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AN EXAMINATION OF SEXUAL FANTASY AND INFIDELITY

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AN EXAMINATION OF SEXUAL FANTASY AND INFIDELITY

THESIS

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Master of Science in the
College of Education
at the University of Kentucky

By

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Lexington, Kentucky

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Lexington, Kentucky

2020

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ABSTRACT OF THESIS

AN EXAMINATION OF SEXUAL FANTASY AND INFIDELITY

Infidelity is a common behavior, influencing many people within romantic relationships (Mark & Haus, 2019). Many factors have been linked to increased infidelity engagement, but no studies exist documenting the role of sexual fantasy regarding infidelity. One such predictor of infidelity is need fulfillment, or the extent to which one's needs are fulfilled in their relationship (Le & Agnew, 2001). Sexual fantasy is a highly common, but largely understudied sexual behavior (Lehmiller, 2018). Therefore, the aims of the current study were: 1) to document the role that sexual fantasy and need fulfillment play in infidelity, 2) to determine any potential gender differences in sexual fantasy themes and 3) to determine whether any particular type of sexual fantasy predicted infidelity. Thus, 1,062 adults in romantic relationships were recruited through a combination of social media ($n = 265$) and the social networking site Ashley Madison® ($n = 797$) to take part in an online survey. Participants provided their demographics and completed the Wilson Sexual Fantasy Questionnaire (SFQ; Wilson, 2010), the Infidelity Intentions scale (Jones et al., 2010), and a Needs-Fulfillment Measure (Le & Agnew, 2001). An independent samples t-test indicated significant gender differences in type of fantasy such that women fantasized more so than did men about sadomasochistic fantasies, but men fantasized more than did women about intimate, exploratory, and impersonal sexual fantasies. Hierarchical multivariate regression indicated lower levels of need fulfillment to be predictive of higher levels of infidelity intentions among women and men, and higher frequency of sexual fantasy to be predictive of higher levels of infidelity intentions among men. Multivariate logistic regression analyses indicated exploratory fantasy to be the most salient predictor of infidelity engagement, but was only significant among women, such that women who fantasized more frequently about exploratory fantasies were less likely to engage in physical infidelity. The findings of this study contribute to what is known about sexual fantasy and indicate that it may have a more salient role in infidelity intentions and engagement than previously thought.

KEYWORDS: Sexual Fantasy, Infidelity, Need Fulfillment, Relationships

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

Western societies place high value on monogamous relationships (Balzarini et al., 2018; Levine et al., 2018). Monogamy is defined as “...sexual and emotional exclusivity to one romantic partner” (Lee & O’Sullivan, 2018, pg 205) and is a focal point of Western relationships (Conley et al., 2012; Anderson, 2010). Monogamous relationships have, and continue to be, the most commonly reported relationship among U.S. adults (Balzarini et al., 2018; Levine et al., 2018). This majority position in society grants certain social and legal power to the individuals within monogamous relationships. Legislation surrounding marriage is one example, as laws align with social norms in favor of those within monogamous relationships. This is demonstrated through laws within the United States that regulate the number of people who can be married to each other, as people can be arrested for entering into multiple marriages, and many states still hold outdated laws regarding what sexual practices are and are not acceptable (Anderson, 2016). This serves as an example of the hegemonic power (social and cultural dominance held by majority groups through popularity, legislation and a natural social order (Anderson, 2010) held by monogamous relationships within the United States, and other countries where monogamy is the majority and the ideal.

This and many other social factors contribute to the conceptualization of compulsory monogamy (Klesse, 2018). Compulsory monogamy is an idea based on the pressure that people within monogamy-centered societies must face in adhering to these norms, despite possible detriments, in order to be socially accepted (Klesse, 2018). Those within these societies who fail to do so will be socially ostracized, or face other consequences (Klesse, 2018); this is particularly evident for women (Willey, 2015). In fact, monogamy is considered a central feature of femininity and normalcy, resulting in the pathologization of women who are non-monogamous (Willey, 2015). In Western societies upholding monogamy as idealistic, those who

do not subscribe to these standards can face many consequences. One negative outcome of non-monogamy is the social judgment from peers who ascribe to social norms regarding monogamy. Because of this, those within monogamous relationships are viewed more positively than peers in non-monogamous relationships (Balzarini et al., 2018). This has resulted in a halo effect regarding monogamy, and those who engage in relationships outside of these bounds are often the recipients of stigma (Balzarini et al., 2018). Consensually non-monogamous (CNM) relationships are romantic relationships where partners share a mutual understanding of emotional or sexual non-exclusivity, or a combination of the two (Thompson et al., 2018; Matsick et al., 2014). As those within CNM relationships exist outside of monogamy, they are dehumanized more often based on their relationship type (Rodriguez et al., 2018). Therefore, the pressure to remain monogamous in our society certainly impacts the types of relationships that we seek.

The stigma faced by those in CNM relationships extends into the research conducted on relationships. While there are many forms of consensually non-monogamous relationships, they are not often examined separately in research (Levine et al., 2018). CNM relationships are also sometimes stigmatized by researchers who examine them from hegemonic perspectives that consider CNM as lesser or more detrimental than monogamous relationships (Levine et al., 2018). This extends to organizations like the Centers for Disease and Control (CDC), which encourages monogamy as a mitigation strategy of the spread of STIs; recent studies have not found empirical support for this strategy (Conley et al., 2015).

CNM relationships, as defined earlier, can take many forms in the context of romantic relationships. While many different forms are excluded from CNM research, as discussed earlier, the different types of CNM in which people engage can result in different amounts of social stigma (Thompson et al., 2018; Grunt-Mejer & Campbell, 2016; Matsick et al., 2014). Typically, the forms of non-monogamy that do not involve emotional attachment (e.g. open relationships, swinging, or group sex) are perceived as less moral and more irresponsible than those that include emotional attachment, and those who engage in infidelity are judged the least favorably of all (Thompson et al., 2018; Grunt-Mejer & Campbell, 2016; Matsick et al., 2014). While there are many forms of consensual non-monogamy that are distinctly different from infidelity, the current study sought to examine infidelity in monogamous relationships only.

1.1 Infidelity

Although many enter monogamous relationships with the intent to remain monogamous, this is not always the case. Many individuals engage in non-consensual extradyadic sexual or emotional behaviors outside of these relationships, which is the commonly adapted definition of infidelity (Thompson et al., 2018; Thompson et al., 2016a, Thompson et al., 2016b). Among those in monogamous marriages, around 25% reported infidelity taking place within their relationship (Mark et al., 2011). Additionally, between 20-52% of adults report engaging in infidelity at some point over the course of their lives (Mark & Haus, 2019; Thompson & O'Sullivan, 2016b; Mark et al., 2011). These percentages vary largely in part based on the operationalization of infidelity in research, as some studies have

used such narrow conceptualizations that many different behaviors are excluded entirely (Thompson & O’Sullivan, 2016a). For example, some studies have conceptualized infidelity only as sexual intercourse with someone who is not one’s partner, therefore excluding many other physical infidelity behaviors, as well as emotional infidelity (Thompson & O’Sullivan, 2016a). Therefore, while monogamous relationships are the most common relationship configuration, infidelity occurs within those relationships.

When monogamy is idealized but unattainable, many issues can arise for people within these relationships. Infidelity can be a major threat to committed relationships and is a large contributor to divorce rates within Western countries (Mark et al., 2011); it was the top reported reason for people seeking divorces across 160 countries (Betzig, 1989). The emotional aftermath of infidelity can potentially cause something that was once a source of excitement and happiness to become a source of pain for all parties involved. The negativity experienced as a result of infidelity can impact both partners in a relationship, with both feeling frustration, discontent, blame, and depression (Thompson & O’Sullivan, 2016a). As romantic relationships have a tremendous impact on the sexual health of those who are involved in them, it is essential to examine the ways in which infidelity can impact these relationships, as well as the ways in which infidelity is potentially influenced by other outside factors.

1.2 Types of Infidelity

Just as consensual non-monogamy takes a variety of forms, so does infidelity (Lee & O’Sullivan, 2018; Thompson & O’Sullivan, 2016a,b). For example,

extradyadic emotional relationships where affective bonds are created, and love and attention are involved, can result in a similar breach of trust within monogamous relationships (Lee & O’Sullivan, 2018; Whitty & Quigley, 2008; Klesse, 2006; Shackelford & Buss, 1997). Both sexual and emotional infidelity can occur independently of one another or simultaneously (Guitar et al., 2016). When an individual engages in both forms of infidelity simultaneously, there is a greater likelihood that the primary relationship will end (Allen et al., 2008). More recent examinations of infidelity have included those that occur online or result due to certain websites or social media platforms (Thompson & O’Sullivan, 2016a; Clayton, 2014; Wysocki & Childers, 2011; Hertlein & Piercy, 2006). As infidelity can be complex, the aim of the current thesis included examinations of sexual and emotional infidelity. As many aspects within a monogamous relationship can be influenced by infidelity, so too can infidelity be impacted by a considerable number of variables.

1.3 Fantasy

Sexual fantasy is one factor that has seldom been considered as having a potential influence on infidelity. Sexual fantasy can be defined as any mental imagery or scenario that an individual finds erotic (Joyal, 2017). Given this definition, it is not surprising that people fantasize about a broad variety of scenarios, which is reflected in the few existing measures that have been generated by researchers seeking to examine this behavior. One of the studies first examining sexual fantasies put forth multiple subscales measuring sexual fantasy, including exploratory, intimate, impersonal, and sadomasochistic fantasies (Wilson, 2010).

Another well-known scale assesses emotional affect with sexual fantasy (Hurlbert & Apt, 1993). Another scale uses six subscales and examines romantic, impersonal, sadistic, masochistic, pre/tactile courtship disorder, and bodily function types of sexual fantasy (Gray, Hassan, & McCulloch, 2003). The constructs included within the existing scales are also indicative of the broad variability of sexual fantasy, as people fantasize about many different topics and scenarios (Lehmiller, 2018).

Due to the varied nature of sexual fantasy, some studies regarding fantasy seek to determine which fantasies are normal, and which are deviant, unusual, or problematic (Cosette et al., 2015). Many of the studies inspired by the sexual fantasy scales stem from a place of analyzing potential disorder, and the creation of Gray's scale was to serve this purpose (Gray et al., 2003). As a result, several studies have examined sexual fantasy with respect to paraphilias and disorders like pedophilia, hypo and hypersexuality, and even sexual homicide (Woodworth et al., 2013; Manglino, 2010; Sheldon & Howitt, 2008; Nutter & Condrion, 2008; Gray et al., 2003). In these scenarios, sexual fantasies are sometimes predictive of negative sexual behaviors (Joyal, 2017).

While many studies focus on the pathologization of sexual fantasy, others hold fantasy to be completely normal. Sexual fantasy is a regular occurrence for many people, and it is common for people to experience a variety of fantasies (Seehuus et al., 2019; Lehmiller, 2018). Some studies have described sexual fantasy as being one component of sexuality, and maintain the idea that fantasies provide key insight to other sexual behaviors (Seehuus et al., 2019; Hicks & Leitenberg, 2001). It is also possible that sexual fantasies can be predictive of future engagement

in other sexual behaviors, as many people hope or plan to engage in the specific behaviors they fantasize about (Lehmiller, 2018).

Sexual fantasy has also been found to interact with other factors and sexual behaviors. For example, some studies have looked to examine gender difference in sexual fantasies, finding that men fantasize more often about someone who is not their partner, but women fantasize more about experiences that they have had (Joyal, 2017). Additionally, higher frequency of sexual fantasy is associated with higher sexual satisfaction and sexual frequency, and it is therefore suggested that sexual fantasy may have a positive impact on sexual relationships and sexual functioning (Joyal, 2017). Additionally, fantasizing about a partner (sometimes referred to as dyadic fantasy) can contribute to positive relationship outcomes such as an increase in dyadic desire (Birnbaum et al., 2019). Increases in dyadic desire have also been reported among women who have crushes on people outside of their relationships, but do not act on them (Mullinax et al., 2015). Sexual fantasy has also been found to occur at higher frequencies among those who have lower religiosity ratings, and higher ratings in permissive attitudes towards sex (Ahrold et al., 2011). Although these studies, and many others, document the impact sexual fantasy can have on sexual behaviors, there is still a general paucity in the research surrounding this behavior (Joyal, 2017). Therefore, the current thesis served to delve further into this phenomenon.

1.4 Need Fulfillment

Need fulfillment, or the extent to which one's needs are met in primary romantic relationship, is another factor that can influence relationship outcomes (Le

& Agnew, 2001). One of the most important factors for pursuing romantic relationships is the fulfillment of various needs, such as sexual needs, or the need for emotional closeness (Lewandowski & Ackerman, 2006). Therefore, it is highly important that these needs are met within a relationship in order to maintain it. The presence of unmet needs within a relationship can contribute to many adverse emotions such that individuals with unmet needs are not happy within their relationship (Le & Agnew, 2001). This creates a chain reaction which results in negative relationship outcomes. The unmet needs of individuals within monogamous relationships can motivate them to engage in different forms of infidelity (Le & Agnew, 2001; Lewandowski & Ackerman, 2006; Mark & Haus, 2019). To date, there is no study that includes a scale used for measuring need fulfillment alongside sexual fantasy. Thus, the current thesis sought to examine both of these variables in an effort to determine whether need fulfillment and sexual fantasy have a measurable impact on rates of sexual and emotional infidelity.

1.5 Problem Statement

Sexual fantasy has been discussed with respect to asexuality (Yule et al., 2014), sex offenders and sexual violence (Bartels et al., 2017), sleep quality (Costa & Oliveira, 2016), religion and spirituality (Ahrold et al., 2011), pornography (Kasemy et al., 2016), and clinical intervention (Newbury et al., 2012), among other things. It is surprising that fantasy has not been examined in the context of infidelity given that sexual fantasy has been found to impact so many other sexual behaviors, and presumably those who engage in sexual infidelity might be seeking stimulation outside of the relationship that could potentially be tied to sexual fantasy, or even

satiated by it. Therefore, the purpose of the current study is to examine the ways in which sexual fantasy could impact or predict extradyadic sexual behaviors.

1.6 Research Questions

1. Are certain types of sexual fantasy predicted by gender?
2. Does greater reported frequency of sexual fantasy contribute to intentions to engage in extradyadic sex?
3. Do lower ratings on need fulfillment measures from extradyadic encounters impact infidelity intentions?
4. Does type of fantasy impact infidelity engagement?
5. Does need fulfillment impact infidelity engagement?

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Detriments of Infidelity

Infidelity has direct negative impacts on the relationships in which it occurs and is regarded as a major contributor to relationship dissolution because of the detriments it can have in these scenarios (Mark & Haus, 2019; Buss, 2018). One longitudinal study found that infidelity in the form of extramarital sex contributed to declining marital satisfaction and increased the likelihood of divorce (Previti & Amato, 2004). Additionally, the same article indicated that extramarital sex is commonly regarded by therapists as a common cause to relationship dissatisfaction and dissolution (Previti & Amato, 2004). Infidelity can contribute to feelings of jealousy within a relationship, which can also lead to issues with pre- and post-breakup stalking, and acts of domestic violence (Buss, 2018). Therefore, infidelity can pose both emotional and physical issues to the relationship, as well as the relationship partners.

Though the relationship itself is often a common focus in research regarding infidelity, both of the individuals involved can bear the consequences. Infidelity can be a source of shame and unrest for both partners, but often the partner of an individual who engages in infidelity experiences more negative outcomes (Fincham & May, 2017). This results in the experience of grief for the loss of the relationship and their loved one, and emotional trauma (Dean, 2011). Many people blame the actions of their unfaithful partner or spouse for relationship dissolution, and those whose relationships have ended due to a partner's infidelity are more likely to experience fear of repeat occurrences in new relationships (Blow & Hartnett, 2005).

Additionally, those whose spouses engage in infidelity may experience depression (Blow & Hartnett, 2005; Cano & O’Leary, 2000), although they are less likely to do so if they make the decision to terminate the relationship (Blow & Hartnett, 2005). Infidelity has also been found to contribute to other negative mental health outcomes in spouses and partners such as PTSD (Fincham & May, 2017), as well as anxiety and anhedonia, especially among women (Cano & O’Leary, 2000).

In addition to the negative impacts posed to relationships and the people in them, children can also be affected by the infidelity of their parents. The infidelity of a parent can negatively impact young, adolescent, and adult children in different ways (Negash & Morgan, 2016) and varies with the extent to which individuals are affected. The children of parents affected by infidelity and divorce are exposed to the conflict between their parents, which can contribute to feelings of guilt and negative mental health outcomes (Negash & Morgan, 2016). These outcomes can impede the emotional, cognitive and sexual development of children of all ages, and can have different impacts on each individual (Negash & Morgan, 2016). In deepening the understanding of the different factors that can contribute to infidelity, positive relationship outcomes can be experienced by everyone involved. Therefore, understanding infidelity and the contributing factors could be influential in improving the health outcomes of everyone involved.

2.2 Contributors to Infidelity

One of the first studies examining infidelity was conducted by Alfred Kinsey, seeking to establish the difference between sexual and emotional infidelity (Kinsey et al., 1948). This study was influential in the shaping of literature

surrounding this topic, as well as the ways in which treatment was provided (Barta & Kiene, 2005). Kinsey's study also examined gender differences that are still widely discussed, encountered and refuted today (Barta & Kiene, 2005). As a result of the popularity of this behavior as a focus of study, many studies exist that serve as a link between infidelity and other contributing factors, two main factors being personality traits and gender.

2.2.1 Personality and Sexual Traits

One of the most commonly examined contributors to infidelity is the personality of the individual engaging in this behavior (Mark & Haus, 2019). Many studies specifically look to the Big Five personality traits for their role in infidelity. Barta and Kiene (2005) found that the Big Five personality traits in combination with other participant characteristics were predictive of certain motives infidelity. In this study, they found that extraversion partly accounted for dissatisfaction related motives, and neuroticism for neglect and anger-related motives (Barta & Kiene, 2005). Altgelt, Reyes, French, Meltzer, and McNulty (2018) also sought to examine the Big Five with respect to infidelity, as well as relationship satisfaction and narcissism. They found that spouses of people high in extraversion or neuroticism were more likely to engage in infidelity, and that wives with high extraversion as well as the husbands of people with high narcissism were more likely to engage in infidelity, possibly due to the amount of negative influence that this particular partner trait can bring to a shared space (Altgelt et al., 2018). Narcissism has also been identified in other studies as a predictor for those who engage in infidelity, both as a trait present in the individual in question, as well as a trait within their partners

(Mark & Haus, 2019; Fincham & May, 2017; McNulty & Widman, 2014).

Narcissism is also classified as a dark personality trait and is sometimes accompanied by the personality traits of psychopathy and Machavellianism, which are collectively referred to as the dark triad (Alavi et al., 2018; Timmermans et al., 2018). The other dark triad traits are also predictors of infidelity, and sometimes predict peoples' intentions to engage in infidelity (Alavi et al., 2018, Timmermans et al., 2018).

Sexual personality traits like sexual attitudes and values have also been examined as predictors of infidelity. For example, Mark, Janssen, and Milhausen (2011) included sexual excitation and inhibition as well as demographic and interpersonal data in their investigation on infidelity. They found that among participants with higher sexual excitation, higher sexual inhibition due to performance concern, and low sexual inhibition due to performance consequences, there were also higher rates of infidelity among both women and men. Several other studies have examined sexual attitudes towards infidelity, finding that those with more permissive attitudes towards infidelity who exist in environments that are also more permissive are more likely to engage in infidelity themselves (Mark & Haus, 2019; Fincham & May, 2017). Barta and Kiene also found a mediation for extraversion and neuroticism in sociosexual orientation, or one's willingness to engage in extradyadic sex (Barta & Kiene, 2005). Similar findings regarding sociosexual orientation were also encountered by Mattingly, Clark, Weidler, Bullock, Hackathorn, and Blankmeyer (2011), who found that individuals with more unrestricted sociosexual orientations were more likely to engage in infidelity.

Sociosexual orientation also predicts the rates in which people engage in electronically-mediated infidelity (Weiser et al., 2017). Therefore, sexual personality traits and major personality traits have both been found to be predictors of infidelity.

2.2.2 Gender

Another area where infidelity has been widely studied lies in the examination of gender. Several studies have examined demographics, finding traditional gender roles and power dynamics to influence patterns of infidelity (Munsch, 2015; Lammers et al., 2011). For example, one study found that women ‘breadwinners’ were less likely to engage in infidelity, while men ‘breadwinners’ were more likely to engage in infidelity, and that both women and men who were financially dependent on their ‘breadwinning’ partners were also likely to engage in infidelity (Munsch, 2015). Additionally, many studies have found that gender is predictive of infidelity, with more men engaging in this behavior than women (Fincham & May, 2017; Blow & Hartnett, 2005). However, it is argued that in recent years, gender differences in the frequency of infidelity may be decreasing (Mark & Haus, 2019; Fincham & May, 2017; Adamopoulou, 2013; Mark et al., 2011). In fact, Mark et al (2011) found that men and women were equally likely to engage in sexual infidelity. In addition to the studies focusing on gender differences, other studies have found individual and social attitudes towards infidelity and casual sex to be more predictive of the behavior than gender (Mark & Haus, 2019; Fincham & May, 2017; Jackman, 2015; Mark et al., 2011). Several studies look to evolutionary theory to explain gender differences and motives for engaging in infidelity (i.e. Buss, 2018; Brand et al., 2007), but as there are numerous contributors to infidelity that cannot be entirely

explained by this theory, the current thesis utilized a biopsychosocial framework in order to best address the reasons for which people engage in this behavior. As with many human behaviors, infidelity can be influenced by a plethora of factors that occur both inside and outside of the relationships in question.

2.2.3 Satisfaction

Another contributor to rates of infidelity is evident in the satisfaction of the individuals within the relationships in question. Satisfaction with the quality of the relationship, or relationship satisfaction, in particular has been found to be particularly important in the success of relationships, and low relationship satisfaction has been found to be a predictor of infidelity (Haseli et al., 2019; Mark & Haus, 2019; Fincham & May, 2017, Previti & Amato, 2004). Infidelity can contribute to low ratings of relationship satisfaction, which can predict future infidelity in turn (Previti & Amato, 2004). While relationship satisfaction has been found to be impacted by many factors both external to the relationship and internal to the individuals in question (Mark & Haus, 2019; Fincham & May, 2017; Mark et al., 2011; Barta & Keine, 2005; Previti & Amato, 2004), the impact of this variable on infidelity remains consistent in the instances where it is examined and documented.

Satisfaction with the frequency, quality and types of sex, or sexual satisfaction, can also impact rates of infidelity within committed relationships. As relationship length increases, sexual frequency can decrease, which can lead to lower rates of sexual satisfaction (Mark & Haus, 2019). Decreased sexual frequency also occurs during pregnancy, contributing to lower rates of sexual satisfaction and more frequent infidelity during pregnancy (Haseli et al., 2019). This is because lower rates

of sexual satisfaction have been found to be predictive of higher rates of infidelity (Haseli et al., 2019; Mark & Haus, 2019; Blow & Hartnett, 2005b). Sexual satisfaction can also be impacted by the sexual compatibility one has with one's partner, with lower rates of compatibility predicting lower satisfaction (Mark & Haus, 2019). This makes sexual satisfaction particularly important when looking at infidelity.

2.3 Sexual Fantasy

Sexual fantasy is common; considered to be a relatively universal experience (Leitenberg & Henning, 1995). Within the United States, 97% of individuals report having experienced sexual fantasy (Lehmiller, 2018). Sigmund Freud once condemned this behavior, aligning fantasy with unhappiness and dissatisfaction, but that seems to be changing with the increase in knowledge about fantasy (Lehmiller, 2018). Although many studies have examined sexual fantasy from a standpoint based on psychopathology, as previously discussed (i.e. Woodworth et al., 2010), emerging perspectives in academia hold this experience to be a completely normal, and even potentially beneficial, component of sexuality (Lehmiller, 2018). For example, Birnbaum, Kanat-Maymon, Mizrahi, Recanati, and Orr (2019) conducted an examination of the ways in which sexual fantasies about one's romantic partner, or dyadic fantasies, impacted participant relationships. They found that the individuals who experienced more frequent dyadic fantasies also engaged more frequently in behaviors that would promote the health of the relationship (Birnbaum et al., 2019). Though this study certainly sheds light on the ways fantasy can impact relationships, sexual fantasy is relatively understudied, and

this is one of the few existing studies that document the impact of dyadic fantasies on partnered relationships. Research examining other types of fantasies is also scarce (Lehmiller, 2018). Therefore, while studies such as that done by Birnbaum and colleagues are promising in terms of demonstrating the positive impacts of fantasy on relationship outcomes, it is possible that other types of fantasies, or even further examination of dyadic fantasy, could provide greater insight into the complexity of fantasies' impact on romantic relationship health.

2.3.1 Extradynamic Sexual Fantasies

Extradynamic fantasies occur when an individual has a sexual fantasy about someone other than their partner. Although many studies exist regarding sexual fantasy, there are very few that discuss extradynamic sexual fantasy. Hicks and Leitenberg sought to examine the frequency of extradynamic fantasy and found it to occur in the majority of both women (80%) and men (98%) participants, but noted that it was 11 times more likely among men (Hicks & Leitenberg, 2001). Hicks and Leitenberg posited that part of this apparent gender difference could have been due to women feeling a stronger sense of taboo regarding extradynamic fantasy than men, and therefore being less open to admitting it (2001). The authors also found that, in addition to this gender difference, relationship length contributed to the frequency of extradynamic fantasy (2001). In response to this finding, the authors postulated that the length of participant relationships could be reducing the excitement in fantasizing about a partner and noted that it is possible that increased fantasy about someone other than a partner could lead to seeking out extradynamic partners (Hicks & Leitenberg, 2001). Lehmiller also discussed extradynamic fantasies in his large-scale

study on fantasy via the different types of fantasy that focuses on consensual non-monogamy (2018). He found that open relationships were most fantasized about, followed by polyamory, then swinging, and then cuckolding (group sex where someone watches their partner having sex with another person) (Lehmiller, 2018). Lehmiller also discussed fantasies related to infidelity and found that the motives behind the fantasy were often more related to the excitement and taboo that infidelity encompasses (2018). The nature of these fantasies could impact infidelity and relationships in different ways. Therefore, the current study aims to examine whether the frequency and intensity of extradyadic fantasy and dyadic fantasy contributes to rates of infidelity in relationships.

2.3.2 Deviant Sexual Fantasies

Deviant sexual fantasies are characterized as fantasies that exist outside of what is considered to be “normal” (Joyal, 2015). Deviant sexual fantasies are sometimes included in the DSM-V, the diagnostic manual for mental health issues, for assistance in categorizing paraphilias, especially with the hopes of recognizing and preventing sex offending (Bartels & Beech, 2016). One example of sexual fantasy that is commonly referenced in the DSM is that of fantasizing about children, which is often used with respect to the diagnosis of pedophilia (Bartels & Beech, 2016). This diagnosis and the controversy surrounding it is far beyond the scope of this thesis, but in these cases sexual fantasies are sometimes (controversially) seen as preparation for sexual offending (Bartels & Beech, 2016). However, it is important to note the difference between fantasy and behavior, and the inclusion of sexual fantasy in the DSM can sometimes problematize areas of sexuality that are not

problematic when fantasized and not acted upon (Lehmiller, 2018; Joyal, Cossette & Lapierre, 2015). One example of the potential detriments of characterizing fantasies and sexual interests as deviant can be seen in the historical pathologization of the LGBTQ* community in previous versions of the DSM (Lehmiller, 2018). Due to non-heterosexual sexual preferences being seen as abnormal, the LGBTQ* community was further ostracized, thought of as mentally ill, and some of the negativity generated during this time continues to occur even today (Lehmiller, 2018). While many studies have sought to determine which fantasies are normal, and which are deviant (i.e. Seehus, Stanton, & Handy, 2019; Lehmiller, 2018; Joyal, et al., 2015), there is still dissolution on the topic. In order to avoid further stigmatizing sexual fantasy, and for the sake of simplicity, the current study did not seek to examine which fantasies are normal or deviant, but rather understand the role of fantasy in infidelity.

2.3.3 Gender Differences in Fantasies

Sexual fantasies are frequently discussed and studied with respect to gender differences in the frequency, nature and content of the fantasies themselves. As mentioned above, men report the experience extradyadic fantasy more frequently than women (Joyal, 2017). Evolutionary theorists suggest that this is due to the evolutionary differences in mating strategies between women and men (Easton, Confer, Goetz, & Buss, 2010). It has also been hypothesized that the frequency and intensity of women's sexual fantasies vary based on their declining fertility due to the aging process (Easton et al., 2010). This study found that women from ages 27-45 whose fertility was declining had more frequent and intense sexual fantasies,

reported greater willingness to engage in sex, and actually engaged in sex more often than women in any other age group (Easton et al., 2010). Studies that focus on gender differences between the sexual fantasies of women and men often discuss women having more fantasies of submission, and men of dominance (Ziegler, 2014; Kno & Jaffe, 1984). Though this has been a documented gender difference, it is thought that this difference is due to the reflection of sexual stereotypes rather than inherent fantasy itself (Kno & Jaffe, 1984). This perspective is supported by work done by Goldey, Avery, and van Anders (2014), who found that the content and themes of sexual fantasies were largely the same in both women and men. The authors of this study also found that while some young people still adhere to sexually stereotyped roles in their fantasies, there are more people moving away from these perspectives than have been previously documented in the literature (Goldey et al., 2014) The shift towards role neutrality in sexual fantasy has also been encountered in other studies, and it has been found that, while previous literature strongly focused on the differences between genders, there are more fantasies commonly shared between women and men than those that are different (Joyal et al., 2015). While the current thesis did not seek to examine gender differences explicitly, they will be considered as a factor in both fantasy and infidelity in order to determine whether any impacts emerge.

CHAPTER 3. METHODS AND DATA COLLECTION

3.1 Participants

In order to assess sexual fantasy, need fulfillment, and the ways in which these variables potentially impact infidelity, the current thesis utilized a voluntary sample of adult participants in partnered relationships. This sample was comprised of two groups: one sample of adults recruited from Ashley Madison® ($n = 797$) and another sample taken from the general population ($n = 265$) for a total of 1,062 participants. Ashley Madison® is a social media networking site used by people looking to engage in infidelity outside of the parameters of their relationships (AshleyMadison.com, 2019). The other participants were recruited from the general public through snowball sampling using social media (primarily Twitter and Facebook). Once recruited, participants from both samples were administered the same measures. As the survey was comprised of around 70 questions, at least 250 participants were necessary in order to have adequate power for statistical analysis (Faul et al., 2007). The age for this sample ranged from 18 – 91, with an average age of 35.7 for the general sample ($SD = 12.18$), 52 for the Ashley Madison® sample ($SD = 11.17$) and an overall average age of 48 years ($SD = 13.49$). The majority of this sample was in a long-term relationship with one person (840, or 77%), though there were also participants seriously dating one person (82, or 7.7%) or multiple people (22, or 2.1%), in long-term relationships with more than one person (80, or 7.5%), or in other types of relationship (57, or 5.4%). The majority of this sample was married (768, or 72%), with single (141, or 13%) and divorced (71, or 6.7%) being the next largest groups. A majority reported engaging in physical infidelity over the course of their lifetimes (687, or 64.7%), and around half of participants reported lifetime

emotional infidelity engagement (527, or 49.7%). Lifetime rates of physical and emotional infidelity engagement were higher among those in the Ashley Madison® sample (72.9% and 52.8%, respectively) than those in the general sample (40% and 40.4%, respectively). The gender composition of the samples was also different, as 61.5% of the general sample participants were women, whereas only 11% of the Ashley Madison® sample were women. See Table 3.1 for additional demographic characteristics of the sample.

[Table 3.1 *Participant Demographics*]

	Women N = 252 (23.7%)	Men N = 810 (76.3%)	Total N = 1062 (100%)
Age	37.71 (13.24)	51.41 (11.74)	48.01 (13.5)
Sexual Identity			
Bisexual/Pansexual	47 (18.7%)	48 (5.9%)	95 (8.9%)
Gay/Lesbian	6 (2.4%)	14 (1.7%)	20 (1.8%)
Queer	8 (3.2%)	2 (.2%)	10 (.9%)
Heterosexual/Straight	182 (72.2%)	730 (90.1%)	912 (85.8%)
I'm not sure	4 (1.6%)	9 (1.1%)	13 (1.2%)
Other, please specify:	5 (2%)	7 (.9%)	12 (1.1%)
Relationship Status			
Seriously dating one person	35 (13.9%)	47 (5.8%)	82 (7.7%)
Seriously dating more than one person	8 (3.2%)	14 (1.7%)	22 (2%)
Long-term relationship with one person	179 (71%)	641 (79.1%)	820 (77.2%)
Long-term relationship with >one person	20 (7.9%)	60 (7.4%)	80 (7.5%)
Other, please specify:	9 (3.6%)	48 (5.9%)	57 (5.4%)
Education			
Some High School	1 (.4%)	3 (.3%)	4 (.4%)
High School Graduate or GED	13 (5.2%)	65 (8.0%)	78 (7.3%)
Some college/university or a 2yr	56 (22.2%)	218 (26.9%)	274 (25.8%)
College/University Graduate	90 (35.7%)	270 (33.3%)	360 (33.9%)
Some Graduate School	26 (10.3%)	63 (7.8%)	89 (8.4%)
Graduated with a Master's Degree	36 (14.3%)	120 (14.8%)	156 (14.7%)
Graduated with a Doctoral Degree	28 (11.1%)	60 (7.4%)	88 (8.3%)
Other, please specify:	2 (.8%)	12 (1.5%)	14 (1.3%)
Ethnicity			
American Indian or Alaska Native	6 (2.4%)	28 (3.5%)	34 (3.2%)
Asian or Asian American	6 (2.4%)	21 (2.6%)	27 (2.5%)
Black or African American	10 (4%)	39 (4.8%)	49 (4.6%)
Native Hawaiian or OPI	1 (.4%)		1 (.09%)
White or Caucasian	212 (84.1%)	664 (82%)	876 (82.5%)
Multiracial, please specify:	17 (6.7%)	57 (7%)	74 (7%)
No response		1 (.1%)	1 (.09%)
Religion			
Catholic	30 (11.9%)	112 (13.8%)	142 (13.4%)
Christian	55 (21.8%)	216 (26.7%)	271 (25.5%)
Hindu	1 (.4%)	6 (.7%)	7 (.6%)
Jewish	13 (5.2%)	23 (2.8%)	36 (3.4%)
Mormon/Latter Day Saints		15 (1.9%)	15 (1.4%)
Muslim/Islam	3 (1.2%)	3 (.4%)	6 (.6%)
Protestant (Baptist, Lutheran, etc.)	18 (7.1%)	85 (10.5%)	103 (9.7%)
I don't identify with any specific religion	105 (41.7%)	260 (32.1%)	365 (34.4%)
Other, please specify:	26 (10.3%)	89 (11%)	115 (10.8%)

No response	1 (.4%)	1 (.1%)	2 (.2%)
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3.2 Measures

3.2.1 Demographics

Demographic questions regarding the participants' sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, age, geographical place of origin, relationship status, relationship type, and education levels were included.

3.2.2 Infidelity Intentions

To measure participants' intentions to engage in infidelity, a measure created by Jones, Olderbak, and Figueredo (2011) was used for the purpose of this study (See Appendix 2). This scale allows participants to indicate their likelihood of engaging in multiple infidelity behaviors via 7-point Likert-style scales ranging from 'Not likely at all' to 'Extremely likely' (Jones et al., 2011). The measure consists of seven items in total. This scale had good internal reliability among women and men (women: $\alpha = .84$, men: $\alpha = .81$).

3.2.3 Fantasy

The Sexual Fantasy Questionnaire (SFQ; Wilson, 1988; see Appendix 3) was to measure sexual fantasy frequency. The SFQ consists of 40 factor-scored items, some of

which were modified for updated language (e.g. changing existing phrasing to reflect newer terminology, such as changing “homosexual behaviors” to “same-sex sexual behavior”). This measure also assesses different types of fantasies, as it includes four subscales of exploratory, intimate, impersonal and sadomasochistic fantasies (Wilson, 1988). The measure also examines whether fantasies happen during the daytime, during intercourse or masturbation, while asleep, if they have happened in reality, or if participants would like them to happen in reality (Wilson, 1988). This measure had high internal consistency for its subscales (women: exploratory $\alpha = .75$, intimate $\alpha = .84$, impersonal $\alpha = .74$, sadomasochistic $\alpha = .83$; men: exploratory $\alpha = .75$, intimate $\alpha = .84$, impersonal $\alpha = .80$, sadomasochistic $\alpha = .82$) as well as overall (women: $\alpha = .93$, men: $\alpha = .93$). By using the SFQ, the current thesis examined the ways in which all of these categories do or do not relate to infidelity.

3.2.4 Need Fulfillment

Need fulfillment has been utilized previously in research pertaining to infidelity (Lewandowski & Ackerman, 2006; Le & Agnew, 2001), so the Need Fulfillment Scale (NFS; Le & Agnew, 2001) was utilized in the current thesis. This measure is comprised of five items on a Likert-style scale from 0 (not fulfilled by my partner) to 6 (completely fulfilled by my partner). This measure had high internal consistency (women: $\alpha = .93$, men: $\alpha = .91$).

3.2.5 Sexual and Relationship Satisfaction

As sexual and relationship satisfaction have previously been found to be predictors of infidelity (Mark & Haus, 2019), the current study included the two variables as

moderators. In order to capture participant sexual and relationship satisfaction, the Global Measure of Sexual Satisfaction (GMSEX; Byers et al., 1998) and the Global Measure of Relationship Satisfaction (GMREL; Byers et al., 1998) were included. Both of these measures had high internal consistency among women and men (women: $\alpha = .97$, men: $\alpha = .97$).

3.3 Procedures

Participants were recruited via Ashley Madison®, and social media (primarily Twitter and Facebook). Participants were offered the chance to participate in a drawing for one of twenty-five \$20 Amazon gift cards. Once a participant expressed interest in the study, they were provided with a link to the Qualtrics survey. The link took them to a digital consent form, and they were unable to proceed to the survey without providing consent. Completing the information form and consent form lead the participant to the full questionnaire. All measures were approved by the Institutional Review Board at the University of Kentucky. Please see appendix 5 for data analysis table.

3.3.1 Data Cleaning

During data cleaning, 264 of the 555 respondents (47%) were removed from the general sample for completing less than 20% of the measures, as were 1,264 respondents (52%) from the 2,394 Ashley Madison® sample. As the current thesis sought to examine sexual fantasy and infidelity among those within relationships, 349 participants who identified as single, separated, divorced, or widowed and had no other relationships were also removed from the sample prior to analysis. After data cleaning and excluding single

participants, the number of participants who identified as nonbinary or genderqueer ($n = 11$) was insufficient for analysis, and was therefore excluded from the analytic sample. This brought the final analytic sample to 1062.

3.3.2 Assumptions Testing

After data cleaning, assumptions testing was conducted in order to determine the that all assumptions were met to begin parametric testing. Skewness in the general sample ranged from $Z(\text{skew}) = -1.96$ to 1.37 , $p < .01$, and kurtosis ranged from $Z(\text{kurtosis}) = -1.83$ to 1.61 , $p < .01$. Among the Ashley Madison® sample, skewness ranged from $Z(\text{skew}) = -.6$ to 1.35 , $p < .01$, and kurtosis ranged from $Z(\text{kurtosis}) = -1.21$ to 4.28 , $p < .01$. These values indicate that the sample is significantly not normally distributed. The range of Kolmogorov – Smirnov scores for Ashley Madison® ($D(486)$ ranged from $.041$ to $.420$, $p < .01$) and the general sample ($D(181)$ $.05$ to $.417$, $p < .01$) as well as Shapiro – Wilks scores (Ashley Madison® ranged from $W(486) = .601$ to $.994$, $p < .01$; general sample scores ranged from $W(181)$ $.6$ to $.992$, $p < .01$) also indicated that the sample was significantly not normally distributed. Levene’s test of equality also indicated that the sample was not normally distributed. However, due to the large sample size, normalcy is still maintained due to the central limit theorem (Field, 2017) and this large sample size allows for parametric testing to move forward despite non-normality. Skewness, kurtosis, Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilks values are also less accurate with large samples, allowing for normalcy assumptions to remain intact (Field, 2017).

CHAPTER 4. MANUSCRIPT

AN EXAMINATION OF SEXUAL FANTASY, INFIDELITY, AND DESIRE

Primary proposed journal: Journal of Sex Research

Secondary proposed journal: Journal of Social and Personal Relationships

4.1 Abstract (200 word max)

Infidelity is a common behavior, influencing many people within romantic relationships (Mark & Haus, 2019). Many factors influence infidelity engagement, one of which is need fulfillment, or the extent to which one's needs are fulfilled in their relationship (Le & Agnew, 2001). Sexual fantasy is common (Lehmiller, 2018), but has never been studied regarding infidelity. Therefore, the current study sought to examine sexual fantasy, need fulfillment, and infidelity. Thus, 1,062 adults in romantic relationships were recruited via social media (n = 265) and Ashley Madison® (n = 797) for an online survey. Participants were asked to provide demographics, and complete the Wilson Sexual Fantasy Questionnaire (SFQ; Wilson, 2010), the Infidelity Intentions scale (Jones et al., 2010), and a Needs-Fulfillment Measure (Le & Agnew, 2001). An independent samples t-test indicated significant gender differences in fantasy types. Hierarchical multivariate regression indicated need fulfillment to be predictive of infidelity intentions among women and men, and frequent sexual fantasy to predict infidelity intentions among men. Multivariate logistic regression analyses indicated exploratory fantasy as the most salient predictor of infidelity engagement, but only among women. The findings of this study contribute to knowledge surrounding sexual fantasy, indicating nuances in the role it plays in infidelity.

Keywords: Sexual Fantasy, Infidelity, Need Fulfillment, Relationships

4.2 Introduction

Although many enter relationships with the intent to remain monogamous, this is not always the case. Many individuals engage in extradyadic sexual or emotional behaviors outside of these relationships, which is the commonly adapted definition of infidelity (Thompson et al., 2018; Thompson et al., 2016a, Thompson et al., 2016b). Among those in monogamous marriages, around one quarter reported infidelity taking place within their relationship (Mark et al., 2011). Additionally, between 20-52% of adults report engaging in infidelity at some point over the course of their lives (Mark & Haus, 2019; Thompson & O'Sullivan, 2016b; Mark et al., 2011).

Infidelity can be a major threat to committed relationships and is a large contributor to divorce rates within Western countries (Mark et al., 2011); it was the top reported reason for people seeking divorces across 160 countries (Betzig, 1989). As romantic relationships have a tremendous impact on the sexual health of those who are involved in them, it is essential to examine the ways in which infidelity can impact these relationships, as well as the ways in which infidelity is potentially influenced by other outside factors.

4.2.1 Types of Infidelity

Infidelity takes a variety of forms (Lee & O'Sullivan, 2018; Thompson & O'Sullivan, 2016a,b) Both sexual and emotional infidelity can occur independently of one another, or simultaneously (Guitar et al., 2016). When an individual engages in both forms of infidelity simultaneously, there is a greater likelihood that the

relationship will end (Allen et al., 2008). While infidelity can be complex, the current study examined only sexual infidelity.

4.2.2 Fantasy

Sexual fantasy is one factor that has seldom been considered as having a potential influence on infidelity. Sexual fantasy can be defined as any mental imagery or scenario that an individual finds erotic (Joyal, 2017). Given this definition, it is not surprising that people fantasize about a broad variety of scenarios. To encompass these, the current study utilized one of the first measure put forth, which multiple subscales measuring sexual fantasy, including exploratory, intimate, impersonal, and sadomasochistic fantasies (Wilson, 2010).

Due to the varied nature of sexual fantasy, some studies regarding fantasy seek to determine which fantasies are normal, and which are deviant, unusual, or problematic (Cosette et al., 2015). Many of the studies inspired by the sexual fantasy scales stem from a place of analyzing potential disorder, and the creation of Gray's scale was to serve this purpose (Gray et al., 2003). As a result, several studies have examined sexual fantasy with respect to paraphilias and disorders like pedophilia, hypo and hypersexuality, and even sexual homicide (Woodworth et al., 2013; Manglino, 2010; Sheldon & Howitt, 2008; Nutter & Condrón, 2008; Gray et al., 2003). In these scenarios, sexual fantasies are sometimes predictive of negative sexual behaviors (Joyal, 2017).

While many studies focus on the pathologization of sexual fantasy, others hold fantasy to be completely normal. Sexual fantasy is a regular occurrence for many people, and it is common for people to experience a variety of fantasies

(Seehuus et al., 2019; Lehmiller, 2018). Some studies have described sexual fantasy as being one component of sexuality, and maintain the idea that fantasies provide key insight to other sexual behaviors (Seehuus et al., 2019; Hicks & Leitenberg, 2001).

Sexual fantasy has also been found to interact with other factors and sexual behaviors. For example, some studies have looked to examine gender difference in sexual fantasies, finding that men fantasize more often about someone who is not their partner, but women fantasize more about experiences that they have had (Joyal, 2017). Higher frequency of sexual fantasy is also associated with higher sexual satisfaction and sexual frequency (Joyal, 2017). Additionally, fantasizing about a partner (sometimes referred to as dyadic fantasy) can contribute to positive relationship outcomes such as an increase in dyadic desire (Birnbaum et al., 2019). Although these studies, and many others, document the impact sexual fantasy can have on sexual behaviors, there is still a general paucity in the research surrounding this behavior (Joyal, 2017). Therefore, the current study served to delve further into this phenomenon.

4.2.3 Need Fulfillment

Need fulfillment, or the extent to which one's needs are met in primary romantic relationship, is another factor that can influence relationship outcomes (Le & Agnew, 2001). The unmet needs of individuals within monogamous relationships can motivate them to engage in different forms of infidelity (Le & Agnew, 2001; Lewandowski & Ackerman, 2006; Mark & Haus, 2019). To date, there is no study that includes a scale used for measuring need fulfillment alongside sexual fantasy.

Thus, the current study sought to examine both of these variables in an effort to determine whether need fulfillment and sexual fantasy have a measurable impact on rates of sexual and emotional infidelity.

4.2.4 Problem Statement

Sexual fantasy has been discussed with respect to asexuality (Yule et al., 2014), sex offenders and sexual violence (Bartels et al., 2017), sleep quality (Costa & Oliveira, 2016), religion and spirituality (Ahrold et al., 2011), pornography (Kasemy et al., 2016), and clinical intervention (Newbury et al., 2012), among other things. It is surprising that fantasy has not been examined in the context of infidelity given that sexual fantasy has been found to impact so many other sexual behaviors, and presumably those who engage in sexual infidelity might be seeking stimulation outside of the relationship that could potentially be tied to sexual fantasy, or even satiated by it. Therefore, the purpose of the current study is to examine the ways in which sexual fantasy could impact or predict extradyadic sexual behaviors.

4.2.5 Research Questions

1. Are certain types of sexual fantasy predicted by gender?
2. Does greater reported frequency of sexual fantasy contribute to intentions to engage in extradyadic sex?
3. Do lower ratings on need fulfillment measures from extradyadic encounters impact infidelity intentions?
4. Does type of fantasy impact infidelity engagement?
5. Does need fulfilment impact infidelity engagement?

4.3 Materials and methods

4.3.1 Participants

The current study utilized a voluntary sample of adult participants in partnered relationships. This sample was comprised of two groups: one sample of adults recruited from Ashley Madison®, a social media networking site for people seeking to engage in infidelity, (n = 797) and another sample taken from the general population via snowball sampling through social media (primarily Twitter and Facebook, (n = 265)) for a total of 1,062 participants. The age for this sample ranged from 18 – 91, with an average age of 48 years (SD = 13.49). A majority reported engaging in physical infidelity over the course of their lifetimes (687, or 64.7%), and around half of participants reported lifetime emotional infidelity engagement (527, or 49.7%). Lifetime rates of physical and infidelity engagement were higher among those in the Ashley Madison® sample (72.9% and 52.8%, respectively) than those in the general sample (40% and 40.4%, respectively). The gender composition of the samples was also different, as 61.5% of the general sample participants were women, whereas only 11% of the Ashley Madison® sample were women. See Table 4.1 for additional demographic characteristics of the sample.

4.4 Measurement

4.4.1 Demographics

Demographic questions regarding the participants' sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, age, geographical place of origin, relationship status, relationship type, and education levels were included.

4.4.2 Infidelity Intentions

To measure participants' intentions to engage in infidelity, a measure created by Jones, Olderbak, and Figueredo (2011) was used for the purpose of this study. This scale allows participants to indicate their likelihood of engaging in multiple infidelity behaviors via 7-point Likert-style scales ranging from 'Not likely at all' to 'Extremely likely' (Jones et al., 2011). The measure consists of seven items in total. This scale had good internal reliability among women and men (women: $\alpha = .84$, men: $\alpha = .81$).

4.4.3 Fantasy

The Sexual Fantasy Questionnaire (SFQ; Wilson, 1988) was to measure sexual fantasy frequency. The SFQ consists of 40 factor-scored items, some of which were modified for updated language (e.g. changing existing phrasing to reflect newer terminology, such as changing "homosexual behaviors" to "same-sex sexual behavior"). This measure had high internal consistency for its subscales (women: exploratory $\alpha = .75$, intimate $\alpha = .84$, impersonal $\alpha = .74$, sadomasochistic $\alpha = .83$; men: exploratory $\alpha = .75$, intimate $\alpha = .84$, impersonal $\alpha = .80$, sadomasochistic $\alpha = .82$) as well as overall (women: $\alpha = .93$, men: $\alpha = .93$).

4.4.4 Need Fulfillment

Need fulfillment has been utilized previously in research pertaining to infidelity (Lewandowski & Ackerman, 2006; Le & Agnew, 2001), so the Need Fulfillment Scale (NFS; Le & Agnew, 2001) was utilized in the current study. This measure is comprised of five items on a Likert-style scale from 0 (not fulfilled by my partner) to 6 (completely

fulfilled by my partner). This measure had high internal consistency (women: $\alpha = .93$, men: $\alpha = .91$).

4.4.5 Sexual and Relationship Satisfaction

As sexual and relationship satisfaction have previously been found to be predictors of infidelity (Mark & Haus, 2019), the current study included the two variables as moderators. In order to capture participant sexual and relationship satisfaction, the Global Measure of Sexual Satisfaction (GMSEX; Byers et al., 1998) and the Global Measure of Relationship Satisfaction (GMREL; Byers et al., 1998) were included. Both of these measures had high internal consistency among women and men (women: $\alpha = .97$, men: $\alpha = .97$).

4.5 Procedures

Participants were recruited via Ashley Madison®, and social media (primarily Twitter and Facebook). Participants were offered the chance to participate in a drawing for one of twenty-five \$20 Amazon gift cards. Once a participant expressed interest in the study, they were provided with a link to the Qualtrics survey, which took them to a digital consent form. Completing the information form and consent form lead the participant to the full questionnaire.

All measures were approved by the Institutional Review Board at the University of Kentucky.

4.6 Results

After data collection and cleaning, descriptive statistics were conducted by gender (Table 4.2). To determine the presence of significant gender differences, independent – samples t-tests were conducted for sexual fantasy subscales. The analyses indicated that there were significant gender differences in exploratory fantasies $t(1033) = -5.38, p < .01$ (women: $M = 1.92, SD = .76$; men: $M = 2.23, SD = .80$), intimate fantasies $t(1028) = -4.93, p < .01$ (women: $M = 3.29, SD = 1.03$; men: $M = 3.63, SD = .91$), and impersonal fantasies $t(1030) = -2.58, p < .05$ (women: $M = 2.48, SD = .80$; men: $M = 2.64, SD = .87$) such that men fantasized more frequently about these themes than women, but the reverse was true regarding sadomasochistic fantasy $t(1031) = 2.30, p < .05$ (women: $M = 2.00, SD = .86$; men: $M = 1.81, SD = .76$).

Bivariate correlations (Table 4.3) and a hierarchical multiple regression (Table 4.4) were run to determine if greater reported frequency of sexual fantasy contributed to intentions to engage in extradyadic sex, and if lower ratings on need fulfillment measures impacted infidelity intentions. As age, sexual satisfaction, and relationship satisfaction have all been found to impact infidelity in the past (Mark & Haus, 2019), they were included in the regression model as control variables. Due to significant gender differences in sexual fantasy, regressions were conducted separately for women and men.

Model one, predicting infidelity intentions, was significant for both women and men, with the covariates accounting for 36% of variance among women, and 8.6% of variance among men (women: $F(3, 184) = 34.64, p < .001$; men: $F(3, 502) = 15.7, p < .001$). In model two, after controlling for age, sexual satisfaction, and relationship satisfaction (Measured by the Global Measure of Relationship Satisfaction, or GMSEX,

and the Global Measure of Sexual Satisfaction, or GMREL; Byers et al., 1998), need fulfillment and sexual fantasy explained 8.5% of variance in infidelity intentions among women, and 2.6% of variance among men (women: $F(2, 182) = 13.98, p < .001$; men: $F(2, 500) = 7.46, p < .001$). Need fulfillment was a significant predictor of infidelity intentions for both women and men, such that lower rates of need fulfillment predicted higher infidelity intentions (women: $\beta = -.48, p < .001$; men: $\beta = -.22, p < .05$). Sexual fantasy was a significant predictor of infidelity intentions among men, such that more frequent sexual fantasy predicted higher infidelity intentions for men ($\beta = .08, p < .05$).

A hierarchical binary logistic regression (Table 4.5) was run to determine whether need fulfillment and specific types of sexual fantasy predicted infidelity engagement. In order to consider potential gender differences, this analysis was also split by participant gender. Model one controlled for age and sexual and relationship satisfaction. Model one explained 22.8% of variance among women, and 5.9% of variance among men (women: $\chi^2(3) = 37.55, p < .001$; men: $\chi^2(3) = 27.8, p < .001$). Model two explained 27.9% of variance among women, and 7.7% of variance among men (women: $\chi^2(8) = 46.93, p < .001$; men: $\chi^2(8) = 36.18, p < .001$). Exploratory fantasy was the only significant predictor of physical infidelity engagement and was only significant among women. For every one-unit increase in exploratory fantasy, the log odds of a woman having engaged in physical infidelity was .41. With every one-unit increase in sexual fantasy frequency, women were 89% less likely to engage in physical infidelity.

4.7 Discussion

The current study was conducted to assess the relationship between sexual fantasy, infidelity, and need fulfillment. Results indicated significant gender differences in sexual fantasy such that men had more frequent sexual fantasies than women in exploratory, intimate, and impersonal sexual fantasy categories, but women had more frequent sadomasochistic fantasies than men. Hierarchical regression indicated that lower need fulfillment scores predicted higher infidelity intention scores among both women and men, and that more frequent sexual fantasy predicted higher infidelity intentions among men. Therefore, women and men whose needs were not being met within their primary relationships, as well as men who frequently experienced sexual fantasy, were more likely to have intentions to engage in infidelity. Logistic regression indicated exploratory fantasy to be the only SFQ subscale predictive of engaging in physical infidelity, which was only significant for women.

The gender differences encountered in the current study regarding sexual fantasy frequency were consistent with previous research. Some studies have encountered similar findings whereby men fantasize more about themes related to exploratory or impersonal fantasies, and women fantasize more about submission (Joyal, 2017); another found that women were much more likely than men to fantasize about both giving and receiving pain (Lehmiller, 2018). As the SFQ sadomasochism subscale includes themes that are dominant and submissive, it is possible that women fantasize more about one or both of these themes. Therefore, it is possible that women are fantasizing about themes that either conflict or agree with socialized gender norms, or both. Some hypothesize that women's increased fantasizing about both dominant and submissive behaviors may be due to

gender roles whereby women are expected to be submissive, and men to be dominant, where giving and receiving pain can be an example of flipping the script and allowing women to enact their dominance (Lehmiller, 2018). Other studies indicate that BDSM practice reduces peoples' adherence to gender normative sexual behaviors, thereby some women are empowered by switching between dominant and submissive behaviors (Lammers & Imhoff, 2015). Thus, it is possible that sexual fantasies about sadomasochism operate under similar mechanisms, but due to the paucity of research on sexual fantasy, it is difficult to draw conclusions on what exactly these fantasies mean, and how they are affected by gender normative beliefs and relationships.

Previous research has found lower scores on need fulfillment to predict infidelity engagement (Le & Agnew, 2001; Lewandowski & Ackerman, 2006). With this in mind, it is unsurprising that lower levels of need fulfillment predicted higher levels of infidelity intentions. It is important to note here that while this was only significant among men, the Ashley Madison® sample was comprised with a majority of men, and the majority of women participants came from the general population sample (69.6% of men in the total sample engaged in infidelity compared to 48.8% of women in the total sample). Therefore, many of the men participants in this sample may have already had lower levels of need fulfillment than women participants, as they were more likely to be actively seeking to engage in infidelity due to the nature of this sample. Future studies should seek to elaborate on this finding by utilizing more representative samples.

The current study found more frequent sexual fantasy to be predictive of higher infidelity intentions among men. This may be due to several things, one of which could be the nature of Ashley Madison® users themselves. Sexual fantasy could be tied to

many of the other factors that influence infidelity engagement, such as desire, or personality traits such as sociosexuality or Machiavellianism (Mark & Haus, 2019).

While sexual fantasy frequency was influenced by gender, making this a predictor only among men, it is important to note again the composition of the sample as being majority men. Future studies should look to examine sexual fantasy with respect to a broad variety of factors, including those already widely studied in order to expand upon what little is known regarding this phenomenon.

Exploratory fantasy was the only type of sexual fantasy found to be predictive of a lower likelihood of engaging in physical infidelity, and was only significant among women. As exploratory fantasies included such things as partner-swapping, engaging in orgies, and same-sex sexual behavior, and all participants were in relationships, the majority of which were heterosexual, it is possible that these fantasies may have been just as fulfilling to women as engaging in extradyadic sex. Therefore, it is possible that exploratory fantasies may be those fantasies that allow women to explore different sexual behaviors within monogamous relationships. It should also be noted that the majority of the women participants in this sample came from the general population, and had lower rates of infidelity than women from the Ashley Madison® sample. As such, this finding may only be reflective of women who are less likely to engage in infidelity in the first place.

One interesting finding worth noting is the significance of relationship satisfaction in the regression analyses. While sexual and relationship satisfaction were not the primary foci of the current study, there has been significant research indicating that lower sexual and relationship satisfaction can contribute to infidelity engagement and intentions

(Mark & Haus, 2019). For this reason, the two were included in model one of both of the regression analyses as control variables. The results of the current study regarding relationship satisfaction are consistent with prior research, as it was a significant predictor for infidelity intentions and infidelity engagement. For both models, relationship satisfaction was significant – indicating that people with lower relationship satisfaction would be more likely to have high infidelity intentions, and also more likely to engage in physical infidelity. The latter was only true for men, but this gender difference should be considered within the context of the sample, in order to avoid overstating gender differences (Hyde, 2018). This is important, as the sample was majority men, and within that, the majority of the men participants in the current study were recruited from Ashley Madison®, and were more likely to have high infidelity intentions and infidelity engagement than the men from the general population sample.

As the current study was exploratory, and was guided by research questions, more research is needed in order to continue examining sexual fantasy, and the ways in which it potentially interacts with other sexual behaviors. For example, qualitative research could be conducted in order to determine what functions sexual fantasy serves for individuals, as well as to inform the ways their sexual fantasies interact with the variables from the current study, as well as many others. This and other studies could provide researchers with the information necessary for normalizing sexual fantasy and decreasing the research gap.

4.7.1 Limitations

Although this study had several strengths and filled important gaps in the current literature, no study is without limitations and findings should be considered within those.

As this data came from self-selected participants via snowball and convenience sampling, the sample is not representative. This sample was largely white, and heterosexual, and majority men, with higher rates of infidelity than a representative sample. The study design also presented a limitation, as it was cross-sectional in nature, and did not utilize dyadic data. The length of the SFQ also led to a high participant dropout rate. While there are many points on which to improve, this study presented an important contribution to research that future studies can build upon.

4.7.2 Practical Implications

The current study served to fill a gap in research regarding sexual fantasy and infidelity, and contribute to what little is known on the topic. By contributing to this body of research, the current study serves to destigmatize exploratory sexual fantasy, and promote a more comprehensive and inclusive view of the topic, as well as a more holistic approach to relationship health. This is important, as the scarcity of research surrounding sexual fantasy and other sexual behaviors can contribute to the stigma that exists around them (Joyal, 2017). This makes these behaviors less approachable for the people who engage in them or wish to do so, as well as serving to limit the extent to which they can be discussed within the contexts of their relationships. If exploratory sexual fantasy is made more accessible within research as well as within the general public, this sexual behavior as well as those that people fantasize about can be destigmatized, allowing people to move past internalized negativity in search of healthy and fulfilling sexual practices. The findings of the current study hold implications for many areas of practice.

There are many clinical implications regarding the findings of the current study. As women who experienced more frequent exploratory fantasy were less likely to engage

in physical infidelity, this could be a useful tool for the health of monogamous relationships. As such, clinical practitioners could discuss this as an alternative for women who are contemplating engaging in behaviors outside of the context of their relationship. Practitioners could also discuss different forms of consensual nonmonogamy as options for individuals whose needs are not being met within their primary or monogamous relationships. This could encourage communication within one's existing relationship, allowing for that partnership to be maintained, while other solutions to unfulfilled needs are considered. Most importantly, clinical practitioners should not shy away from discussing sexual fantasy with their clients in an effort to normalize their sexual behaviors, and avoid further stigmatizing topics that clients may already find difficult to discuss.

These findings also have many significant implications for health promotion efforts. As positive relationships with high levels of satisfaction directly contribute to the health of the individuals involved (Fincham & May, 2017), it is essential to center sexual fantasy, infidelity, and the needs of all parties involved within the context of a relationship in health promotion efforts in these areas. Infidelity can also contribute to the spread of sexually transmitted infections (or STIs), as there is a lower rate of condom use among those who engage in physical infidelity (Fincham & May, 2017). Therefore, exploratory fantasy and consensually non-monogamous relationships could reduce the spread of STIs, and improve the health of people within relationships in multiple ways. As infidelity can have many negative impacts on individuals' health, it is important to consider fantasy and consensual non-monogamy as healthy alternatives. This is something that should be embodied in every branch of health promotion efforts. Program

planning and education surrounding relationship health must include these approaches when working towards the sexual and relationship health of society. Policies around relationships and sexual health should be expanded in order to include every type of relationship, as well as diverse sexual behaviors, in order to move towards normalizing sexuality and making sexual health more accessible to everyone, not just hegemonic majorities. In order to improve sexual health and relationships for all, these sexual behaviors must be included.

Last but not least, these findings hold important implications for sexuality education. Within the United States, sexuality education is highly variable, and often questionable in terms of content, as it is left to each state to decide what is taught, and when it occurs (Hall et al., 2016). The state of sexuality education can be a dividing topic, and there is much disagreement on what should be included, and the age at which students should receive this education (Hall et al., 2016). Among the states that do mandate some form of sexuality education, healthy relationships are frequently included as a content area (Hall et al., 2016). As the findings of the current study offer much information regarding the topic of healthy relationships, sexual fantasy and consensually non-monogamous relationships should be included in this content area in order to provide truly comprehensive sexuality education. What people learn early on can serve to inform their sexual and relationship practices throughout the rest of their lives (Hall et al., 2016). Making this information available to them through their public-school sexuality education curriculum can help support sexual health throughout the lifespan.

4.8 Conclusion

While exploratory, the current study indicated that sexual fantasy and need fulfillment contribute to infidelity intentions, and exploratory sexual fantasy to contributed to decreasing women's physical infidelity engagement. This is particularly noteworthy due to the scarcity of research surrounding sexual fantasy, especially with respect to infidelity. This is highly important, as much of the existing research surrounding sexual fantasy stems from a perspective of pathology, thereby serving to make it less accessible still (Joyal, 2017). As this study indicates exploratory sexual fantasy may make some people less likely to engage in physical infidelity, it is of the utmost importance that these sexual fantasies are normalized and their role within relationships is recognized. This could help couples to use their exploratory sexual fantasies as a source of communication within romantic relationships, improving relationship health and communication, and ultimately assisting society in moving towards a more holistic and comprehensive view of sexuality.

Table 4.1 *Participant demographics*

	Women N = 252 (23.7%)	Men N = 810 (76.3%)	Total N = 1062 (100%)
Age	37.71 (13.24)	51.41 (11.74)	48.01 (13.5)
Sexual Identity			
Bisexual/Pansexual	47 (18.7%)	48 (5.9%)	95 (8.9%)
Gay/Lesbian	6 (2.4%)	14 (1.7%)	20 (1.8%)
Queer	8 (3.2%)	2 (.2%)	10 (.9%)
Heterosexual/Straight	182 (72.2%)	730 (90.1%)	912 (85.8%)
I'm not sure	4 (1.6%)	9 (1.1%)	13 (1.2%)
Other, please specify:	5 (2%)	7 (.9%)	12 (1.1%)
Relationship Status			
Seriously dating one person	35 (13.9%)	47 (5.8%)	82 (7.7%)
Seriously dating more than one person	8 (3.2%)	14 (1.7%)	22 (2%)
Long-term relationship with one person	179 (71%)	641 (79.1%)	820 (77.2%)
Long-term relationship with >one person	20 (7.9%)	60 (7.4%)	80 (7.5%)
Other, please specify:	9 (3.6%)	48 (5.9%)	57 (5.4%)
Education			
Some High School	1 (.4%)	3 (.3%)	4 (.4%)
High School Graduate or GED	13 (5.2%)	65 (8.0%)	78 (7.3%)
Some college/university or a 2yr	56 (22.2%)	218 (26.9%)	274 (25.8%)
College/University Graduate	90 (35.7%)	270 (33.3%)	360 (33.9%)
Some Graduate School	26 (10.3%)	63 (7.8%)	89 (8.4%)
Graduated with a Master's Degree	36 (14.3%)	120 (14.8%)	156 (14.7%)
Graduated with a Doctoral Degree	28 (11.1%)	60 (7.4%)	88 (8.3%)
Other, please specify:	2 (.8%)	12 (1.5%)	14 (1.3%)
Ethnicity			
American Indian or Alaska Native	6 (2.4%)	28 (3.5%)	34 (3.2%)
Asian or Asian American	6 (2.4%)	21 (2.6%)	27 (2.5%)
Black or African American	10 (4%)	39 (4.8%)	49 (4.6%)
Native Hawaiian or OPI	1 (.4%)		1 (.09%)
White or Caucasian	212 (84.1%)	664 (82%)	876 (82.5%)
Multiracial, please specify:	17 (6.7%)	57 (7%)	74 (7%)
No response		1 (.1%)	1 (.09%)
Religion			
Catholic	30 (11.9%)	112 (13.8%)	142 (13.4%)
Christian	55 (21.8%)	216 (26.7%)	271 (25.5%)
Hindu	1 (.4%)	6 (.7%)	7 (.6%)
Jewish	13 (5.2%)	23 (2.8%)	36 (3.4%)
Mormon/Latter Day Saints		15 (1.9%)	15 (1.4%)
Muslim/Islam	3 (1.2%)	3 (.4%)	6 (.6%)
Protestant (Baptist, Lutheran, etc.)	18 (7.1%)	85 (10.5%)	103 (9.7%)
I don't identify with any specific religion	105 (41.7%)	260 (32.1%)	365 (34.4%)
Other, please specify:	26 (10.3%)	89 (11%)	115 (10.8%)

No response	1 (.4%)	1 (.1%)	2 (.2%)
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Table 4.2 *Mean and standard deviation for variables of interest by gender*

	Women M(SD)	Men M(SD)	Total M(SD)
Need Fulfillment	24.59 (8.86)	17.72 (8.16)	21.15 (8.51)
Infidelity Intentions	20.26 (10.96)	29.33 (10.66)	24.79 (10.81)
Exploratory Fantasies	1.92 (.76)	2.23 (.80)	2.07 (.78)
Intimate Fantasies	3.29 (1.03)	3.63 (.91)	3.46 (.97)
Impersonal Fantasies	2.48 (.80)	2.64 (.87)	2.56 (.84)
Sadomasochistic Fantasies	2.00 (.86)	1.81 (.76)	1.90 (1.62)
Overall Sexual Fantasy Score	2.43 (.76)	2.61 (.71)	2.52 (1.47)

Table 4.3 *Bivariate correlations for the variables of interest*

Women								
Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Need Fulfillment	24.59	8.87						
2. Infidelity Intentions	20.26	10.96	-.62**					
3. Exploratory Fantasies	1.92	.760	-.086	.152*				
4. Intimate Fantasies	3.29	1.03	-.111	.171**	.594**			
5. Impersonal Fantasies	2.48	.808	-.055	.152*	.712**	.811**		
6. Sadomasochistic Fantasies	2.00	.869	-.001	.088	.154*	.64**	.66**	
7. Total Sexual Fantasy Score	2.43	.763	-.07	.16*	.82**	.89**	.91**	.85**
Men								
Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Need Fulfillment	17.72	8.168						
2. Infidelity Intentions	29.33	10.66	-.31**					
3. Exploratory Fantasies	2.23	.808	.098*	.041				
4. Intimate Fantasies	3.63	.91	.038	.078	.628**			
5. Impersonal Fantasies	2.64	.87	.064	.048	.732**	.776**		
6. Sadomasochistic Fantasies	1.86	.766	.171**	.008	.588**	.523**	.582**	
7. Total Sexual Fantasy Score	2.61	.714	.11**	.04	.85**	.87**	.91**	.77**

M = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Table 4.4 *Multivariate analyses for infidelity intentions*

Variable	Women			Men		
	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	β	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	β
Model 1						
Constant	25.05	6.43	.00	32.49	12.61	.00
Age	.29	-3.23	.35**	.10	2.65	.11*
Sexual Satisfaction	-.11	-.90	-.08	-.12	-1.65	-.10
Relationship Satisfaction	-.44	-3.23	-.30*	-.22	-2.73	-.17*
Model 2						
Constant	27.18	6.36	.00	29.70	9.60	.00
Age	.20	3.97	.25**	.09	2.35	.10*
Sexual Satisfaction	.07	.62	.05	-.03	-4.60	-.03
Relationship Satisfaction	-.10	-.74	-.07	-.08	-.88	-.06
Sexual Fantasy	.84	1.06	.06	1.3	2.02	.08*
Need Fulfillment	-.61	-5.06	-.48**	-.30	-3.40	-.22 *

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

Table 4.5 *Multivariate analyses for physical infidelity engagement*

Variable	Women				Men			
	<i>B</i>	<i>SEb</i>	<i>Wald</i>	Exp (<i>B</i>)	<i>B</i>	<i>SEb</i>	<i>Wald</i>	Exp (<i>B</i>)
Model 1								
Constant	2.18	.92	5.56*	8.84	.36	.49	.55	1.44
Age	-.07	.01	24.96**	.93	-.03	.01	.11**	.97
GMSEX	.03	.03	.80	1.02	-.12	-1.65	-.10	1.00
GMREL	-.01	.03	.14	.99	-.22	-2.73	-.17*	1.01
Model 2								
Constant	2.94	1.11	6.93*	18.99	1.26	.62	4.12*	3.51
Age	-.07	.01	20.58**	.93	-.04	.01	21.51**	.96
GMSEX	.03	.33	.59	1.03	.01	.01	.42	1.01
GMREL	-.01	.04	.10	.98	.01	.02	.30	1.01
Need Fulfillment	.00	.03	.00	1.00	.01	.02	.14	1.01
SFQ Exploratory	-.89	.34	6.90**	.41	-.10	.17	.22	.91
SFQ Intimate	.06	.28	.05	1.06	-.14	.15	.81	.87
SFQ Impersonal	.18	.41	.20	1.20	.12	.19	.42	1.13
SFQ SM	.16	.27	.38	1.18	-.25	.16	2.55	.78

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

CHAPTER 5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

5.1 Results

After data collection and cleaning, descriptive statistics were conducted by gender (Table 5.1). To determine the presence of significant gender differences, independent – samples t-tests were conducted for sexual fantasy subscales. The analyses indicated that there were significant gender differences in exploratory fantasies $t(1033) = -5.38, p < .01$ (women: $M = 1.92, SD = .76$; men: $M = 2.23, SD = .80$), intimate fantasies $t(1028) = -4.93, p < .01$ (women: $M = 3.29, SD = 1.03$; men: $M = 3.63, SD = .91$), and impersonal fantasies $t(1030) = -2.58, p < .05$ (women: $M = 2.48, SD = .80$; men: $M = 2.64, SD = .87$) such that men fantasized more frequently about these themes than women, but the reverse was true regarding sadomasochistic fantasy $t(1031) = 2.30, p < .05$ (women: $M = 2.00, SD = .86$; men: $M = 1.81, SD = .76$).

Table 5.1 *Mean and standard deviation for variables of interest by gender*

	Women M(SD)	Men M(SD)	Total M(SD)
Need Fulfillment	24.59 (8.86)	17.72 (8.16)	21.15 (8.51)
Infidelity Intentions	20.26 (10.96)	29.33 (10.66)	24.79 (10.81)
Exploratory Fantasies	1.92 (.76)	2.23 (.80)	2.07 (.78)
Intimate Fantasies	3.29 (1.03)	3.63 (.91)	3.46 (.97)
Impersonal Fantasies	2.48 (.80)	2.64 (.87)	2.56 (.84)
Sadomasochistic Fantasies	2.00 (.86)	1.81 (.76)	1.90 (1.62)
Overall Sexual Fantasy Score	2.43 (.76)	2.61 (.71)	2.52 (1.47)

Bivariate correlations (Table 5.2) and a hierarchical multiple regression (Table 5.3) were run to determine if greater reported frequency of sexual fantasy contributed to intentions to engage in extradyadic sex, and if lower ratings on need fulfillment measures impacted infidelity intentions. As age, sexual satisfaction, and relationship satisfaction

have all been found to impact infidelity in the past (Mark & Haus, 2019), they were included in the regression model as control variables. These were measured through the Global Measure of Relationship Satisfaction (GMREL; Byers et al., 1998), and the Global Measure of Sexual Satisfaction (GMSEX; Byers et al., 1998). Due to significant gender differences in sexual fantasy, regressions were conducted separately for women and men.

Model one, predicting infidelity intentions, was significant for both women and men, with the covariates accounting for 36% of variance among women, and 8.6% of variance among men (women: $F(3, 184) = 34.64, p < .001$; men: $F(3, 502) = 15.7, p < .001$). In model two, after controlling for age, sexual satisfaction, and relationship satisfaction, need fulfillment and sexual fantasy explained 8.5% of variance in infidelity intentions among women, and 2.6% of variance among men (women: $F(2, 182) = 13.98, p < .001$; men: $F(2, 500) = 7.46, p < .001$). Need fulfillment was a significant predictor of infidelity intentions for both women and men, such that lower rates of need fulfillment predicted higher infidelity intentions (women: $\beta = -.48, p < .001$; men: $\beta = -.22, p < .05$). Sexual fantasy was a significant predictor of infidelity intentions among men, such that more frequent sexual fantasy predicted higher infidelity intentions for men ($\beta = .08, p < .05$).

Table 5.2 *Bivariate correlations for the variables of interest*

Women								
Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. Need Fulfillment	24.59	8.87						
9. Infidelity Intentions	20.26	10.96	-.62**					
10. Exploratory Fantasies	1.92	.760	-.086	.152*				
11. Intimate Fantasies	3.29	1.03	-.111	.171**	.594**			
12. Impersonal Fantasies	2.48	.808	-.055	.152*	.712**	.811**		
13. Sadomasochistic Fantasies	2.00	.869	-.001	.088	.154*	.64**	.66**	
14. Total Sexual Fantasy Score	2.43	.763	-.07	.16*	.82**	.89**	.91**	.85**
Men								
Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. Need Fulfillment	17.72	8.168						
9. Infidelity Intentions	29.33	10.66	-.31**					
10. Exploratory Fantasies	2.23	.808	.098*	.041				
11. Intimate Fantasies	3.63	.91	.038	.078	.628**			
12. Impersonal Fantasies	2.64	.87	.064	.048	.732**	.776**		
13. Sadomasochistic Fantasies	1.86	.766	.171**	.008	.588**	.523**	.582**	
14. Total Sexual Fantasy Score	2.61	.714	.11**	.04	.85**	.87**	.91**	.77**

M = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Table 5.3 *Multivariate analyses for infidelity intentions*

Variable	Women			Men		
	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	β	<i>B</i>	<i>t</i>	β
Model 1						
Constant	25.05	6.43	.00	32.49	12.61	.00
Age	.29	-3.23	.35**	.10	2.65	.11*
Sexual Satisfaction	-.11	-.90	-.08	-.12	-1.65	-.10
Relationship Satisfaction	-.44	-3.23	-.30*	-.22	-2.73	-.17*
Model 2						
Constant	27.18	6.36	.00	29.70	9.60	.00
Age	.20	3.97	.25**	.09	2.35	.10*
Sexual Satisfaction	.07	.62	.05	-.03	-4.60	-.03
Relationship Satisfaction	-.10	-.74	-.07	-.08	-.88	-.06
Sexual Fantasy	.84	1.06	.06	1.3	2.02	.08*
Need Fulfillment	-.61	-5.06	-.48**	-.30	-3.40	-.22 *

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

A hierarchical binary logistic regression (Table 5.4) was run to determine whether need fulfillment and specific types of sexual fantasy predicted infidelity engagement. In order to consider potential gender differences, this analysis was also split by participant gender. Model one controlled for age and sexual and relationship satisfaction. Model one explained 22.8% of variance among women, and 5.9% of variance among men (women: $\chi^2(3) = 37.55, p < .001$; men: $\chi^2(3) = 27.8, p < .001$). Model two explained 27.9% of variance among women, and 7.7% of variance among men (women: $\chi^2(8) = 46.93, p < .001$; men: $\chi^2(8) = 36.18, p < .001$). Exploratory fantasy was the only significant predictor of physical infidelity engagement, and was only significant among women. For every one-unit increase in exploratory fantasy, the log odds of a woman having engaged in physical infidelity was .41. With every one-unit increase in sexual fantasy frequency, women were 89% less likely to engage in physical infidelity.

Table 5.4 *Multivariate analyses for physical infidelity engagement*

Variable	Women				Men			
	<i>B</i>	<i>SEb</i>	<i>Wald</i>	Exp (<i>B</i>)	<i>B</i>	<i>SEb</i>	<i>Wald</i>	Exp (<i>B</i>)
Model 1								
Constant	2.18	.92	5.56*	8.84	.36	.49	.55	1.44
Age	-.07	.01	24.96**	.93	-.03	.01	.11**	.97
GMSEX	.03	.03	.80	1.02	-.12	-1.65	-.10	1.00
GMREL	-.01	.03	.14	.99	-.22	-2.73	-.17*	1.01
Model 2								
Constant	2.94	1.11	6.93*	18.99	1.26	.62	4.12*	3.51
Age	-.07	.01	20.58**	.93	-.04	.01	21.51**	.96
GMSEX	.03	.33	.59	1.03	.01	.01	.42	1.01
GMREL	-.01	.04	.10	.98	.01	.02	.30	1.01
Need Fulfillment	.00	.03	.00	1.00	.01	.02	.14	1.01
SFQ Exploratory	-.89	.34	6.90**	.41	-.10	.17	.22	.91
SFQ Intimate	.06	.28	.05	1.06	-.14	.15	.81	.87
SFQ Impersonal	.18	.41	.20	1.20	.12	.19	.42	1.13
SFQ SM	.16	.27	.38	1.18	-.25	.16	2.55	.78

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

5.2 Discussion

The current thesis was conducted to assess the relationship between sexual fantasy, infidelity, and need fulfillment. Results indicated significant gender differences in sexual fantasy such that men had more frequent sexual fantasies than women in exploratory, intimate, and impersonal sexual fantasy categories, but women had more frequent sadomasochistic fantasies than men. Hierarchical regression indicated that lower need fulfillment scores predicted higher infidelity intention scores among both women and men, and that more frequent sexual fantasy predicted higher infidelity intentions among men. Therefore, women and men whose needs were not being met within their primary relationships, as well as men who frequently experienced sexual fantasy, were more likely to have intentions to engage in infidelity. Logistic regression indicated

exploratory fantasy to be the only SFQ subscale predictive of engaging in physical infidelity, which was only significant for women.

The gender differences encountered in the current thesis regarding sexual fantasy frequency were consistent with previous research. Some studies have encountered similar findings whereby men fantasize more about themes related to exploratory or impersonal fantasies, and women fantasize more about submission (Joyal, 2017); another found that women were much more likely than men to fantasize about both giving and receiving pain (Lehmiller, 2018). As the SFQ sadomasochism subscale includes themes that are dominant and submissive, it is possible that women fantasize more about one or both of these themes. Therefore, it is possible that women are fantasizing about themes that either conflict or agree with socialized gender norms, or both. Some hypothesize that women's increased fantasizing about both dominant and submissive behaviors may be due to gender roles whereby women are expected to be submissive, and men to be dominant, where giving and receiving pain can be an example of flipping the script and allowing women to enact their dominance (Lehmiller, 2018). Other studies indicate that BDSM practice reduces peoples' adherence to gender normative sexual behaviors, thereby some women are empowered by switching between dominant and submissive behaviors (Lammers & Imhoff, 2015). Due to increased attention on BDSM through the popularity of the *Fifty Shades of Grey* series, and other forms of media, it is also possible these practices are becoming more acceptable (Deller & Smith, 2013). Around 46% of individuals report engaging in BDSM activities such as bondage, spanking, or being blindfolded at least once in their lives, and contemporary interest in these practices are becoming more mainstream (De Neef et al., 2019). Thus, it is possible that sexual

fantasies about sadomasochism are operating under similar mechanisms, but due to the paucity of research on sexual fantasy, it is difficult to draw conclusions on what exactly these fantasies mean, and how they are affected by gender normative beliefs and relationships.

Previous research has found lower scores on need fulfillment to predict infidelity engagement (Le & Agnew, 2001; Lewandowski & Ackerman, 2006). With this in mind, it is unsurprising that lower levels of need fulfillment predicted higher levels of infidelity intentions. It is important to note here that while this was only significant among men, the Ashley Madison® sample was comprised with a majority of men, and the majority of women participants came from the general population sample (69.6% of men in the total sample engaged in infidelity compared to 48.8% of women in the total sample). Therefore, many of the men participants in this sample may have already had lower levels of need fulfillment than women participants, as they were more likely to be actively seeking to engage in infidelity due to the nature of this sample. Future studies should seek to elaborate on this finding by utilizing more representative samples.

The current thesis found more frequent sexual fantasy to be predictive of higher infidelity intentions among men. This may be due to several things, one of which could be the nature of Ashley Madison® users themselves. Sexual fantasy could be tied to many of the other factors that influence infidelity engagement, such as desire, or personality traits such as sociosexuality or Machiavellianism (Mark & Haus, 2019). While sexual fantasy frequency was influenced by gender, making this a predictor only among men, it is important to note again the composition of the sample as being majority men. Future studies should look to examine sexual fantasy with respect to a broad variety

of factors, including those already widely studied in order to expand upon what little is known regarding this phenomenon.

Exploratory fantasy was the only type of sexual fantasy found to be predictive of a lower likelihood of engaging in physical infidelity, and was only significant among women. As exploratory fantasies included such things as partner-swapping, engaging in orgies, and same-sex sexual behavior, and all participants were in relationships, the majority of which were heterosexual, it is possible that these fantasies may have been just as fulfilling to women as engaging in extradyadic sex. Therefore, it is possible that exploratory fantasies may be those fantasies that allow women to explore different sexual behaviors within monogamous relationships. It should also be noted that the majority of the women participants in this sample came from the general population, and had lower rates of infidelity than women from the Ashley Madison® sample. As such, this finding may only be reflective of women who are less likely to engage in infidelity in the first place.

One interesting finding worth noting is the significance of relationship satisfaction in the regression analyses. While sexual and relationship satisfaction were not the primary foci of the current thesis, there has been significant research indicating that lower sexual and relationship satisfaction can contribute to infidelity engagement and intentions (Mark & Haus, 2019). For this reason, the two were included in model one of both of the regression analyses as control variables. The results of the current thesis regarding relationship satisfaction are consistent with prior research, as it was a significant predictor for infidelity intentions and infidelity engagement. For both models, relationship satisfaction was significant – indicating that people with lower relationship

satisfaction would be more likely to have high infidelity intentions, and also more likely to engage in physical infidelity. The latter was only true for men, but this gender difference should be considered within the context of the sample, in order to avoid overstating gender differences (Hyde, 2018). This is important, as the sample was majority men, and within that, the majority of the men participants in the current thesis were recruited from Ashley Madison®, and were more likely to have high infidelity intentions and infidelity engagement than the men from the general population sample.

As the current study was exploratory, and was guided by research questions, more research is needed in order to continue examining sexual fantasy, and the ways in which it potentially interacts with other sexual behaviors. For example, qualitative research could be conducted in order to determine what functions sexual fantasy serves for individuals, as well as to inform the ways their sexual fantasies interact with the variables from the current study, as well as many others. This and other studies could provide researchers with the information necessary for normalizing sexual fantasy, and decreasing the research gap.

5.3 Limitations

Although this thesis had several strengths and filled important gaps in the current literature, no study is without limitations and findings should be considered within those. All of the analyses were separated by gender in order to examine potential gender differences, and there was an insufficient number of nonbinary or genderqueer participants for analysis. As Ashley Madison® has more men users than women users, the sample included many more men than women. Additionally, the sample was largely

white and heterosexual. Future studies should seek to incorporate diverse samples in order to accurately assess sexual fantasy among individuals from different races and ethnicities, as well as individuals with diverse sexual orientations and gender identities, especially considering the extent to which culture can influence sexuality (Mark & Haus, 2019).

Another limitation is the sampling methods that were relied upon. Snowball sampling was utilized to collect the general sample, and convenience sampling was used to collect the sample from Ashley Madison®. These sampling methods did not allow for a representative sample to be taken, nor for a true comparison to be made between groups, as members of both groups had and had not engaged in sexual or emotional infidelity. As many participants were from Ashley Madison®, it is also likely that infidelity intentions were higher for this sample than for other groups. Future studies should seek to utilize different sampling methods in order to ensure for more generalizability.

The study design also presented a limitation, as it was cross-sectional in nature, and did not utilize dyadic data. Therefore, in future research, different methodological designs should be integrated in order to better assess the variety of different ways that sexual fantasy could potentially interact with other behaviors and aspects within relationships. As so little research exists regarding sexual fantasy (Joyal, 2017; Lehmler, 2018), studies like these could be instrumental to our understanding of the topic.

The measures used within the current thesis also presented limitations. As the Sexual Fantasy Questionnaire (Wilson, 2010; Wilson, 1988) is quite long, many participants dropped out of the study when they reached this measure, leading to the high

number of participants removed during data cleaning. By increasing the amount of research done on sexual fantasy, shorter measures of sexual fantasy could be created, which would also help future researchers include this behavior in their studies.

5.4 Practical Implications

The current thesis served to fill a gap in research regarding sexual fantasy and infidelity, and contribute to what little is known on the topic. By contributing to this body of research, the current thesis serves to destigmatize sexual fantasy, and promote a more comprehensive and inclusive view of the topic, as well as a more holistic approach to relationship health. This is important, as the scarcity of research surrounding sexual fantasy and other sexual behaviors can contribute to the stigma that exists around them (Joyal, 2017). This makes these behaviors less approachable for the people who engage in them or wish to do so, as well as serving to limit the extent to which they can be discussed within the contexts of their relationships. If sexual fantasy is made more accessible within research as well as within the general public, this sexual behavior as well as those that people fantasize about can be destigmatized, allowing people to move past internalized negativity in search of healthy and fulfilling sexual practices. The findings of the current thesis hold implications for many areas of practice.

There are many clinical implications regarding the findings of the current thesis. As women who experienced more frequent exploratory fantasy were less likely to engage in physical infidelity, this could be a useful tool for the health of monogamous relationships. As such, clinical practitioners could discuss this as an alternative for women who are contemplating engaging in behaviors outside of the context of their

relationship. Practitioners could also discuss different forms of consensual nonmonogamy as options for individuals whose needs are not being met within their primary or monogamous relationships. This could encourage communication within one's existing relationship, allowing for that partnership to be maintained, while other healthy solutions to unfulfilled needs are considered. Most importantly, clinical practitioners should not shy away from discussing sexual fantasy with their clients in an effort to normalize their sexual behaviors, and avoid further stigmatizing topics that clients may already find difficult to discuss.

These findings also have many significant implications for health promotion efforts. As positive relationships with high levels of satisfaction directly contribute to the health of the individuals involved (Fincham & May, 2017), it is essential to center sexual fantasy, infidelity, and the needs of all parties involved within the context of a relationship in health promotion efforts in these areas. Infidelity can also contribute to the spread of sexually transmitted infections (or STIs), as there is a lower rate of condom use among those who engage in physical infidelity (Fincham & May, 2017). Therefore, fantasy and consensually non-monogamous relationships could reduce the spread of STIs, and improve the health of people within relationships in multiple ways. As infidelity can have many negative impacts on individuals' health, it is important to consider fantasy and consensual non-monogamy as healthy alternatives. This is something that should be embodied in every branch of health promotion efforts. Program planning and education surrounding relationship health must include these approaches when working towards the sexual and relationship health of society. Policies around relationships and sexual health should be expanded in order to include every type of

relationship, as well as diverse sexual behaviors, in order to move towards normalizing sexuality and making sexual health more accessible to everyone, not just hegemonic majorities. In order to improve sexual health and relationships for all, these sexual behaviors must be included.

Last but not least, these findings hold important implications for sexuality education. Within the United States, sexuality education is highly variable, and often questionable in terms of content, as it is left to each state to decide what is taught, and when it occurs (Hall et al., 2016). The state of sexuality education can be a dividing topic, and there is much disagreement on what should be included, and the age at which students should receive this education (Hall et al., 2016). Among the states that do mandate some form of sexuality education, healthy relationships are frequently included as a content area (Hall et al., 2016). As the findings of the current thesis offer much information regarding the topic of healthy relationships, sexual fantasy and consensually non-monogamous relationships should be included in this content area in order to provide truly comprehensive sexuality education. What people learn early on can serve to inform their sexual and relationship practices throughout the rest of their lives (Hall et al., 2016). Making this information available to them through their public-school sexuality education curriculum can help support sexual health throughout the lifespan.

CHAPTER 6. CONCLUSION

The purpose of the current thesis was to investigate the role of sexual fantasy and need fulfillment in infidelity engagement. To do so, adults were recruited from social media and Ashley Madison®, and administered measures that allowed for the examination of these variables. While exploratory, the current thesis indicated that sexual fantasy and need fulfillment contribute to infidelity intentions, and exploratory sexual fantasy to contributed to decreasing women's physical infidelity engagement. This is particularly noteworthy due to the scarcity of research surrounding sexual fantasy, especially with respect to infidelity. The current thesis is evidence that sexual fantasy may be important to consider with respect to romantic relationships and sexual health, and should serve to inform future research on the topic, as well as policies, programs, education, and practices that center relationships and sexual health.

By continuing to study sexual fantasy, researchers could contribute much to what is known about the subject, making it a more normalized behavior. This is highly important, as much of the existing research surrounding sexual fantasy stems from a perspective of pathology, thereby serving to make it less accessible still (Joyal, 2017). Reducing the stigma around sexual fantasy would also serve to reduce the pathologizing perspective that is so often seen in research on this behavior. As this study indicates sexual fantasy may make some people less likely to engage in physical infidelity, it is of the utmost importance that sexual fantasies are normalized and their role within relationships is recognized. This could help couples to use their sexual fantasies as a source of communication within romantic relationships, improving relationship health

and communication, and assisting society in moving towards a more holistic and comprehensive view of sexuality.

While the current thesis had a number of limitations, it allows for a more nuanced view of sexual fantasy, and the ways in which it can influence partnered relationships. As the current thesis was cross-sectional in nature, there are many opportunities for future studies to improve the amount of information known about sexual fantasy's impacts on different areas of sexual health through different research designs. Future research on sexual fantasy should utilize a variety of methodological approaches in order to elaborate on these findings. Prospective dyadic data would be useful in determining the interpersonal influence of sexual fantasy within paired relationships, for example, and longitudinal studies could be particularly helpful in determining how sexual fantasies may or may not change with age.

Including sexual fantasy when approaching different topics sexual health could hold numerous benefits for sexual health promotion efforts. As this is one of the most common sexual behaviors (Lehmiller, 2018), research on sexual fantasy could inform our understanding of healthy sexuality, and highlight different strategies to support the sexual health needs of people throughout their lives. Sexuality is a highly stigmatized area, leading many within health-related fields to avoid the discussion or implementation of strategies ensuring sexual health equity, which contributes to disparities in sexual health. Therefore, it is crucial that sexual fantasy be considered within the contexts of solitary and partnered behaviors, and through the lens of normalizing perspectives towards sex and sexuality in order to promote equity in sexual health.

It is imperative that research on these topics continues to be conducted and applied to everyday life. This allows for the knowledge that is generated to support the people from which it is gathered, contributing to the forward movement of humankind. The knowledge and support surrounding sexual fantasy and sexual health are no exception to this. In order to contribute to social change, and support the diverse sexual health needs and experiences that real people have, we must first accept and recognize that human beings are unique. This individuality is reflected in the broad spectrum of sexual behaviors and experiences present within our society, of which some have been outlined in the current thesis.

APPENDIX 1. DEMOGRAPHICS

Demographics Questionnaire

Please provide a response for the following questions. All information provided will be kept confidential and will be used only for the purposes of this study.

1. Age: _____ (in # of years)

2. What is your gender identity?
 - a. Woman
 - b. Man
 - c. Genderfluid/genderqueer/gender non-binary
 - d. Other (please specify): _____

3. Does your gender match the sex you were assigned at birth?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No, I'm transgender
 - c. I'm not sure

4. What is the highest level of education you have completed?
 - a. ___ Some high school
 - b. ___ Graduated high school or equivalent
 - c. ___ Some college/university
 - d. ___ Graduated college/university
 - e. ___ Some post graduate training
 - f. ___ Graduated with a Master's degree
 - g. ___ Graduated with a Doctoral degree (PhD, JD, MD, etc.)
 - h. ___ Other: please specify: _____

5. Which of the following do you feel best describes your race or ethnicity?
 - a. American/Canadian Indian or Alaska Native
 - b. Asian or Asian-American/Canadian
 - c. Black or African-American
 - d. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - e. White or Caucasian
 - f. Multiracial, please specify: _____
 - g. No response

6. Which of the following best describes the religion with which you identify, if any?
 - a. Catholic
 - b. Christian

- c. Hindu
- d. Jehovah's Witness
- e. Jewish
- f. Mormon/Latter Day Saints
- g. Muslim/Islam
- h. Protestant (Baptist, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Episcopalian, Methodist)
- i. I don't identify with any specific religion
- j. Other, please specify: _____
- k. No response

7. During the past 12 months, how often did you typically attend religious or spiritual services?

- a. Not at all
- b. A few times a year
- c. About once a month
- d. Weekly
- e. More than once a week
- f. No response

8. Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?

- a. _____ Bisexual or Pansexual
- b. _____ Gay or Lesbian
- c. _____ Queer
- d. _____ Heterosexual or Straight
- e. _____ I'm not sure
- f. _____ Other, please specify: _____

9. Please select the option that best describes your sexual behavioral experience:

Entirely with the same sex 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Entirely with the

opposite sex

10. Please select the option that best describes your current feelings of sexual attraction:

Entirely to the same sex 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Entirely to the opposite

sex

11. What is your current relationship status?

- a. Single, not dating anyone
- b. Single, casually dating one or more people
- c. Seriously dating one person
- d. Seriously dating more than one person
- e. In a long-term relationship with one person

- f. In a long-term relationship with more than one person
 - g. Other (please specify): _____
12. What is your marital status?
- a. Single
 - b. Engaged
 - c. Married
 - d. Separated
 - e. Divorced
 - f. Widowed
 - g. Other: _____
13. If you are currently in a relationship, are you in a monogamous relationship?
- a. Yes, I am in a monogamous relationship
 - b. No, I am in a consensually non-monogamous/open/polyamorous) relationship
 - c. No, I am not monogamous, but my partner doesn't know
14. If you are currently in a relationship, what is your partner's gender identity?
- a. I am not in a relationship
 - b. Man
 - c. Woman
 - d. Genderfluid/genderqueer/gender non-binary
 - e. Other (please specify): _____
15. I interacted sexually with someone other than my current partner on the Internet (had chat room sex, web cam sex, etc.)
- a. Done in past 30 days (past month)
 - b. Done in past 90 days (past 3 months)
 - c. Done in past year
 - d. Done more than a year ago
 - e. Never done this since I've been with my current partner
 - f. No response
16. I had sex (e.g., vaginal sex, anal sex, oral sex) with someone other than my current partner.
- a. Done in past 30 days (past month)
 - b. Done in past 90 days (past 3 months)
 - c. Done in past year
 - d. Done more than a year ago
 - e. Never done this since I've been with my current partner
 - f. No response

17. I had an emotional relationship with someone other than my current partner.

- a. Done in past 30 days (past month)
- b. Done in past 90 days (past 3 months)
- c. Done in past year
- d. Done more than a year ago
- e. Never done this since I've been with my current partner
- f. No response

18. Have you ever engaged in sexual infidelity on any partner in your life?

- a. Yes
 - i. Please expand: _____[open ended]
- b. No

19. Have you ever engaged in emotional infidelity on any partner in your life?

- a. Yes
 - i. Please expand: _____[open ended]
- b. No

APPENDIX 2. INFIDELITY INTENTIONS

Infidelity Intentions Scale

Within the next 6 months, which of the following do you intend to engage in with someone other than your regular partner?

1	2	3	4	5	6
	7				

Certainly

Certainly

Not

Yes

_____ Casual Friendship

_____ Steady Friendship

_____ Close Friendship

_____ Love Relationship

_____ Deep Love Relationship

_____ Kissing

_____ Hugging

_____ Caressing or petting

_____ Sexual intimacy without intercourse

_____ Sexual intercourse

_____ Kissing a friend

_____ Hugging a friend

_____ Having sexual intimacy with a friend without having sexual intercourse

_____ Having a deep love relationship with sexual intercourse

APPENDIX 3. SFQ

Sexual Fantasy Questionnaire

Please indicate how often you fantasize about the themes below at various times, how often you do them, and how often you would like to do them if given the opportunity

0 **1** **2** **3** **4** **5**
 Never Seldom Occasionally Sometimes Often Regularly

	Daytime fantasies	Fantasies during intercourse or masturbation	Dreams while asleep	Have done in reality	Would like to do in reality
1. Having sexual intercourse out of doors in a romantic setting (e.g. field of flowers, beach at night)					
2. Having intercourse with a loved partner					
3. Intercourse with someone you know but have not had sex with					
4. Intercourse with an anonymous stranger					
5. Sex with two other people					
6. Participating in an orgy					
7. Being forced to do something					
8. Forcing someone to do something					
9. Same-sex sexual behavior					
10. Receiving oral sex					
11. Giving oral sex					
12. Watching others have sex					
13. Sex with an animal					
14. Whipping or spanking someone					

15. Being whipped or spanked					
16. Taking someone's clothes off					
17. Having your clothes taken off					
18. Having sex somewhere other than the bedroom					
19. Being excited by material or clothing (e.g. rubber, leather, underwear)					
20. Hurting a partner					
21. Being hurt by a partner					
22. Partner-swapping					
23. Being aroused by watching someone urinate					
24. Being tied up					
25. Tying someone up					
26. Having incestuous sexual relationships					
27. Exposing yourself					
28. Being promiscuous					
29 Having sex with someone much younger than yourself					
30. Having sex with someone much older than yourself					
31. Being much sought after by the opposite sex					
32. Being seduced as an "innocent"					
33. Seducing an "innocent"					
34. Being embarrassed by failure of sexual performance					
35. Using objects for stimulation (e.g. vibrators, candles)					

36. Being masturbated to orgasm by a partner					
37. Looking at obscene pictures or films					
38. Kissing Passionately					

Please provide the number of the fantasy you find most exciting from the list: _____

The number most exciting in reality: _____

Do you have a favorite fantasy that we have omitted? Describe briefly: _____

APPENDIX 4. NEED-FULFILLMENT MEASURE

Need-Fulfillment Based Fantasy Fulfillment Measure

Think about the fantasies you have within your current romantic relationship. Please indicate the extent to which each need is fulfilled by your partner.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Not at Completely all Fulfilled			Somewhat Fulfilled			

_____ Intimacy fantasies (These fantasies are related to feeling close with your partner)

_____ Companionship fantasies (These fantasies are related to feeling as though you have a friend and companion in your partner)

_____ Sexual fantasies (These fantasies are feeling as though your sexual needs, preferences and desires are fulfilled and respected)

_____ Security fantasies (These fantasies are related to feeling as though you have a relationship that you can count on)

_____ Emotional involvement fantasies (These fantasies are related to feeling that your emotions are understood, valued and respected)

APPENDIX 5. GMSEX

Global Measure of Sexual Satisfaction

For each of the following questions, select the response that best reflects your experiences.

Overall, how would you describe your sexual relationship with your partner?

Very bad

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Very good

Very unpleasant

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Very pleasant

Very negative

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Very positive

Very unsatisfying

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Very satisfying

Worthless

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Very valuable

APPENDIX 6. GMREL

Global Measure of Relationship Satisfaction

For each of the following questions, select the response that best reflects your experiences.

Overall, how would you describe your relationship with your partner?

Very bad Very good

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Very unpleasant Very pleasant

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Very negative Very positive

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Very unsatisfying Very satisfying

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Worthless Very valuable

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

APPENDIX 7. DATA ANALYSIS TABLE

Data Analysis Table

Research Question	Types of Measurement for Each Construct	Proposed Analysis
1. Are certain types of sexual fantasy predicted by gender?	Wilson Sexual Fantasy Questionnaire Demographic Self-Report Gender Questions	Independent Samples T-Test
2 Does greater reported frequency of sexual fantasy contribute to intentions to engage in extradyadic sex?	Wilson Sexual Fantasy Questionnaire Infidelity Intentions Scale	Correlations, Multivariate Regression
3. Do higher ratings on fantasy fulfillment measures from extradyadic encounters impact infidelity intentions?	Fantasy Fulfillment Scale Infidelity Intentions Scale	Multivariate Regression
4. Does type of fantasy impact infidelity engagement?	Wilson Sexual Fantasy Questionnaire Infidelity Engagement	Logistic Regression
5. Does fantasy fulfilment impact infidelity engagement?	Fantasy Fulfillment Scale Infidelity Engagement	Logistic Regression

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