**GENDER-DIFFERENTIAL SUBJECTIVE SEXUAL AROUSAL PATTERNS TO DIVERSE HETEROSEXUAL SEXUAL STIMULI**

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**Introduction**

Most studies measuring subjective sexual arousal use global self-report, thereby precluding the ability to measure sexual response patterns across time. To our knowledge no studies have looked at whether gender differences exist with respect to both measures of continuous subjective sexual arousal as well as to the variability of responses to different types of heterosexual sexual stimuli. Clinical literature suggests that there is wide variability in what women find sexually arousing. How this variability compares to that which occurs during male sexual arousal is unknown.

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**Methods**

### PARTICIPANTS

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<th>Table 1: Demographic information</th>
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**AGE (years)**: 26.19 ± 1.16 (range 17-25)

**Gender (men/F)%**: 24 (51.1%)

**Ethnicity**: Caucasian 24 (51.1%), African American 5 (10.6%), Hispanic 9 (19%), Asian 4 (8.5%), Other 5 (10.6%)

**PSQI Full Scale**: 5.34 ± 0.56 (range: 4.2-6.5)

**Total Score**: 66.3 ± 4.42 (range: 60-74)

**Erectile subcore**: 28.5 ± 1.53 (range: 25-30)

### ANALYSIS

- Percentages of maximum arousal were calculated by taking the average of each 5-sec epoch and then averaging within participants across each stimulus type (i.e., neutral, petting, oral, intercourse, total erotic) with participants according to the formula:

  \[
  \text{Percent maximum arousal} = \frac{\text{Maximum arousal in epoch}}{\text{Epoch length}} \times 100
  \]

- Standard deviations were also calculated within participants across each stimulus type as an index of subjective variability.

**RESULTS**

- Males and females both exhibited a significant increase in subjective response to the entire erotic film (across erotic stimuli) and their magnitudes were similar as noted by the absence of a gender by film (neutral, erotic) interaction (F39)=0.005, p=0.945) (see Fig 1).

- When stimulus-specific within-gender responses were examined, a different pattern emerged. That is, both men and women responded similarly and were significantly more aroused to both oral sex (males: t(17)=7.475, p<0.001; females: t(22)=10.768, p<0.001) and intercourse stimuli (males: t(17)=6.479, p<0.001; females: t(22)=18.487, p<0.001) compared to petting stimuli. Females additionally demonstrated significantly more arousal to the intercourse stimulus compared to the oral stimuli (t(22)=5.865, p<0.001) (see Fig 2).

**REFERENCES**


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