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LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

IMPACT OF SEX-ROLE IDENTIFICATION
ON PARTNER PREFERENCE AND
RELATIONSHIP SATISFACTION

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
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MASTER OF ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF
COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY

BY
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Culturally prescribed behaviors that are deemed appropriate for males and females are defined as sex-roles. Men and women have been socialized to uphold the expectations that are warranted by their gender. These expectations form social sex-role stereotypes (Shively, Rudolph, and DeCecco, 1978). The characteristics associated with femininity, such as, nurturance, dependence and compliance have been culturally assigned to females. Strength, independence, and self-reliance are traits that males have been socialized to maintain. Adherence to these gender roles was once considered the norm in society.

Sex-role identity, characterized by masculinity and femininity, in homosexual men and women has been well researched in the past (Cardell, Finn & Marecek, 1981; Finlay & Scheltema, 1991; Heilbrun & Thompson, 1977; Jones & DeCecco, 1983; Kurdek, 1987; Oldham, Farnill & Ball, 1982). In homosexual couples, role allocation by gender is no longer viable. Hence, homosexual relationships were thought to be an attempt to mimic heterosexual relationships by joining a feminine partner, male or female, to a masculine partner of the same sex (Jones & DeCecco, 1982). It was assumed that homosexual couples were "acting out" traditional sex-roles in the relationship. Several researchers have explored the social sex-role stereotypes that exist in today's society (Shively et al. 1978; Taylor, 1983). The belief that homosexuals are sex-role deviants permeates throughout the literature. "Masculine" lesbians

and “feminine” gay men are considered the stereotype in the gay community. Even when individuals have encountered feminine lesbians or masculine heterosexual women, they refused to acknowledge these women as having valid identities. Further, they attributed those identities to maladjustments within the women rather than variations in sex-role identity (Storms, Stivers, Lambers & Hill, 1981). Despite the perceived stereotypes that existed in past research, evidence reported that same sex couples participate in less traditional gender-role playing than heterosexual couples (Marecek, Finn & Cardell, 1982). Exploring partners’ sex-role identities in lesbian couples may provide a better understanding of a true relationship, if any, that may exist between sex-role identity and sexual orientation.

In addition to examining the relationship between sex-role identification and sexual orientation, researchers have investigated sex-role identity as a factor that influences interpersonal attraction (Pursell & Banikiotes, 1978; Seyfried & Hendrick, 1973). Studies revealed mixed results when investigating the link between sex-role similarity and attraction. Methodological flaws in the research may contribute to the inconsistencies of the findings. Future research is needed to explore attraction as a function of sex-role identity.

The interaction of sex-role identity with relationship satisfaction in couples has also been researched (Antill, 1983; Cardell et al. 1981; Kurdek & Schmitt, 1986a; Kurdek & Schmitt, 1986b; Marecek et al. 1982; Rosenzweig & Lebow, 1992). Research evidence indicates that egalitarian or role-free relationships are associated with greater satisfaction than relationships that are gender-role typed (Caldwell and Letitia, 1984; Cardell et al. 1981; Marecek et al. 1982; Peplau, Cochran & Padesky, 1978; Peplau, Padesky & Hamilton,

1982). Furthermore, being in the feminine role was less satisfying than being in the masculine role (Cardell et al. 1981). Lastly, androgynous individuals, characterized by increased flexibility in sex-role behavior, may contribute to relationship fulfillment (Antill, 1983).

Sandra Bem (1974) developed The Bem Sex-Role Inventory (BSRI), a measurement of psychological androgyny. "Androgynous" individuals have high levels of both masculinity and femininity. Contrary to other sex-role inventories, the BSRI rates individuals on two separate dimensions. Because of this distinction, this inventory is a good tool to identify sex-role identity and will be used in the present empirical research.

The current study was an attempt to examine sex-role identity in lesbian women and its influence on partner preference and relationship satisfaction. Three questions were derived for this study: (1) Is there a relationship between participants' sex role-identities and the sex-role identities of their ideal partners? (2) How similar are the participants' current and ideal partners? (3) Does sex-role identity matching affect relationship satisfaction?

Hypotheses:

1. It was predicted that lesbian women will choose ideal partners with a similar sex-role identity.
2. It was predicted that a high level of similarity exists between the ideal and current partners.
3. It was predicted that androgynous lesbians will have higher levels of relationship satisfaction.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Several researchers have attempted to define the construct of sex-role identity (Bem, 1974; Spence, Helmreich & Stapp, 1975). Since the birth of this construct, evidence linked sex-role identity to both interpersonal attraction and relationship quality. Much of the empirical evidence supported the notion that sex-role identity influences these interpersonal processes. In this chapter, the literature related to the influence of sex-role identity in lesbian relationships will be addressed. This section will explore the existing literature as well as the methodological implications that may have affected the findings.

Sex-Role Identity Across Sexual Orientation

The initial efforts to research sex-role identity in lesbian women consisted of comparison studies between the sex-role identity of both heterosexual and homosexual women. The research indicated discrepancies in the existence of increased "masculinity" in lesbian women. Several studies supported the perception that lesbian women were more masculine than their heterosexual counterparts (Heilbrun and Thompson, 1977; Kurdek & Schmitt, 1986b; Shively et al., 1978; Taylor, 1983). The purpose of many of these studies was to identify the social sex-role stereotypes that exist in today's society. These findings upheld the notion that sex-role identity is influenced by sexual orientation.

Other studies indicated increased levels of masculinity in lesbian women; however, the levels of femininity were similar across sexual orientations (Finlay

and Scheltema, 1991; Kurdek, 1987; Larson, 1981; Oldham et al. 1982). These findings dispel the fallacy that lesbian women abandon femininity when choosing to be in a same sex union.

LaTorre and Wendenburg (1983) found self-labeled homosexual women to be more androgynous and undifferentiated than heterosexual women. This study further indicated the discrepancies that exist when exploring the relationship between sexual orientation and sex-role identity.

Several other studies determined that there was no variation in sex-role identity in women who had different sexual orientations (Dancey, 1992; Stokes, Kilmann & Wanlass, 1983). The prevailing stereotype that lesbian women have more "masculine" attributes was not supported in this research.

The aforementioned studies indicated mixed results when examining the link between sexual orientation and sex-role identity. Lesbian women, like all groups, have much variation within the population. Many attempts have been made to identify a common sex-role identity among lesbian women; however, the research failed to generate an universal identity.

Gender Role-Playing In Lesbian Partnerships

"Butch-Fem", a phrase used to identify the gender roles that lesbians adhere to in a relationship, remains under scrutiny as to its existence in today's lesbian community. Rigid gender role-playing has been well documented in the lesbian culture during the last several decades (Cooper, 1990; Davis & Kennedy, 1986; Lockard, 1986; Nichols, 1987) Marecek et al. (1982) proposed one possible explanation of gender-role playing in couples. They supported the notion that individuals who have internalized prevailing cultural models of how to behave in intimate relationships may portray these ideals in their own

partnerships.

Nichols (1986) also speculated on the function of polar-opposite sex-role matching in couples. First, the gender role assignment of an individual, whether it be masculine or feminine, defined behaviors that one may exhibit. Consequently, the individual may desire a mate with the opposing sex-role to complement their existing identity and repertoire of behaviors. The “opposites attract” phenomenon first theorized by Winch, Ktsanes, and Ktsanes (1954) may exist in lesbian couples as well. A “butch” lesbian, one whose identification has been marked by strength, emotional control and aggressiveness, may be attracted to a “femme” lesbian, who is seen as nurturing and tender and vice versa. The following studies addressing “butch-fem” role playing in lesbian relationships supported this complementary sex-role matching.

Davis and Kennedy (1986) investigated a lesbian community in Buffalo, New York, from the 1930s to the 1960s. This oral history was an attempt to understand forms of lesbian identity and expression as well as identify norms in the lesbian community during the forties and fifties. The sample consisted of fifteen members of the lesbian community in the 1950s. These women recounted their experience and remarked on the prominence of gender role playing. Results suggested that image (i.e., dress and mannerisms) and sexuality were two indications that a woman was either “butch” or “fem”. A code or standard existed within the community which reinforced certain behaviors both in the subculture and within a relationship. “Butch-fem” partnerships mimicked traditional heterosexual couples in that the butch was the initiator in sexual experiences. This study suggested that gender-role identity in lesbian couples established guidelines for partnership pairing. This sample was

indeed small and from a time period where lesbians were creating an independent subculture. However, butch-fem roles were part of the lesbian identity development.

Cooper (1990) conducted another qualitative study on gender identity development in lesbians. Fifteen lesbian women were interviewed and all reported a rejection of the traditional feminine role.

Lewis (as cited in Cooper, 1990) stated:

For many lesbians, the first manifestation that they do not fit the heterosexual pattern is a rejection of the female/ feminine role to which they are geared from birth. This rejection is sometimes manifested in the preference for, or identification with, the only other visible to them--- the male role. (p.372)

From early childhood, these particular lesbians rebelled against gender appropriate behavior. They were "tomboys" and would not adhere to the rules of being a girl. These lesbians found limitations in the accepted "female" model. Their concept of self was not congruent with the mold they were expected to fill. Many found the "male role" more appropriate and necessary to gain access to other women. As time progressed, they still rejected the female role; however, they remarked that androgyny was an ideal for achieving a sense of self. This study provided good evidence of the existence of gender role-playing in lesbian partnerships. Again, the findings are not widely generalizable due to the sampling procedure and small number of participants in the study.

Schneider (1989) conducted a qualitative study which investigated the coming out process in younger women. Twenty-five self-identified lesbians between the ages of 15 and 20 were interviewed to explore their development

of a lesbian identity. These young women discussed the pressure to conform to the “butch” stereotype. Many went through a phase where they acted out the “butch” role. Physical appearance and attire were the main sources of recognition that one was a lesbian. One subject stated, “a lesbian would not be caught dead in heels.” After completing the coming out process, many of the lesbian youth in this study realized that they could define their own identity. The stereotypes were considered a thing of the past and they felt they had options and choices to dress and act in a way which felt natural to them. This study represented a small number of lesbian adolescents. It revealed that stereotypes still exist in the lesbian subculture; however, these youth felt they had a choice to define their own lesbian identity.

In the past, the development of a lesbian subculture was defined by norms of behavior, which included feminine and masculine role-playing. Initially, butch-fem roles supported this development by defining its existence through role allocation. The advocates of gay liberation struggled to show that the stereotypes further oppressed lesbian women. The butch-fem roles stifled two women who attempted to define their existence as a couple. Hence, the presence of butch-fem role-playing in lesbian partnerships has declined since the fifties.

Role-Free Lesbian Partnerships

The femininist movement had a great impact on both lesbian identity and partnership. Lesbian women abandoned the presumed “model” of relationship formation (heterosexual couples) and replaced it with role-free expectations for partnerships.

Caldwell and Letitia (1984) investigated the nature of power in lesbian

relationships. Specifically, the study was designed to look at the factors that may affect the perceived level of equality in individual partners. Sex-role attitudes and butch-fem role playing were two of the proposed factors that may influence the balance of power and equality. The sample consisted of 77 lesbian women who were currently in a romantic relationship. The results suggested that women who gave more feminist responses (held more nontraditional views about sex roles) tended to be in egalitarian relationships more than women who held more traditional views. Furthermore, the sample failed to report any "butch-femme" role playing. One limitation with this study was sampling procedure and selection. This sample was a homogeneous group of lesbian women who, in general, held more feminist beliefs. The common view of the participants may have limited the influence that reported sex-role attitudes had on relationship equality and may have contributed to the lack of "butch-femme" role playing reported. Moreover, the instrument to measure "butch-femme" role playing has questionable construct validity. The division of household tasks was the criterion used to measure this construct. "Butch-femme" roles may be further differentiated beyond household duties.

Lynch and Reilly (1986) investigated equality and role playing in lesbian partnerships. They predicted that lesbian women would pursue egalitarian relationships with minimal role playing. The sample consisted of 70 couples who have lived together for a minimum of one year. The results suggested that this sample did not engage in "butch-femme" role playing. Again, defining role playing by the division of household tasks is questionable as to its construct validity. The role playing evidence did not reflect the levels of perceived masculinity and femininity in the participants. In addition, medium and high

economic statuses were over represented in this sample. Hence, the sample failed to depict the true variability that exists within the lesbian population. The findings from this study are only suggestive due to these limitations.

Oberstone and Sukoneck (1976) compared the psychological adjustment and life styles of single lesbians to single heterosexual women. They interviewed 25 women between the ages of 20 and 45 from both sexual orientations. One component of the interview examined role playing in their relationships. Specifically, the participants were asked if they played "clear-cut" social roles. The study yielded mixed results. Over half of the lesbian participants indicated that they had never played sex-stereotyped social roles. Nonetheless, one third of the lesbian women reported previously engaging in such role playing; however, clearly defined social roles were not a part of their current relationships. Thus, lesbian women indicated that role playing was indeed a part of their past experiences.

This study failed to investigate the length to which lesbian women demonstrated this role playing behavior in past relationships. The researchers missed a crucial point by not asking the participants to expand on the existence of such behaviors. Again, no generalizations can be made to the lesbian population due to the small number of participants. Nonetheless, the results revealed a self-reported decrease in the amount of role playing that lesbian women reported in current relationships.

Other evidence has supported that role playing was a component of past lesbian partnerships (Davis & Kennedy, 1986; Cooper, 1990). Nonetheless, other literature indicated that lesbian women made an elected shift from traditional sex-role modeling to the establishment of identities to represent their

own ideals.

Attraction Due To Sex-Role Similarity

Several researchers have investigated the influence of sex-role identity similarity on interpersonal attraction (Pursell & Banikiotes, 1978; Seyfried & Hendrick, 1973). These analogue studies explored the impact of similar and opposing sex-role identities on perceived attraction.

Pursell and Banikiotes (1978) proposed that sex-role similarity would lead to greater attraction. After taking the Bem Sex-Role Inventory (Bem, 1974), fifty-four undergraduate participants were then asked to rate their perception of four protocols: stereotyped female, androgynous female, stereotyped male, androgynous male. Overall, the results indicated that androgynous participants were more attracted to the androgynous protocols than the stereotyped protocols. Likewise, the stereotyped participants had increased attraction towards protocols with the similar stereotyped classification. Despite the overall similarity between participants and protocols, both stereotyped and androgynous female participants elicited greater attraction towards androgynous protocols than to the stereotyped protocols. This study indicated that sex-role similarity positively influenced interpersonal attraction in heterosexual individuals. The results must be qualified in view of the division of sex-role identity into two categories: androgynous and stereotyped. This study did not focus on specific categories such as masculine and feminine sex-role identities so the similarity hypothesis was not tested.

Seyfried and Hendrick (1973) conducted an analogue study which investigated when sex-role attitude similarity would lead to attraction. Sixty undergraduate students (30 male and 30 female) participated in this study. The

Masculine-Feminine Preferences Test developed for this study was used to compare the participants' sex-role attitudes to two stimulus strangers. The participants then completed an interpersonal rating form on each stranger. The findings revealed that similarity of sex-role attitudes led to attraction when the participant and the stranger were of the same gender. The lack of psychometric properties reported for both scales used in this study introduces possible measurement flaws. The measure of sex-role attitudes has questionable construct validity. Furthermore, the use of analogue in research decreases external validity. The participants were responding to "made up" stimulus strangers. Hence, the participants' responses may differ if they were rating "real" individuals.

In another study, Cardell et al. (1981) investigated sex-role identity and sex-role behavior in heterosexual, lesbian, and gay male couples. The sample consisted of 10 heterosexual, 10 lesbian, and 5 gay male couples. The BSRI and an 8-item scale created by the authors were used to measure sex-role identity and sex-role behaviors, respectively. The findings indicated that the lesbian women were more similar in sex-role identity than the remaining two groups. Evidence indicated that all three groups experienced role differentiation within couples which was measured by the sex-role behaviors scale. In spite of this finding, no link between sex-role identity and sex-role behavior was apparent. The inadequate sample size limits the relevance of the findings. No generalizations can be made due to the lack of representativeness of lesbian community as a whole. Furthermore, insufficient psychometric data for the measure of sex-role behaviors is problematic due to its questionable construct validity. Thus, the occurrence of complementary role behaviors

performed within lesbian couples are at best suggestive due to preceding limitations.

The aforementioned studies supported a positive relationship between similar sex-role identities as well as similar attitudes and interpersonal attraction. The significant results reported in these studies are suggestive and must be interpreted with caution due the limitations addressed.

Partner Preference Independent of Sex-Role Identity

Jones and DeCecco (1982) attempted to investigate if partners in both heterosexual and homosexual relationships have similar or complementary sex-role identities. The results revealed no significant matching in either the heterosexual or homosexual group. Because of the homogeneous sample obtained, the researchers could not further explore the proposed question. Eighty-seven percent of the sample were androgynous, as measured by the Personal Attributes Questionnaire (PAQ) (Spence et al. 1975).

The sample consisted of 60 subjects. Heterosexual, lesbian, and gay male couples were equally represented. The small sample was not representative of the general population; therefore, the prominence of the androgynous sex-role identity should not be generalized to other populations. The PAQ , a 24-item scale, defines sex-role identity by masculine and feminine personality traits. Sex-role identity may extend beyond personality characteristics. Several theorists operationalized the construct, "sex-role identity" (Bem, 1974; Bem, Martyna & Watson, 1976; Shively et al. 1978). Hence, Shively et al. (1978) redefined sex-roles to include appearance, speech, mannerisms, and interests. Consequently, the instrument used may not contain all of the relevant items necessary to accurately measure "sex-role

identity" which may have contributed to the high proportion of androgynous participants.

Kurdek and Schmitt (1986a) found a relationship between sex-role matching in one group, heterosexual cohabiting couples. All other groups, including lesbian women, had various combinations of sex-role pairings. This sample may be more representative of the general population; therefore, the study accounted for the variability that exists within specific populations (i.e., homosexual women).

The previous studies failed to support sex-role identity matching in lesbian relationships. Some of the methodological flaws addressed may have contributed to the absence of partner pairing.

Influence of Sex-Role Identity on Relationship Satisfaction

Numerous researchers investigated the interaction of sex-role identity with relationship quality (Antill, 1983; Cardell et al. 1981; Kurdek & Schmitt, 1986a; Kurdek & Schmitt, 1986b; Marecek et al. 1982; Rosenzweig & Lebow, 1992). Although different aspects of the partners' sex-role concepts were considered, the quest to identify any interaction of sex-role identity with relationship quality was the focal point of these investigations.

Antill (1983) found that couples with similar sex-roles were happier than other couples. Specifically, partners with similar levels of masculinity and femininity reported higher levels of relationship satisfaction. Moreover, increased levels of satisfaction were indicated by couples in which both partners scored high on femininity and androgynous and feminine couples tended to be happier than masculine and undifferentiated couples. Heterosexual participants were used in the study; therefore,

generalizations should not be made to other populations such as lesbians. Furthermore, the sampling procedure is problematic due to the method in which investigators obtained subjects. They solicited participation at several shopping centers in suburban Sydney. The participants were told that the survey contained questions regarding married life in Australia. The individuals that chose to participate were open to discussing content related to relationships. This sample may be biased due to the types of couples that would interview about married life. Thus, the sample presented may not be representative of all married couples.

In another study, Cardell et al. (1981) reported that couples, including lesbian women, indicated less satisfaction when more role-differentiated behavior was present; however, there was no relationship between the partners' sex-role identities and those role playing behaviors. This study indicated that the link between sex-role identity and sex-role behavior remained obscure, thus role playing behavior was the only influence on relationship satisfaction.

Kurdek and Schmitt (1986a) investigated relationship quality in married, heterosexual cohabiting, gay, and lesbian couples. The partners' sex-role identities, measured by the BSRI (Bem, 1974), were the independent variables. The results indicated that androgynous and feminine subjects reported greater satisfaction than masculine and undifferentiated subjects. Higher levels of femininity seemed to enhance relationship quality.

A final study (Kurdek & Schmitt, 1992) also reported that lesbians who indicated high levels of femininity, both androgynous and feminine sex-roles, were more sexually satisfied and had higher dyadic adjustment than lesbians

with masculine and undifferentiated sex-role identities. This study further supported that femininity is a robust factor that positively influences relationship satisfaction.

Other studies focused on general relationship satisfaction in lesbian couples (Marecek et al. 1982; Peplau et al. 1978; Peplau et al. 1982) . Factors within the couple that enhance relationship satisfaction were addressed. One ingredient of relationship satisfaction, perceived equality, remained a recurrent theme throughout the literature. Egalitarian, role-free relationships proved to strengthen bonds within lesbian couples. Peplau et al. (1982) emphasized that couples, regardless of sexual orientation, experienced increased satisfaction when partner equality was present.

Summary

The previous literature provided evidence that sex-role identity is a factor that influences interpersonal attraction as well as relationship satisfaction in both heterosexual and homosexual couples. It may seem obvious that if an individual has certain attributes that make up his/ her identity, those characteristics will either attract or repel potential mates. It is crucial to examine the dynamics that exist within a couple when making therapeutic interventions. In working with lesbian couples, more information is needed regarding the roles that exist, whether overt or subtle, which may impact the quality of the relationship.

The current study will further investigate sex-role identity and its influence on both attraction and relationship satisfaction in lesbian partnerships. This empirical research should augment the existing literature related to lesbian relationships. The author's intention was to increase public awareness of the

variability that exists within the lesbian community. Lastly, this study offers more insight to therapists who may facilitate couples work with homosexual women.

CHAPTER III

METHODS

Participants

Fifty-eight women who identified themselves as lesbians served as research participants for the current study. Subjects were recruited using the snow ball technique. This procedure links members in a specific population to each other either in a direct or indirect fashion (Lynch & Reilly, 1990). Participants were solicited within the lesbian community at locations frequented by the target population (ie. coffeehouses, bookstores, support groups). Other participants were contacted indirectly through the mail. In order to obtain a diverse sample within this specific population, a variety of resources were used. Two incomplete questionnaires were eliminated from the analysis. The return rate was 83% (58 completed out of 70 distributed).

Instruments

Demographic Survey. The information requested from the participants included age, race, education and income level, length of relationship (if applicable), and relationship status: single, involved, and living together. In addition, prior sexual experiences with both male and female partners and the participant's self-designation of sexual orientation (i.e., gay, homosexual, lesbian, dyke) was indicated.

Bem Sex-Role Inventory for Subject. The Bem Sex-Role Inventory (BSRI) was chosen to operationalize the construct of psychological androgyny.

The BSRI was developed by Bem (1974) to measure levels of masculinity and femininity. This inventory is unique in that it treats masculinity and femininity as separate dimensions. The inventory contains sixty personality characteristics: twenty stereotypically feminine, twenty stereotypically masculine, and twenty neutral that act as fillers. The participant is asked to indicate how well each of the 60 characteristics describes herself or himself. The characteristics are measured on a 7-point Likert scale with values ranging from 1 ("Never or almost never true") to 7 ("Always or almost always true"). The participants are classified as masculine (high masculine, low feminine), feminine (high feminine, low masculine), undifferentiated (low masculine, low feminine) or androgynous (high masculine, high feminine) by splitting the sample by both the masculine and feminine medians of the normative sample, which were 4.90 and 4.95, respectively. Bem (1981) suggested that researchers may utilize the medians of normative sample when research is involving a small sample or with a sample containing only one sex.

The internal consistency of the BSRI was estimated by computing coefficient alpha for the Femininity Score and Masculinity Score of both the female and male subjects in the sample. Coefficient alpha for the Femininity and Masculinity scores was .78 and .86 for the females and .78 and .87 for the males, respectively. Test-retest reliability was computed using product-moment correlations between the first and second administration, ranging from .76 to .94, which indicated high test-retest reliability. Appendix A and B provide the instrument's instructions and items, respectively.

Bem Sex-Role Inventory for Ideal Partner. This scale was created by the author by using a second BSRI to indicate how the participant would rate an

“ideal” partner on 60 personality characteristics. The wording of the directions was the only modification made to the BSRI format. The participant was instructed to imagine her “ideal” partner, “ideal” being the person whom the participant would see to be the best fit with her in a relationship. The test administration and scoring were identical to the BSRI for the subject; therefore, the psychometric properties reported previously were the same. Appendix C presents the modified instructions to the BSRI for an ideal partner.

Partner Congruence Scale. This four- item inventory was created by the experimenter for the current study. The inventory was designed to measure the level of congruence between the participant’s ideal and current partner across 4 dimensions. The participant was asked to indicate how similar her current partner is to her ideal in the following areas: personality, emotionality, communication style, and physical attributes. The individual items are responded to on a 5-point Likert scale with values ranging from 1 (“not at all similar”) to 5 (“very similar”). This 4 item inventory is too small to calculate psychometric properties. Appendix D provides individual items.

Relationship Assessment Scale. The Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS) was designed by Hendrick (1988) to measure an individual's satisfaction with his or her relationship. It is a seven-item questionnaire that is scored on a 5-point Likert scale with (1) representing low satisfaction and (5) representing high satisfaction. Two of the items are reversed scored. The potential range for the total score is 7 to 35. Higher overall scores are indicative of greater relationship satisfaction. Its psychometric data was based on an administration to 125 subjects who reported themselves to be “in love”. Analyses revealed a unifactorial scale structure and moderate intercorrelations among the items.

The internal consistency reliability coefficient for the scale was .86. The scale was effective in discriminating couples who stayed together from those whose relationship ended. Appendix E includes the individual items.

Procedure

The first data collection consisted of five individuals who were part of a pilot study. The experimenter was evaluating the potential effects of fatigue if the participants were instructed to complete three Bem-Sex Role Inventories: (1) self (2) ideal partner (3) current partner. After completion, the participants commented that they were fatigued after the second BSRI and were not concerned with the validity of their answers by the third inventory. Consequently, the experimenter eliminated the BSRI for the subject's current partner and developed the Partner Congruence Scale to measure the level of similarity between the subject's current and ideal partner.

The experimenter frequented several settings (i.e., coffeehouses and lesbian social gatherings) to solicit participation. Individuals were asked if they wanted to participate in a survey related to attraction in lesbian partnerships. Participants were asked to complete the survey which included the following: demographic information, BSRI for self and ideal partner, PCS, and RAS. If the participant was not currently involved in a relationship, she was instructed to stop after she completed the BSRI for her ideal partner. The last two instruments were designed to look at relationship dynamics, therefore single participants were not applicable. The informed consent was signed prior to the administration of the questionnaire to ensure anonymity. No identifiable information was asked on the questionnaire and the signed consent forms were placed separately in a manila envelope.

When the questionnaires were distributed in a group setting (i.e., lesbian social function), the participants were asked if their partners were present. If the partners were present, the participants were asked not to discuss their answers until the questionnaires have been returned to the experimenter. This procedure was implemented in an effort to encourage honest responses from the participants.

The time to complete the survey ranged from 20 to 30 minutes, depending on the relationship status of the subject. Participants who were not currently involved in a relationship completed the survey in a shorter amount of time as compared to participants who were currently partnered. The experimenter remained on site to assist the participants and to collect the completed surveys. The participants were debriefed after the questionnaires were secured. Appendices F and G provide the instructions given to the participants and the debriefing statements, respectively.

In addition, the experimenter ran out of questionnaires at one social function. Those individuals still wanting to participate gave the experimenter their address so that a survey could be mailed to them. The participants were asked to adhere to the same instructions that were followed in the group setting. These participants were mailed the survey with a self-addressed stamped envelope to return the questionnaire to the experimenter. The participants were assured that the informed consent would be stored separately from the questionnaire. The experimenter also offered an additional self-addressed envelope to mail the consent back separately at the participant's request.

Other questionnaires were distributed during a gay, lesbian, bisexual meeting at a professional school by a colleague of the experimenter.

Individuals were asked if they wanted to participate in a research study involving attraction in lesbian relationships. The colleague gave the same instructions to those participants and returned the completed surveys to the experimenter.

Data Analysis

The research questions proposed in this study were: (a) Is there any correlation between participant's sex-role identity and that of an ideal partner? (b) How similar are the participant's ideal and current partners? (c) Does sex-role pairing affect relationship satisfaction? It was predicted that participants would chose an androgynous ideal for a partner and that androgynous individuals would report higher levels of relationship satisfaction.

The independent variables in this study were: (a) the sex-role identity of the respondent: androgynous, feminine, masculine, or undifferentiated (b) the sex-role identity of an ideal partner: androgynous, feminine, masculine, or undifferentiated. The dependent variables were: (a) the level of relationship satisfaction as indicated by the RSI (b) the level of similarity between the participants' ideal and current partners as measured by the PCS.

Descriptive data were calculated for all of the variables of interest, including the demographic variables of the sample. Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated to test the relationship between the participant's level of masculinity and femininity , as measured by BSRI for self and the ideal partner's level of masculinity and femininity, as measured by the BSRI for an ideal partner.

Data analyses consisted of an analysis of variance (ANOVA), a 4 (sex-role identity of participant) X 4 (sex-role identity of an ideal partner) ANOVA,

and two one-way ANOVAS were used to look at the relationship between the ideal partner's feminine and masculine scores with the subject's sex-role identity.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Demographic Characteristics of Sample

The subjects in the sample had a mean age of 28.8 years with a standard deviation of 4.7 years. The range of ages was between 19 and 43 years. The sample consisted of 88% Caucasian (N = 51), 2% African American (N = 1), 5% Latino (N = 3), and 5% other (N = 3). The distribution of racial identity is clearly not representative of the general population. Fifty-seven percent (N = 33) of the sample had received their undergraduate degree. Thirty-four percent (N = 20) of the participants were pursuing or had completed their graduate education. Sixty-four percent (N = 37) of the participants' annual income ranged between 10,000 and 40,000.

Thirty-eight percent (N = 22) of the sample were single, 35% (N = 20) characterized themselves as being in dating relationships, and 27% (N = 16) reportedly lived with their partners. The average length of the participants' relationships was 23.4 months, or 1.95 years, with a standard deviation of 20.4 months, or 1.7 years. The relationship length reported had a range from 1 month to 84 months. Five percent (N = 3) of the sample were divorced and none of the participants had children.

With regards to sexual orientation identification, 69% (N = 40) identified themselves as lesbians, 10% (N = 6) were identified as gay, 9% (N = 5) were self-identified homosexuals, 7% (N = 4) were self-identified bisexuals, and 3 %

(N = 2) identified themselves as dykes. One participant did not respond to the question.

The age of the first sexual experience with a same sex partner reported by the participants ranged from 8 to 32 years. The mean age was 19.5 years with a standard deviation of 4.6 years. One individual did not respond to the question. The age of the first sexual experience with an opposite sex partner reported by the participants ranged from 12 to 27 years. The mean age was 17.2 years with a standard deviation of 3.1 years. Ten participants did not respond to the question. Fourteen percent (N = 8) of the participants reported that they have not had sexual experiences with the opposite sex.

Descriptive Data on the Instruments

The Partner Congruence Scale, a measurement of similarity between the subject's ideal and current partner, represented four dimensions: personality, emotionality, communication style, and physical attributes. The mean score for similarity in personality was 3.5 with a standard deviation of .94. The potential range of scores was between 1 and 5. The range of the scores for the sample was between 2 and 5. For the measure of similarity in emotionality, the mean score was 3.5 with a standard deviation of 1.2. The potential range of this measure, as well as the range of the sample, was between 1 and 5. For the measure of similarity in communication style, the mean score was 3.7 with a standard deviation of 1.2. Both the potential range and the range of the sample were between 1 and 5. The mean score for similarity in physical attributes was 3.7 with a standard deviation of 1.1. Again, both the potential range and the range of the sample were between 1 and 5.

On the relationship satisfaction instrument, the Relationship Assessment

Scale (RAS), the mean score was 27.9 with a standard deviation of 5.5. The potential range of scores was between 7 and 35. The range of scores for the sample was between 13 to 35. Table 1 summarizes the demographic characteristics of the sample as well as the descriptive statistics characterizing the instruments.

Table 1

Means, Standard Deviations and Ranges of Participant Demographics and
Descriptive Data on Instruments

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Range
Participant Age (in years)	28.8	4.7	19 - 43
Length of Relationship (in months)	23.4	20.4	1 - 84
Age of 1st same sex experience	19.5	4.6	8 - 32
Age of 1st opposite sex experience	17.2	3.1	12 - 27
Partner Congruence Scale			
Personality	3.5	.94	2 - 5
Emotionality	3.5	1.2	1 - 5
Communication	3.7	1.2	1 - 5
Physical Attributes	3.7	1.1	1 - 5
Relationship Assessment Scale	27.9	5.5	13 - 35

Correlational Data

Correlation coefficients were calculated to respond to the first research question: Is there a relationship between participants' sex-role identities and the sex-role identities of their ideal partners? Preliminary analyses indicated that there were significant correlations between the subject's level of masculinity and femininity and the ideal partner's level of masculinity and femininity. Specifically, the Pearson product moment correlation for the relationship between the subject's feminine score and the ideal partner's feminine score was significant ($r = .59, p < .01$). The Pearson product moment correlation between the subject's masculinity score and the ideal partner's masculinity score was also significant ($r = .33, p < .05$). In addition, a significant correlation was noted between the ideal partner's femininity and masculinity scores ($r = .43, p < .01$). The Pearson correlation coefficients are represented in Table 2.

Table 2

Pearson Correlation Coefficients and Significance Levels for the Variables of Interest: Femininity and Masculinity Scores between Self and Ideal Partner

	1.	2.	3.	4.
1. Self Femininity	-			
2. Self Masculinity	-.17	-		
3. Ideal Femininity	.59 **	.12	-	
4. Ideal Masculinity	.24	.33*	.43**	-

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

Sex-Role Categories for Self and Ideal

In order to determine the congruence between sex-role type in participant and ideal partner, the masculinity and femininity scores were calculated for both the participant and the participant's ideal partner. The participant and the ideal partner were then categorized as androgynous, feminine, masculine, or undifferentiated. Forty-one percent (N = 24) of the participants were androgynous, 23% (N = 13) were feminine, 26% (N = 15) were masculine, and 10% (N = 6) were undifferentiated.

In contrast, the ideal partners' sex-role classification had a different distribution. Sixty-four percent (N = 37) of the participants preferred androgynous partners, 12% (N = 7) selected feminine ideal partners, 7% (N = 4) preferred masculine partners and 10% (N = 6) favored undifferentiated partners. Seven percent (N = 4) of the sample did not complete the ideal sex-role inventory in its entirety, so their inventories were not scored. Table 3 illustrates the distribution of both the participants' and their ideal partners' sex-role classification.

Table 3

Frequency of Self and Ideal Partner Sex-Role Classification

Sex-Role Classification	Self		Ideal	
	N	%	N	%
Androgynous	24	41.4%	37	63.8%
Feminine	13	22.4%	7	12.1%
Masculine	15	25.9%	4	6.9%
Undifferentiated	6	10.3%	6	10.3%
Missing Data	0	0.0%	4	6.9%
Total	58	100%	58	100%

Frequency of Sex-Role Self-Concept Pairing

The crosstabulation of participants' and ideal partners' sex role self-concepts is presented for the total sample in Table 4. Ninety-two percent (N = 22) of the androgynous participants wanted an androgynous partner, 4.2% (N = 1) desired a feminine ideal, 0.0% (N = 0) wanted a masculine ideal and 4.2% (N = 1) desired an undifferentiated partner.

Among the participants categorized as feminine, 66.7% (N = 8) of this group desired an androgynous ideal partner, 25 % (N = 3) wanted a feminine partner, 0.0% (N = 0) wanted a masculine ideal and 8.3% (N = 1) desired an undifferentiated partner.

Forty-two percent (N = 5) of the masculine participants wanted an androgynous ideal partner, 16.7% (N = 2) desired a feminine ideal partner, 25% (N = 3) wanted a masculine ideal, and 16.7% (N = 2) desired an undifferentiated partner.

Among the undifferentiated participants, 33.3% (N = 2) wanted an androgynous ideal, 16.7% (N = 1) wanted a feminine partner, 16.7% (N = 1) desired a masculine ideal, and 33.3% wanted an undifferentiated partner.

An androgynous ideal partner remains the most desirable partner type across all 4 categories of participants. In contrast, a partner with a masculine sex-role identity is not considered an ideal partner for participants with either an androgynous or feminine sex-role identity.

Table 4

Distribution of Participants with Ideal Partners Across Sex-Role Self-Concepts

Subject	Ideal Partner			
	A	F	M	U
A	91.7% (22)	4.2% (1)	0.0% (0)	4.2% (1)
F	66.7% (8)	25.0% (3)	0.0% (0)	8.3% (1)
M	41.7% (5)	16.7% (2)	25.0% (3)	16.7% (2)
U	33.3% (2)	16.7% (1)	16.7% (1)	33.3% (2)

Note. A = Androgynous, F = Feminine, M = Masculine,
U = Undifferentiated

Analysis of Variance

An analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to assess the effect of sex role identity matching on relationship satisfaction. No significant main effects were indicated. There was a significant interaction effect $F(4,32) = 3.64$, $p < .05$. Due to the low and zero cell frequencies across the sex role categories, the results indicated are not conclusive.

Two one-way ANOVAS were used to assess the relationship between the ideal partners' feminine and masculine scores with the participants' sex-role identity classification. On the variable of ideal partners' masculine score, there was a significant difference in means across the participants' sex-role classifications, $F(3,54) = 4.13$, $p < .05$. Two-tailed t-tests were conducted on the mean groups scores to determine which groups differed significantly at a .10 level. The androgynous participants differed significantly from feminine participants but not from masculine or undifferentiated participants at a $p = .10$ level. Specifically, the androgynous participants preferred higher levels of masculinity in an ideal partner than feminine participants. On the variable of ideal partners' feminine score, there was also a significant difference in means across the 4 sex-role classifications, $F(3,54) = 9.18$, $p < .10$. The androgynous participants were different from the masculine and undifferentiated participants, but not different from the feminine participants at a $p = .10$ level. Particularly, the androgynous participants tended to prefer an ideal partner with significantly higher levels of femininity than those participants classified as masculine or undifferentiated.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

The purpose of the present study was to explore interpersonal attraction within the lesbian community. Specifically, this effort was designed to examine the relationship between the sex-role identity of an individual and that of an ideal partner and if sex-role pairing affects relationship satisfaction. The results of the study will be discussed. The limitations of the study will be presented. Finally, the implications for future research and applications to counseling will be discussed.

Results of the Present Study

The levels of femininity and masculinity designated for an ideal partner were related to the subject's own level of those two traits. For example, an individual who scored high on the masculinity scale desired that trait in an ideal partner. This finding partially supported the first hypothesis that individuals will desire partnerships with people that are similar to themselves. Byrne (as cited in Pursell and Banikiotes, 1978) postulated the similarity theory which proposed that persons more similar in attitudes and personality are perceived as more attractive than dissimilar others. Furthermore, Byrne, Clore and Smeaton (1986) posited that people may rely increasingly on positive factors (i.e., similar attitudes) to select a partner for interpersonal closeness.

The results did not support similarity in specific sex-role pairing of participants with their ideal partner. All four sex-role categories indicated a

preference for androgynous partners. This preference for a partner with both high masculinity and high femininity contributed to the positive correlation between the ideal partners' masculine and feminine scores. Moreover, other researchers (Gilbert, Deutsch & Strahan, 1978) found similar results. In their study, both men and women desired an androgynous partner when asked to indicate their ideal mate. Androgynous individuals who have greater flexibility in sex-role behaviors may offer more as a partner than individuals with other sex-role classifications. In another study, Peplau et al. (1978) found that lesbians preferred an androgynous identity to maintain both intimacy and independence in relationships.

The results indicated that the similarity between participants' current and ideal partners was moderate, ranging from 3.5 to 3.7 on a 5 point scale. Due to the lack of psychometric data, these findings are noted with caution. The lesbians in this sample reported sufficient agreement that their current partner was similar to their ideal mate across personality, emotionality, in communication style, and physical attributes. This scale attempted to address other "factors" besides personality that may influence sex-role identity. Shively et al. (1978) included appearance, speech, mannerisms, and interests as additional characteristics that constitute sex-role identity. When asked to disclose the similarity between their current partner with an "ideal", participants may have wanted to perceive that they were dating their ideal and as a result, overestimated the level of similarity due to this perception.

Lastly, the findings which involved the interaction of sex-role identity pairing with relationship satisfaction were not supported. Two reasons may have contributed to the lack of significant findings related to sex-role pairing and

its influence on relationship satisfaction. First, the no and low cell frequencies across sex-role classifications may have contributed to the inconclusive outcome. The sample did not represent all of possible variations in sex-role pairings; therefore, an accurate analysis of sex-role matchings with levels of relationship satisfaction was not possible in this study. The small sample obtained resulted in a lack of power or the ability to reject a truly null hypothesis. Second, relationship satisfaction may, in fact, not be influenced by sex-role pairing. Individuals in this study reported relatively equal levels of relationship satisfaction so there is not one distinguishable sex-role matching that will have a greater chance at successful, satisfying relationships. This calls to question the push to be androgynous. Suffice to say, the participants varied in sex-role identity, yet consistently reported moderate levels of relationship satisfaction.

Limitations

The first and major limitation of the study is a result of the sampling procedure used to obtain the subjects. The snow ball technique, a commonly employed method of collecting data from gay, lesbian, and bisexual populations, tends to limit the variability derived from within the lesbian population. The majority of the lesbians in this study were well-educated, Caucasian women between the ages of 25-35. This sample is not representative of the lesbian population as a whole. This sampling method may not include lesbians who are not "openly" known in the lesbian community. Hence, "closeted" lesbians may not be represented in this sample. The author distributed the questionnaires in a way to increase variability of the sample; however, the demographics depicted are rather homogeneous. The findings must be viewed as suggestive rather than conclusive.

Another limitation in this study was the lack of psychometric properties reported on the Partner Congruence Scale. This inventory was used to measure the level of similarity between the subjects' ideal and current partners. The inventory may have misrepresented the true level of similarity which would influence the effect that sex-role pairing has on relationship satisfaction. Individuals may have responded in a way that indicates that their current partner does have similar qualities to their perceived "ideal" match. If the participants did not report high levels of similarity between the current and ideal partners, the viability of the relationship would be called to question. Due to this fact, the participants may overestimate the level of similarity.

Being that the survey consisted of self-report questionnaires, social desirability of responses could not be controlled for by the experimenter. The subjects may have been able to guess which characteristics are "socially acceptable" and responded accordingly. Furthermore, some individuals completed the survey in their homes, and they may have been influenced by their partners' presence; therefore, the potential inflation of relationship satisfaction is possible.

Counseling Applications

Several counseling applications may be drawn from this study. Foremost, a therapist who is working with lesbian couples should acknowledge that roles are no longer determined by gender in these dyads. Burch (1986) and Marecek et al. (1982) suggested that lesbian couples may experience identity confusion when no role allocation is present. The importance of the therapist to facilitate an openness to explore their identities within the dyad is essential to mitigate the confusion. Lesbian women in partnerships may need

support in understanding the role, if any, they play in the couple.

A therapist may want to examine both partners' perceptions of similarity to one another. If the couple reveals large discrepancies in the level of partner similarity, the therapist may want to intervene and process both similarities and differences that exist in the dyad. To enhance relationship quality, the therapist may want to focus on partner similarities to locate the commonalities that prevail in the partnership. Overtime, the therapist can further facilitate the mediation process when the couple negotiates their differences.

Implications For Future Research

Researchers should try to increase sample size in future studies. All combinations of sex-role identity pairings must be represented in order to successfully analyze the possible influence that matching has on relationship satisfaction. In addition, better sampling methods should be implemented. The snow ball technique limits the true variability that exists in the gay population as a whole. However, it remains the most popular way to solicit participation in studies related to gay, lesbian, and bisexual issues.

Future researchers may want to explore why the levels of femininity and masculinity designated for an ideal partner were related to the participant's own levels of those traits, yet there was no indication of sex-role similarity. The Bem Sex-Role Inventory (BSRI) treats masculinity and femininity as separate dimensions; however, the sex-role classifications are derived from the median split of both scores. When masculinity and femininity were looked at independently, the participants and their ideal partner were similar; therefore, more research should be done investigating these traits as separate dimensions.

The division of sex-role identity into masculine and feminine extremes further maintains the fallacy that lesbians are “male-like”. Whereas characteristics deemed “masculine” according to the Bem Sex-Role Inventory (ie. assertive, independent) are considered positive in today’s society, lesbians who claimed to have these attributes were labeled as sex-role deviants (Taylor, 1983). In general, the definition of sex-role identity has not weathered the changing times. The characteristics that were deemed masculine and feminine in the past, no longer depict gender appropriate behavior today.

Finally, research studies should address the possible stereotypes that may still exist in today’s day and age. Storms et al. (1981) suggested that society generated an “confused and unstable” script for feminine lesbians and masculine heterosexual women which indicates that the public has not willing to surrender the commonly held stereotype. An attempt to dispel the stereotype may increase the awareness that there is variability in all populations, including lesbian women. Oberstone et al. (1976) wisely stated:

Are they really more “masculine” in their behavior than their “normal” counterparts, or are they more free to develop both their feminine and masculine and in fact, their total human potential? It is possible that, rather than being “masculine”, the lesbian woman, by virtue of being an outlaw, has had to develop personality qualities that have been traditionally the domain of the male, such as independence, self determination, competence, and aggression. (p.185)

APPENDIX A

DIRECTIONS FOR BEM SEX-ROLE INVENTORY

On the following page, you will see listed a number of personality characteristics to describe yourself, that is, we would like you to indicate, on a scale from 1 to 7, how true of you each of these characteristics is. Please do not leave any characteristic unmarked.

Example: sly

Write a 1 if it is never or almost never true that you are sly.

Write a 2 if it is usually not true that you are sly.

Write a 3 if it is sometimes but infrequently true that you are sly.

Write a 4 if it is occasionally true that you are sly.

Write a 5 if it is often true that you are sly.

Write a 6 if it is usually true that you are sly.

Write a 7 if it is always or almost always true that you sly.

Thus, if you feel it is sometimes but infrequently true that you are "sly," never or almost never true that you are "malicious," always or almost always true that you are "irresponsible," and often true that you are "carefree," then you would rate these characteristics as follows:

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APPENDIX B

BEM SEX-ROLE INVENTORY

1
never or
almost
never true

2
usually
not
true

3
sometimes
but
infrequently
true

4
occasionally
true

5
often
true

6
usually
true

7
always or
almost
always true

Defend my own beliefs	
Affectionate	
Conscientious	
Independent	
Sympathetic	
Moody	
Assertive	
Sensitive to needs of others	
Reliable	
Strong personality	
Understanding	
Jealous	
Forceful	
Compassionate	
Truthful	
Has leadership abilities	
Eager to soothe hurt feelings	
Secretive	
Willing to take risks	
Warm	

Adaptable	
Dominant	
Tender	
Conceited	
Willing to take a stand	
Love children	
Tactful	
Aggressive	
Gentle	
Conventional	
Self-reliant	
Yielding	
Helpful	
Athletic	
Cheerful	
Unsystematic	
Analytical	
Shy	
Inefficient	
Make decisions easily	

Flatterable	
Theatrical	
Self-sufficient	
Loyal	
Happy	
Individualistic	
Soft-spoken	
Unpredictable	
Masculine	
Gullible	
Solemn	
Competitive	
Childlike	
Likable	
Ambitious	
Do not use harsh language	
Sincere	
Act as a leader	
Feminine	
Friendly	

APPENDIX C
INSTRUCTIONS FOR IDEAL SEX-ROLE INVENTORY

Now we would like you to imagine your “ideal” partner. “Ideal” being the person you would see to be the best fit with you in a relationship. Again, we would like you to indicate, on a scale from 1 to 7, how true to your ideal partner each of these characteristics is. Please do not leave any characteristic unmarked.

APPENDIX E

RELATIONSHIP ASSESSMENT SCALE

- 1) How well does your partner meet your needs?
- 1-----2-----3-----4-----5
not at all very well
- 2) In general, how satisfied are you with your relationship?
- 1-----2-----3-----4-----5
not at all satisfied very satisfied
- 3) How good is your relationship compared to most?
- 1-----2-----3-----4-----5
worse than most better than most
- 4) How often do you wish you hadn't gotten into this relationship?
- 1-----2-----3-----4-----5
very often never
- 5) To what extent has your relationship met your original expectations?
- 1-----2-----3-----4-----5
not at all all were met
- 6) How much do you love your partner?
- 1-----2-----3-----4-----5
not at all very much
- 7) How many problems are there in your relationship?
- 1-----2-----3-----4-----5
very many none

APPENDIX F
INSTRUCTIONS TO PARTICIPANTS

For this experiment, you will be presented with a number of questions. Some will inquire about you, some about your “ideal” partner. (“Ideal” being the person you would see to be the best fit with you in a relationship.) Additionally, if you are currently involved in a relationship, some questions inquire about the similarities between your ideal and current partner, as well as, relationship satisfaction. It is important that the questions concerning your relationship and partner be answered in a consistent manner. In other words, please answer these questions based on one exclusive relationship, if you are in several intimate relationships. All of your responses will be kept completely anonymous and confidential. After you finish the questionnaire, please return it to me and I will debrief you on the purpose of this research project.

APPENDIX G
DEBRIEFING STATEMENT

The experiment you just completed was interested in interpersonal attraction in lesbian partnerships and how that affects relationship satisfaction. Specifically, the inventories were used to assess both your sex-role identity and that of an ideal mate. This study assessed the potential similarities that exist between your current and ideal partner and the level of satisfaction in your current relationship. It was hypothesized that (1) individuals will prefer ideal partners who were similar to themselves (2) individuals tend to date women who are similar to their "ideal" (3) androgynous individuals will report higher levels of relationship satisfaction. If you have any questions about the study, please contact the experimenter at 296-1588. Thank you for contributing to research involving the gay community.

APPENDIX H
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Bem Inventory

Test Booklet (Short and Original)

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one year starting from date of purchase:
April 4, 1996

by Sandra Lipsitz Bem

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