Identity–behaviour congruence among behaviourally bisexual young women: The role of individual differences in sexual identity attitudes and beliefs

Mariana A. Preciado & Elisabeth Morgan Thompson

Department of Psychology, University of California, Los Angeles, CA, USA

LFA Group: Learning for Action, San Francisco, CA, USA

Version of record first published: 13 Jul 2012

To cite this article: Mariana A. Preciado & Elisabeth Morgan Thompson (2012): Identity-behaviour congruence among behaviourally bisexual young women: The role of individual differences in sexual identity attitudes and beliefs, Psychology & Sexuality, DOI:10.1080/19419899.2012.700022

To link to this article: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/19419899.2012.700022

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE

Full terms and conditions of use: http://www.tandfonline.com/page/terms-and-conditions

This article may be used for research, teaching, and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, redistribution, reselling, loan, sub-licensing, systematic supply, or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden.

The publisher does not give any warranty express or implied or make any representation that the contents will be complete or accurate or up to date. The accuracy of any instructions, formulae, and drug doses should be independently verified with primary sources. The publisher shall not be liable for any loss, actions, claims, proceedings, demand, or costs or damages whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with or arising out of the use of this material.
Identity–behaviour congruence among behaviourally bisexual young women: The role of individual differences in sexual identity attitudes and beliefs

Mariana A. Preciado a* and Elisabeth Morgan Thompson b

aDepartment of Psychology, University of California, Los Angeles, CA, USA; bLFA Group: Learning for Action, San Francisco, CA, USA

(Received 3 September 2011; final version received 24 April 2012)

Though sexual identity labels (e.g. straight, bisexual, gay/lesbian) are regularly used as a proxy for sexual behaviour and/or attraction, sexual identity is often imperfectly correlated with these aspects of sexual orientation. In this study, we examined whether individual differences would explain differences in the relationship between sexual identity label (i.e. exclusively straight, mostly straight, bisexual or mostly/exclusively gay) and self-reported sexual behaviour among a sample of 76 behaviourally bisexual college-aged women. We found that individual differences in sexual identity exploration, uncertainty, commitment and integration moderated the relationship between sexual identity label and sexual behaviour among exclusively and mostly straight women. Sexual identity uncertainty and integration moderated the relationship between sexual identity label and sexual behaviour among exclusively straight and bisexual women, and among exclusively straight and mostly/exclusively gay women. We discuss the implications of these results for the measurement of aspects of sexual orientation and future research on the sexual identity–behaviour relationship.

Keywords: sexual identity; sexual behaviour; individual differences; self-perception; bisexuality

Introduction

Sexual identity labels (e.g. straight, bisexual, gay/lesbian) are regularly used as a proxy for sexual orientation, sexual behaviour and/or sexual attraction (Morin, 1977; Phillips, Ingram, Smith, & Mindes, 2003; see Savin-Williams, 2005, for a discussion). However, sexual identity labels are often imperfectly correlated with the aspects of sexual orientation, including sexual behaviour, especially among women (e.g. Diamond, 2008; Laumann, Gagnon, Michael, & Michaels, 1994). In their interviews with 3432 American men and women between the ages of 18 and 59 years, Laumann et al. (1994) found that although only 1.4% of women identified with a same-sex sexual identity (e.g. bisexual, lesbian), 7.5% of women reported some form of same-sex interest. More recently, Vrangalova and Savin-Williams (2010) found that 84% of the heterosexually identified college women surveyed reported at least some degree of same-sex sexual attraction, fantasy or behaviour. It is clear that women vary in the degree to which their sexual identity corresponds to their degree of same-sex behaviour. Yet, little work has addressed the mechanisms that explain

*Corresponding author. Email: mariana.preciado@ucla.edu
why some women show a strong relationship between their sexual identity label and their sexual behaviours and others do not.

We argue that the complex nature of sexual identity makes it such that the ‘appropriate’ relationship between identity and behaviour may not be clear, particularly for behaviourally bisexual women. Thus, relevant individual differences may in part determine how women decide what degree of identity–behaviour coupling they desire. The purpose of this study was to examine whether the extent to which the amount of same-sex experience that young college women have predicts their sexual identity label varies as a function of their beliefs and attitudes about their sexual identity.

The complex nature of sexual identity

Though people typically report their sexual identity as a single category label, this category belies the great complexity underlying that categorisation. Although the relationship between sexual identity label and sexual behaviour is fairly straightforward for those who exclusively engage in same-sex or other-sex sexual behaviour, this is not the case for the behaviourally bisexual (e.g. Kinnish, Strassberg, & Turner, 2005). Behaviourally bisexual women are known to identify as heterosexual, bisexual or lesbian (e.g. Diamond, 2000; Kinsey, Pomeroy, & Martin, 1948; Vrangalova & Savin-Williams, 2010). This behavioural diversity among heterosexually identified women seems to be reflected in their greater likelihood, relative to heterosexually identified men, to question their sexual orientation (Morgan, Steiner, & Thompson, 2010; Morgan & Thompson, 2011) and to report lower commitment to their sexual identity (Morgan, 2012).

Furthermore, although the traditional identity label ‘bisexual’ might be thought appropriate for behaviourally bisexual women, many feel that this label is not sufficient to describe their sexual experiences and, thus, choose a more specific label such as ‘mostly straight’ or ‘bi-curious’ (e.g. Morgan & Thompson, 2011; Savin-Williams, 2005; Thompson & Morgan, 2008; Weinrich & Klein, 2002). Though women who hold more specific sexual identity labels (e.g. mostly straight) are behaviourally distinct from those who identify with more traditional labels (Thompson & Morgan, 2008), these more nuanced sexual identities are still less socially defined than sexual identity categories such as straight, bisexual or lesbian. This introduces even greater ambiguity into the relationship between identity and behaviour – how many same-sex experiences justify a ‘mostly straight’ versus an exclusively heterosexual label? Perhaps this ambiguity leaves room for factors other than sexual behaviour to predict identification with a ‘mostly straight’ identity label.

Complexity underlying sexual identity derives from the fact that sexual identity is not just based on sexual behaviour. Sexual identity is an organizing schema not only for the sexual experiences one identifies as relevant to one’s sexual orientation (e.g. behaviour, attraction, fantasy) but also for relevant cognitions, emotions and social experiences (Worthington, Savoy, Dillon, & Vernaglia, 2002). Perhaps, then, it is unsurprising that sexual identity is often not a perfect reflection of sexual behaviours. For instance, one’s sexual identity label may not reflect behaviours that one has already had but, instead, may reflect sexual behaviours one anticipates having or is open to in the future. Indeed, Klein and colleagues (Klein, 1990; Klein, Sepekoff, & Wolf, 1985) emphasised the importance of measuring past, present and ideal or anticipated sexual identities separately.

Individual differences and the identity–behaviour relationship

As distinguished from one’s sexual orientation, one’s sexual identity can be said to be adopted or chosen (Ellis & Mitchell, 2000). Theories of sexual identity development
suggest that the acquisition of a sexual identity is an active, dynamic and ongoing process characterised by different dimensions (e.g. Fassinger & Miller, 1996; McCarn & Fassinger, 1996; Worthington et al., 2002). Two women with the same sexual identity label may nonetheless hold different attitudes and beliefs regarding it (e.g. Weinrich & Klein, 2002; Worthington & Reynolds, 2009). Moreover, the same woman may feel differently about her own sexual identity across time (e.g. Diamond, 2008). Given the complexity underlying the adoption of a sexual identity, it follows that the consistency between young women’s sexual behaviour and sexual identity might vary across individuals. Some women may show a strong relationship between their sexual identity and behaviour such that the more same-sex behaviour they engage in, the more likely they are identified as a sexual minority. Other women may show a weak relationship between their sexual identity and behaviour such that the amount of same-sex behaviour they engage in is unrelated to their adoption of a sexual minority (or heterosexual) identity.

Individual differences in attitudes and beliefs regarding one’s sexual identity might help explain which women are likely to show a strong identity–behaviour relationship and which are not. In this article, we focus on individual differences in sexual identity exploration, uncertainty, commitment and integration (Worthington, Navarro, Savoy, & Hampton, 2008) as potential moderators of the identity–behaviour relationship for young college women. Derived from Marcia’s (1966) identity framework, Worthington et al. (2008) proposed that these four dimensions characterise identity development across all sexual identities.

**Sexual identity exploration, uncertainty, commitment and integration**

Sexual identity exploration indicates the degree to which an individual feels oriented ‘towards or away from sexual exploration’ (Worthington et al., 2008, p. 31). For instance, a heterosexually identified woman may feel inclined to explore her sexuality and experiment with both hetero- and same-sex sexuality; another heterosexually identified woman may feel uncomfortable with new sexual experiences. Bisexually identified individuals, relative to heterosexual and lesbian- and gay-identified individuals, show the highest levels of exploration (Worthington et al., 2008). Heterosexually identified women who question their sexual orientation are higher on exploration than non-questioning women (Morgan & Thompson, 2011). Furthermore, ‘mostly straight’ women exhibit higher exploration levels than exclusively straight women (Thompson & Morgan, 2008).

In this study, we predicted that women who were more exploratory of their sexual identity would have less identity–behaviour consistency than women who were less exploratory of their sexual identity. Exploratory women might not feel as compelled to tightly couple their sexual identity label with their sexual behaviour, given that they feel comfortable exploring different types of sexual experiences.

Sexual identity uncertainty is an index of the level of insecurity one experiences regarding the appropriateness of one’s sexual identity for oneself and the comfort one has with expressing that identity. For instance, a woman may identify as mostly straight but feel uncertain that this identity is appropriate for her. On the other hand, a bisexual woman may feel very certain in her sexual identity, feeling confident that her sexual experiences are an accurate expression of her sexual identity. Bisexually identified individuals are higher in uncertainty than heterosexual-, lesbian- and gay-identified individuals (Worthington et al., 2008). Perhaps, unsurprisingly, heterosexually identified women who question their sexual orientation are more uncertain about their sexual orientation than non-questioning
women (Morgan & Thompson, 2011). Mostly straight women are also more uncertain than exclusively straight women (Thompson & Morgan, 2008).

In this study, we predicted that women who were more uncertain about their sexual identity would also show less identity–behaviour consistency than women who were more certain about their sexual identity, irrespective of their sexual identity. We aimed to establish this correlation, but not to determine its cause. Uncertain women might become uncertain about their sexual identity because of the inconsistency between their sexual identity and behaviour. However, women who are uncertain of their sexual orientation may also feel less of a need to resolve discrepancies between their behaviour and their identity than women who feel more certain of their sexual identity.

Sexual identity commitment is a measure of an individual’s feelings of clarity regarding their sexual identity and the firmness of their belief regarding the appropriateness of their sexual identity for themselves. For instance, a bisexual woman may not feel strongly committed to her bisexual identity; she may be willing to consider other identities. On the other hand, a bisexual woman may feel quite confident that she understands her identity and is steadfast in her commitment to it. Heterosexually identified women who question their sexual orientation have less sexual identity commitment than non-questioning women (Morgan & Thompson, 2011). However, Thompson and Morgan (2008) showed that young women are equally committed to their sexual identities, regardless of the identity category they endorse.

In this study, we predicted that women who were less committed to their sexual identity would have less identity–behaviour consistency than women who were more committed to their sexual identity. Uncommitted women may show less identity–behaviour consistency because their lack of commitment indicates that they are transitioning to another sexual identity or, at least, they would be more comfortable undergoing such a transition.

Finally, the dimension of sexual identity integration measures one’s belief that aspects of one’s sexuality (e.g. sexual behaviours, needs, partners, values) are coherent with each other. For instance, a heterosexually identified woman high on the integration dimension may feel strongly that all aspects of her sexuality do and should tightly correspond to each other. On the other hand, a woman who identifies as mostly straight may not be concerned with the internal consistency of her sexuality; in fact, some research has shown mostly straight women to be less integrated than heterosexually identified women (Thompson & Morgan, 2008). Moreover, heterosexually identified women who question their sexual orientation have less sexual identity integration than non-questioning heterosexually identified women (Morgan & Thompson, 2011).

In this study, we predicted that women lower in sexual identity integration would show less identity–behaviour consistency than women higher in sexual identity integration. Women with a need for an integrated sexual identity may be more likely to engage in identity-consistent behaviours as a reflection of their desire for consistency in their sexual identity. Consistent with this prediction, heterosexually identified women who organise social and non-social information in more structured ways tend to also report more same-sex sexual attraction, behaviour and fantasy than do women who organise social and non-social information in less structured ways (Preciado & Peplau, 2011).

**Present study**

We examined whether these individual differences in beliefs about one’s sexual identity would explain differences in the relationship between sexual identity label (i.e. exclusively straight, mostly straight, bisexual or mostly/exclusively gay) and self-reported sexual
behaviour among a sample of behaviourally bisexual college-aged women. Specifically, we built upon previous research by looking at the effect of individual differences in sexual identity attitudes and beliefs on the sexual identity–behaviour relationship. We predicted that the relationship between sexual identity label and sexual behaviour would be most consistent among those participants who reported low levels of sexual identity exploration and sexual identity uncertainty and among those who reported high levels of sexual identity integration and sexual identity commitment. Correspondingly, we predicted that the relationship between sexual identity label and sexual behaviour would be least consistent among those participants who reported high levels of sexual identity exploration and uncertainty, and among those who reported low levels of sexual identity integration and commitment.

Method

Participants

Participants were recruited on the basis of a screening questionnaire distributed to students in the psychology participant pool at a public university in Northern California. Those students who identified as female and had reported experiencing and/or witnessing a same-sex kiss between women were contacted via email. In the email, participants were asked to sign up to participate in an interview and questionnaire study about same-sex behaviour among women.

A total of 114 college-aged women participated in the interview and survey portions of the study. In this study, we analysed the responses of the subset of 76 women who (1) chose from a list of possible sexual identity categories that their sexual orientation was best described as Exclusively Straight, Mostly Straight, Bisexual, Mostly Gay or Exclusively Gay and (2) were behaviourally bisexual, reporting at least some identity-inconsistent behaviour (i.e. same-sex for those identified as Exclusively or Mostly Straight or Bisexual; other-sex for those identified as Mostly or Exclusively Gay). Participants who chose a sexual identity that did not indicate a corresponding degree of same-sex behaviour (e.g. Questioning, Curious, Unidentified, Other; N = 28) were excluded because it was unclear how our hypotheses would apply to those sexual identity labels.

Race/ethnicity was assessed in an open-ended format using the question ‘How do you identify racially or ethnically?’ Participants in our final sample mostly self-identified as White/European American (54%) and were 20 years of age on average (SD = 1.45, range 18–25). Age and ethnic identity did not significantly differ by sexual identity category, all p’s > 0.20. Forty-five percent (n = 34) of participants identified as Exclusively Straight, 29% (n = 22) as Mostly Straight, 13% (n = 10) as Bisexual and 13% as Mostly or Exclusively Gay (n = 10).

Procedure

Participants who responded to the recruitment email signed up for the study online and came into the laboratory for individual study sessions. The study comprised a semi-structured interview followed by an online questionnaire. After giving consent, participants were interviewed by two female interviewers regarding their relationship history, sexual orientation, their experience of a same-sex kiss (if they had reported having one in the screening questionnaire) and their experience of witnessing a same-sex kiss between women (if they had reported having seen one in the screening questionnaire). The interviews lasted 70 minutes on average (range = 45–150 minutes).
Following the interview, participants were taken to an adjacent room with a computer and asked to fill out a secure online questionnaire (hosted on www.surveymonkey.com). The questionnaire took 45 minutes on average to complete and contained a variety of measures regarding gender, sexual experience and sexual identity. This article focuses on the sexual identity measure administered at the beginning of the interview portion of the study, the specific individual difference measures of beliefs about one’s own sexual identity taken from the online questionnaire portion of the study and the behavioural measures taken from the online questionnaire portion of the study. Upon completion, participants were asked whether they had any further questions and were asked to voluntarily provide follow-up contact information for future studies. Participants were then debriefed, provided with researcher contact information and given both more information regarding the study and a list of local gender- and sexuality-related resources.

**Measures**

This study focuses on responses to the sexual identity measure from the interview portion of the study and two specific measures included in the online questionnaire: a sexual experience scale measuring the incidence of other-sex and same-sex sexual behaviours and the Measure of Sexual Identity Exploration and Commitment (MoSIEC; Worthington et al., 2008).

**Sexual identity category**

Primary sexual identification was assessed towards the beginning of the interview, following questions about age, year in school, religious affiliation and dating experience. Participants were then asked to choose the label they currently use to describe themselves from a provided list of nine categories: Exclusively Straight, Mostly Straight, Bisexual, Mostly Gay/Lesbian, Exclusively Gay/Lesbian, Curious, Questioning, Unlabelled and Other. This study focuses on participants who chose the labels Exclusively Straight (ES), Mostly Straight (MS), Bisexual (BI) or Mostly or Exclusively Gay (GY). The Mostly \( (n = 3) \) and Exclusively \( (n = 7) \) Gay categories were collapsed to create a group with a large enough sample size to include in analyses.

**Sexual experience scale**

The sexual experience scale was constructed by the researchers for the study. The purpose of this scale was to assess the frequency with which respondents had different sexual experiences with both men and women (e.g. hand holding, making out, giving/receiving oral sex and giving/receiving vaginal and anal penetration). Participants were asked, ‘Please indicate the appropriate number that corresponds with how many times you have participated in each of the following consensual sexual activities’. Participants were asked to indicate whether they had engaged in each behaviour ‘never’ (given a value of ‘0’ (0), ‘1–2 times’ (1), ‘3–5 times’ (2), ‘6–9 times’ (3) or ‘10 or more times’ (4). See Table 1 for descriptive statistics of self-reported identity-inconsistent behaviour among the four sexual identity groups analysed below.

A total identity-inconsistent behaviour score was created by adding up the frequency responses to the different identity-inconsistent sexual experience items on the scale. Identity-inconsistent experiences were defined as same-sex experiences for ES, MS and...
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Exclusively straight</th>
<th>Mostly straight</th>
<th>Bisexual</th>
<th>Mostly/Exclusively gay</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Mean (SD)</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Mean (SD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Held hands</td>
<td>34 (100%)</td>
<td>3.21 (1.25)</td>
<td>22 (100%)</td>
<td>3.32 (1.13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lightly kissed</td>
<td>23 (68%)</td>
<td>1.79 (1.70)</td>
<td>21 (95%)</td>
<td>2.14 (1.28)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Made out</td>
<td>16 (47%)</td>
<td>1.12 (1.45)</td>
<td>17 (77%)</td>
<td>1.50 (1.19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caressed breasts (OC)</td>
<td>12 (35%)</td>
<td>0.82 (1.36)</td>
<td>12 (55%)</td>
<td>1.09 (1.27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had breasts caressed (OC)</td>
<td>15 (44%)</td>
<td>0.91 (1.38)</td>
<td>15 (68%)</td>
<td>1.50 (1.47)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fondled/kissed breasts (UC)</td>
<td>7 (21%)</td>
<td>0.41 (0.96)</td>
<td>8 (36%)</td>
<td>0.50 (0.74)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had breasts fondled/kissed (UC)</td>
<td>7 (21%)</td>
<td>0.38 (0.89)</td>
<td>9 (41%)</td>
<td>0.68 (1.04)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petted genitals</td>
<td>5 (15%)</td>
<td>0.26 (0.79)</td>
<td>6 (27%)</td>
<td>0.32 (0.57)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had genitals petted</td>
<td>4 (12%)</td>
<td>0.24 (0.78)</td>
<td>6 (27%)</td>
<td>0.45 (0.96)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performed oral sex</td>
<td>2 (6%)</td>
<td>0.15 (0.61)</td>
<td>4 (18%)</td>
<td>0.45 (1.18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Received oral sex</td>
<td>2 (6%)</td>
<td>0.15 (0.61)</td>
<td>4 (18%)</td>
<td>0.29 (0.90)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performed vaginal penetration</td>
<td>2 (6%)</td>
<td>0.09 (0.38)</td>
<td>3 (14%)</td>
<td>0.14 (0.35)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Received vaginal penetration</td>
<td>1 (3%)</td>
<td>0.06 (0.34)</td>
<td>2 (9%)</td>
<td>0.23 (0.87)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performed anal penetration</td>
<td>0 n/a</td>
<td>0 n/a</td>
<td>0 n/a</td>
<td>0 n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Received anal penetration</td>
<td>0 n/a</td>
<td>0 n/a</td>
<td>0 n/a</td>
<td>0 n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: OC, over clothing; UC, under clothing.
Identity-inconsistent = same-sex for Exclusively Straight, Mostly Straight and Bisexual.
Identity-inconsistent = other-sex for Mostly/Exclusively Gay.
N = number (percentage) reporting at least one incidence.
BI women, and as other-sex experiences for GY women. We then divided the identity-inconsistent behaviour score by the total frequency of same-sex and other-sex behaviours for each woman to create a score indicating the proportion of the total of her reported sexual behaviour that was identity-inconsistent (Proportion Score). The average Proportion Score for ES women was 0.20 (SD = 0.14), indicating that, on average, 20% of sexual behaviour was identity-inconsistent among these women. On average, 27% of sexual behaviour was identity-inconsistent among MS women (SD = 0.14) and 43% of sexual behaviour was identity-inconsistent among BI women. Among GY women, 26% of sexual behaviour was identity-inconsistent on average (SD = 0.12). Proportion Score had a skewness statistic of 0.58 (SE = 0.28), indicating a moderate but not problematic (skew < 1) positive skew. This was further confirmed by an examination of the Q–Q plot of the variable.

Measure of Sexual Identity Exploration and Commitment
The MoSIEC, developed by Worthington et al. (2008), is a multidimensional measure of individual differences in attitudes and beliefs regarding one’s sexual identity, intended for use with persons of any sexual identity label. The measure consists of a series of statements for which participants indicate their level of agreement. The response scale ranged from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 7 (Strongly Agree).

The MoSIEC has four distinct subscales: Exploration (nine items), Uncertainty (four items), Commitment (seven items) and Integration (five items). Sample items of the Exploration subscale include ‘I am actively trying new ways to express myself sexually’ and ‘My sexual values will always be open to exploration’. The mean of the Exploration subscale was 4.63 (SD = 1.27), Cronbach’s α = 0.90. Sample items of the Uncertainty subscale include ‘My sexual orientation is clear to me’ and ‘I do not know how to express myself sexually’. The mean of the Uncertainty subscale was 2.56 (SD = 1.45), Cronbach’s α = 0.88. Sample items of the Commitment subscale include ‘I have a clear sense of the types of sexual activities I prefer’ and ‘I have a firm sense of what my sexual values are’. The mean of the Commitment subscale was 5.17 (SD = 1.14), Cronbach’s α = 0.86. Finally, sample items of the Integration subscale include ‘My understanding of my sexual needs coincides with my overall sense of sexual self’ and ‘The sexual activities I prefer are compatible with all other aspects of my sexuality’. The mean of the Integration subscale was 5.44 (SD = 1.04), Cronbach’s α = 0.89. High scores on Exploration, Uncertainty, Commitment and Integration indicate that respondents are highly exploratory of, uncertain of, committed to and integrated with regard to their sexual identity, respectively.

Results
Analytic strategy
To test whether the relationship between same-sex behaviour and sexual identity label differed among women with individual differences in identity exploration, uncertainty, integration and commitment, we conducted a series of multinomial logistic regression analyses. Multinomial logistic regression analysis allows one to test how a set of variables predicts the log odds of a participant falling into one category relative to a base category. This technique allowed us to use a statistically parsimonious method of simultaneously measuring the relationship between sexual behaviour and identity for MS, BI and GY women (compared with ES women). In each analysis, we predicted the log odds of identifying as either MS, BI or GY (compared with ES) from participants’ Proportion...
Scores, one of the four subscales of the MoSIEC (sexual identity exploration, commitment, uncertainty and integration), and the interaction between Proportion Score and the relevant subscale.

If an interaction was significant in any given analysis, it would indicate that the relationship between sexual behaviour and sexual identification differed among these women in a way that was moderated by their scores on the relevant psychological ‘moderator’ variable (i.e. sexual identity exploration, uncertainty, integration or commitment). To understand the nature of such interactions, we followed up any significant interactions with tests of simple effects (i.e. tests of the relationship between two variables at a specific level of a third variable). Specifically, in each case where a significant interaction was observed, we ran additional analyses of simple effects to test the significance of the relationship between sexual behaviour and identity for participants who had a low score on the moderator (1 SD below the mean), an average score on the moderator (at the mean) and a high score on the moderator (1 SD above the mean).

Finally, to account for differences in not just the frequency of identity-inconsistent behaviours but also the intimacy of identity-inconsistent behaviours, in each of the subsequent analyses, we controlled for whether the participant had experienced identity-inconsistent Genital Contact (for ES, MS and BI = genital contact with women; for GY = genital contact with men; 0 = no identity-inconsistent genital contact, 1 = at least one instance of identity-inconsistent genital contact).

Table 2 details the results for the overall models resulting from our analyses. The first line of each section of that table indicates whether the relevant statistical model as a whole – including both the interaction and the Genital Contact covariate – predicted significant variance in the log odds of sexual identity in general. Subsequent lines within each section of the table show the strength of the interaction in predicting the log odds of identifying

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>$\chi^2$</th>
<th>$p$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sexual identity exploration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall model</td>
<td>59.69</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction (MS vs. ES)</td>
<td>4.97</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction (BI vs. ES)</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>0.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction (GY vs. ES)</td>
<td>2.36</td>
<td>0.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual identity uncertainty</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall model</td>
<td>78.88</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction (MS vs. ES)</td>
<td>12.60</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction (BI vs. ES)</td>
<td>8.24</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction (GY vs. ES)</td>
<td>9.07</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual identity commitment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall model</td>
<td>48.01</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction (MS vs. ES)</td>
<td>5.52</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction (BI vs. ES)</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>0.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction (GY vs. ES)</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>0.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual identity integration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall model</td>
<td>61.57</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction (MS vs. ES)</td>
<td>3.51</td>
<td>0.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction (BI vs. ES)</td>
<td>6.91</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction (GY vs. ES)</td>
<td>6.17</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
as MS (compared with ES), the strength of the interaction in predicting the log odds of identifying as BI (compared with ES) and the strength of the interaction in predicting the log odds of identifying as GY (compared with ES) for each of the following analyses.

For ease of understanding these simple slopes analyses, a positive effect of Proportion Score (i.e. a positive \( b \) coefficient) indicates that increasing proportion of identity-inconsistent behaviour is associated with an increased likelihood of identifying as MS, BI or GY (compared with ES). A non-significant effect of Proportion score (i.e. a non-significant \( b \) coefficient) indicates no relationship between identity-inconsistent behaviour and sexual identity label. A negative effect of Proportion Score (i.e. a negative \( b \) coefficient) indicates that increasing proportion of identity-inconsistent behaviour is associated with a decreased likelihood of identifying as MS, BI or GY (compared with ES).

**Interactions between sexual behaviour and sexual identity exploration**

We predicted that those participants higher in sexual identity exploration would have less consistency between their sexual behaviour and their sexual identity compared with participants who scored lower in sexual identity exploration. We tested this by predicting the log odds of identifying as MS, BI or GY (relative to ES) from the interaction of Proportion Score and Exploration, controlling for Genital Contact. The interaction of Proportion Score and Exploration was only a significant predictor of the log odds of identifying as MS; it did not predict the log odds of identifying as BI or GY. This indicates that although individual differences in sexual identity exploration did predict the degree of identity–behaviour consistency among MS women (compared with ES women), they were not predictive for BI or GY women (see Table 2).

As noted above, we investigated this significant interaction using simple slopes analysis. To examine how the relationship between sexual behaviour and sexual identity differed by level of sexual identity exploration among MS women (compared with ES women), we examined the behaviour–identity relationship at different levels of Exploration. There was a significant positive relationship between Proportion Score and the log odds of identifying as MS at low levels of Exploration (1 SD below the mean). In other words, participants who had low levels of sexual identity exploration were more likely to identify as MS (compared with ES) at higher proportions of same-sex behaviour. There was no relationship between Proportion Score and sexual identity for participants with average levels of Exploration. There was a marginally significant negative relationship between Proportion Score and identifying as MS at high levels of Exploration (1 SD above the mean), indicating that participants with high levels of sexual identity exploration and higher proportions of same-sex behaviour were marginally more likely to identify as ES than those with lower proportions of same-sex behaviour.

In summary, as expected, we found that higher levels of identity exploration were associated with a weaker and even reversed relationship (i.e. where higher levels of same-sex behaviour was associated with lower odds of identifying as MS) between behaviour and identity among MS women. Low levels of identity exploration were associated with a strong, positive relationship between same-sex behaviour and the log odds of identifying as MS (see Figure 1).

**Interactions between sexual behaviour and sexual identity uncertainty**

We predicted that those participants higher in sexual identity uncertainty would have a weaker relationship between sexual behaviour and sexual identity than those participants lower in sexual identity uncertainty. We tested this by predicting the log odds of identifying
Figure 1. The strength of the relationship between the proportion of same-sex behaviour and the log odds of identifying as MS, stratified by levels of moderator variables (b coefficient). Positive numbers indicate greater odds of identifying as MS relative to ES with increasing proportion of same-sex behaviour; negative numbers indicate greater odds of identifying as ES relative to MS with increasing proportion of same-sex behaviour. \(^p < 0.10\), \(^*p < 0.05\), \(**p < 0.01\).

as MS, BI or GY (relative to ES) from the interaction of Proportion Score and Uncertainty, controlling for Genital Contact. The interaction of Proportion Score and Uncertainty was a significant predictor of the log odds of identifying as MS, the log odds of identifying as BI and the log odds of identifying as GY. This indicates that individual differences in sexual identity uncertainty predicted the degree of identity–behaviour consistency among MS, BI and GY women (compared with ES women; see Table 2).

We first decomposed the interaction for MS women. To examine how the relationship between sexual behaviour and sexual identity differed by the level of sexual identity uncertainty among MS women (compared with ES women), we examined the strength of the behaviour–identity relationship at different levels of Uncertainty. There was a significant positive relationship between Proportion Score and the log odds of identifying as MS at low levels of Uncertainty (1 SD below the mean). In other words, participants who had low levels of sexual identity uncertainty were more likely to identify as MS (compared with ES) at higher proportions of same-sex behaviour. There was no relationship between Proportion Score and sexual identity at an average level of Uncertainty. There was a significant negative relationship between Proportion Score and identifying as MS at high levels of Uncertainty (1 SD above the mean), indicating that participants with high levels of sexual identity uncertainty and higher proportions of same-sex behaviour were more likely to identify as ES than those with lower proportions of same-sex behaviour.

In summary, we found that higher levels of identity uncertainty were associated with a reversed relationship (i.e. where higher levels of same-sex behaviour was associated with lower odds of identifying as MS) between behaviour and identity among MS women. As expected, low levels of identity uncertainty were associated with a strong, positive relationship between same-sex behaviour and the log odds of identifying as MS (see Figure 1).

We then decomposed the interaction for BI women. There was a significant positive relationship between Proportion Score and the log odds of identifying as BI at low levels of Uncertainty (1 SD below the mean). In other words, participants who had low levels of sexual identity uncertainty were more likely to identify as BI (compared with ES) at higher proportions of same-sex behaviour. There was a marginally positive relationship between
Proportion Score and sexual identity at an average level of Uncertainty. There was no relationship between sexual behaviour and sexual identity at high levels of Uncertainty (1 SD above the mean).

In summary, as expected, lower levels of identity uncertainty were associated with a positive relationship between same-sex behaviour and the log odds of identifying as BI; higher levels of identity uncertainty were associated with a weaker or non-existent relationship between sexual behaviour and identity (see Figure 2).

Finally, we decomposed the interaction for GY women. Note that in this case, a positive relationship between Proportion Score and the log odds of identifying as GY indicates that as the proportion of other-sex behaviour increases, the likelihood of identifying as GY also increases. Interestingly, there was a marginally positive relationship between Proportion Score and the log odds of identifying as GY at low levels of Uncertainty (1 SD below the mean). In other words, participants who had low levels of sexual identity uncertainty were marginally more likely to identify as GY (compared with ES) at higher proportions of other-sex behaviour. There was a marginally negative relationship between Proportion Score and sexual identity at average levels of Uncertainty and a strong negative relationship between sexual behaviour and sexual identity at high levels of Uncertainty (1 SD above the mean). These last two analyses indicated that participants with average and high levels of sexual identity uncertainty were more likely to identify as ES instead of GY at higher levels of other-sex behaviour.

In summary, lower levels of identity uncertainty were associated with a positive relationship between other-sex behaviour and the log odds of identifying as GY; higher levels of identity uncertainty were associated with a negative relationship between other-sex behaviour and GY identity (see Figure 3).

**Interactions between sexual behaviour and sexual identity commitment**

Next, we tested whether those participants higher in sexual identity commitment would have a stronger relationship between same-sex behaviour and sexual identity than those participants lower in sexual identity commitment. We tested this by predicting the log

![Figure 2](image-url)  
Figure 2. The strength of the relationship between the proportion of same-sex behaviour and the log odds of identifying as BI, stratified by levels of moderator variables (b coefficient). Positive numbers indicate greater odds of identifying as BI relative to ES with increasing proportion of same-sex behaviour; negative numbers indicate greater odds of identifying as ES relative to BI with increasing proportion of same-sex behaviour. †p < 0.10, **p < 0.01.
odds of identifying as MS, BI or GY (relative to ES) from the interaction of Proportion Score and Commitment, controlling for Genital Contact. The interaction of Proportion Score and Commitment was only a significant predictor of the log odds of identifying as MS; it did not significantly predict the log odds of identifying as BI or GY. This indicates that although individual differences in sexual identity uncertainty predicted the degree of identity–behaviour consistency among MS women (compared with ES women), it did not predict the degree of identity–behaviour consistency among BI or GY women (see Table 2).

To examine how the relationship between sexual behaviour and sexual identity differed by level of sexual identity commitment among MS women (compared with ES women), we examined the behaviour–identity relationship at different levels of Commitment. There was a significant positive relationship between Proportion Score and the log odds of identifying as MS at high levels of Commitment (1 SD above the mean). In other words, participants who had high levels of sexual identity commitment were more likely to identify as MS (compared with ES) at higher proportions of same-sex behaviour. There was a marginally positive relationship between Proportion Score and sexual identity at average levels of Commitment. There was no relationship between Proportion Score and identifying as MS at low levels of Commitment (1 SD above the mean).

In summary, as expected, we found that higher levels of identity commitment were associated with a stronger relationship between behaviour and identity among MS women than lower levels of identity commitment (see Figure 1).

**Interactions between sexual behaviour and sexual identity integration**

Finally, we predicted that those participants higher in sexual identity integration would have a stronger relationship between sexual behaviour and sexual identity than those participants lower in sexual identity integration. We tested this by predicting the log odds of identifying as MS, BI or GY (relative to ES) from the interaction of Proportion Score and Integration, controlling for Genital Contact. The interaction of Proportion Score and Integration was a marginally significant predictor of the log odds of identifying as MS, and a significant predictor of the log odds of identifying as BI and of identifying as GY. This indicates
that individual differences in sexual identity uncertainty predicted the degree of identity–
behaviour consistency among MS, BI and GY women (compared with ES women; see
Table 2).

Because the interaction was bordering on statistical significance, we first decomposed
the interaction for MS women. To examine how the relationship between sexual behaviour
and sexual identity differed by level of sexual identity integration among MS women
(compared with ES women), we examined the size of the behaviour–identity relation-
ship at different levels of Integration. There was a significant positive relationship between
Proportion Score and the log odds of identifying as MS at high levels of Integration (1 SD
above the mean). In other words, consistent with the effects for identity commitment, par-
ticipants who had high levels of sexual identity integration were more likely to identify as
MS (compared with ES) at higher proportions of same-sex behaviour. There was no rela-
tionship between Proportion Score and sexual identity at average or low levels (1 SD below
the mean) of Integration.

In summary, as expected, we found that among MS women, higher levels of sexual
identity integration were associated with stronger relationship between behaviour and
identity than average or low levels of sexual identity integration (see Figure 1).

We then examined the interaction for BI women. There was a significant positive rela-
tionship between Proportion Score and the log odds of identifying as BI at high levels
(1 SD below the mean) and average levels of Integration. In other words, participants who
had high or average levels of sexual identity integration were more likely to identify as BI
(compared with ES) at higher proportions of same-sex behaviour. There was no relation-
ship between Proportion Score and sexual identity at low levels of Integration (1 SD below
the mean).

In summary, as expected, higher levels of sexual identity integration were associated
with a positive relationship between same-sex behaviour and the log odds of identifying as
BI (see Figure 2).

Finally, we decomposed the interaction for GY women. Note that in this case, a positive
relationship between Proportion Score and the log odds of identifying as GY indicates that
as the proportion of other-sex behaviour increases, the likelihood of identifying as GY also
increases. Surprisingly, there was a marginally positive relationship between Proportion
Score and the log odds of identifying as GY at high levels of Integration (1 SD below
the mean). In other words, participants who had high levels of sexual identity integration
were marginally more likely to identify as GY (compared with ES) at higher proportions of
other-sex behaviour. There was no relationship between Proportion Score and sexual
identity at the mean of Integration. There was a marginally significant negative relationship
between Proportion Score and sexual identity at low levels of Integration (1 SD below
the mean). This indicates that participants with low levels of sexual identity integration
were marginally more likely to identify as ES instead of GY at higher levels of other-sex
behaviour.

In summary, higher levels of sexual identity integration were associated with a positive
relationship between other-sex behaviour and the log odds of identifying as GY; lower
levels of sexual identity integration were associated with a negative relationship between
other-sex behaviour and GY identity (see Figure 3).

**Discussion**

Sexual identity is often used as an indicator of other aspects of sexual orientation, including
sexual behaviour. Yet, the reality is that the relationship between women’s sexual iden-
tity labels and sexual behaviour is often complicated (e.g. Diamond, 2008; Thompson &
Morgan, 2008). The present research presents a novel approach to the identity–behaviour relationship. Specifically, we found that differences among college-aged women in the relationship between their sexual identities and their sexual behaviours vary as a function of individual differences in identity exploration, uncertainty, commitment and integration.

In this investigation, we found that those participants who identified as mostly straight (compared with those who identified as exclusively straight) exhibited consistency between their sexual identity label and their sexual behaviour when they were not exploratory of, highly certain of, highly committed to and highly integrated in their sexual identity. Among women who identified as bisexual (compared with those who identified as exclusively straight), they exhibited consistency between their sexual identity label and their sexual behaviour when they were highly certain of their sexual identity and had a moderately or highly internally integrated sexual identity.

Notably, we also found that, among mostly straight women (compared with those who identified as exclusively straight), high sexual identity uncertainty was related to a negative relationship between sexual identity and sexual behaviour. In other words, among those women who identified as ‘mostly straight’ and who were highly uncertain of that identification, greater proportions of same-sex behaviour were associated with a greater likelihood of identifying as exclusively heterosexual. We found the same pattern for high sexual identity exploration, though that effect was only marginally significant: among women who identified as ‘mostly straight’ and who were highly exploratory of that identity, greater proportions of same-sex behaviour were associated with a greater likelihood of identifying as exclusively heterosexual. These findings suggest that young women who are highly uncertain and exploratory with regard to their sexual identity may feel comfortable engaging in same-sex behaviour while maintaining an ‘exclusively straight’ sexual identity. Alternately, young women who are highly uncertain and exploratory may be questioning their exclusively heterosexual identity but have not made a transition to a mostly straight identity.

Finally, the pattern of results for gay women was surprising. We found that among mostly/exclusively gay women (compared with exclusively straight women), high identity certainty and high identity integration were marginally associated with a greater likelihood of identifying as mostly/exclusively gay for women who had engaged in the greatest proportion of other-sex behaviour. Identity uncertainty and disintegration were associated with a greater likelihood of identifying as exclusively straight, rather than gay, among women who engaged in the greatest proportion of other-sex behaviour. These findings suggest that for gay-identified women, identity certainty and integration may be about more than just identity–behaviour consistency, but we are tentative about this conclusion because of the small number of gay women in our sample. Future research should utilise larger samples of gay-identified women to investigate the role individual differences play in the identity–behaviour relationship for those women.

One’s sexual behaviours do not always clearly point to a suitable sexual identity label, especially for the behaviourally bisexual. We propose that individual differences in attitudes and beliefs regarding sexual identity may guide individuals in their sexual identification. Although this study cannot prove directionality of these effects, it forms a foundation for future experimental work looking at the unique contributions of sexual behaviour and individual differences in sexual identity formation.

Considerations for the present research

Although we believe that this work represents an important step forward in our understanding of the sexual identity–behaviour relationship, there are some aspects of the present
research that beg further discussion. The study presented here utilised a relatively small convenience sample of college-aged women, limiting statistical power. Specifically, the sample included small numbers of bisexual and lesbian young women, and future inquiries should include larger, more representative sexual-minority samples. Due to these reasons, it is important to be cautious in generalising the results of the present research. For instance, young people are more likely to use alternative identity labels such as ‘mostly straight’ than older cohorts (Savin-Williams, 2005). Furthermore, college is a unique social context, and young women’s identities during this time are often in flux (Diamond, 2008). Future work should examine the effects of individual differences on the identity–behaviour relationship among broader, more diverse, populations, including older participants.

Similarly, this study examined the identity–behaviour relationship among behaviourally bisexual women, but more research is needed to address whether these patterns would hold for men as well. Some research suggests that men exhibit a stronger relationship between their sexual identity and their arousal patterns than women (e.g. Chivers, Rieger, Latty, & Bailey, 2004). On the other hand, men do demonstrate identity–behaviour inconsistency, if to a lesser extent, than women (e.g. Laumann et al., 1994; Vrangalova & Savin-Williams, 2010). More work is needed to address the psychological underpinnings of the identity–behaviour relationship among sexually diverse men.

Finally, the individual differences used in the present research were measured following a long interview dealing with same-sex behaviour. It is possible that participants’ responses to the measures of identity exploration, uncertainty, commitment and integration were impacted by having recently discussed their sexual orientation in great detail. However, the measures have been established to have good test–retest reliability, even in 2-week intervals of measurement, indicating that the measures are unlikely to be hugely impacted by the interviews (Worthington et al., 2008). Additionally, because we find our hypothesised effects among mostly straight, bisexual and mostly/exclusively gay women, and controlling for same-sex genital contact, any systematic bias (e.g. bias occurring across groups of participants) in responses to the measures as a result of the interview process seems improbable.

**Implications and extensions**

In addition to providing a new avenue for research on the sexual identity–behaviour relationship, the present research has specific implications and extensions. We assert that the present findings are useful for the further refinement of the measurement of sexual orientation and its various aspects (e.g. behaviour, attraction, fantasy and identity). A central challenge to the psychological study of sexual orientation is that extrapolating from one aspect of sexual orientation (e.g. sexual identity) to another (e.g. sexual behaviour) is sometimes misleading (Savin-Williams, 2005). Indeed, many researchers have devised alternate methods for measuring sexual orientation and its component parts (e.g. Kinsey et al., 1948; Klein et al., 1985). The present findings suggest that researchers should pay closer attention to individual differences in beliefs about sexual orientation in order to understand the relationship between a respondent’s sexual identity label and other aspects of their sexual orientation.

The results from this study also suggest strategies for exploring differences in the relationship between sexual identity label and sexual behaviour across social contexts, both within the United States and more broadly. Within the United States, there are subpopulations that show greater discrepancies between sexual identity label and sexual behaviour than most. Some examples include college populations (Vrangalova & Savin-Williams, 2010), heterosexually identified men who engage in same-sex behaviours while in prison.
women who begin long-term relationships with partners discrepant with their chosen sexual identity (e.g. Hany, 1983; Peplau, Cochran, Rook, & Padesky, 1978; Whisman, 1996) and women who switch to identity labels that are inconsistent with their history of sexual behaviour (Kitzinger & Wilkinson, 1995).

It is possible that in these unique social contexts – such as college – changes in the sexual identity–behaviour relationship are precipitated by or at least accompanied by a corresponding change in sexual identity attitudes and beliefs. The data in this study only allow for the examination of relationships and cannot make claims regarding causality. That is to say that the present results allow that individual differences in identity exploration and uncertainty could act as either a cause or a consequence of the strength of the sexual identity–behaviour relationship among young women. For instance, among heterosexually identified women transitioning into college, this change in context may be accompanied by a corresponding change in sexual identity exploration or commitment, facilitating their ability and comfort with engaging in identity-inconsistent same-sex behaviour. Focusing on individual differences in sexual identity attitudes and beliefs may be a useful way to engage with the psychological mechanisms underlying identity–behaviour discrepancies.

Similarly, outside of the United States, the meaning of same-sex behaviour and the identity labels likely to be attached to those behaviours varies considerably from culture to culture (e.g. Blackwood, 1993; Herdt, 1997). Although modern Western cultures tend to view same-sex sexual behaviour as indicative of homosexuality, evidence from India (Khan, 1996) and Latin American countries (Magaña & Carrier, 1991; Mason, Marks, Simoni, Ruiz, & Richardson, 1995) shows that this is not true across the globe. For instance, Herdt (1984) demonstrated that homosexual behaviour in New Guinea was more connected to ritual than to either a bisexual or a gay identity. The present research suggests that individual differences in beliefs and attitudes about sexual identity may explain these cross-contextual differences in identity–behaviour congruency. To our knowledge, no research has examined differences in sexual identity exploration, uncertainty, commitment and integration across cultures. Future research should examine the impact of sexual identity attitudes and behaviours on the identity–behaviour relationship in diverse geographical locations.

Conclusion

The present research takes a psychological approach to a phenomenon that was heretofore primarily isolated to description in the literature: the sexual identity–behaviour relationship. In doing so, we have been able to demonstrate that individual differences in a person’s beliefs and attitudes towards sexual identity contribute to the explanation for observed discrepancies in sexual identity label and sexual behaviour. The present research lays a foundation for future research on the psychological underpinnings of individual configurations of sexual identity label and sexual experience.

Acknowledgements

This research was conducted as part of Elisabeth Morgan Thompson’s dissertation research at the University of California, Santa Cruz. The authors thank the University of Michigan Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Psychology Summer Institute for making this collaboration possible.

Note

1. We defined identity-inconsistent behaviour for Bisexual women as same-sex behaviour because Bisexual women, on average, reported more other-sex behaviour than same-sex behaviour ($M$ proportion of same-sex behaviour = 0.43, $SD = 0.07$).
Notes on contributors

Mariana A. Preciado is a Ph.D. student in social psychology at the University of California, Los Angeles. Her research focuses on the influence of motivational and perceptual factors on the self-perception of sexual orientation. She is also interested in the mechanisms by which people hold motivated perceptions of their sexual orientation and the implications of these processes for the development of sexual orientation and the promotion of sexual health.

Elisabeth Morgan Thompson is an associate consultant at LFA Group: Learning for Action in San Francisco, CA. She received her Ph.D. from the University of California, Santa Cruz, and completed her postdoctoral work at the Frances McClelland Institute for Children, Youth, and Families at the University of Arizona. Her research program focuses on social influences on gender and sexuality, including media, popular culture, peers and schools; young women’s sexual identity development; and adolescent sexual health, rights and education.

References


