesser and McCormick's results, in which few differences between men's and women's reported strategies for influencing a sexual

encounter were found, were contradicted by the results of LaPlante et al. (1980). These latter researchers attempted to replicate McCormick's (1979) study. Their results, based on unmarried college students showed that while the men and women stereotyped all strategies for having sex as being used predominantly by men and all strategies for avoiding sex as being used predominantly by women, they also reported behaving and being influenced according to these same stereotypic patterns, thus, supporting the traditional sexual script.

LaPlante et al. (1980) offer methodological explanations as to why their results deviated from the before mentioned surveys. For example, in contrast to Jesser and McCormick's methodology, their study's questions did not oblige students to put themselves in the role of an influencing agent in a sexual encounter. Instead, students were asked, how much, if at all, they personally used each strategy and were influenced by each strategy to have or avoid coitus. This wording allowed students to indicate whether their actual sexual experience reflected the stereotypic beliefs. In contrast, Jesser asked students to check one or more of 20 items describing what they usually did to persuade a partner to have sex. Similarly, McCormick required students to be sexual influencing agents by asking them to write essays describing what they would do to initiate coitus.

Another important methodological variable concerned the order of the questions. Students in the 1980 research were asked about their sex-role stereotypes of a particular strategy immediately before they were

asked to describe their personal experiences of the same strategy. This may have programmed them to respond in the stereotypic direction when they reported their own behavior. McCormick (1976) gives empirical support for this reasoning when she found men and women using similar strategies when asked how they might influence a sexual encounter before they were asked to indicate the sex-role appropriateness of each strategy to have or avoid coitus. Whereas, men claimed they used all strategies to have sex and women claimed they used all strategies to avoid sex when asked how they influenced dates after they had stereotyped the sex-role appropriateness of various given strategies.

Finally, a different approach to sampling may account for the discrepancy between the LaPlante et al. (1980) results and those of Jesser. Jesser's sample was recruited from a sex-role course and may have attracted older and more sex-role liberated students than the other studies were able to test.

Other authors, Perper & Weis (1987) contributed to the initiation literature by examining proceptive strategies in 117 essays written by female unmarried college students (40 of these essays were supplied from McCormick's 1976 sample). These authors described proceptive strategies as escalating sets of both verbal and non-verbal signals which women use to communicate sexual interest in a man. By focusing on the initiation of the first sexual encounter, students were asked to imagine being on a second date with someone they had known for about three weeks but had

never had any kind of sex with. The findings indicated that sexual intent was conveyed in eight major ways, the most frequent being : a) verbal (e.g. sexy talk, general conversation, compliments, laughing, asking, b) environmental (e.g. dress, alcohol, romantic ambiance, music, dance), and non-verbal (e.g. touching, kissing). Again, generalization of the findings is limited because they were derived from inexperienced participants in hypothetical situations. It can only be speculated whether what these women wrote in essays about how they would initiate sex, would be confirmed in their actual behavior in a developing relationship. Also, the study was limited by virtue of its female sample and because of its exclusive focus on the initial sexual encounter only.

In another more recent study (Greer & Buss, 1994), research was conducted from an evolutionary theoretical framework. These authors examined strategy usage "for promoting a sexual encounter". Male and female single college students were asked "to list what they themselves did or what they thought other people they knew did to promote the sexual advances of someone else" (p. 188). An extensive list of initiation behaviors was generated using Perper & Weis's items (e.g. dress, romantic ambiance, talking, touching) but also using additional strategies. The findings showed that men and women were generally similar in the strategies performed. However, women were more likely than men to dress seductively and enhance their physical appearance whereas men were more likely than women to use strategies indicating their willingness to spend time, energy and resources on a partner (e.g. display status, give gifts, etc.).

Because, as in the McCormick and the Perper & Weis studies, the strategies reported in this study likely included speculations about initiation behaviors, generalization of the findings is limited. Moreover, some of the initiation behaviors in the questionnaire were described in the given instructions as being “subtle and difficult to observe easily” (p. 188); thus, the questionnaire may have been measuring respondents ability to correctly observe and interpret complex repertoires of initiation behaviors they themselves had never experienced.

Of particular interest is a study conducted by Byers & Heinlein (1989). These authors expanded our knowledge of sexual initiation by examining initiation as an important aspect of sexual frequency. Unlike the sampling and assessment procedures of others studies (i.e. checklists, essays of hypothetical nature, etc.) they used a self-monitoring procedure in order to provide a more accurate assessment of how frequently men and women initiate, refuse, and consider initiating sexual activity. Participants were asked to record the behaviors they or their partner used to initiate sexual activity and to respond to the sexual initiation. Unlike prior studies, participants were in long term relationships (“romantically involved” with their partner for an average of 8.7 years; median age of 29.6 years ranging from 18 to 68 years of age). They were also asked to report on actual behavior and not fantasy situations. However, participants were recruited from introductory college classes and the individual respondents were not married to each other or cohabiting with each other (i.e. the partners of only three of the respondents took part in this study). The results

indicated that male partners initiated and considered initiating sexual activity more often than did the females. In addition, more initiations within the couple were reported by participants who were younger, were cohabiting, had been romantically involved with their partner for a shorter time, were more satisfied with their relationship, and reported greater sexual satisfaction. The findings support the notion that the way men and women in long-standing relationships initiate sex can have important consequences on both the quantity and quality of their sexual activity.

The current research attempts to address the gap in the sexual initiation literature by assessing sexual initiation between members of married or cohabiting couples. Two articles were produced with a two-fold objective. Given the lack of a comprehensive measure of sexual initiation in established couples, the main objective of the first article was to develop and validate the Sexual Initiation Scale (SIS), a self-report measure of sexual initiation strategies and factors facilitating these behaviors in a sample of both older and married or cohabiting couples varying in relationship duration. The first article contains two studies and are described as follows :

#### Study 1

Study 1 was designed to collect item contents for developing the SIS



## Method

Participants. Ten English speaking couples (20 partners) from a large metropolitan area participated in the study. Of these couples, 8 were married and two were cohabiting. The mean age was 41 for the males ( $SD = 7.14$ ) and 37 years for the females ( $SD = 5.28$ ). Eighty percent of the males and 60 % of the females had a university education. Seventy percent of the males and 60 % of the females worked in a professional capacity. The mean length of time the couples had lived together was 6 years and 40 % had at least one child.

Recruitment. Participants were a convenience sample obtained through snowball procedures of friendship networks. All participants were volunteers who responded to oral announcements which described the project as a study of couple communication. Participants were told that they must be cohabiting with or married to each other and that participation of both members of each couple was required. Of the 13 couples who responded, 3 couples declined the interview when they were told it would deal with sexual initiation interactions. In these cases the wives consented but the husbands declined. All participants were Caucasian and born in this country. All were of middle class status.

Procedure. Couples were interviewed in their home. Interviews were conducted to obtain information in a flexible manner from questions shown in the literature to have relevance to sexual initiation. Participants were verbally asked seven questions, a) who is the initiator, b) who would you

like the initiator to be, c) how often do you have sex with your partner, d) how often would you like to have sex, e) how do you initiate sex with your partner, f) how does your partner initiate sex with you, and g) what factors or situations contribute to your initiating sex with your partner. Each member of the couple was interviewed separately, then the couple conjointly. Each interview, conducted by the principal researcher, lasted about two hours.

Confidentiality of all information was assured each interview participant, including explanation that the information gathered from the individual part of the interview would also be kept confidential from their partners. Participants were told that this was a pilot study and that the data generated would serve to construct a sexual initiation scale for use in the major part of the research. Participants were offered the opportunity to contact the researcher with feedback or questions.

## Study 2

Study 2 was designed to examine the factorial structure of the SIS, its reliability, and its convergence with concurrent measures of sexual arousability, sexual difficulties, and initiation.

### Method

Participants. A total of 101 English speaking couples (202 partners) from a large metropolitan area participated in the research. Of these couples, 72 were married and 29 were cohabiting. The mean age was 39 years for males ( $SD = 10.17$ ) and 36 years for females ( $SD = 8.34$ ). Seventy-

four percent of the males and 64 % of the females had a university education. Forty-eight percent of the males and 39 % of the females worked in a professional capacity. The mean length of time couples had lived together was 10.59 years ( $SD = 9.26$ ), and 62.4 % of the couples had at least one child. Almost all participants were Caucasian and born in this country. All participants were of middle to upper class status.

Recruitment. All participants were unpaid volunteers who responded to written or oral announcements which described the project as a questionnaire study of couple communication. Prospective participants were informed that they must be cohabiting with or married to each other and that participation of both members of each couple was required. Competency in the English language was also required.

Seventy percent of the sample was recruited informally by presenting details of the research to selected individuals representing hospital staff, teaching staff, business and professional offices. Through word of mouth, the selected individuals encouraged their friends or colleagues to participate in the study. The other thirty percent of the sample was recruited by means of advertisement and presentation. Ads were posted in local English newspapers and bulletin boards around the city (Appendix A). Presentations were made at parent activity meetings, business meetings, staff conferences, etc. A total of 180 prospective couples responded initially. Of these couples, 166 couples responded positively when the

study's focus on sexual initiation was revealed. Of the 166 couples who participated, 101 couples actually completed the questionnaires.

Procedure. All participants were provided a large self-addressed stamped envelope which contained an introductory letter, and the questionnaires as described below. Copies of the introduction letter and the questionnaire can be found in the Appendix B. Each partner completed the questionnaires at home. Participants were instructed to fill out the research forms independently of the other. The questionnaires were returned by mail to the researchers. Participants were assured verbally that all responses would be anonymous and would be kept confidential even from their partners, including explanation that results to be reported would be based upon group characteristics, not upon individual data.

Measures. Three measures were used : 1. Sexual Arousability Inventory (SAI; Hoon, Hoon, & Wincze, 1976), 2. Sexual History Form (SHF; Nowinsky & LoPiccolo, 1979) and 3. Sexual initiation. Sexual initiation was assessed by three descriptive questions.

The second article had two objectives. The first objective was to predict the sexual quality of partnered sex using individual and dyadic determinants. A second objective was to examine whether sexual initiation strategies and factors contributing to initiation would further improve the prediction of sexual quality beyond that afforded by individual and dyadic

determinants. Participants were the same as those used in article 1 (study 2) and the procedure was identical.

Measures. Six independent variables were considered and measured.

(a) Dyadic adjustment was measured by the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS; Spanier, 1976), (b) Power was measured with ten items of two questions each on the perceived distribution of power in five categories; (financial, emotional, intellectual, verbal and overall power), (c) Psychological symptoms were measured with the Symptom Checklist-10 (SCL-10; Nguyen, Attkinson, and Stegner, 1983) (d) Sexual arousability was measured by using the Sexual Arousability Inventory (SAI; Hoon, Hoon, & Wincze, 1976), (e) Health, Partner's appearance, and Own appearance was measured by a set of eight questions. In addition, three dependent variables were used. (a) Sexual initiation which was measured by two items pertaining to frequencies of sexual initiation, (b) Frequency of sexual interactions which was measured by one item pertaining to frequency of sexual intercourse or activity, (c) Sexual satisfaction which was measured with two items pertaining to sexual satisfaction with partner and satisfaction with sexual initiation with partner.

First Article

The Sexual Initiation Scale (S.I.S.)

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### The Sexual Initiation Scale (SIS)

Sexual initiation has been described in popular and research literature as an area of conflict for many couples, affecting both the quality and quantity of their sexual activity. For example, a high percentage of couples report difficulties and sexual dissatisfaction stemming not from sexual dysfunction but from more routine factors such as poor approach by a partner or partner initiating sexual activity at inconvenient times (e.g. Brown & Auerback, 1981; Byers & Heinlein, 1989; Frank, Anderson, & Rubinstein 1978; Zilbergeld, 1992). Despite this, we have little empirical knowledge about how men and women in an established couples' relationship initiate sexual activity.

Sexual initiation can be defined as a first step taken by one partner to convey verbally and/or non-verbally to the other partner an interest or desire for sexual activity, whether or not sexual activity between the partners results. The few studies that have addressed the issue are substantively and methodologically limited by virtue of unrepresentative samples and by inadequacies in the assessment procedures used to measure initiation.

Taking into account previous limitations, the objective of this study was to develop a self-report comprehensive measure of sexual initiation behaviors in married or cohabiting relationships.



### Sampling issues

Preceding research in sexual initiation has been done with a restricted sample of sexually experienced individuals. First, data from a recent national survey (Laumann, Gagnon, Michael, & Michaels (1994) shows that the social group that has the highest rate of sexual activity among heterosexuals was not the single men and women in young relationships but the seldom studied group of married and cohabiting couples. Moreover, in this survey, the people who reported being the most sexually satisfied were married couples. Second, however participants in studies of sexual initiation have typically been unmarried college students (Greer & Buss, 1994; Jessor, 1978; LaPlante, McCormick, & Brannigan, 1980; McCormick, 1976, 1979; Perper & Weis, 1987). One of the reasons given for such a focus is the belief that, as a relationship progressed over time, sexual initiations become more routine and, consequently, subtle and less accessible to study (McCormick, 1976). However, one can assume that young participants in young relationships do not yet know much about each other and are likely to be at early stages of development and sexual socialization. Thus, the findings in these studies cannot generalize to sexual interactions in people who are older or have been in longer established relationships (Laumann et al., 1994). In the current study, sexual initiation was assessed using a sample of both older and married or cohabiting couples varying in relationship duration.

Third, much information on sexual initiation has been derived from the individual and not the couple dyad. In these studies, responses were collected from samples of husbands who were independent of samples of wives, thus husbands and wives were not married to each other (Byers and Heinlein, 1989; Greer & Buss, 1994; Jesser, 1978; Laplante et al., 1980; McCormick, 1976, 1979; Perper & Weis, 1987). Therefore, there was no cross-validation of spouses' responses even though the research literature indicates that the perceptions of married partners are often quite different. For example, studies comparing both spouses' self-reports on sexual interests indicated systematic differences between partners' interests (Levinger, 1966; Levinger & Breedlove, 1966) and systematic bias in partners reporting for the other partner (Julien, Bouchard, Gagnon, & Pomerleau, 1992). This strongly suggests that sampling both partners in a couple is necessary for reliable and comprehensive data pertaining to the marital dynamic.

#### Assessment issues

Another major problem in preceding research is that many data have derived from hypothetical situations. For example, participants were asked how they or others would express sexual interest with a fictitious date by imagining themselves in sexual initiation situations. Because some participants had no coital experience (e.g. McCormick, 1976, 1979; Perper & Weis, 1987), it has been impossible to sort out real life initiation strategies from the respondents' fantasy, or from the respondents' ability to

project themselves into situations they have neither experienced nor intended to experience. For example, initiation strategies were examined by coding essay questions about how participants would initiate sex with a date (McCormick, 1976; 1979). "Seduction" (a step-by-step plan for initiating coitus with a date) was the most frequent strategy for both males and females. Also, women were more likely than males to report using body language (e.g. facial expressions, posture, etc.). However, these strategies were generated by asking participants to imagine being alone with an attractive person of the opposite sex whom they had known for less than three weeks and with whom they had necked but had not yet had sexual intercourse. Because only 65 % of the males and 56 % of the females in the study were coitally experienced, generalization to actual initiation behaviors of older and more experienced dyads is limited.

Similarly, initiation strategies were examined by coding essays written by female unmarried college students about how they would express sexual interest with a fictitious date (Perper & Weis, 1987). Students were asked to imagine being on a second date with someone they had known for about three weeks but never had any kind of sex with. The findings indicated that sexual intent was conveyed in eight major ways, the most frequent being : a) verbal (e.g. sexy talk, general conversation, compliments, laughing, asking), b) environmental (e.g. dress, alcohol, romantic ambiance, music, dance), and non-verbal (e.g. touching, kissing). Again, generalization of the findings is limited because they were derived from inexperienced participants in hypothetical situations.

More recently, Greer & Buss (1994) conducted research in which male and female single college students were asked to list what they themselves did or what they thought other people they knew did to promote the sexual advances of someone else. An extensive list of initiation strategies was generated using Perper & Weis's items (e.g. dress, romantic ambiance, talking, touching) but also including additional strategies. The findings showed that men and women were generally similar in the kinds of strategies performed. However, women were more likely than men to dress seductively and enhance their physical appearance whereas men were more likely than women to use strategies indicating their willingness to spend time, energy and resources on a partner (e.g. display status, give gifts, etc.). Because, as in the McCormick and the Perper & Weis's studies, the strategies reported in this study likely included speculations about initiation behaviors, thus generalization of the findings is limited. Moreover, some of the initiation behaviors in the questionnaire were described in the given instructions as being "subtle and difficult to observe easily"; thus, the questionnaire may have been measuring respondents ability to correctly observe and interpret complex repertoires of initiation behaviors they themselves had never experienced.

Of particular interest is a study conducted by Byers & Heinlein (1989). These authors expanded our knowledge of sexual initiation by examining initiation as an important aspect of sexual frequency. Unlike the sampling and assessment procedures of others studies (i.e. checklists, essays of hypothetical nature, etc.) they used a self-monitoring procedure

in order to provide a more accurate assessment of how frequently men and women initiate, refuse, and consider initiating sexual activity. Participants were asked to record the behaviors they or their partner used to initiate sexual activity and to respond to the sexual initiation. Unlike prior studies, participants were in long term relationships (“romantically involved” with their partner for an average of 8.7 years; median age of 29.6 years ranging from 18 to 68 years of age). They were also asked to report on actual behavior and not fantasy situations. However, participants were recruited from introductory college classes and the individual respondents were not married to each other or cohabiting with each other (i.e. the partners of only three of the respondents took part in this study). The results indicated that male partners initiated and considered initiating sexual activity more often than did the females. In addition, more initiations within the couple were reported by participants who were younger, were cohabiting, had been romantically involved with their partner for a shorter time, were more satisfied with their relationship, and reported greater sexual satisfaction. The findings support the notion that the way men and women in long-standing relationships initiate sex can have important consequences on both the quantity and quality of their sexual activity.

Given the sampling and assessment limitations outlined above and given the paucity of research on how older members in an established dyad initiate sexual activity, the Sexual Initiation Scale (SIS) was developed to expand our theoretical and clinical understanding of sexual initiation.

## STUDY 1

Study 1 was designed to collect item contents for developing the SIS.

### Method

#### Participants

Ten couples ranging in age from 30 to 57 participated in the study. Of these couples, eight were married and two were cohabiting. Eighty percent of the males and 60 % of the females had a university education. Seventy percent of the males and 60 % of the females worked in a professional capacity. The mean length of time the couples had lived together was 6 years and 40 % had at least one child.

#### Procedure

Couples were interviewed in their home. Interviews were conducted to obtain information in a flexible manner from questions shown in the literature to have relevance to sexual initiation. Participants were verbally asked seven questions, a) who is the initiator, b) who would you like the initiator to be, c) how often do you have sex with your partner, d) how often would you like to have sex, e) how do you initiate sex with your partner, f) how does your partner initiate sex with you, and g) what factors or situations contribute to your initiating sex with your partner. Because it has been shown that there is often a lack of accord between husbands' and

wives' reports of sexual activity (e.g. Julien et al., 1992), each member of the couple was interviewed separately then the couple conjointly. Each interview, conducted by the principal researcher, lasted about two hours. The interviews were audiotaped and their content transcribed.

## Results

### Data Classification

Interview data were coded using clinical judgment of two psychologists (first and third author). They were guided by previous research that categorized initiation approaches into direct or indirect, verbal or non-verbal strategies.

Thirty categories of strategies for initiating sexual activity were derived. A category was defined as any classificatory division which comprehends behaviors regarded as having similar characteristics. A strategy was defined as any action consciously used by a partner to initiate sex. "Physical approach" of one partner towards the other exemplifies a category of strategies. The strategy might be direct (e.g. making genital contact) or non direct (e.g. accidentally bumping into each other).

Forty eight categories of contributing factors were also identified. A contributing factor was defined as any item that may have contributed to a spouse initiating sex with the other partner. "Location" exemplifies a

category of contributing factors. Novelty, decor, vacations exemplify contributing items in the "Location" category".

After the strategies and contributing factors had been derived, questions were formulated and incorporated each of the categories identified. The final questionnaire comprised 93 items referring to initiation strategies and 170 items referring to the contributing factors. The questions asked participants to report the use of each strategy to initiate sex with their partner, and to report the contribution of each contributing factor to their sex initiations. Answers were given on a 7 point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (never or almost never), 4 (average amount), to 7 (always or almost always).

The strategies items were classified into two a priori subscales : a) verbal or non-verbal, b) direct or non-direct. For example, the item "prepare a special meal" is a non-direct, non-verbal item. The contributing items were classified into three a priori subscales : a) communication items of a contextual (e.g. going on vacation), verbal (partner says humorous or funny things), cognitive (e.g. nostalgic memories) and sensory nature (e.g. your partner's natural body scent); b) body language items (e.g. longer than usual eye contact; your partner touches own genitals; your partner looks tired, etc.); and c) mood-related items (e.g. you feel relaxed; your partner feels jealous towards you; you feel in a festive mood, etc.). The final questionnaire was then administered to 10 additional couples to verify the clarity of the instructions and the item content. No changes were made.



## STUDY 2

Study 2 was designed to examine the factorial structure of the SIS, its reliability, and its convergence with concurrent measures of sexual arousability, sexual difficulties, and initiation.

### Method

#### Participants

A total of 101 English speaking couples (202 partners) from a large metropolitan area participated in the research. Of these couples, 72 were married and 29 were cohabiting. The mean age was 39 years for males ( $SD = 10.17$ ) and 36 years for females ( $SD = 8.34$ ). Seventy-four percent of the males and 64 % of the females had a university education. Forty-eight percent of the males and 39 % of the females worked in a professional capacity. The mean length of time couples had lived together was 10.59 years ( $SD = 9.26$ ), and 62.4 % of the couples had at least one child.

All participants were unpaid volunteers who responded to written or oral announcements which described the project as a questionnaire study of couple communication. Prospective participants were informed that they must be cohabiting with or married to each other and that participation of both members of each couple was required. Competency in the English language was also asked.

Seventy percent of the sample was recruited informally by presenting details of the research to selected individuals representing hospital staff, teaching staff, business and professional offices. Through word of mouth, the selected individuals encouraged their friends or colleagues to participate in the study. The other thirty percent of the sample was recruited by means of advertisement and presentation. Ads were posted in local English newspapers and bulletin boards around the city. Presentations were made at parent activity meetings, business meetings, staff conferences, etc.

### Procedure

Each partner completed the questionnaires at home. Participants were instructed to fill out the research forms independently of the other. The questionnaires were returned by mail to the researchers.

### Measures

Concurrent validity was assessed using measures of sexual arousability, sexual difficulties, and sexual initiation. Sexual arousability was assessed by Sexual Arousability Inventory (SAI; Hoon, Hoon, & Wincze, 1976). This 28 item instrument measures perceived arousability to a variety of sexual experiences. The items are descriptions of intimate erotic situations which are rated along a 7-point Likert scale on the basis of how sexually aroused the respondent feels (or would feel) when engaged in the

described activity. Response options range from -1 adversely affects arousal, unthinkable, repulsive, distracting to 5, indicating almost always causes sexual arousal, extremely arousing. Hoon et al. (1976) report a test-retest reliability of 0.69, and Spearman-Brown split-half reliability coefficients of .92 for both validation and of cross-validation.

Sexual difficulties was measured by the Sexual History Form (SHF; Nowinsky & LoPiccolo, 1979). This 28 item questionnaire measures sexual history and basic functioning of each participant, like the absolute frequencies of sexual contact, masturbation, duration of foreplay and intercourse, frequency of erectile failure, orgasm, and so on. The SHF was used mostly in clinical assessments. Normative data are available on 164 non-dysfunctional couples and provide useful standards for purposes of comparison. The higher the SHF score is, the higher the gravity of sexual problems.

Sexual initiation was assessed by three descriptive questions : (a) in the last four weeks, how often were you the one to initiate sex, (b) in the last four weeks, how often was your partner the one to initiate sex, and (c) how often were you satisfied with how you initiate sex with partner. Participants answered on a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (never or almost never), 4 (about half of the time), to 7 (always or almost always).

## Results

### Contributors Scale

Items selection. In order to reduce the number of items, the distribution of the scores for each item was examined, and the items with very little variance due to floor or ceiling effect were removed from the initial pool of 170 contributor items. An item was removed when : a) more than 50 % of the respondents scored 1 (the lowest score of the scale) or 7 (the highest score of the scale), and when b) more than 90 % of the cases were on one half of the scale (scores 1 to 3, or scores 4 to 7). This way, sixty-six items (39 % of the items) were removed because of poor variance : 30 items from the Communication subscale, 32 items from the Mood subscale, and 4 items from the Body language subscale. It is interesting to note that most of the removed items were negative. Examples of the removed items are : "your partner appears to be telling lies", "you feel tired", "you are angry at your partner", "your partner finds fault with you".

Factorial structure of the Contributors scale. Because of high correlations between most of the items, and in order to know whether the final pool of items measured dimensions corresponding to the three a priori subscales defined in study 1 (communication, body language and mood), a first principal components analysis with VARIMAX rotation was conducted. The Scree Test yielded two independent factors.

The elimination of items that did not fit the two-factor model was used to reduce the number of items. A series of principal components analyses with two factors extracted were again conducted. For each analysis, items were removed when : a) they loaded less than .50 on both factors, or when b) they loaded near .50 on both factors (thus when they did not discriminate between the two factors). The analysis was then carried out again until a final solution would show that no more items had to be removed. Table 1 shows that in the final analysis, 39 items loaded .50 or more on one or the other factor.

The total variance accounted for by the two factors was 53.3 %. The first factor, named the Zest factor, accounted for 28.4 % of the variance. The Zest factor included 19 items that formed part of the initial Mood subscale of study 1. The second factor, named the Intimacy factor, accounted for 24.9 % of the variance. The Intimacy factor included 20 items, mostly from the Communication and Body language initial subscales of study 1.

Reliability of the factors. Cronbach's  $\alpha$ s were conducted on each factor. The  $\alpha$  was .96 for the Zest factor and .94 for the Intimacy factor. Because the scores are close to 1, the reliability of both factors is considered to be very good.

### Strategies Scale

Items selection. A similar procedure was followed to that described for the Contributors scale, with exactly the same criteria for item removal. A total of 26 items out of 93 items (28 %) were removed in this way.

Factorial structure of the Strategies scale. In order to reduce the number of dimensions and the number of items, a first principal components analysis with VARIMAX rotation was conducted. The Scree Test yielded two independent factors.

Items that did not fit the two-factor model were eliminated following the same procedure with the same criteria as outlined for the contributors scale. Table 2 shows that the 37 remaining items loaded .50 or more on one or the other factor.

The total variance accounted for by the two factors is 47.2 %. The first factor, named the Direct initiation factor, accounted for 26.6 % of the variance, and comprised 19 items, all describing direct physical strategies for initiating sex. The second factor, named the Indirect initiation factor, accounted for 20.6 % of the variance and comprises 18 items, all of which described non physical strategies for initiating sex.

Reliability of the factors. Cronbach's  $\alpha$ s were conducted on each factor. The  $\alpha$  was .95 for the Direct initiation factor and .91 for the Indirect initiation factor. Again, the reliability of both factors was very good.

#### Concurrent Validity

Whether the four SII factors were associated with concurrent measures of sexual difficulties and sexual initiation was examined using correlations between the four SII factors on the one hand, and, on the other hand, one measure of sexual arousability, one measure of sexual difficulties and the three descriptive measures of sexual initiation (Table 3).

Concurrent validity with sexual arousability (SAI). The findings indicated a consistent pattern of correlations between the four SIS factors and sexual arousability, for both males and females. Males' scores on the four SIS factors were positively associated with their sexual arousability scores. In other words, the higher the Zest and Intimacy as contributors to males' initiation, and the higher their use of Direct and Indirect strategies, the higher their sexual arousability. Females showed a similar pattern, although Zest did not correlate significantly with their sexual arousability. A paired  $t$ -test of difference between  $r$ s showed no significant differences between males' and females' respective association between Zest and SAI.

Concurrent validity with sexual difficulties (SHQ). As seen in Table 3, the correlations between the SII factors and sexual difficulties indicated

negative associations between Direct strategies and sexual difficulties for both males and females. In other words, the higher their use of Direct strategies, the lower the gravity of their sexual problems. For the males too, the higher the Zest as a contributor to their initiation, the lower the gravity of their sexual problems. However, a paired  $t$ -test of differences between  $r$ s showed no significant differences between males' and females' respective association between Zest and SHQ. For both males and females, the Intimacy and the Indirect strategy factors were not associated with their scores on sexual problems.

Concurrent validity with measures of sexual initiation. Table 3 shows no relations between the SIS factors and the measures of sexual initiation for males. Females' higher scores on Intimacy as a contributor to their initiation were associated with more frequent initiation of sex by themselves and lower frequency of initiation of sex by their partner, as reported by the females. These associations were significantly stronger for females than for males,  $t_s(98) = 3.05$ ,  $p < .01$ , and  $-2.12$ ,  $p < .05$ , respectively. Similarly, higher scores on females' use of Direct Strategies for initiating sex were associated with more frequent sexual initiation by themselves, less frequent initiation by their partner, and more satisfaction with their own initiation. Also, tests on the  $r$ s indicated that these three associations were stronger for the females than for the males,  $t_s(98) = 5.73$ ,  $p < .01$ ;  $-3.45$ ,  $p < .01$ ; and  $2.50$ ,  $p < .05$ , respectively. For both males and females, none of the other associations were significant.



## Discussion

The purpose of this research was to develop a self-report comprehensive measure The Sexual Initiation Scale (SIS) which assesses initiation behaviors in married or cohabiting relationships and the factors facilitating these behaviors. Two studies were conducted with the purpose of determining the content validity of the SIS, its factorial structure, its reliability and its concurrent validity.

In the first study, 263 items were generated reflecting both the strategies men and women use to initiate sex with each other and the contributors facilitating sexual initiation. Our sample of adult couples in established relationships corrected for limitations of previous studies in which data was derived from samples of single men and women, mostly college students in young or fictitious relationships. However, because our sample of couples was highly educated, the items generated have limitations, too. Survey studies have repeatedly shown that sexual practices vary with social class, education and culture (e.g. Kinsey, Pomeroy & Martin, 1948; Kinsey, Pomeroy, Martin, & Gebhard, 1953; Laumann et al., 1994). Specifically, data have shown that more educated individuals have a different history of sexual activity than do the less educated (Kinsey et al., 1948; 1953). Future studies can confirm whether the factors which emerged pertaining to initiation strategies (direct and indirect) and the factors which emerged pertaining to initiation contributors (Zest and Intimacy) generalize to other populations of couples with different

psychological or demographic standing as well as different ethnic origins. Additional data can shed light on these questions.

The second study established the factorial structure and the reliability of the SIS using a sample of adult couples. The SIS's convergence with concurrent measures of sexual arousability, sexual difficulties and initiation were also examined. Our findings showed a clear factorial structure and excellent reliability and concurrent validity of the SIS.

The findings indicated that the Zest factor, consisting of a set of items which form the contributor part of initiation, deals mostly with positive, energetic and zestful feelings of both partner and self. This content is similar to the findings of Laumann et al. (1994) survey which showed health and happiness with life are linked with increased sexual frequency and satisfaction with partnered sex. Similarly, Brown and Auerback (1981) found that sexual initiation more frequently occurred when the couple was happy. It is interesting that in our sample of non-clinical couples, all negative mood items (e.g. you are angry at your partner, your partner feels pessimistic, etc.) were removed in the factor extraction process. This suggests that negative mood does not facilitate initiation of sex.

The Intimacy factor, which consists of another set of items pertaining to the contributor part of initiation, deals mostly with intimacy and communication skills of both partners. It makes sense that relationships

involving commitment between the partners are likely to use communication skills that enhance the sexual relationship (e.g. Talmadge & Talmadge, 1986; Spence, 1997; Zilbergeld, 1992).

It is important to note that contributing factors emerged with items reported by couples mostly satisfied with their sexual lives and relationships. It is an empirical question whether the same structures would have emerged had both clinical and non clinical populations been used to generate items. Thus, future research should also examine whether the SIS can discriminate a clinical from a non-clinical group.

With regard to the strategy factors, the items we found relate to both direct and indirect strategies. These findings are similar to earlier studies which targeted men and women. However, it is interesting to note that all the items depicted within the Direct strategies factor are unquestionably physical, indicating that non-clinical cohabiting and married couples consider a direct physical approach to be a key element of their initiation interaction. Therefore, our study has a distinct advantage over previous research in that it reveals an interesting set of contributors in older couples. In future studies it would be interesting to determine what the responses would be of younger couples if such contributor questions were asked.

Otherwise, the SIS factors showed good concurrent validity with measures of related constructs. As expected, the four factors were

associated with sexual arousability for both men and women. Also, correlations between the SIS factors and sexual history showed that the more the men and the women endorsed Direct strategies and Zest, the lower was the gravity of their sexual problems.

Moreover, the more the women endorsed Direct strategies and Intimacy, the more frequent was their initiation and the less frequent was their partner initiating. Furthermore, when the women used Direct strategies, they were more satisfied with their own way of initiating. It makes sense that when women share the responsibility for initiating sex in their relationships, men find more satisfaction in their sexual interactions. The fact that the SIS factors were more often associated with females' than males' measures of sexual initiation may be reflective of the small variance of male initiation frequencies, given that most males usually initiate.

### Clinical Implications

There is an increased awareness among clinicians that numerous couples presenting at sex and couple services manifest difficulties with sexual initiation whether or not sexual dysfunction also exists (e.g. Brown & Auerback, 1981; Byers & Heinlein, 1989; Frank et al., 1978; Kaplan, 1974; Leiblum & Rosen, 1988; Maddock, 1975; Zilbergeld, 1992). According to Apfelbaum (1988), both functional and dysfunctional couples are generally lacking in initiation techniques and unaware of their deficits in initiation which can lead to problematic interactions. Surprisingly, sex therapy has

never considered sexual initiation as a major aspect of sexual dysfunction. It has not looked at the existence of dysfunctional initiation patterns. Zilbergeld (1992) states that "it is a topic hardly anyone touches". Initiation may have been incorporated in Sensate Focus exercises in which initiation is assigned to members of a couple (e.g. Masters & Johnson, 1970; Kaplan, 1974) or more recently sexual interventions have been made from a scripting perspective (Leiblum & Rosen, 1988). However, treatment interventions have mostly been based on clinical observations.

Future researchers intent on elaborating on the SIS would clearly benefit by including a clinical sample for comparison and differentiation. Also, a more clear delineation of the concepts expressed in the factors may help to accomplish this. Empirical knowledge from a group of satisfied couples and dysfunctional groups could be used to develop and evaluate a treatment strategy which incorporates modification of initiation difficulties. In this respect, the SIS has a purposeful role. In addition to serving as a measure of sexual initiation, the SIS could have good diagnostic utility and aid in devising treatment.

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Table 1

Principal Components Analysis for Contributors of Sexual Initiation

Items	Loadings	
	Factor 1 e.v. <sup>a</sup> = 11.07	Factor 2 e.v. = 9.73
Zest		
You are in a good mood	.62	.39
Your partner is in a good mood	.62	.36
You feel good about yourself	.72	.30
Your partner feels good about her/himself	.71	.37
You feel happy	.74	.37
Your partner feels happy	.75	.38
You feel a wave of love for your partner	.81	.13
Your partner is unexpectedly affectionate	.82	.13
You feel loved by your partner	.81	.18
You feel in a festive mood	.75	.37
Your partner feels in a festive mood	.73	.31

(... table 1 continued)

Table 1

Principal Components Analysis for Contributors of Sexual Initiation

Items	Loadings	
	Factor 1 e.v. <sup>a</sup> = 11.07	Factor 2 e.v. = 9.73
You feel a zest for life	.70	.43
Your partner feels a zest for life	.67	.39
You feel romantic	.74	.11
Your partner feels relaxed	.51	.35
You need affection	.66	.16
You need to feel loved	.69	.16
Your partner needs to feel loved	.62	.22
You need to feel sexually desired	.55	.21
Total: 19 items		

(... table 1 continued)

Table 1

Principal Components Analysis for Contributors of Sexual Initiation

Items	Loadings	
	Factor 1 e.v. <sup>a</sup> = 11.07	Factor 2 e.v. = 9.73
<b>Intimacy</b>		
Being able to talk to your partner about feelings	.31	.66
Your partner shares some of the day's events	.27	.71
Your partner confides in you	.36	.66
Your partner shares an interesting story	.33	.70
Your partner is teasing you in a pleasant way	.36	.64
When sharing common adversity	.16	.59
Having a enjoyable conversation with other people when your partner is present	.35	.61
Having a enjoyable conversation with other people without your partner's presence	.17	.56
The way partner's voice sounds	.27	.61

(... table 1 continued)

Table 1

Principal Components Analysis for Contributors of Sexual Initiation

Items	Loadings	
	Factor 1 e.v. <sup>a</sup> = 11.07	Factor 2 e.v. = 9.73
You feel adventurous	.40	.58
Your partner feels adventurous	.34	.64
Your partner feels pleased at having recently accomplished an objective	.43	.64
Longer than usual eye contacts	.25	.59
Your partner moves restlessly	-.02	.63
Your partner is energetic	.31	.64
Your partner stretches	-.01	.60
Your partner looks at you more frequently than usual	.36	.65
Your partner's body language suggests self-confidence	.34	.70
Your partner is semi-nude	.19	.60
Your partner is washing self	.21	.61
Total: 20 items		

Note. e.v.<sup>a</sup> = Eigen value.

Table 2

Principal Components Analysis for Strategies of Sexual Initiation

Items	Loadings	
	Factor 1 e.v. <sup>a</sup> = 9.85	Factor 2 e.v. = 7.63
Direct initiation		
Initiate at a time you feel your partner will be receptive	.57	.05
Be physically affectionate with your partner	.62	.14
Intentionally sit close to your partner	.59	.37
Caress your partner non-sexually	.65	.21
Kiss your partner longer than usual	.73	.21
Deep (tongue) kiss to your partner	.75	.16
Return a kiss passionately	.78	.23
Press against your partner	.80	.20
By sensing a sequence of events when to initiate	.55	.30
Snuggle up to your partner	.74	.21
Prolong eye contact with your partner	.65	.29

(... table 2 continued)

Table 2

Principal Components Analysis for Strategies of Sexual Initiation

Items	Loadings	
	Factor 1 e.v. <sup>a</sup> = 9.85	Factor 2 e.v. = 7.63
Let your hands wander over your partner's body	.82	.12
Make physical contact that will likely result in direct sexual stimulation	.76	.15
Prolong a touch	.82	.24
Touch more than usual	.79	.19
Cuddle your partner	.64	.17
Touch your partner's genitals	.57	.13
Convey sexual desire facially	.61	.31
You move into that physical "territory" or "space" currently occupied by your partner	.52	.18
Total: 19 items		

(...table 2 continued)

Table 2

Principal Components Analysis for Strategies of Sexual Initiation

Items	Loadings	
	Factor 1 e.v. <sup>a</sup> = 9.85	Factor 2 e.v. = 7.63
Indirect initiation		
Offer to do a task for your partner	.21	.57
Say something to boost your partner's self esteem	.36	.55
Make arrangements to be alone at home with partner	.29	.56
Set up a romantic ambiance	.24	.69
Share exciting sexual fantasies with your partner	.15	.59
Share non-sexual fantasies with your partner	.23	.56
Act out a sexual fantasy with your partner	.15	.60
Groom yourself in ways you know your partner finds attractive	.27	.70
Suggest to your partner that you take a nap together	.15	.56
Wear (or not wear) certain articles of clothing's	.22	.63

(... table 2 continued)

Table 2

Principal Components Analysis for Strategies of Sexual Initiation

Items	Loadings	
	Factor 1 e.v. <sup>a</sup> = 9.85	Factor 2 e.v. = 7.63
Change the usual routine	.21	.63
Use scents (or perfumes)	.11	.60
Tell partner that you are going to lie down for awhile	.15	.59
Suggest taking a bath together	.14	.63
Tell your partner that you are about to take (or have just taken) a shower or a bath	.13	.69
Suggest taking a drink (of alcohol) together	-.02	.57
Be vibrant	.36	.54
Prepare a special meal	.10	.71
Total: 18 items		

Note. <sup>a</sup> e.v. = Eigen value.



Table 3

Pearson correlations between the SIS factors, sexual arousability, sexual difficulties, and sexual initiation

	SIS factors							
	Males				Females			
	Zest	Intim.	Dir. st.	Ind. st.	Zest	Intim.	Dir. st.	Ind. st.
Sexual arousability								
SAI <sup>a</sup>	.18*	.24**	.30**	.16*	ns	.42**	.50**	.26**
Sexual difficulties								
SHF <sup>b</sup>	-.20*	ns	-.31**	ns	ns	ns	-.36**	ns
Sexual initiation								
Freq. (self)	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	.33**	.51**	ns
Freq. (partner)	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	-.17*	-.28**	ns
Satisfaction	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	.40**	ns

Note. <sup>a</sup> Sexual Arousability Inventory (Hoon, Wincze, & Hoon, 1976). <sup>b</sup> Sexual History Forms (Nowinski & LoPiccolo, 1979). ns = non significant (one-tailed test).

\*\*  $p < .01$ . \*  $p < .05$ .

Second Article  
Determinants of Sexual Quality in  
Long-term Couples' Relationships

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## Abstract

The first objective of this study was to predict the sexual quality of partnered sex using individual and dyadic determinants. A second objective was to examine whether sexual initiation strategies and factors contributing to initiation would further improve the prediction of sexual quality beyond that afforded by individual and dyadic determinants. Hierarchical regression analysis, using sexual quality as the dependent variable, were conducted on the responses of 101 couples in long-standing relationships. Both partners' mean levels of sexual quality and partners' discrepancies in their reports of sexual quality were examined. The overall findings indicated that individual and dyadic factors significantly predicted sexual quality and that the initiation variables further contributed unique variance in sexual quality beyond that afforded by the couples' individual and dyadic characteristics. Implications for sex therapy and future research are discussed.

Keys Words :       sexual quality, sexual initiation, dyadic adjustment, long-standing couples' relationship

### Determinants of Sexual Quality in Long-term Couples' Relationships

Interpersonal sex is a major aspect of most couples' lives. However, research on the individual and dyadic factors determining the sexual interactions of couples is relatively scant despite the fact that the highest rates of sexual activity among heterosexuals is among married and cohabiting couples (Laumann, Gagnon, Michael & Michaels, 1994). Measuring sex in established couples is particularly complicated due to its multidetermined nature. Many questions arise in an attempt to measure and understand it. For example, how couples initiate sexual activity, which factors determine their sexual frequencies and sexual satisfaction are questions of interest to researchers and clinicians investigating determinants of partnered sex.

Participation in the initiation of sexual activities is an important and integral part of partnered sex affecting the quality and quantity of a couples' sexual activity (e.g., Apfelbaum, 1988; Brown & Auerback, 1981; Byers & Heinlein, 1989; Crain, 1980; Frank, Anderson & Rubinstein, 1978; Kaplan, 1974; Leiblum & Rosen, 1988; Maddock, 1975; Zilbergeld, 1992). Sexual initiation can be defined as a first step taken by one partner to convey verbally and/or non-verbally to the other partner an interest or desire for sexual activity, whether or not sexual activity between the partners results. Surprisingly, sex research and sex therapy have only recently considered sexual initiation as a major aspect of sexual functioning between partners in adult relationships (e.g., Rosen & Beck,

1988; Leiblum & Rosen, 1988; Zilbergeld, 1992). We know little about the factors facilitating or inhibiting sexual initiation interactions between partners in long-standing relationships.

Sexual initiation can lead or not lead to full sexual intercourse. Thus, another key question that has been addressed in prior research is how frequently couples actually have sexual intercourse and which factors facilitate or inhibit sexual intercourse. Several studies have examined factors contributing to sexual frequencies in established relationships. Demographic findings in such studies showed that coitus tends to decline with age (Kinsey, Pomeroy, & Martin, 1948; Hunt, 1974; Ade-Ridder, 1985). Additional factors such as relationship satisfaction (e.g., Byers & Heinlein, 1989) and child status (Hunt, 1974; Kinsey, 1948, 1953) have also been linked to sexual frequencies. However, few studies have examined the dyadic and individual characteristics determining whether sexual activity occurs.

At last, as related to sexual initiation and sexual intercourse, another question associated with partnered sex is how satisfied are couples with their sexual relationships with each other. Beyond immediate factors such as experience of orgasm or more distant factors such as marital satisfaction (e.g., Blumstein & Schwartz, 1983; Donnelly, 1993), we know relatively little about the determinants of couples' sexual satisfaction. The objective of this study was to examine how individual characteristics of married or cohabiting partners and characteristics of their relationship contribute to

their sexual initiation, the frequencies of their sexual activities and their sexual satisfaction.

#### Dyadic Determinants of Partnered Sex

Most of our knowledge about sexual initiation has been derived from studies which have typically sampled unmarried college students in dating or fictitious contexts revealing little about the sexual initiation interactions of adult men and women (Greer & Buss, 1994; Jesser, 1978; LaPlante, McCormick & Branninngan, 1980; McCormick, 1976, 1979; Perper & Weis, 1987). Given the paucity of research on how older members in an established dyad initiate sexual activity, we developed the Sexual Initiation Scale (SIS; Gossmann, Julien, Mathieu, and Chartrand, 2000). The SIS is a self-report measure of sexual initiation strategies and factors facilitating these behaviors in long-standing marital or cohabiting relationships. Four aspects of initiation were identified. Examination of the factorial structure of the SIS showed two dimensions, labeled Zest and Communication intimacy, that pertained to contributors of the initiation interactions in established dyads. We also identified two dimensions, labeled Direct strategies and Indirect strategies, that pertained to the initiation strategies of adult couples. Our previous study indicated that the SIS scales predicted frequencies of initiation and sexual satisfaction. However, several dyadic characteristics of the couples and several individual characteristics of the partners may have accounted for the couples' sexual outcomes. We do not know whether the SIS accounts for a unique variance in sexual initiation,

sexual frequencies and sexual satisfaction, beyond that afforded by the couples' marital and individual characteristics. The objective of this study was to examine whether the SIS predicts unique variance in sexual outcome variables after controlling for the effect of partners' relationship and individual characteristics.

Prior research on the determinants of partnered sex has shown a strong relationship between marital and sexual satisfaction (Blumstein & Schwartz, 1983; Scanzoni & Marsiglio, 1991; Donnelly, 1993; Clark & Wallin, 1965; Frank, Anderson & Rubinson, 1979). Couples who report high overall satisfaction with their relationship typically report more frequent and more satisfying sexual relationships. Studies of sexual initiation and refusals of sexual advances among married and cohabiting couples have found that only marital satisfaction affected both the number of initiations and the likelihood that the partner would respond positively once sex was initiated (e.g., Byers & Heinlein, 1989). Thus relative to satisfied couples, dissatisfied couples initiate sex less often and respond to initiation with less interest. In this study, we predicted that couples' satisfaction with their relationship would be positively associated with higher degrees of initiation, higher frequencies of sexual interactions and higher degrees of sexual satisfaction.

Closely related to marital satisfaction, power has been shown to be related to levels of sexual activity. Clinical evidence has shown that "power struggles" in the relationship contribute to conflict in the sexual

relationship as well (Kaplan, 1974; Masters & Johnson, 1970; LoPiccolo, & LoPiccolo, 1978; Leiblum & Rosen, 1988, Zilbergeld, 1992, etc.). Some authors have suggested that men are not likely to have sex if their partners have more power than they (e.g., Gilder, 1975; Bernard, 1972). Other authors have shown that men and women who report their relationships are fair and equitable are more satisfied with their sexual relationship and have sex more often than those who report that their marriages are inequitable (Hatfield, Greenberger, Traupman & Campbell, 1982). Thus, we expected that the unequal distribution of power in the couple will be negatively associated with initiation, frequencies of sex and sexual satisfaction.

#### Partners' Individual Characteristics as Determinants of Partnered Sex

Research also suggests that psychological factors such as partners' levels of stress, anxiety and depression may have a debilitating effect on the couples' sexual functioning. For example, studies have shown that negative affective states, marital difficulties and sexual problems are interrelated (e.g., Zimmer, 1987). Negative thoughts about the self, the partner and the relationship, which typically occur in psychological distress, are strongly associated with the quality of both the general and sexual aspects of the relationship (Spence, 1997). Thus, we predicted that higher levels of emotional distress would be associated with lower degrees of initiation, lower frequencies of sexual interactions and lower degrees of sexual satisfaction.



Beyond the characteristics described above, partners' capacity for physiological sexual arousability has always been a crucial part of sexual functioning (Kaplan, 1974; Leiblum & Rosen, 1988; Masters & Johnson, 1970). More recently, the cognitive and emotional factors of arousal have also been linked to sexual motivation and the activation of sexual behavior (e.g., Bancroft, 1989; Hill & Preston, 1996; Rosen & Beck, 1988). Similarly, studies have shown that sexual arousability is positively associated with satisfaction with intercourse frequencies and satisfaction with sexual responsiveness (e.g., Hoon, Hoon & Wincze, 1976). Given that sexual arousal appears to be a crucial part of satisfactory partnered sex, we expected levels of arousal to be associated with higher degrees of initiation, higher frequencies of sexual interactions and higher degrees of sexual satisfaction.

Research on the determinants of general sexual activity suggest that partners' health and exercise activities affect levels of sexual frequencies and satisfaction. For instance, previous research has demonstrated that acute illnesses or injury may cause temporary decreases in sexual activity and that more permanent decreases in sexual activity may be linked to variables such as chronic illness or handicaps (e.g., Greenblat, 1983; Schover & Jensen, 1988). Also, a variety of pharmacological agents inadvertently impact on sexual interest or activity (e.g., Segraves, 1988). Similarly, physical fitness, as defined by levels of exercise, is an important health behavior which influences sexual initiatives and satisfaction. For example, studies of the determinants of enhanced sexual responsiveness

and functioning in males (White, Case, McWhriter & Mattison, 1990) have shown that exercisers, relative to controls, had higher frequencies of coitus and orgasms. We expected that both husbands and wives reporting to be in better health would also report higher degrees of initiation, higher frequencies of sexual interactions and higher degrees of sexual satisfaction.

Other research on the determinants of general sexual activity suggest that partners' physical appearance is likely to affect levels of sexual initiation. Studies have shown that degree of satisfaction with one's own body is positively related to the quality and quantity of sexual activities (e.g., MacCorquodale & DeLamater, 1980). It makes sense that men and women who are uncomfortable with their body appearance would find satisfying sexual contacts more difficult to achieve. Physical appeal has also been considered an important determinant of sexual attraction for both men and women, especially for women attracting men (e.g., Feingold, 1990; Buss, 1989; Greer & Buss, 1994). Thus, we predicted that physical appearance of self and partner would be important determinants of sexual initiation for both male and female partners.

Given the associations found between partners' dyadic and individual characteristics and partners' sexual outcomes, the objective of this study was to examine whether the SIS contributors and strategies of sexual initiation still accounted for variance in sexual outcomes, after controlling for the effect of partners characteristics.

## Method

### Participants

Participants were 101 English speaking couples (202 partners) from a large metropolitan area. Of these couples, 72 were married and 29 were cohabiting. The mean age was 39 years for males ( $SD = 10.17$ ) and 36 years for females ( $SD = 8.34$ ). Seventy-four percent of the males and 64 % of the females had a university education. Forty-eight percent of the males and 39 % of the females worked in a professional capacity. The mean length of time couples had lived together was 10.59 years ( $SD = 9.26$ ), and 62.4 % of the couples had least one child.

All participants were unpaid volunteers who responded to written or oral announcements which described the project as a questionnaire study of couple communication. Prospective participants were informed that they must be cohabiting with or married to each other and that participation of both members of each couple was required. Competency in the English language was also required.

### Procedure

Each partner completed the questionnaire at home. Participants were instructed to fill out the research forms independently of the other. The questionnaires were returned by mail to the researchers.

## Measures

### Independent Variables

Dyadic Adjustment. We measured relationship satisfaction with the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS; Spanier, 1976). This 32-item scale measures the perceived quality of the relationship of married or cohabiting couples. The DAS generates a global score and four subscales measuring Dyadic Consensus, Affection, Cohesion, and satisfaction. The scales are reported to have very high internal consistency and to discriminate between distressed and non-distressed couples. The DAS has good concurrent validity with the Locke -Wallace Marital Adjustment Scale (Spanier, 1976). Total scores ranged from 1-151. Higher scores reflect a better relationship. In our study, the mean DAS scores for the sample was 100.29 level (SD = 13.25). The Cronbach  $\alpha$  was .75.

Power. We measured power with ten items of two questions each on the perceived distribution of power in five power categories : 1) financial 2) emotional 3) intellectual 4) verbal, and 5) overall power. Respondents were asked to indicate the distribution of power they think they have in their relationships in each category and to indicate the distribution of power they want to have in these same categories. For example, in the category "financial", respondents were asked "What is the distribution of financial power" and "What do you want the distribution of financial power to be". Items were ranked along a 7-point Likert type scale ranging from 1 (self

more powerful) to 7 (partner more powerful). A global score for the items on power was computed. The score, measuring Power discrepancy, corresponds to the mean of the difference between the actual and the desired power levels within each of the 5 categories of power. A low power discrepancy score indicates satisfaction about the distribution of power in the relationship. Cronbach  $\alpha$  was .63.

Psychological symptoms. We measured psychological symptoms with the Symptom Checklist-10 (SCL-10; Nguyen, Attkinson, and Stegner, 1983) which is an abbreviated version of the SCL-90 developed by Derogatis, Lipman, & Covi (1973). The SCL-10 assesses the following three aspects of psychological discontent : Depression (6 items), Somatization (2 items), and Phobic anxiety (2 items). Examples of each category are as follows. "How much were you distressed by feeling weak in part of your body " (Somatization), and "How much were you distressed by feeling afraid to go out of your house alone" (Phobic anxiety). All items were rated along a 5-point Likert type scale from 0 (not at all) 2 (moderately) to 4 (extremely). Higher scores reflect a higher degree of psychological distress. Cronbach  $\alpha$  was .84.

Sexual arousability. We measured sexual arousability by using the Sexual Arousability Inventory (SAI; Hoon, Hoon, & Wincze, 1976). This is a 28 items questionnaire measuring perceived arousability to a variety of sexual experiences. The items are descriptions of intimate erotic situations which were rated along a 7-point Likert scale on the basis of how sexually

aroused the respondent feels (or would feel) when engaged in the described activity. Response options range from 1 (adversely affects arousal, unthinkable, repulsive, distracting) to 5 (almost always causes sexual arousal, extremely arousing). Hoon et al. (1976) report a test-re-test reliability of 0.69, and Spearman-Brown split-half reliability coefficients of .92 for both validation and of cross-validation. Cronbach  $\alpha$  was .82.

Health, Partners' Appearance, and Own Appearance. A set of eight questions referring to health and general body appearance were submitted to a principal components analysis with VARIMAX rotation which yielded three independent factors, explaining 62,6 % of the total variance. Each of the eight items loaded on one factor. The first factor, called Health, included 4 items. The second factor, called Partners' appearance, included 2 items. The third factor, called Own appearance, included 2 items. The factorial scores for the three subscales were used for the analyses of this study. The four questions measuring Health were 1) "What is your overall health", 2) "What is your partners' overall health", with responses ranging from 1 (poor) to 4 (average) to 7 (excellent), 3) "How often do you have health discomfort (e.g., sore throats, colds, etc.)" with responses ranging from 1 (never) to 4 (average amount) to 7 (very often) and 4) "On average, how often do you exercise (e.g., swim, run, jog, play tennis, etc.)" with responses ranging from 1 (once or less per week) to 7 (daily or more). The first question measuring partners' appearance was "How sexually appealing is your partners' body to you" with responses on a Likert type scale from 1 (not at all appealing) 4 (average sexual appeal) to 7 (very sexually

appealing). The second question was “in your opinion, how would rate your partners’ weight” to responses on a Likert type scale from 1 (underweight) 4 (about the right weight) to 7 (overweight). The first question measuring own appearance was “In your opinion, how would you rate your sexual appeal” with responses on a Likert type scale from 1 (not at all sexually appealing) to 4 (average sexual appeal) to 7 (very sexually appealing). The second question was “In your opinion, how would you rate your own weight” with responses on a Likert type scale from 1 (underweight) 4 (average weight) to 7 (overweight).

Sexual Initiation Scales. (SIS; Gossman, Julien, Mathieu, & Chartrand). This is a 76 item scale which measures initiation strategies and factors facilitating these behaviors in married or cohabiting relationships. This SIS assesses four aspects of initiation : Zest contributors (19 items dealing mostly with positive and energetic feelings of both partners and self). Communication intimacy contributors (20 items dealing mostly with intimacy and communication skills of both partners). Direct strategies (19 items, all describing direct physical strategies for initiating sex), and Indirect strategies (18 items, all of which describe non-physical strategies for initiating). Examples of each subscale are as follows : “You feel happy”, “Your partner is in a festive mood” (Zest), “Your partner confides in you”, “When sharing common adversity” (Communication intimacy), “Touch partners’ genitals”, “snuggle up to partner” (Direct strategies), and “Offer to do a task for partner”, “Groom yourself in ways you know partner finds attractive” (Indirect strategies). Items are rated along a 7-point Likert scale

on the basis of how often each contributing item influences the initiation of sex with the partner, or on the basis of how often each strategy is used to initiate sex with partner. Response options range from 1 (never or almost never) to 4 (average amount) to 7 (always or almost always). The subscales have excellent internal consistency : Alpha were .96 for Zest, .94 for Communication intimacy, .95 for Direct strategies, and .91 for Indirect strategies. Concurrent validity was supported with measures of sexual arousability, sexual difficulty and initiation. In this study, factorial scores for each scale were used for the analyses.

### Sexual Outcomes

Sexual initiation. Two items measured frequencies of Sexual Initiation : 1)What percentage of the total number of sexual initiations between you and your partner do you make ? (from 0 percent to 100 percent), and 2) In the last 4 weeks, how often were you the one to initiate sex with you partner? This item was rated along a 7-point Likert type scale ranging from 1 (never or almost never) to 7 (always or almost always). Scores for the items were standardized and averaged. The Cronbach  $\alpha$  was .78.

Frequency of sexual interactions. We assessed sexual frequencies using the item : How frequently do you and your mate have sexual intercourse or activity ? Participants answered on a 9-point scale ranging from 1 (from than once a day) to 9 (not at all).



Sexual satisfaction. We assessed sexual satisfaction with 2 items : 1) How satisfactory to you is your sexual relationship with your mate? Response options for this item ranged from 1 (extremely unsatisfactory) to 6 (extremely satisfactory). The other item measured satisfaction with sexual initiation : 2) How often are you satisfied with how you initiate sex with your partner ? This item was measured along a 7-point Likert type scale ranging from 1 (never or almost never) to 7 (always or almost always). The Cronbach  $\alpha$  was .75

## Results

### Analytical Strategy

Data reduction. For husbands and wives, the respective correlations between frequencies of initiation and frequencies of intercourse were .51 and .59, the correlation's between frequencies of initiation and sexual satisfaction were .38 and .43, and the correlation's between frequencies of intercourse and sexual satisfaction were .50 and .44. Because the correlations were high, the three outcome scores were standardized and averaged, thus creating a single outcome variable respectively for husbands and wives. The outcome variable was named sexual quality.

Unit of analysis. For all the analyses, the couple was the unit of analysis because the husbands' and wives' scores were correlated. Given that discrepancies between husbands' and wives' reports were of clinical

interest, the average and relative difference between husbands' and wives' scores were used as two measures for each variable (Kenny, 1996). Thus, the initial data set for the analyses comprised 22 predictors (11 average scores and 11 relative difference scores for the dyadic and individual characteristics and for the four SIS scales) and 2 outcomes (partners' average and difference of their report of sexual quality). The sample's means for husbands' and wives' averages on Dyadic Adjustment, Power, Symptom Checklist, and Arousability were, respectively, 100.29 ( $SD = 11.45$ ), .80 ( $SD = .49$ ), 5.74 ( $SD = 3.66$ ), and, 91.41 ( $SD = 13.33$ ). The sample's means for husbands' and wives' relative differences on Dyadic Adjustment, Power, Symptom checklist, and Arousability were, respectively, -1.84 ( $SD = 13.36$ ), -.16 ( $SD = .68$ ), -.03 ( $SD = 5.92$ ), and 9.44 ( $SD = 24.25$ ). All the other variables (Health, Partner's Appearance, Own Appearance, the four scales of the SIS, and Sexual Quality were standardized scores.

Analyses for the prediction of sexual quality. To examine whether the partners' characteristics and the SIS predicted the couples' sexual quality, we used multiple regression analyses with the partners' characteristics and the SIS as the predictors and sexual quality as the dependent variable. Because the average scores and difference scores for sexual quality were poorly correlated ( $r = .18$ ), we decided to run two independent regression equations, the first to predict partners' mean levels of sexual quality, and the second to predict partners' difference in their report of sexual quality.

For each regression, a hierarchical model was defined taking into account both theoretical and practical constraints. The rationale underlying the model and the resulting order of entry for the variables for the first hierarchical regression were as follows : First, because length of cohabitation was associated with partners' mean levels of sexual quality, the model had to give priority to cohabitation over the other predictors. By entering duration of cohabitation first, followed by the other individual and dyadic characteristics, we were able to determine whether the individual and dyadic characteristics improved the prediction of sexual quality beyond that afforded by the length of cohabitation. Second, because we wanted to know whether the SIS improved prediction beyond that afforded by length of cohabitation and the individual and dyadic characteristics, we entered the four scales of the SIS in the last step. Thus, the hierarchical model for predicting partners' mean levels of sexual quality comprised three steps.

Table 1 shows the intercorrelations between all the variables within each sets of variables included in the regression equations. Table 2 shows the correlations between the predictors and partners' mean levels and difference in sexual quality. The first regression equations were derived using all the variables that showed significant bivariate correlations with partners' mean levels of sexual quality. For predicting the couples' mean levels of sexual quality, we entered cohabitation first, followed in the second step by the set of individual and dyadic characteristics variables that showed significant correlations with partners' mean levels of sexual

quality. Variables that did not significantly increase prediction in the second step were dropped, whereas those that did were again entered, after entering cohabitation. In the third step, we entered the set of SIS variables that showed significant bivariate correlation's with partners' mean levels of sexual quality.

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Insert Table 1 and 2 about here

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Because length of cohabitation was not correlated with partners' difference in their report of sexual quality, the hierarchical regression for predicting partners' difference in their reports of sexual quality comprised only step two and three described above. Table 3 and 4 shows the standardized regression coefficients  $\beta$ , the changes in  $R^2$ , and the adjusted  $R^2$  of the final equations for predicting couples' levels of sexual quality and the husbands' and wives' relative differences in their respective reports of sexual quality.

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Insert Table 3 and 4 about here

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### Predicting Partners' Mean Levels of Sexual Quality

The bivariate correlations (Table 2) indicated that shorter duration's of cohabitation, more positive perceptions of own appearance, more positive perceptions of partner's appearance, higher sexual arousability, smaller difference between husbands' and wives' arousability, lower psychological symptoms, higher dyadic adjustment, and smaller perceived discrepancies between partners' power were associated with higher levels of partners' sexual quality. Also, the bivariate correlations between the SIS scales and partners' sexual quality showed that smaller discrepancies between husbands' and wives' reports of intimacy as a contributor to their sexual initiation, and higher uses of direct strategies for initiating sex were associated with higher levels of sexual quality. The regression analyses (Table 3) showed that  $R$  was significantly different from zero for length of cohabitation,  $F(1, 99) = 6.06$ ,  $p < .05$ . The addition of the couples' individual and dyadic characteristics significantly increased  $R^2$ ,  $F(7, 93) = 10.25$ ,  $p < .001$ . And finally, the addition of the two SIS variables marginally increased  $R^2$ ,  $F(6, 94) = 14.36$ ,  $p = .08$ . After dropping the individual variables that did not significantly contribute to sexual quality, the final equation showed that shorter cohabitation, more positive perception of self-appearance, higher sexual arousability, higher levels of dyadic adjustment, and smaller discrepancies between husbands' and wives' reports of intimacy as contributing to their initiation of sex predicted higher levels of sexual quality.

Predicting Partners' Discrepancies in their Reports of Sexual Quality

The bivariate correlation's between the predictors and partners' difference in their reports of sexual quality (Table 2) also showed that smaller discrepancies between husbands' and wives' positive perceptions of their partners' appearance, smaller discrepancies between husbands' and wives' sexual arousability, between their levels of symptoms, and between their levels of dyadic adjustment, higher levels of husbands' and wives' zest as a contributing factor to their initiation of sex, and smaller discrepancies in their use of direct strategies for initiating sex, the smaller was their discrepancies in their report of sexual quality. The regression findings (Table 4) indicated that  $R$  was significantly different from zero for the partners' individual and dyadic characteristics,  $F(4, 95) = 6.42, p < .001$ . The addition of the two SIS variables also significantly increased  $R^2$ ,  $F(4, 96) = 7.41, p < .05$ . After dropping the specific variables that did not contribute significantly to partners' discrepancies in reports of sexual quality, the final model showed that bigger discrepancies between husbands' and wives' sexual arousability, bigger discrepancies between their reports of dyadic adjustment and higher degrees of the levels of zest as a contributing factor to their initiating sex, the bigger were their discrepancies in their reports of sexual quality.

## Discussion

The goal of this study was to predict the sexual quality of partnered sex using other aspects of individual and dyadic functioning. A second goal was to examine whether the SIS would improve the prediction of sexual quality above that of length of cohabitation, individual and dyadic characteristics. Sexual quality was defined using three aspects that have been related to partnered sex : (a) frequency of initiation, (b) frequency of intercourse and (c) sexual satisfaction. We initially expected that these aspects while sharing important interrelations, would each also be determined by unique contributing and facilitating characteristics. However, in this study they were highly correlated, thus a separate elaboration was not possible. Future research can re-define and isolate these dimensions.

### Predicting Partners' Mean Levels of Sexual Quality

As predicted, the individual and dyadic characteristics significantly predicted partners' mean levels of sexual quality. Results showed that the individual and dyadic characteristics that best predicted average levels of partners' sexual quality were : more positive perception of self-appearance, higher sexual arousability and higher levels of dyadic adjustment. The finding that more positive perception of one's own appearance is a significant predictor of sexual quality indicated an awareness of body concerns among the men and women we sampled. We are under increasing

external and self-imposed pressure to look good. Men (not just women) are concerned about their looks, spend time at gyms to improve their bodies and invest financially to feel and look good. Being comfortable with one's physical appeal would make it easier for men and women to initiate sex and to focus on feelings of sexual pleasure. Also, some studies have shown that breakups are more common among couples who are mismatched on attractiveness (e.g., Cash & Janda, 1984). The finding that perception of own appearance is a determinant of sexual quality suggests that clinicians dealing with couples' sexual and relationship problems should be encouraged to deal more closely with the appearance concerns of men and women.

The finding that higher sexual arousal predicts sexual quality is understandable. Some studies examining sexual correlates of sexual arousability have found sexual arousability to be correlated to sexual responsiveness and frequency of intercourse in female samples (e.g., Hoon et al., 1976). Also, being cued in to one's levels of arousal narrows our focus towards sexual pleasure and desires (e.g., Zilbergeld, 1992) and would thus lead to a fuller sexual enjoyment and sexual quality. It is easier to anticipate, initiate, and enjoy sex when one is already aroused.

We expected that the SIS variables would significantly impact on partners' mean levels of sexual quality above that of individual and dyadic characteristics. Among the SIS variables, smaller discrepancies between husbands' and wives' reports of Communication intimacy as contributing to



their initiation of sex, predicted unique variance in the couples' sexual quality. This finding suggests that, regardless of the levels of intimacy, marital partners who see "eye to eye" about their expressions of intimacy avoid intimacy related conflicts. For example, when one partner needs and seeks out higher levels of intimacy than the other for initiating sex that could interfere with willingness to have sex, sexual frequencies, and both partners' pleasure derived from the activities.

#### Predicting Partners' Discrepancies in their Reports of Sexual Quality

Recent research on couples has increasingly pointed in the direction of a dyadic focus which involves investigating discrepancies between couples' views (e.g., Julien, Bouchard, Gagnon & Pomerleau, 1992; Seal, 1997). As predicted, individual and dyadic characteristics significantly contributing to the prediction of partners' discrepancies in their reports of sexual quality. Results indicated that the individual and dyadic characteristics that best predicted partners' discrepancies in their reports of sexual quality were : smaller discrepancies between husbands' and wives' arousability and smaller discrepancies between their reports of dyadic adjustment.

Although wanting sex is not synonymous with arousal (e.g., Zilbergeld, 1992; Leiblum & Rosen, 1988) it would seem that couples who function on similar levels of arousal would have an easier time negotiating interactions. Being on similar levels of arousal may make it easier to arrive

at mutual expectations on when to have or not have sex, how often and what to expect of sexual interactions. Also, arousal in one partner often incites the other, thus leading to higher levels of sexual quality.

Smaller discrepancies on partners' reports of dyadic adjustment suggest that couples agree on the current state of their relationship whether the relationship is based on higher levels of intimate functioning or not. Since intimacy is only one model of a relationship and not desired by all (e.g., Leiblum & Rosen, 1988) couples may feel mutually satisfied in "lesser" levels of closeness. Studies have shown that it is the discrepancies in levels of desires and perceptions and not the degree of either that are associated with marital and sexual conflicts. For example, studies have found that people tend to be attracted to others who have similar love-styles (e.g., Lee, 1988) and that the success of a relationship can partially be predicted by the compatibility of styles (Hendrick, Hendrick, & Adler 1988; Hahn & Blass, 1997; Meyer & Pepper, 1977). Also, understanding can foster satisfaction with what they already have or serve as a basis for negotiation towards further improvement in the relationship if so desired.

The addition of the SIS variables also significantly increased prediction above individual and dyadic measures. The finding that higher degrees of the levels of Zest as a contributing factor to initiation predicts partners' difference in report of sexual quality may support the idea that sexual quality can be seen as more than the absence of dysfunction (e.g., Wincze & Carey, 1991) and more than simply the presence of satisfaction.

The Zest scale describes items dealing with energy, vitality and an association with happiness in life. It is of no surprise that Zest would be a pulling force toward sexual initiation. Also, Zest may have a contagious quality in that zest begets zest, potentially leading to more frequent sex and higher sexual responsiveness. However, one can only speculate as to why higher levels of Zest contributed to men reporting higher levels of sexual quality relative to their wives. Their own high levels of Zest and the influence of their wives' levels of Zest gets translated into even higher levels of sexual quality for them relative to their wives. The high levels of wives' Zest, may act as a potent injection of validation and success indicative of having wives that are happy, which may help men to feel good about their lives, themselves and their relationship. As a consequence, they may invest in their relationship with heightened sexuality. Studies predicting marital happiness have found that investment on the part of the husband and acceptance of the wives' influence and power also on the part of the husband are predictive of higher marital happiness (e.g., Gottman, & Silver, 1999).

Some caution is warranted regarding the generalizability of our findings. Given that our sample consisted of non-clinical couples who are older, highly educated and generally satisfied with their sexual and non-sexual aspects of their relationships, it would be difficult to generalize these results to couples of different psychological or demographic standing. Also, the usual caution is warranted concerning couples who participate in self report studies dealing with sexual matters as they may

differ in important ways from couples who refuse to participate (e.g., Morokoff, 1986).

In regard to the recent medicalization of sexual interactions (e.g., Viagra) or (e.g., Schover & Leiblum, 1994), this study is a step towards the importance of multivariate emotional and interpersonal characteristics of partnered sex in predicting sexual quality.

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Table 1  
 Intercorrelations Within Individual and Dyadic Characteristics – Set 2 – (Partners' Means and Differences) in the Hierarchical Regression Model for Predicting Couples' Sexual Quality

	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1. DAS - <u>M</u>													
2. DAS - $\Delta$	-.06												
3. Power - <u>M</u>		-.45**											
4. Power - $\Delta$		.15											
5. SCL - <u>M</u>			.18										
6. SCL - $\Delta$			-.24*										
7. Arousalability - <u>M</u>				.13									
8. Arousalability - $\Delta$				-.17									
9. Health - <u>M</u>					.03								
10. Health - $\Delta$					-.07								
11. Partner's Appearance - <u>M</u>						.25*							
12. Partner's Appearance - $\Delta$						-.07	.17						
13. Own Appearance - <u>M</u>						-.13	.23*						
14. Own Appearance - $\Delta$						.05	-.03	.15					
						-.15	.12	-.31**					
						.09	-.19	.02	-.18	-.07			
							-.24*	.00	-.19	.29**	-.14	.16	.04
								.05	.18	-.24*	.10	-.12	.05
									.00	.07	.06	.06	-.11
										.13	-.10	.27**	-.09
											-.20*	.57**	.08
												-.11	-.56**
													-.08

Note. 1. \* p < .05. \*\* p < .01.

Table 2  
Intercorrelations Within the SIS<sup>1</sup> Variables – Set 3 – (Partners' Means and Differences) in the Hierarchical Regression Model for Predicting Couples' Sexual Quality

	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Zest - <u>M</u>	.03	.06	.08	.30**	.25*	.30**	.06
2. Zest - $\Delta$		.25*	.03	.07	.47**	.03	.37**
3. Intimacy - <u>M</u>			-.08	.29**	.07	.55**	.18
4. Intimacy - $\Delta$				-.09	.21*	-.02	.50**
5. Direct Strategy - <u>M</u>					-.02	-.04	.17
6. Direct Strategy - $\Delta$						-.02	.03
7. Indirect Strategy - <u>M</u>							-.09
8. Indirect Strategy - $\Delta$							

Note 1. <sup>1</sup> Sexual Initiation Scale.

\*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ .

Table 3

Correlations Between the Predictor Variables (Partners' Means and Differences) and the Outcome Variables

	Sexual Quality	
	Partners' $\bar{M}$	Partners' $\Delta$
Set 1 - Length cohabitation	-.24*	.14
Set 2 - Individual and dyadic characteristics		
DAS - $\bar{M}$	.51**	.02
DAS - $\Delta$	-.06	.38**
Power $\bar{M}$	-.40**	.03
Power $\Delta$	-.01	-.12
SCL - $\bar{M}$	-.32**	.09
SCL - $\Delta$	-.15	-.23*
Arousability - $\bar{M}$	.38**	.12
Arousability - $\Delta$	-.26**	.25*
Health - $\bar{M}$	.02	.07
Health - $\Delta$	-.05	.12
Partner's Appearance - $\bar{M}$	.42**	.00
Partner's Appearance - $\Delta$	-.06	.21*
Own Appearance - $\bar{M}$	.33**	-.01
Own Appearance - $\Delta$	.03	.05

(... table 3 continued)

Table 3

Correlations Between the Predictor Variables (Partners' Means and Differences) and the Outcome Variables

	Sexual Quality	
	Partners' $\underline{M}$	Partners' $\underline{\Delta}$
Set 3 - SIS <sup>1</sup>		
Zest - $\underline{M}$	.14	.28**
Zest - $\underline{\Delta}$	-.06	.03
Intimacy - $\underline{M}$	-.15	-.06
Intimacy - $\underline{\Delta}$	-.31**	.13
Direct Strategy - $\underline{M}$	.25*	-.15
Direct Strategy - $\underline{\Delta}$	-.15	.30**
Indirect Strategy - $\underline{M}$	.06	.08
Indirect Strategy - $\underline{\Delta}$	-.04	.07

Note. <sup>1</sup> Sexual Initiation Scale.

\*  $p < .05$ .    \*\*  $p < .01$ .    \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

Table 4

Hierarchical Regression of Couples' Characteristics and SIS on Couples' Mean Levels of Sexual Quality

Variable	$\beta$	$R^2$ Change
Couples' Characteristics		
Length Cohabitation	-.24	.06*
Dyadic Adjustment Average	.48	
Sexual Arousability Average	.20	
Own Appearance Average	.33	.41***
SIS		
Intimacy Difference	-.14	.43***

Note. Adjusted  $R^2 = .40$ . SIS = Sexual Initiation Scale.

\* $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

Table 5

Hierarchical Regression of Couples' Characteristics and SIS<sup>1</sup> on Partners' Relative  
Difference of Sexual Quality

Variable	$\beta$	$R^2$ Change
Dyadic Adjustment Difference	.38	
Sexual Arousability Difference	.20	.18***
Zest Average	.20	.22***

Note. Adjusted  $R^2 = .40$ . SIS = Sexual Initiation Scale.

\*\*\*  $p < .001$



## Discussion

The main focus of the current research was to gather empirical information on the sexual initiation process as it relates to couples in long-standing relationships. In addition, having established what initiation strategies and contributing factors to initiation are, a second objective was to determine whether our new measure significantly predicts sexual quality beyond the prediction afforded by other partners' individual characteristics and dyadic characteristics of the couples' relationships.

Overall, the findings indicated good factorial structure and excellent validity of the SIS. Moreover, our findings showed that the SIS contributed unique variance in sexual quality beyond that afforded by the couples' individual and dyadic characteristics.

In addition to this contribution to the field, this study improved over previous research in several ways. First, unlike prior research which used mostly single college students in young or fictitious relationships, we sampled older spouses and cohabitators in long-standing contexts. Second, unlike previous research, which frequently sampled hypothetical initiation behaviors in mostly fictitious contexts, we tried to improve by sampling real-life couples by asking them to tell us what they actually did and what influenced their sexual initiation interactions. Thus, our research is not based on speculation or imagination, but instead on real-life behaviors as reported by couples in real relationships. In this regard, the interviews provided much information. McCormick (1976) stated that her "results would have been entirely different" had she used a different methodology

"such as interviewing people" (p. 78) (McCormick, 1976). Interviews are more likely to provide useful and valid information than arbitrarily selected categories which tend to be simplistic. The nature of the experimenter's relation to those being studied is important especially when conducting interviews. However, Heath (1978) writes that researchers have too facilely underestimated the validity of self-report data, particularly when they are obtained under conditions of trust from healthy persons. When such trust and rapport are found in a generally articulate and aware sample, then self-report data may be more valid than is considered to be the case by researchers whose relationships with those they study are typically impersonal and detached. This is so especially when such findings can be independently confirmed by significant others and thus reduce social desirability bias. In our study, each member of the couple was interviewed first separately and then together as a couple. Obtaining independent reports from both partners should minimize distortions and provided an opportunity to check the reliability of reports by comparing answers of both partners. Finally, in prior research, much information on sexual initiation has been derived from the individual and not the couple dyad. We improved over these studies by sampling both partners in each couple. It is our belief that sampling both partners in a couple is necessary for reliable and comprehensive data pertaining to the marital or cohabiting dynamic.

However, our current sample was also limited by virtue of its focus on mostly middle to upper class, educated and professional Caucasian men

and women and who, in addition, were obtained mostly by "word of mouth". This sample was also comprised of couples who were mostly satisfied with their sexual and conjoint relationships. Thus, participants may not represent the larger population and generalization of the data is thus limited. Clearly, future researchers should employ a more randomizing sampling technique. Similarly, it has been shown that volunteers for sex surveys tend to be more sexually permissive and liberated than non-volunteers (e.g. Morokoff, 1986). We tried to minimize this bias by first announcing the study as dealing with couple interactions. Still, the sample was limited to those couples who were willing to disclose intimate aspects of their sexual relationships. However, those couples who seek sex therapy are also couples who have a willingness to disclose. In addition, it has been suggested in the literature that cohabiting is not a substitute for marriage (e.g. Pattison, 1982). While keeping this variable in mind, we nevertheless combined these two groups due to the time constraint of finding participant couples and also due to the fact that the distinction we wanted to draw was primarily between dating individuals and established couples living together in a cohabiting or married context.

### Clinical applications

Although the main focus of this research has been to determine what factors and strategies culminate in sexual activity, an additional interest is to incorporate into sex therapy such knowledge. Given that the probability of sexual satisfaction may well be determined in the dyadic interaction

preceding sexual intercourse, the study of initiation has important relevance to sex therapy. Amazingly, sex therapy has never considered sexual initiation interaction as a major aspect of sexual functioning. Initiation may have been incorporated into Sensate Focus exercises in which initiation is assigned to members of a couple (e.g. Masters & Johnson, 1970; Kaplan, 1974) or more recently initiation interventions, based on clinical observation alone, have been made from a scripting perspective (e.g. Leiblum & Rosen, 1988). However, sex therapy has not specifically and systematically looked at the existence of dysfunctional initiation patterns. A large part of the problem may be that we are only beginning to understand what actually goes on between members of a couple in sexual initiation interactions and to recognize the importance such knowledge has in determining partnered sexual quality and quantity. The lack of systematic knowledge has made it impossible to verify or answer the many anecdotal comments and/or questions about initiation currently expressed. For example; which partner will initiate and how often. What are the signals that indicate potential interest or disinterest before initiation takes place. What individual or dyadic factors contribute to initiation, etc.

During interviews and with feedback afforded by participants throughout the research, it was apparent that the topic of initiation evoked a great deal of interest and concern among couples. Sexual initiation was frequently perceived as a taboo and mysterious dimension of their sexual activities and was a topic rarely talked about. Both interviews and the resulting initiation questionnaire were beneficial tools in raising couples's

awareness to their initiation practices. Based on comments made by respondents, it appeared that participation in the research had consequently affected a change in some couple's initiation patterns. Thus, it would be useful for future researchers to incorporate into the research, a post-interview and initiation scale in order to determine the possible impact of the initial interview or initiation scale on a couple's consequent initiation interactions.

Sex therapy has acknowledged categories and subcategories of sexual dysfunction. It is possible that certain dysfunctions such as secondary erectile dysfunction reflect initiation patterns. For example, publications that have focused on secondary erectile dysfunctions have looked at the sexual initiation by the woman as a factor in exacerbating or even precipitating the problem (e.g. Kaplan, 1974). The man in such a situation may perceive his partner's decision to initiate sex with him as performance demand with the associated threat of failure. It could thus be speculated that if initiation could be modified, we might prevent a sexual dysfunction or the sexual dysfunction might disappear.

Also, unlike Sensate Focus which is often perceived as artificial by clients, initiation behaviors are real life behaviors occurring between members of couples and thus could not as easily be thought of as artificial. This could benefit the clinician. Couples could be taught to initiate and through this means achieve closeness before any other assignment (e.g. Sensate Focus) is given.

As an added facet to the current research, we examined whether there was a difference in strategy usage for men and women as well as whether the various contributing factors would be endorsed differently by the sexes. Interestingly, men and women were more similar in their initiation interactions than they were different. For example, in an exploration of top ten items endorsed by men and women within the strategy and contributing factors categories (Appendix C) it was found that "going on vacation with your partner" was the top item endorsed by both males and females. Such similarity between the sexes in our study may be reflective of our sample of older established couples. Sex role differences may be more typical of dating couples. Also, certain items such as "going on vacation with your partner" may also reflect our middle to upper class professional participants. These people were more financially able to have lifestyles that included vacations. This choice may not have been so readily chosen by those couples in dating or less financially opportune situations.

An initiation scale such as the SIS which assesses initiation interactions of couples in long-standing relationships is a valuable addition to clinical practice. However the current initiation scale has limitations regarding the amelioration of sex therapy. For instance, our data was derived using a sample of "normal" men and women who were mostly satisfied with their sexual and partnered relationships. Given that knowledge can be advanced by understanding what goes right as well as what goes wrong, much can be learned from studying such a sample of

"normal" couples not seeking sex therapy. Findings derived from this sample may then contribute to theoretical knowledge and be of value to clinicians engaged in the treatment of maladaptive behaviors. However, researchers intent on developing and/or elaborating on the SIS would clearly benefit by including a clinical sample for comparison and differentiation. Also, future studies can confirm whether the factors which emerged pertaining to initiation strategies (direct and indirect) and the factors which emerged pertaining to initiation contributors (zest and intimacy) generalize to other populations of couples of different psychological or demographic standing as well as different ethnic origins. Additional data will be required to shed light on these questions. A more clear delineation of the concepts expressed in these factors may help to accomplish this.

Lastly, the appreciation expressed by many respondents during interviews and after filling out this lengthy set of questionnaires was impressive. Both men and women told us that they had gained in awareness of the role sexual initiation played in their partnered sexuality and were grateful for the opportunity to discuss and reflect on it. The findings from this study of normal couples suggests that an instrument such as the SIS may find use not only with distressed couples but with couples aiming to enrich their sexual and couple partnerships.



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## Appendix A



INTERESTED IN COUPLE COMMUNICATION ?

If so, a research team from the Université de Montréal and McGill University, would like your points of view

We want to know more about how partners communicate with one another. Whether or not you are satisfied with your relationship we invite your participation.

Interested couples will be asked to complete several questionnaires. These will be mailed to your home for you to complete and return (post-paid) to the research team.

There will be an opportunity for those who want it, to talk about the questionnaires in more detail after completion. Of course, your responses will be kept STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL.

IF YOU ARE : English speaking, married or living together, AND would like assist, please call [REDACTED] for further information.

YOUR PARTICIPATION : METHOD : Questionnaires (mailed to you)  
LOCATION : Your home  
DURATION : 1 or 1 ½ hours

RESEARCH TEAM : Ilona Gossman, Psychologist, CPPQ,  
Université de Montréal  
Mireille Mathieu, Ph.D., Université de Montréal  
Ron Harris, Ph.D., McGill University  
Stéphane Sabourin, Ph.D., Université de Montréal

## Appendix B

Dear Participant :

Thank you for taking part in this study.

Please verify that your package contains the following items

- |  | Check ( √ ) |
|--|-------------|
| - General Instructions                 | _____       |
| - Part I Background Information        | _____       |
| - Part II Sexual History               | _____       |
| - Part III Sexual Initiation Inventory | _____       |
| - Part IV Dyadic Scale                 | _____       |
| - Part V SAI Inventory                 | _____       |
| - Stamped Addressed Envelope           | _____       |

If your package did not contain all the above items please call

Ilona Gossmann : [REDACTED] .

Instructions are included with each of the parts ; please read these carefully.

Begin with Part I and proceed, in order, to the end. If, for any reason you cannot complete all parts in one sitting, try to break at the end of a part. Begin where you left off.

When you have finished please return all the items in the stamped, addressed envelope.

Ilona Gossmann

General Instructions

Human sexual behaviors are complex and influenced by many things. This study is designed to further our knowledge of some of the subtle factors involved. The results of this study will benefit those who seek an understanding of sexual behavior in general. Moreover, the results of this study will enable therapists to treat sexual problems more effectively and reduce distress in this important area of human interaction.

It is very important that you complete the questions by yourself without comparing or discussing your responses with your partner. In other words, respond to the questions from your own point of view. Remember that there are no “right” or “wrong” responses.

In addition, be assured that your responses to the questions are *COMPLETELY CONFIDENTIAL*. No release of your responses will be made to your partner or anyone else at any time.

N. B. Questions are printed on both sides of most pages.

PLEASE ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS

P.S. When you have completed all sections, if you have comments or suggestions please write (or type) them below (and on the reverse side of this page if necessary).

Comments :

**PART I**  
**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Please answer the following background questions:

1. Sex: \_\_\_\_\_ , \_\_\_\_\_  
(male) (female)

2. Age: \_\_\_\_\_ years

3. Current Marital Status: \_\_\_\_\_ married  
\_\_\_\_\_ "living together" with partner

If married: Number of years married to current partner \_\_\_\_\_  
(years)

If "living together": Number of years living with current partner \_\_\_\_\_  
(years)

4. How many children are living at home with you? \_\_\_\_\_  
How old are they? \_\_\_\_\_

5. Are there any other people who live at home with you?  
\_\_\_\_\_ yes , \_\_\_\_\_ no

If yes: Give relationship (eg. mother, father, maid, etc.).

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6. At what level did you complete your formal education?  
(eg. High School, University, Trade School, etc.)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7. How often do you attend religious services?  
Once or more a week \_\_\_\_\_, once or twice a month \_\_\_\_\_,  
less than once a month \_\_\_\_\_, never \_\_\_\_\_

8. If not born in Canada, how long have you lived here?  
\_\_\_\_\_ years

9. What is your occupation? \_\_\_\_\_

10. What method of contraception is most frequently used by you or your partner?

Rhythm \_\_\_\_\_, Withdrawal \_\_\_\_\_, Diaphragm \_\_\_\_\_,

Foam, jelly, or other chemical means \_\_\_\_\_,

Condom \_\_\_\_\_, Intrauterine loop \_\_\_\_\_, Pill \_\_\_\_\_,

Vasectomy or ligation \_\_\_\_\_, None \_\_\_\_\_

If you are not using birth control are you presently trying to have a child? \_\_\_\_\_yes, \_\_\_\_\_no

Are you presently pregnant? \_\_\_\_\_yes, \_\_\_\_\_no

**PART II**  
**SEXUAL HISTORY**



Please circle the most appropriate response for each question.

1. How frequently do you and your mate have sexual intercourse or activity?
  - 1) more than once a day
  - 2) once a day
  - 3) 3 or 4 times a week
  - 4) twice a week
  - 5) once a week
  - 6) once every two weeks
  - 7) once a month
  - 8) less than once a month
  - 9) not at all
  
2. How frequently would you like to have sexual intercourse or activity?
  - 1) more than once a day
  - 2) once a day
  - 3) 3 or 4 times a week
  - 4) twice a week
  - 5) once a week
  - 6) once every two weeks
  - 7) once a month
  - 8) less than once a month
  - 9) not at all
  
3. Who usually initiates having sexual intercourse or activity?
  - 1) I always do
  - 2) I usually do
  - 3) my mate and I each initiate about equally often
  - 4) my mate usually does
  - 5) my mate always does
  
4. Who would you like to have initiate sexual intercourse or activity?
  - 1) myself, always
  - 2) myself, usually
  - 3) my mate and I equally often
  - 4) my mate, usually
  - 5) my mate, always
  
5. How often do you masturbate?
  - 1) more than once a day
  - 2) once a day
  - 3) 3 or 4 times a week
  - 4) twice a week
  - 5) once a week
  - 6) once every two weeks
  - 7) once a month
  - 8) less than once a month
  - 9) not at all

Please circle the most appropriate response for each question.

6. How frequently do you feel sexual desire? This feeling may include wanting to have sex, planning to have sex, feeling frustrated due to a lack of sex, etc....
- |                         |                           |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1) more than once a day | 6) once every two weeks   |
| 2) once a day           | 7) once a month           |
| 3) 3 or 4 times a week  | 8) less than once a month |
| 4) twice a week         | 9) not at all             |
| 5) once a week          |                           |
7. For how many years have you and your mate been having sexual intercourse?
- |                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1) less than 6 months | 4) 4 to 6 years       |
| 2) less than 1 year   | 5) 7 to 10 years      |
| 3) 1 to 3 years       | 6) more than 10 years |
8. For how long do you and your mate usually engage in sexual foreplay (kissing, petting, etc.) before having intercourse?
- |                         |                         |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1) less than one minute | 5) 11 to 15 minutes     |
| 2) 1 to 3 minutes       | 6) 16 to 30 minutes     |
| 3) 4 to 6 minutes       | 7) 30 minutes to 1 hour |
| 4) 7 to 10 minutes      |                         |
9. How long does intercourse usually last, from entry of the penis until the male reaches orgasm (climax)?
- |                       |                         |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| 1) less than 1 minute | 6) 11 to 15 minutes     |
| 2) 1 to 2 minutes     | 7) 15 to 20 minutes     |
| 3) 2 to 4 minutes     | 8) 20 to 30 minutes     |
| 4) 4 to 7 minutes     | 9) more than 30 minutes |
| 5) 7 to 10 minutes    |                         |

Please circle the most appropriate response for each question.

10. Does the male ever reach orgasm while he is trying to enter the woman's vagina with his penis?
- |                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| 1) never                             | 4) sometimes, 50% of the time          |
| 2) rarely, less than 10% of the time | 5) usually, 75% of the time            |
| 3) seldom, less than 25% of the time | 6) nearly always, over 90% of the time |
11. Overall, how satisfactory to you is your sexual relationship with your mate?
- |                              |                            |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1) extremely unsatisfactory  | 4) slightly satisfactory   |
| 2) moderately unsatisfactory | 5) moderately satisfactory |
| 3) slightly unsatisfactory   | 6) extremely satisfactory  |
12. Overall, how satisfactory do you think your sexual relationship is to your mate?
- |                              |                            |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1) extremely unsatisfactory  | 4) slightly satisfactory   |
| 2) moderately unsatisfactory | 5) moderately satisfactory |
| 3) slightly unsatisfactory   | 6) extremely satisfactory  |
13. When your mate makes sexual advances, how do you usually respond?
- |                                 |                   |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1) usually accept with pleasure | 3) often refuse   |
| 2) accept reluctantly           | 4) usually refuse |
14. When you have sex with your mate, do you feel sexually aroused (i.e. feeling "turned on," pleasure, excitement)?
- |  |                                  |
|--|----------------------------------|
| 1) nearly always, over 90% of the time | 4) seldom, about 25% of the time |
| 2) usually, about 75% of the time      | 5) never                         |
| 3) sometimes, about 50% of the time    |                                  |

Please circle the most appropriate response for each question.

15. When you have sex with your mate, do you have negative emotional reactions, such as fear, disgust, shame or guilt?
- |                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| 1) never                             | 4) sometimes, 50% of the time          |
| 2) rarely, less than 10% of the time | 5) usually, 75% of the time            |
| 3) seldom, less than 25% of the time | 6) nearly always, over 90% of the time |
16. If you try, is it possible for you to reach orgasm through masturbation?
- |  |                                  |
|--|----------------------------------|
| 1) nearly always, over 90% of the time | 4) seldom, about 25% of the time |
| 2) usually, about 75% of the time      | 5) never                         |
| 3) sometimes, about 50% of the time    | 6) have never tried to           |
17. If you try, is it possible for you to reach orgasm through having your genitals caressed by your mate?
- |  |                                  |
|--|----------------------------------|
| 1) nearly always, over 90% of the time | 4) seldom, about 25% of the time |
| 2) usually, about 75% of the time      | 5) never                         |
| 3) sometimes, about 50% of the time    | 6) have never tried to           |
18. If you try, is it possible for you to reach orgasm through sexual intercourse?
- |  |                                  |
|--|----------------------------------|
| 1) nearly always, over 90% of the time | 4) seldom, about 25% of the time |
| 2) usually, about 75% of the time      | 5) never                         |
| 3) sometimes, about 50% of the time    | 6) have never tried to           |

Please circle the most appropriate response for each question.

19. What is your usual reaction to erotic or pornographic materials (pictures, movies, books)?
- |                     |                                       |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1) greatly aroused  | 3) not aroused                        |
| 2) somewhat aroused | 4) negative—disgusted, repulsed, etc. |
20. Does the male have any trouble in getting an erection, before intercourse begins?
- |                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| 1) never                             | 4) sometimes, 50% of the time          |
| 2) rarely, less than 10% of the time | 5) usually, 75% of the time            |
| 3) seldom, less than 25% of the time | 6) nearly always, over 90% of the time |
21. Does the male have any trouble keeping an erection, once intercourse has begun?
- |                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| 1) never                             | 4) sometimes, 50% of the time          |
| 2) rarely, less than 10% of the time | 5) usually, 75% of the time            |
| 3) seldom, less than 25% of the time | 6) nearly always, over 90% of the time |
22. Does the male ejaculate (climax) without having a full, hard erection?
- |                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| 1) never                             | 4) sometimes, 50% of the time          |
| 2) rarely, less than 10% of the time | 5) usually, 75% of the time            |
| 3) seldom, less than 25% of the time | 6) nearly always, over 90% of the time |

Please circle the most appropriate response for each question.

23. Is the female's vagina so "dry" or "tight" that intercourse cannot occur?
- |                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| 1) never                             | 4) sometimes, 50% of the time          |
| 2) rarely, less than 10% of the time | 5) usually, 75% of the time            |
| 3) seldom, less than 25% of the time | 6) nearly always, over 90% of the time |
24. Do you feel pain in your genitals during sexual intercourse?
- |                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| 1) never                             | 4) sometimes, 50% of the time          |
| 2) rarely, less than 10% of the time | 5) usually, 75% of the time            |
| 3) seldom, less than 25% of the time | 6) nearly always, over 90% of the time |
25. (WOMEN ONLY, MEN GO ON TO QUESTION 28) Can you reach orgasm through stimulation of your genitals by an electric vibrator or any other means such as running water, rubbing with some object, etc.?
- |  |                                  |
|--|----------------------------------|
| 1) nearly always, over 90% of the time | 4) seldom, about 25% of the time |
| 2) usually, about 75% of the time      | 5) never                         |
| 3) sometimes, about 50% of the time    | 6) have never tried to           |
26. (WOMEN ONLY) Can you reach orgasm during sexual intercourse if at the same time your genitals are being caressed (by yourself or your mate or with a vibrator, etc.).
- |  |                                  |
|--|----------------------------------|
| 1) nearly always, over 90% of the time | 4) seldom, about 25% of the time |
| 2) usually, about 75% of the time      | 5) never                         |
| 3) sometimes, about 50% of the time    | 6) have never tried to           |

Please circle the most appropriate response for each question.

27. (WOMEN ONLY) When you have sex with your mate, including foreplay and intercourse, do you notice some of these things happening: your breathing and pulse speeding up, wetness in your vagina, pleasurable sensations in your breasts and genitals?

- |   |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| 1) nearly always, over 90%<br>of the time | 4) seldom, about 25% of the<br>time |
| 2) usually, about 75% of<br>the time      | 5) never                            |
| 3) sometimes, about 50% of<br>the time    |                                     |

28. (MEN ONLY) Do you ever ejaculate (climax) without any pleasurable sensation in your penis?

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1) never                                | 4) sometimes, 50% of the time             |
| 2) rarely, less than 10%<br>of the time | 5) usually, 75% of the time               |
| 3) seldom, less than 25% of<br>the time | 6) nearly always, over 90%<br>of the time |

PART III  
SEXUAL INITIATION INVENTORY



The questions you will be asked in this section cover a wide variety of topics. Some questions are quite general. Other questions are more specific to sexual "initiation" in your relationship.

For present purposes, sexual "initiation" is explained as follows:

As a first step one partner conveys (verbally or non-verbally) to the other partner an interest or desire for sexual activity. This first step, the step conveying interest or desire, is what is meant by sexual "initiation" (even if no sexual activity between the partners, results).

In this questionnaire many of your responses will be made on a 7-point scale. Please read each question carefully and circle the number that you decide best applies to you. Remember to answer all questions.

Example:

How often do you have headaches?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Never			Average Amount			Very Often

This response represents that the person has somewhat less headaches than the average, as they see it.

The next section contains general questions on aspects of yourself and/or your relationship.

GENERAL

1. What is your overall health?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Poor			Average			Excellent

2. What is your partner's overall health?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Poor			Average			Excellent

3. How often do you have health discomfort (eg. sore throats, colds, etc.)?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Never			Average Amount			Very Often

4. What medications (if any) are you taking?

---

---

---

---

---

5. If you are taking medication how does it affect your sense of well-being (if at all)?

---

---

---

---

---

6. What surgical operations have you had?

---

---

---

---

---

7. Do you have any medical problems or disabilities?

---

---

---

---

---

8. On average, how often do you exercise (eg. swim, run, jog, play tennis, etc.)?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Once or Less per Week						Daily or More

9. How sexually appealing is your partner's body to you?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all Sexually Appealing			Average Sexual Appeal			Very Sexually Appealing

10. In your opinion, are you?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all Sexually Appealing			Average Sexual Appeal			Very Sexually Appealing

11. In your opinion, is your partner?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Underweight			About the right Weight			Overweight

12. In your opinion, are you?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Underweight			About the right Weight			Overweight

Please turn over to the next section.

(c)

6

---

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Self			Equal			Partner
More Powerful			Distribution of Power			More Powerful

---

Please refer to the rating scale format on the top of this page when answering the following items as they pertain to your relationship:

1. What is the distribution of financial power?
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
  
2. What do you want the distribution of financial power to be?
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
  
3. With whom does the emotional power lie?
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
  
4. With whom do you want the emotional power to lie?
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
  
5. With whom does the intellectual power lie?
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
  
6. With whom do you want the intellectual power to lie?
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
  
7. With whom does the verbal power lie?
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
  
8. With whom do you want the verbal power to lie?
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
  
9. What is the distribution of overall power?
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

---

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Self			Equal			Partner
More Powerful			Distribution of Power			More Powerful

---

Please refer to the rating scale format on the top of this page when answering the following items as they pertain to your relationship:

10. What do you want the distribution of overall power to be?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---



Please turn over to the next section.

(c)

9

SEXUAL INITIATION

Directions:

In the next section questions are on sexual "initiation". For convenience the definition of sexual initiation is given once more, below:

As a first step one partner conveys (verbally or non-verbally) to the other partner an interest or desire for sexual activity. This first step, the step conveying interest or desire, is what is meant by sexual "initiation" (even if no sexual activity between the partners, results)

PLEASE ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS USING THE BEST ESTIMATE POSSIBLE

1. How often are sexual initiations (not how often do you have sex) made in your relationship?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Less than Once a month	Once a month	Once every 2 weeks	Once a week	2 times a week	3 to 4 times a week	Daily or more often

2. How often do you and your partner talk about the way each of you initiates sex?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Less than Once a month	Once a month	Once every 2 weeks	Once a week	2 times a week	3 to 4 times a week	Daily or more often

3. During menstruation do you initiate?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Less Often (or never)			About the Same			More Often

4. In what way does your chosen method of contraception (includes rhythm, withdrawal, etc.) affect the frequency of your sexual initiation?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Decreased Frequency			Does not affect Frequency			Increases Frequency

Please turn to next page

0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
Percent					Percent					Percent

Please refer to the rating scale format on the top of this page when answering the following items as they pertain to your relationship:

1. What percentage of the total number of sexual initiations between you and your partner do you make?

0    10    20    30    40    50    60    70    80    90    100

2. What percentage of the total number of sexual initiations do you want to make?

0    10    20    30    40    50    60    70    80    90    100

3. What percentage of the total number of sexual initiations do you estimate that your partner wants you to make?

0    10    20    30    40    50    60    70    80    90    100

Please turn to next page

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Never or Almost Never			About Half-the-Time			Always or Almost Always

Please refer to the rating scale format on the top of this page when answering the following items as they pertain to your relationship:

1. In the last four weeks how often were you the one to initiate sex with your partner?
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
  
2. In the last four weeks how often was your partner the one to initiate sex with you?
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
  
3. How often are you satisfied with how you initiate sex with your partner?
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
  
4. How often are you satisfied with how your partner initiates sex with you?
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
  
5. Is the quality of your own sexual satisfaction enhanced when you are the initiator?
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
  
6. When you are the initiator, how often does this mean that you carry the responsibility for continuing to take the lead sexually, on that occasion?
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
  
7. How often do you initiate sex just to maintain the relationship?
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

In the next section please estimate  
how often the items mentioned may have  
contributed to your initiating sex with  
your partner.



Estimate how often the items below may have contributed to your initiating sex with your partner:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Never or Almost Never			Average Amount			Always or Almost Always

Please refer to the above rating scale when answering the following items as they pertain to your relationship:

1. Your partner's natural body scent.
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
2. Recalling a good sexual experience.
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
3. Having sexual fantasies.
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
4. Recalling an unpleasant sexual experience.
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
5. Pleasant memories evoked by scent.
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
6. Nostalgic memories.
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
7. Financially good periods.
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
8. Financially bad periods.
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
9. Unexpected financial earnings.
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Estimate how often the items below may have contributed to your initiating sex with your partner:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Never or Almost Never			Average Amount			Always or Almost Always

Please refer to the above rating scale when answering the following items as they pertain to your relationship:

- 10. Playing Sports.
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
- 11. Entertaining at home.
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
- 12. Going on vacation with your partner.
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
- 13. Having time for yourself to do your own thing.
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
- 14. A noisy environment.
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
- 15. A quiet environment.
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
- 16. The weather.
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
- 17. An enjoyable conversation.
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
- 18. A thought provoking conversation with your partner.
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Estimate how often the items below may have contributed to your initiating sex with your partner:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Never or Almost Never			Average Amount			Always or Almost Always

Please refer to the above rating scale when answering the following items as they pertain to your relationship:

19. Talking about personal (but non-sexual) things with your partner.
- 1            2            3            4            5            6            7
20. Feeling bored by your partner's conversation.
- 1            2            3            4            5            6            7
21. When, through no fault of your partner, you cannot converse with your partner.
- 1            2            3            4            5            6            7
22. Your partner makes it difficult for you to converse.
- 1            2            3            4            5            6            7
23. Your partner says humorous or funny things.
- 1            2            3            4            5            6            7
24. A sexually playful conversation with your partner.
- 1            2            3            4            5            6            7
25. Having an enjoyable conversation with other people when your partner is present.
- 1            2            3            4            5            6            7
26. Having an enjoyable conversation with other people without your partner's presence.
- 1            2            3            4            5            6            7
27. Your partner finds fault with you.
- 1            2            3            4            5            6            7

Estimate how often the items below may have contributed to your initiating sex with your partner:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Never or Almost Never			Average Amount			Always or Almost Always

Please refer to the above rating scale when answering the following items as they pertain to your relationship:

28. Being unable to say what you think because your partner won't discuss certain topics.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
29. Your partner conveys sexual interest by means of privately understood words or gestures.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
30. Your partner says or does something that both of you recognize as having special personal sexual symbolism.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
31. Your partner calls you by affectionate (or "pet") names.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
32. Having a spirited argument with your partner.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
33. Being able to talk to your partner about feelings whether positive or negative.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
34. Your partner is empathic and understanding towards you.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
35. The way your partner's voice sounds.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
36. Your partner is bragging.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

Estimate how often the items below may have contributed to your initiating sex with your partner:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Never or Almost Never			Average Amount			Always or Almost Always

Please refer to the above rating scale when answering the following items as they pertain to your relationship:

37. Your partner "lectures" or talks down to you.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
38. Your partner expresses signs of weakness or vulnerability to you.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
39. Your partner comes on as superior to you.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
40. Your partner shares some of the day's events or happenings.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
41. Your partner confides in you.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
42. Your partner seems incapable of understanding what you are saying.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
43. An event reminds you that you and your partner share a common outlook on life.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
44. An event indicates that you and your partner have a different outlook on life.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
45. Your partner expresses affection in a novel way.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

Estimate how often the items below may have contributed to your initiating sex with your partner:

---

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Never or Almost Never			Average Amount			Always or Almost Always

---

Please refer to the above rating scale when answering the following items as they pertain to your relationship:

46. Your partner lets you know that you are attractive.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
47. Your partner lets you know that you are special.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
48. Your partner lets you know that you are intelligent.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
49. Your partner lets you know that you are an equal.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
50. Your partner speaks profanely or obscenely.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
51. Your partner is judgemental of you.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
52. Your partner encourages your efforts to reach personal goals.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
53. Your partner talks to you like a parent talks.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
54. Your partner expresses the wish to have a child with you.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

Estimate how often the items below may have contributed to your initiating sex with your partner:

1 Never or Almost Never	2	3	4 Average Amount	5	6	7 Always or Almost Always
-------------------------------	---	---	------------------------	---	---	---------------------------------

Please refer to the above rating scale when answering the following items as they pertain to your relationship:

55. Your partner tells "dirty jokes".
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
56. Your partner shares an entertaining story.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
57. Your partner appears to be telling lies.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
58. Your partner talks with attractive person of opposite sex.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
59. Your partner talks about attractive person of opposite sex.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
60. Your partner says, "I love you" (or talks about love for you).
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
61. Your partner says something that is intended to discourage sexual initiation.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
62. Talking about past good times.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
63. Your partner isn't feeling well and tells you so.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

Estimate how often the items below may have contributed to your initiating sex with your partner:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Never or Almost Never			Average Amount			Always or Almost Always

Please refer to the above rating scale when answering the following items as they pertain to your relationship:

64. Your partner "fakes" feeling unwell.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
65. Talking about a vacation.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
66. Your partner is teasing in an unpleasant way.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
67. Your partner is teasing in a pleasant way.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
68. Your partner is overly demanding.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
69. When sharing common adversity.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
70. Your partner is behaving in a self-centered way.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
71. Your partner seems distracted or "far-away".
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|



In the next section please estimate how often the items mentioned may have contributed to your initiating sex with your partner.

Please Note: When answering these items assume that your partner is not making a sexual initiation.

Estimate how often the items below may have contributed to your initiating sex with your partner:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Never or Almost Never			Average Amount			Always or Almost Always

Please refer to the above rating scale when answering the following items as they pertain to your relationship:

1. Longer than usual eye contact.
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
2. Your partner averts gaze.
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
3. Your partner dancing.
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
4. Your partner moves restlessly.
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
5. Your partner is energetic.
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
6. Your partner is "mischievous".
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
7. Your partner is playful.
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
8. Your partner moves sensually.
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
9. Your partner touches own genitals.
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Estimate how often the items below may have contributed to your initiating sex with your partner:

---

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Never or Almost Never			Average Amount			Always or Almost Always

---

Please refer to the above rating scale when answering the following items as they pertain to your relationship:

10. Your partner stretches.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
11. Your partner yawns.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
12. Your partner looks at you more frequently than usual.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
13. Your partner's body language suggests self-confidence.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
14. Your partner is relaxed.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
15. A "morning" erection (reflex erection on awakening).
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
16. Your partner is nude.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
17. Your partner is semi-nude.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
18. Your partner is washing self.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

Estimate how often the items below may have contributed to your initiating sex with your partner:

---

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Never or Almost Never			Average Amount			Always or Almost Always

---

Please refer to the above rating scale when answering the following items as they pertain to your relationship:

19. Your partner looks tired.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

20. Your partner behaves shyly.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

Some questions in the next section ask you about your partner's feelings. It may be difficult to know precisely how your partner is feeling but please answer as best you can.

Please estimate how often the items mentioned may have contributed to your initiating sex with your partner.

Estimate how often the items below may have contributed to your initiating sex with your partner:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Never or Almost Never			Average Amount			Always or Almost Always

Please refer to the above rating scale when answering the following items as they pertain to your relationship:

1. You are in a good mood.
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
2. Your partner is in a good mood.
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
3. You feel irritable.
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
4. Your partner feels irritable.
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
5. You are angry at your partner.
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
6. You are angry but not at your partner.
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
7. You are in a humorous or amused mood.
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
8. Your partner is in a humorous or amused mood.
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
9. You feel a duty towards your partner.
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Estimate how often the items below may have contributed to your initiating sex with your partner:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Never or Almost Never			Average Amount			Always or Almost Always

Please refer to the above rating scale when answering the following items as they pertain to your relationship:

10. You feel adventurous.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

11. Your partner feels adventurous.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

12. You feel lonely.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

13. Your partner feels lonely.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

14. You need affection.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

15. Your partner needs affection.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

16. You need to feel loved.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

17. Your partner needs to feel loved.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

18. You feel stressed.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

Estimate how often the items below may have contributed to your initiating sex with your partner:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Never or Almost Never			Average Amount			Always or Almost Always

Please refer to the above rating scale when answering the following items as they pertain to your relationship:

19. Your partner feels stressed.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

20. You feel nervous.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

21. Your partner feels nervous.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

22. You feel "down".

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

23. Your partner feels "down".

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

24. You feel troubled.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

25. Your partner feels troubled.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

26. You feel vulnerable.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

27. Your partner feels vulnerable.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7



Estimate how often the items below may have contributed to your initiating sex with your partner:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Never or Almost Never			Average Amount			Always or Almost Always

Please refer to the above rating scale when answering the following items as they pertain to your relationship:

28. You feel the relationship is secure.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

29. Your partner feels the relationship is secure.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

30. You feel the relationship is insecure.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

31. Your partner feels the relationship is insecure.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

32. You feel sorry for your partner.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

33. Your partner feels sorry for you.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

34. You feel good about yourself.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

35. Your partner feels good about her/himself.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

36. You feel unhappy.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

Estimate how often the items below may have contributed to your initiating sex with your partner:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Never or Almost Never			Average Amount			Always or Almost Always

Please refer to the above rating scale when answering the following items as they pertain to your relationship:

37. Your partner feels unhappy.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

38. You feel happy.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

39. Your partner feels happy.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

40. You are sulking.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

41. Your partner is sulking.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

42. You feel bad-tempered.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

43. Your partner feels bad-tempered.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

44. You are excited about an occurrence outside of the relationship.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

45. Your partner is excited about an occurrence outside of the relationship.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

Estimate how often the items below may have contributed to your initiating sex with your partner:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Never or Almost Never			Average Amount			Always or Almost Always

Please refer to the above rating scale when answering the following items as they pertain to your relationship:

46. You feel jealous towards your partner (in reference to a person).
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
47. Your partner feels jealous towards you.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
48. You feel envious towards your partner (in reference to a thing, achievement etc.).
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
49. Your partner feels envious towards you.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
50. You don't feel independent enough.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
51. You feel your partner is too independent.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
52. You feel your partner is too dependent.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
53. You feel tired.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
54. Your partner feels tired.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

Estimate how often the items below may have contributed to your initiating sex with your partner:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Never or Almost Never			Average Amount			Always or Almost Always

Please refer to the above rating scale when answering the following items as they pertain to your relationship:

55. You are pleased at having recently accomplished an objective.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
56. Your partner feels pleased at having recently accomplished an objective.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
57. You feel in a "lazy" mood.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
58. Your partner feels in a "lazy" mood.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
59. You feel a wave of love for your partner.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
60. Your partner is unexpectedly affectionate.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
61. You feel loved by your partner.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
62. You feel in a festive mood.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
63. Your partner feels in a festive mood.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

Estimate how often the items below may have contributed to your initiating sex with your partner:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Never or Almost Never			Average Amount			Always or Almost Always

Please refer to the above rating scale when answering the following items as they pertain to your relationship:

64. You feel a zest for life.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

65. Your partner feels a zest for life.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

66. You feel pessimistic (in general).

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

67. Your partner feels pessimistic (in general).

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

68. You feel romantic.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

69. You feel anxious.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

70. Your partner feels anxious.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

71. You feel optimistic (in general).

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

72. Your partner feels optimistic (in general).

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

Estimate how often the items below may have contributed to your initiating sex with your partner:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Never or Almost Never			Average Amount			Always or Almost Always

Please refer to the above rating scale when answering the following items as they pertain to your relationship:

- 73. You feel sexually aroused.  
1            2            3            4            5            6            7
- 74. Your partner feels sexually aroused.  
1            2            3            4            5            6            7
- 75. You feel relaxed.  
1            2            3            4            5            6            7
- 76. Your partner feels relaxed.  
1            2            3            4            5            6            7
- 77. Out of the blue (spontaneously) you feel like initiating.  
1            2            3            4            5            6            7
- 78. You need to feel sexually desired.  
1            2            3            4            5            6            7
- 79. Your partner needs to feel sexually desired.  
1            2            3            4            5            6            7

When answering the questions in the next section  
assume that you are interested in having sex with  
your partner. Estimate how often you try any of  
the following:

Assume that you are interested in having sex with your partner. Estimate how often you try any of the following:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Never or Almost Never			Average Amount			Always or Almost Always

Please refer to the above rating scale when answering the following items as they pertain to your relationship:

1. Tell partner that you love them.
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
2. Initiate and persist.
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
3. You play "hard to get" to purposely excite desire in your partner.
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
4. Initiate at a time you feel partner will be receptive.
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
5. "Seduce" your partner.
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
6. Be physically affectionate with your partner.
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
7. Talk romantically.
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
8. Intentionally compliment your partner.
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---
9. Talk sexily.
 

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---



Assume that you are interested in having sex with your partner. Estimate how often you try any of the following:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Never or Almost Never			Average Amount			Always or Almost Always

Please refer to the above rating scale when answering the following items as they pertain to your relationship:

- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 10. Offer to do a task for your partner.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 11. Show interest in your partner.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 12. Promise to stop some habit that displeases your partner.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 13. Give your partner a gift.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 14. Coerce your partner.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 15. Say something to boost your partner's self-esteem.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 16. Make arrangements to be alone at home with your partner.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 17. Set up a romantic ambiance.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 18. Initiate when there is a possibility of being caught, seen or overheard by others if you make love. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

Assume that you are interested in having sex with your partner. Estimate how often you try any of the following:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Never or Almost Never			Average Amount			Always or Almost Always

Please refer to the above rating scale when answering the following items as they pertain to your relationship:

19. Share exciting sexual fantasies with your partner.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
20. Share non-sexual fantasies with your partner.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
21. Act out a sexual fantasy with partner.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
22. Test, step by step, to determine if your partner feels receptive.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
23. Groom yourself in ways you know your partner finds attractive.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
24. Suggest to partner that you take a nap together.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
25. Wear (or not wear) certain articles of clothing.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
26. Let your partner see you naked.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
27. Use a mutually understood signal.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

Assume that you are interested in having sex with your partner. Estimate how often you try any of the following:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Never or Almost Never			Average Amount			Always or Almost Always

Please refer to the above rating scale when answering the following items as they pertain to your relationship:

28. Suggest taking "recreational" drugs together.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

29. Ask your partner for sex.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

30. Tell your partner that you would like to have sex.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

31. Arouse your partner's anticipation by suggesting you will have a sexy time together later.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

32. Purposely make yourself feel sexually aroused.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

33. Arrange to watch a sexy film together.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

34. Arrange to read sexy stories together.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

35. Remark that it has been awhile since you last had sex together.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

36. Intentionally sit close to your partner.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

Assume that you are interested in having sex with your partner. Estimate how often you try any of the following:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Never or Almost Never			Average Amount			Always or Almost Always

Please refer to the above rating scale when answering the following items as they pertain to your relationship:

37. Caress your partner non-sexually.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

38. Kiss your partner longer than usual.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

39. Deep (tongue) kiss your partner.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

40. Return a kiss passionately.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

41. Press against your partner.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

42. Complain about the infrequency of sex.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

43. Tell your partner you feel lonely.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

44. Make use of nostalgia.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

45. Persuade by reasoning with your partner.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

Assume that you are interested in having sex with your partner. Estimate how often you try any of the following:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Never or Almost Never			Average Amount			Always or Almost Always

Please refer to the above rating scale when answering the following items as they pertain to your relationship:

46. Badger or cajole your partner.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

47. Be humorous.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

48. Change the usual routine.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

49. Tell your partner you feel ignored and want some attention.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

50. Use scents (or perfumes).

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

51. By sensing during a sequence of events when to initiate.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

52. Ask your partner to lie down with you.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

53. Arouse sympathy.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

54. Induce guilt in your partner.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

Assume that you are interested in having sex with your partner. Estimate how often you try any of the following:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Never or Almost Never			Average Amount			Always or Almost Always

Please refer to the above rating scale when answering the following items as they pertain to your relationship:

55. Be more talkative.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

56. Be less talkative.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

57. Talk affectionately.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

58. Talk intimately.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

59. Talk teasingly.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

60. Snuggle up to your partner.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

61. Prolong eye contact with your partner.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

62. Let your hands wander over your partner's body.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

63. Give your partner a massage.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

Assume that you are interested in having sex with your partner. Estimate how often you try any of the following:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Never or Almost Never			Average Amount			Always or Almost Always

Please refer to the above rating scale when answering the following items as they pertain to your relationship:

64. Make "accidental" physical contact with your partner.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
65. Tell your partner that you are going to lie down for awhile.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
66. Clown around (involving touch, chase, tickle, "rough-housing").
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
67. Guide your partner's hand suggestively over your body.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
68. Make physical contact that will likely result in direct sexual stimulation.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
69. Prolong a touch.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
70. Touch more often than usual.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
71. Suggest taking a bath together.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
72. Put on a "child-like" act.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

Assume that you are interested in having sex with your partner. Estimate how often you try any of the following:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Never or Almost Never			Average Amount			Always or Almost Always

Please refer to the above rating scale when answering the following items as they pertain to your relationship:

73. Make seductive body movements.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
74. Suggest dancing.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
75. Feign shyness.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
76. Cuddle your partner.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
77. Tell your partner that you are about to take (or have just taken) a shower or bath.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
78. Suggest taking a drink (of alcohol) together.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
79. Suggest playing "strip-poker" (or similar 'game').
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
80. Suggest going for a walk with your partner.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
81. Touch your partner in a teasing way.
- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|



Assume that you are interested in having sex with your partner. Estimate how often you try any of the following:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Never or Almost Never			Average Amount			Always or Almost Always

Please refer to the above rating scale when answering the following items as they pertain to your relationship:

82. Make mock sexual advances.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

83. Touch your partner's genitals.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

84. Convey sexual desire facially.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

85. Suggest relaxing together.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

86. Be dominant.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

87. Be submissive.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

88. Make your partner feel jealous (in reference to a person).

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

89. Make your partner feel envious (in reference to a thing, achievement etc.).

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

90. You move into that physical "territory" or "space" currently occupied by your partner.

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

Assume that you are interested in having sex with your partner. Estimate how often you try any of the following:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Never or Almost Never			Average Amount			Always or Almost Always

Please refer to the above rating scale when answering the following items as they pertain to your relationship:

91. Try emotional persuasion.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

92. Be vibrant.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

93. Prepare a special meal.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

**PART IV**  
**DYADIC SCALE**

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Most persons have disagreements in their relationship. Please indicate below the approximate extent of agreement or disagreement between you and your partner. Alongside each item, circle the number that you decide best applies.

	<u>Always Agree</u>	<u>Almost Always Agree</u>	<u>Occasionally Disagree</u>	<u>Frequently Disagree</u>	<u>Almost Always Disagree</u>	<u>Always Disagree</u>
1. Handling family finances	5	4	3	2	1	0
2. Matters of recreation	5	4	3	2	1	0
3. Religious matters	5	4	3	2	1	0
4. Demonstration of affection	5	4	3	2	1	0
5. Friends	5	4	3	2	1	0
6. Sex relations	5	4	3	2	1	0
7. Conventionality (correct or proper behavior)	5	4	3	2	1	0
8. Philosophy of life	5	4	3	2	1	0
9. Ways of dealing with parents or in-laws	5	4	3	2	1	0
10. Aims, goals, and things believed important	5	4	3	2	1	0
11. Amount of time spent together	5	4	3	2	1	0
12. Making major decisions	5	4	3	2	1	0
13. Household tasks	5	4	3	2	1	0
14. Leisure time interests and activities	5	4	3	2	1	0
15. Career decisions	5	4	3	2	1	0
	<u>All the time</u>	<u>Most of the time</u>	<u>More often than not</u>	<u>Occasionally</u>	<u>Rarely</u>	<u>Never</u>
16. How often do you discuss or have you considered divorce, separation, or terminating your relationship?	0	1	2	3	4	5
17. How often do you or your mate leave the house after a fight?	0	1	2	3	4	5
18. In general, how often do you think that things between you and your partner are going well?	0	1	2	3	4	5

INSTRUCTIONS: Most persons have disagreements in their relationship. Please indicate below the approximate extent of agreement or disagreement between you and your partner. Alongside each item, circle the number that you decide best applies

	All the time	Most of the time	More often than not	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
19. Do you confide in your mate?	5	4	3	2	1	0
20. Do you ever regret that you married? (or lived together)	0	1	2	3	4	5
21. How often do you and your partner quarrel?	0	1	2	3	4	5
22. How often do you and your mate "get on each other's nerves?"	0	1	2	3	4	5
	Every day	Almost every day	Occasionally	Rarely	Never	
23. Do you kiss your mate?	4	3	2	1	0	
	All of them	Most of them	Some of them	Very few of them	None of them	
24. Do you and your mate engage in outside interests together?	4	3	2	1	0	

How often would you say the following events occur between you and your mate?

	Never	Less than once a month	Once or twice a month	Once or twice a week	Once a day	More often
25. Have a stimulating exchange of ideas	0	1	2	3	4	5
26. Laugh together	0	1	2	3	4	5
27. Calmly discuss something	0	1	2	3	4	5
28. Work together on a project	0	1	2	3	4	5

INSTRUCTIONS: Most persons have disagreements in their relationship. Please indicate below the approximate extent of agreement or disagreement between you and your partner. Alongside each item, circle the number that you decide best applies.

These are some things about which couples sometimes agree and sometime disagree. Indicate if either item below caused differences of opinions or were problems in your relationship during the past few weeks. (Check yes or no)

- |     | Yes      | No       |                          |
|-----|----------|----------|--------------------------|
| 29. | <u>0</u> | <u>1</u> | Being too tired for sex. |
| 30. | <u>0</u> | <u>1</u> | Not showing love.        |

31. The dots on the following line represent different degrees of happiness in your relationship. The middle point, "happy," represents the degree of happiness of most relationships. Please circle the dot which best describes the degree of happiness, all things considered, of your relationship.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
<u>Extremely</u>	<u>Fairly</u>	<u>A little</u>	<u>Happy</u>	<u>Very</u>	<u>Extremely</u>	<u>Perfect</u>
<u>Unhappy</u>	<u>Unhappy</u>	<u>Unhappy</u>		<u>Happy</u>	<u>Happy</u>	

32. Which of the following statements best describes how you feel about the future of your relationship?

- 5 I want desperately for my relationship to succeed, and would go to almost any length to see that it does.
- 4 I want very much for my relationship to succeed, and will do all I can to see that it does.
- 3 I want very much for my relationship to succeed, and will do my fair share to see that it does.
- 2 It would be nice if my relationship succeeded, but I can't do much more than I am doing now to help it succeed.
- 1 It would be nice if it succeeded, but I refuse to do any more than I am doing now to keep the relationship going.
- 0 My relationship can never succeed, and there is no more that I can do to keep the relationship going.

**PART V**  
**SAI INVENTORY**

Instructions: The experiences in this inventory may or may not be sexually arousing to you. There are no right or wrong answers. Read each item carefully, and then circle the number which indicates how sexually aroused you think you would feel if you actually experienced it. Be sure to answer every item. If you aren't certain about an item, circle the number that seems about right. The meaning of the numbers is given below:

- 1 adversely affects arousal; unthinkable, repulsive, distracting
- 0 doesn't affect sexual arousal
- 1 possibly causes sexual arousal
- 2 sometimes causes sexual arousal; slightly arousing
- 3 usually causes sexual arousal; moderately arousing
- 4 almost always sexually arousing; very arousing
- 5 always causes sexual arousal; extremely arousing

How you feel or think  
you would feel if you  
were actually involved  
in this experience

ANSWER EVERY ITEM

- |  |    |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|--|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. When a loved one stimulates your genitals with mouth and tongue   | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. When a loved one fondles your breasts with his hands              | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. When you see a loved one nude                                     | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. When a loved one caresses you with his eyes                       | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. When a loved one stimulates your genitals with his finger         | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. When you are touched or kissed on the inner thighs by a loved one | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. When you caress a loved one's genitals with your fingers          | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. When you read a pornographic or "dirty" story                     | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. When a loved one undresses you                                    | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. When you dance with a loved one                                  | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11. When you have intercourse with a loved one                       | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12. When a loved one touches or kisses your nipples                  | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 13. When you caress a loved one (other than genitals)                | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 14. When you see pornographic pictures or slides                     | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15. When you lie in bed with a loved one                             | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |



Instructions: The experiences in this inventory may or may not be sexually arousing to you. There are no right or wrong answers. Read each item carefully, and then circle the number which indicates how sexually aroused you think you would feel if you actually experienced it. Be sure to answer every item. If you aren't certain about an item, circle the number that seems about right. The meaning of the numbers is given below:

- 1 adversely affects arousal; unthinkable, repulsive, distracting
- 0 doesn't affect sexual arousal
- 1 possible causes sexual arousal
- 2 sometimes causes sexual arousal; slightly arousing
- 3 usually causes sexual arousal; moderately arousing
- 4 almost always sexually arousing; very arousing
- 5 always causes sexual arousal; extremely arousing

How you feel or think  
you would feel if you  
were actually involved  
in this experience

ANSWER EVERY ITEM

- |   |    |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 16. When a loved one kisses you passionately                              | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 17. When you hear sounds of pleasure during sex                           | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 18. When a loved one kisses you with an exploring tongue                  | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 19. When you read suggestive or pornographic poetry                       | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 20. When you see strip shows  | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 21. When you stimulate your partner's genitals with your mouth and tongue | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 22. When a loved one caresses you (other than genitals)                   | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 23. When you see a pornographic movie (stag film)                         | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 24. When you undress a loved one  | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 25. When a loved one fondles your breasts with mouth and tongue           | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 26. When you make love in a new or unusual place                          | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 27. When you masturbate   | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 28. When your partner has an orgasm                                       | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

CIRCLE A NUMBER INDICATING TO WHAT DEGREE (IF ANY) YOU NOTICE THE FOLLOWING CHANGES WHEN YOU ARE SEXUALLY AROUSED

	<u>Never</u>						<u>Always</u>
29. Vaginal lubrication (dampness)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mild genital sensations (warmth, pulsations)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Moderate genital sensations	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strong genital sensations	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Nipple erection	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Breast swelling	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Muscular tension	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Sex flush (reddening skin)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Hyperventilation (rapid breath)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Heart rate increases	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Decreasing awareness of the environment	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
30. In general, how often are you aware of body sensations when you are sexually aroused?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

## Appendix C

## TOP TEN Items for Males and Females

STRATEGIES			STRATEGIES		
Males	Mean	St dev	Females		
Let your hands wander over your partner's body	5,3	1,53	Be physically affectionate with your partner		
Initiate at a time you feel partner will be receptive	5,27	1,35	Snuggle up to your partner		
Be physically affectionate with your partner	5,16	1,38	Let your hands wander over your partner's body		
Press against your partner	5,12	1,59	Press against your partner		
Snuggle up to your partner	5,12	1,56	Initiate at a time you feel partner will be receptive		
Return a kiss passionately	4,7	1,78	Show interest in your partner		
Show interest in your partner	4,57	1,45	Cuddle your partner		
Cuddle your partner	4,56	1,56	Return a kiss passionately		
Touch more often than usual	4,48	1,56	Touch more often than usual		
Kiss your partner longer than usual	4,42	1,61	Caress your partner non-sexually		
COMMUNICATION			COMMUNICATION		
Males	Mean	St dev	Females		
Going on vacation with your partner	5,04	1,77	Going on vacation with your partner		
A sexually playful conversation with your partner	4,94	1,61	Your partner lets you know that you are special		
Your partner let you know that you are special	4,73	1,52	Your partner lets you know that you are attractive		
Your partner says: I love you	4,66	1,61	Your partner says, I love you		
Your partner says or does something that both of you recognize as having special personal sexual symbolism	4,62	1,84	Your partner is empathic and understanding towards you		
Your partner lets you know that you are attractive	4,62	1,5	A sexually playful conversation with your partner		
Your partner expresses affection in a novel way	4,53	1,72	Your partner expresses affection in a novel way		
Your partner conveys sexual interest by means of privately understood words or gestures	4,49	1,85	Your partner lets you know that you are intelligent		
An enjoyable conversation	4,36	1,55	Your partner encourages your efforts to reach personal goals		
Your partner is teasing in a pleasant way	4,32	1,69	An enjoyable conversation		
MOOD			MOOD		
Males	Mean	St dev	Females		
You feel sexually aroused	5,96	1,17	You feel sexually aroused		
Your partner feels sexually aroused	5,87	1,36	You feel a wave of love for your partner		
Your partner is unexpectedly affectionate	5,34	1,49	You feel loved by your partner		
You feel romantic	5,26	1,35	Your partner is unexpectedly affectionate		
You feel a wave of love for your partner	5,23	1,43	You feel romantic		
You feel loved by your partner	5,12	1,54	Your partner feels sexually aroused		
Your partner is in a good mood	5,03	1,25	You feel in a festive mood		

BODY LANGUAGE			BODY LANGUAGE		
Males	Mean	St dev	Females		
You are in a good mood	4.91	1.26	Your partner feels in a festive mood		
You feel in a festive mood	4.8	1.59	You are in a good mood		
Your partner feels in a festive mood	4.77	1.61	You feel good about yourself		
BODY LANGUAGE			BODY LANGUAGE		
Males	Mean	St dev	Females		
Your partner moves sensually	5.24	1.58	Your partner is playful		
Your partner is semi-nude	4.86	1.45	Your partner moves sensually		
Your partner is playful	4.82	1.48	Your partner is relaxed		
Your partner is nude	4.71	1.47	Your partner is nude		
Your partner touches own genitals	4.29	2.1	Your partner's body language suggests self-confidence		
Your partner is energetic	4.07	1.62	Your partner is energetic		
Your partner is mischievous	4.01	1.74	Your partner is semi-nude		
Your partner is relaxed	3.98	1.48	Your partner looks at you more frequently than usual		
Your partner's body language suggest self-confidence	3.97	1.52	Your partner is mischievous		
Your partner dancing	3.8	1.78	Longer than usual eye contact		

Note. By Ilona Gossmann (2000).

## Appendix D











