

**COLLOQUIAL TERMS USED IN YOUNG
ADULTS' TALK ABOUT SEXUAL PRACTICES,
SEXUAL SUBJECTIVITIES AND SEXUAL
DESIRES'**

Thesis submitted by

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ABSTRACT

Much of the growth in sexualities' research has taken the form of large scale surveys, but there is also increased interest in qualitative approaches that provide useful insights into the experiential and subjective aspects of sexuality, and illuminate the social and cultural contexts shaping these experiences. The reason for this research is to provide a richer understanding of the language that young people employ when speaking about sexuality.

This study examines young adults' talk about sexualities with a special focus on the way in which colloquial terms are deployed in this talk and through the presence of gendered and/or heteronormative assumptions. Data consisted of posts off a student-led social media site and the study design employed was a validity check group interview. The social media site allowed its followers to post anonymously about a range of sexualities related issues. Data were analysed thematically, using a deductive, critical, and post-structuralist approach with key insights drawn on from Michael Foucault, Adrienne Rich, Gayle Rubin, Judith Butler and Rosalind Gill.

Three overarching themes emerged: young adults spoke to sexual practices, sexual subjectivities and sexual desires. A major focus of this talk is casual sex. This talk showed that there are attempts to undermine gendered and heteronormative power relations, for example, non-normative sexual experiences were not seen as deviant, although those who were engaging in monogamy and casual sex were constructed as deviant sexual subjects. Yet underpinning of these power relations still took place, for example, in the female missing discourse of desire, the internalisation of male sexual desires over female sexual desires and the sexual double standard. There was a clear divide between the sexual practices and sexual subjectivities that were considered to be good and bad. This research therefore has the potential to benefit sexuality interventions by bringing into sharp focus the actual experiences of young adults.

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DECLARATION

I am the sole author of this thesis. No part of this thesis has been published or submitted for publication. To the best of my knowledge, my thesis does not infringe upon anyone's copyright nor violate any proprietary rights. Any ideas, techniques, quotations, or any other material from the work of other people that I have included in my thesis, published or otherwise, are fully acknowledged in accordance with the American Psychological Association (APA) guidelines. This is a true copy of my thesis, including any final revisions, as approved by my supervisor. This thesis has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other university or institution.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
Aids	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
USA	United States of America
UCKAR	University Currently Known as Rhodes
BPS	British Psychological Society
LO	Life Orientation
LGBTQ	Lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transsexual and queer
RPERC	Research Proposal and Ethics Review Committee
STD	Sexually Transmitted Disease
HPV	Human Papillomavirus Infection
S/M	Sadism and Masochism

CHAPTER ONE



INTRODUCTION

This research explores the colloquial terms young adults deploy in their everyday talk on sexual practices, sexual subjectivities and sexual desires. This talk was accessed through a student-led Facebook site where people can post anonymously about any aspect of their lives. In the above image, I have provided an organic image capturing how posts look; the colloquial terms within this post include “hook-up”, “hoe” and “nasties”. In collecting these data, I was interested to know: (a) which colloquial terms young adults draw on to speak about their experiences as desiring subjects and, (b) how this language is deployed in the construction of sexual desires, sexual practices and sexual subjectivities. In relation to the second question, I was particularly interested in examining how deployment of this language underpins and/or undermines gendered and heteronormative power relations.

In the following sections of this chapter, I aim to locate my research in the South African context. This focuses on numerous aspects: firstly, how the vast majority of sexuality research is integrated within a disease model and, although valuable, a new direction needs to be taken; secondly, the contestations of young people's sexual subjectivities as seen in protests and social media campaigns; thirdly, how the university campus is a site for sexual vulnerability of young adults; and lastly, the role that sexuality education plays in young adults' lives.

SEXUALITIES RESEARCH AND THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT

In recent decades there has been a significant growth in sexualities research worldwide and in South Africa. The reasons for this growth are varied. South Africa has the largest human immunodeficiency virus HIV epidemic in the world. The HIV prevalence amongst females aged 15-49 is 26.3%, while amongst males of the same age it is 14.8%. Incidence (the rate of new infections) of HIV is highest among young adults aged 15 to 24 years ("The fifth South African national HIV prevalence, incidence, behaviour and communication survey (sabssm v1)," 2017). In South Africa annually, 118.2 rape incidents are reported per 100,000 women, but due to under reporting, this is not an accurate picture of the actual rates [South African Police Service (SAPS), 2014]. Thirty-five point five percent of reported sexual offences were made by individuals older than 16 (Maluleke, 2018). Teenage pregnancy, which has been decreasing since 1996, is still very common (Panday, Makiwane, Ranchod, & Letsoala, 2009). Furthermore, while abortion has been legal in South Africa since 1996, evidence suggests that adolescents are less likely to make use of legal abortion services (Panday et al., 2009). For all these reasons, over the past 15 years, there has been a boom in research into the sexual attitudes and behaviours of the South African youth.

Much of the surge in sexuality research has been in the form of large-scale surveys, including Umthenthe Uhlaba Usamila: The South African Youth Risk Behaviour Survey (Reddy et al., 2003), HIV and Sexual Behaviour Among Young South Africans: National Survey of 15-24 Year Olds (Pettifor et al., 2005), The National Household HIV Prevalence and Risk Survey of South African Children (Brookes, Shisana, & Richter, 2004), Reproductive Attitudes of Teenage Women, their Mothers, and Maternal Grandmothers in South Africa (Spjeldnaes, Sam, Moland, & Peltzer, 2007), The South African National HIV Prevalence, Incidence and Behaviour Survey (Shisana et al., 2014) and The Third National HIV Communication Survey (Johnson et al., 2013). This research has been useful in terms of identifying patterns of risk and possibilities for intervention. However, there has also been an increased interest in developing qualitative approaches to the study of youths and sexuality.

Qualitative sexualities research has focussed on gendered dynamics and power relations in maintaining particular sexual and reproductive health status. Arguably, this is because (as with survey research) it has been problem-driven, fuelled by concern about high rates in HIV, sexual violence, teenage pregnancy and abortion. Nevertheless, this research has provided useful insights into the experiential and subjective aspects of sexuality and illuminated the social and cultural contexts shaping these experiences (For example, Bhana & Pattman, 2011; Gibbs, Sikweyiya, & Jewkes, 2014; Mathews, Jewkes, & Abrahams, 2011; Shefer, Clowes, & Vergnani, 2012).

One interesting aspect that emerges from a focus on the socio-cultural context is the language that young people employ in their talk about sexual desires, sexual practices and sexual subjectivities. In the United States of America (USA), research on young gay men's sexual practices brought attention to practices colloquially termed 'bare-backing' (unprotected anal sex) and 'bug chasing' (bare-backing with the intention of contracting HIV) (Gauthier & Forsyth, 1999). In South Africa, Swartz and Bhana (2009) have identified terms

such as 'the spare wheel' to indicate concurrent partners and 'small house' and 'big house' to differentiate between main and secondary relationships. South African researchers examining transactional sex – where money or gifts are exchanged for a sexual relationship – have identified terms such as 'taxi queen' that are used to describe transactional sex involving a young woman and a taxi driver and 'sugar daddy' to describe intergenerational transactional sex in the local vernacular (e.g. Potgieter, Strebel, Shefer, & Wagner, 2012). In recent months, 'blesser' has become a popular term used in the South African news media to describe wealthy older men who provide financial assistance and expensive gifts to young women in exchange for sexual favours (for example, Wa Afrika, 2017).

Little research has endeavoured to examine sexualities' slang outside of the context of HIV/AIDS and transactional sex or early reproduction. One notable exception is the scholarship examining female and male genital slang. The results of this research indicate that women are more likely to use euphemistic terms for genitalia, while men tend to use more derogatory language to describe genitalia (for example, Braun & Kitzinger, 2001; Cameron, 1997; Cornog, 1981). Although this research is interesting to read, it is a bit dated now and does not speak to the local South African context. The focus on terminology for genitalia also means that the relational aspects of sexualities are overlooked. Another notable exception is a recent South African study examining the intersections of isiZulu genderlects (a variety of speech or conversational style used by a particular gender) that young gay men employ in the construction of *skesana* identities (Msibi & Rudwick, 2015). A *skesana* is a man who takes the passive role (that is, the traditionally feminine role) in sexual relations with other men. This research illustrates how linguistic expressions allow gay men to draw on traditional sexual and gender identities to signify same-sex desires. The usefulness of this research is that it highlights the importance of everyday talk as a site for examining the role of social and cultural contexts in shaping sexual desires, sexual practices and sexual subjectivities, and this is the focus of my research.

THE PRESENT RESEARCH

The research upon which my thesis is based examines the colloquial terms that young adults draw on to speak about their experiences as desiring subjects. My research questions are: Which colloquial terms do young adults draw on to speak about their experiences as desiring subjects? And how is this language deployed in the construction of sexual desires, sexual practices and sexual subjectivities? To investigate this, I collected data in the form of posts to a public, student-led Facebook group in which university students discuss sex and matters related to sexualities – an example of which is provided at the start of this chapter. Additionally, at the time, I conducted a validity check group interview with undergraduate university students and my analysis undertook a post-structuralist stance.

The online data was sourced from Rhodes Confessions, a site with an interesting confessional nature. The site runs on a programme on which interested parties, from now on called posters, can anonymously post comments relating to their lives. In addition to this, the page name creates the idea that because of the anonymity, one can post an array of confessions. Furthermore, those who post anonymously can follow their post for likes, comments and shares, but run the risk, if commenting on their own posts, of exposing their identity. This begs the question of the satisfaction of posting a confession if one cannot engage with comments on one's confession. It also brings to light the satisfaction one may feel after posting a confession. It is never clear whether these interested parties who confess their experiences are making them up, or telling the truth. However, this research is not interested in the validity of experience. The focus rather is on young adults' everyday talk.

It is important to do this research because the sexual practices and subjectivities of young people are sites of contestation in South Africa, where there is political interest in the experiences of women and violence. Contestations of sexual practices and sexual subjectivities occur at a grassroots level which includes protests and social media

campaigns to advocate for awareness and change in traditional ways of thinking around sexuality.

GENDER AND SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGNS

In South Africa the global 16 Days of Activism for No Violence Against Women and Children campaign has the support of the ruling party. In recent years, the campaign was launched by former President Jacob Zuma and officials from government departments, such as, the Department of Basic Education, the Ministry for Women and Children and People with Disabilities and the event has been attended by representatives from civil society organisations.

There has also been a growth in a range of grassroots protests and social media campaigns addressing sexual violence and gender inequality. These include the #RURferenceList protest at the University Currently Known as Rhodes (UCKAR¹) in 2016, which challenged the institution's failure to respond to reports of sexual violence on campus. Additionally, in 2016, the #RememberKwesi protest was staged during former President Jacob Zuma's Independent Electoral Committee (IEC) speech, in which young women held up placards with the words 'Khanga', 'Remember Khwezi', '10 yrs later' and 'I am 1 in 3' which were all references to the 2006 trial in which he was charged (and later acquitted) of raping the daughter of a close friend.

¹ Over the past 4 years the name Rhodes University has been controversial as it references Cecil Rhodes, a British white supremacist. Protests such as Rhodes must fall, led students and some media outlets to refer to the university as "The University Currently Known as Rhodes"

In 2017, the campaigns #MenAreTrash, #SlutWalk, #HoelsLife and #NudeRevolution sought to challenge toxic masculinity² in contemporary society. The #MenAreTrash was initiated after the much-publicised murder of a young woman, Karabo Mokoena. Shortly after she was reported missing, police found her charred remains in a shallow grave in a field in the Johannesburg suburb of Lyndhurst. On May 2nd, her boyfriend was found guilty of her murder (Chabalala, 2018).

Sadly, the response of many South African men to the #MenAreTrash campaign illustrated precisely the sorts of beliefs about gender and sexuality that the campaign sought to challenge. Rather than admitting that toxic masculinity is a significant problem impacting upon the lives of South African women (and men) and committing to addressing systems of belief and entitlement that underpin it, many men chose instead to argue that “not all men are trash” (Tshingilane, 2017, May 18) and even that some women were ‘asking for it’, suggesting that they were somehow to blame for what had happened to them. Commenting on the arrest of Sandile Mantsoe for the murder of Karabo Mokoena, Mr Fikihle Mbalula, the South African Minister of Police, stated that he (Mantsoe) had been arrested for killing “such a beautiful girl, [a] yellowbone” [a term describing a light skinned black person], suggesting that Mokoena’s murder was particularly despicable because she was attractive (The Citizen, 2017, May 13).

In a similar fashion, a policeman in Toronto, Canada, suggested that women should avoid sexual assault by not dressing as sluts. His comment led to an outcry concerning the universal tendency for victim blaming and provoked a series of global #SlutWalk protests. These protests are largely endorsed by Amber Rose, an American celebrity personality, who has suffered her own slut shaming at the hands of the press. Rose hosts a weekend festival for empowering women where a slut walk protest takes place (Evans, 2017, September 28).

² Toxic masculinity is a term that is used to refer to traditional norms of behaviour among men in contemporary society that are associated with detrimental social and psychological effects (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005).

These protests aim to reclaim the derogatory slur 'slut' – a misogynistic term used to shame women for being sexual subjects.

Not only do these protests take place in the global Northern Hemisphere, they also occur in South Africa. South Africa has held its own version of the protests. The first was in 2008, after a woman was attacked at a taxi rank for wearing a miniskirt. Taxi drivers and hawkers tore off her clothes, taxi drivers allegedly stuck their fingers up her skirt, poured alcohol over her head and called her names. After this attack, the protestors, mainly black women, wore miniskirts and danced with placards calling for the end of sexual harassment and corrective rape of queer women ("Miniskirt ordeal sparks outrage," 2008, February 19).

In 2011 simultaneous slut walk protests were held in major cities of South Africa. Protestors of all genders, races and ages chanted "it's a dress, not a yes" (Moila, 2011, September 26), while other slut walk slogans read: "does this outfit say, 'rape me?'" and "rapists rape people, not outfits" (Slut Walk JHB, 2011). Since then, South Africa hosted another slut walk protest in 2014.

In the continuation of these protests there is a debate about the appropriateness of reclaiming the slur 'slut', in particular in relation to black women. In response to the #SlutWalk protests founded by Amber Rose, a black American woman wrote an open letter (Brison, 2011, September 27) concerning the appropriateness of such a protest. In this letter, the writer claimed that the protests had attracted more white than black women. The letter explained that black women did not have the same sexual accessibility and freedom of expression as white women. As women they were already oppressed, and as black women they had suffered and were still suffering from further oppression (Beal, 2008).

The origins of particular understandings of black women's sexuality are rooted in American slavery. Black women were sold into slavery as prostitutes for white men. The sexual stereotype of the black woman was forged into a stereotype called a Jezebel. At that time

the images of a Jezebel were suggested as reflecting black women to encourage them to satisfy the sexual fantasies of white men. This constructs the black woman as a whore or hoochie and it furthers the control of the black woman's sexuality and oppression (Collins, 2000). Although there are many movements that aim to change thinking and regain power for women's sexuality, black women's sexuality is often marginalised and not at the forefront of these movements.

Because of this marginalisation, the recent national and international #HoelsLife and the #NudeRevolution are targeted at black women's sexual freedom. The #HoelsLife social media movement embraces the sexual freedom of black women and reclaims power over their bodies previously maintained by patriarchy (Phalaetsile, 2017, August 11). The term 'hoe' implicates black women more so than any other race of women because of the history of the black women's sexuality. This movement, like the #SlutWalks, reclaims the term 'hoe' – which derives from the term 'whore', a term used to describe women who are prostitutes. The reclaiming of the term 'hoe' dissociates all misogynistic power from it, extending a defiance towards notions of sexual passivity.

The #NudeRevolution in South Africa gave space to many black women to share nude pictures of themselves with other black women. The aim was to affirm women's bodies without the sexual objectification of them, often done through the male gaze. This allowed a women's body a safe space, away from sexual harassment or abuse, while giving them the space to explore what their sexuality meant to them (Phalaetsile, 2017, August 11). The reports of violence against women and these social media movements highlighted that young people are talking about sexual acts and sexual subjectivities; this talk thus represents their sites of contestations. Because my research focuses on university studies, I have provided some contextual background to student life on university campuses in the subsequent section.

THE UNIVERSITY CAMPUS

A range of research has gone into highlighting the lives of students, especially those on university campuses. Bogle (2008) suggests that universities provide young adults with their first experience of having less parental control and family responsibility. The increase in free time and living on campus also means that students who are of similar ages live in proximity to each other. This creates a campus lifestyle which makes engaging in sex easy.

The first time a university student encounters the university lifestyle is during Orientation Week. Research in the United Kingdom and USA has shown that high alcohol intake occurs during Orientation Week (Riordan, Scarf, & Conner, 2015), that entertainment practices sexualise female bodies (Andersson, Sadgrove, & Valentine, 2012) and that activities during Orientation Week that attract the mass of students can lead to higher incidences of sexual assault (Sampsel, Godbout, Leach, Taljaard, & Calder, 2015). Research examining sexual assault on university campuses has highlighted masculine norms that position men as being able to take advantage of women. For example, Bleecker and Murnen (2005) found that men living in fraternities (all-male residences) had more sexualised images of women and scored higher on rape supportive attitude scales compared to men not in fraternities. Locke and Mahalik (2005) found that men who conformed to masculine norms such as power over women, dominance, risk taking and those who consumed large amounts of alcohol displayed higher rates of sexually aggressive behaviour. Hayes, Abbott, and Cook (2016) suggested that males are more likely to victim blame in rape cases, while McMahon (2010) suggested that men are more likely to be bystanders in experiences of sexual assault. Adams-Curtis and Forbes (2004) found that some types of coercive behaviour on campuses were perceived as normal aspects of sexual negotiations and behaviours.

This research highlights the gendered ideologies within college campuses. Jozkowski, Marcantonio, and Hunt (2017) conducted research on U.S.A. college students' consent

communication. They found that students perceived a sexual double standard, in that women's sexuality was constructed as "good girls don't have sex". This entailed that women should privilege men's sexual needs over their own and that women owe men sex. Jozkowski, Marcantonio and Hunt (2017) also found that men viewed sex as a conquest and that if women refused to have sex with them, women could be convinced into having it.

At UCKAR, serenading was an orientation activity that required first-year students in female and male residences to perform a song, often a pop song, for fellow residents. House committee members' rationale was to give students a chance to meet new people. In 2012, there were outcries by first-year students that serenading was heteronormative, objectified and degrading to women; it was overtly sexual, due to the nature of lyrics, dance moves and outfits that went with serenading (Hazell, 2012, 27 February). Since then, there have been efforts to desexualise Orientation Week. Yet there are still allegations of sexual assault on campus during orientation, one of which occurred just two days after a student had arrived on the university campus. On the 4th of February 2018, a first-year student posted to Rhodes Confessions alleging that she had been raped within 2 days of being on and around campus.

THE ROLE OF SEXUALITY EDUCATION

In recognition of the negative outcomes of on-going gender inequality and high rates of sexual violence, the South African government has, since 1997 (as cited in, Jansen, 1998), sought to provide education and guidance on sex and sexualities-related issues as part of the formal school curriculum. In South Africa, sex education forms part of the Life Orientation (LO) programme in schools. Life Orientation aims to empower young people by providing them with information about HIV and AIDS, unwanted pregnancy, abstinence and gender-

based violence that is intended to assist them to make better informed decisions regarding their own lives (Department of Education, 2008).

While empowering adolescents is one of the aims of the sex education component of the LO programme, a number of scholars (Francis, 2010; Jeeves, 2001; Shefer & Macleod, 2015) have argued that the primary aim has been to decrease the rate of teenage pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections such as HIV/AIDS. It is argued that the sex education component of the LO programme entrenches conservative morals and values concerning sex and sexuality (Rooth, 2005). It has also been argued that teachers who wish to adopt a less conservative approach to teaching sex education often find it difficult to strike a balance between the learners' needs and the attitudes of their parents and the school community (Glover & Macleod, 2016). This has a negative impact on the teachers' ability to provide learners with the information they need to protect themselves (for example, how to use a condom) (Mukoma et al., 2009). This negative impact is highly unfortunate given that a central aim of the sex education component of the LO programme is to empower learners to make informed decisions so that they can better protect themselves from negative outcomes.

When learners are given information, it is often presented in a 'transmission' style whereby the teacher reiterates 'textbook facts', rather than facilitating discussion that is designed to engage students with key issues (Francis, 2011). Furthermore, these facts have been found to focus on the potential risks and dangers of being sexually active (Macleod, 2009), suggesting that abstinence is the most appropriate preventative behaviour (Ngabaza, Shefer, & Macleod, 2016). It is argued that this is all contrary to what learners want and need from the sex education curriculum (Macleod & Jearey-Graham, 2015; Mukoma et al., 2009; Rooth, 2005).

Macleod and Jearey-Graham (2015) argue that teenagers' understandings and experiences of sex and sexuality are frequently shaped by the knowledge and opinions circulating within

their peer groups. They found, for example, that gendered behaviours were maintained by peer pressure – such as when ‘manliness’ is associated with having numerous sexual partners and ‘womanliness’ is associated with maintaining a stable boyfriend. Arguably, for sex education to be relevant to learners, it would have to be critically responsive to adolescents’ experiences of gender inequalities.

A major theme that emerges in Glover and Macleod’s (2016) review of research on sexuality education in South Africa is the growing disjuncture between what learners are being taught and their actual experiences. Shefer, Kruger, Macleod, Baxen, and Vincent (2015) found that, by focusing on the ‘dangers’ of sex, such as unwanted pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections, the sex education component of the LO programme constructed sex as an overwhelmingly negative experience that should be avoided at all costs. The authors argue that, while this makes students fearful of sex and ill-prepared at sexual debut, it also forecloses on any expectations regarding pleasure and enjoyment. Shefer, et al. (2015) argue that students have a desire (and would benefit from the opportunity) to speak about the positive emotional aspects of sex, such as feeling loved and cared for, rather than a single focus on the risks and dangers of sex. Learners are also aware that this shift in approach to teaching sex education also requires rethinking the dynamics of the classroom and teacher-learner power differentials (Macleod & Jearey-Graham, 2015).

There are thus a number of recommendations to improve the sex education component of the LO programme. Shefer et al. (2015) argue that the curriculum should recognise that many adolescents are already sexually active and focus on providing the information young people need to protect themselves, rather than pandering to adults who might be discomforted by that fact. Francis (2011) argues that the curriculum would go some way in supporting young people’s sexual agency if it promoted sexual diversity and was inclusive of the experiences of lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transsexual and queer (LGBTQ) youths. It is also

suggested that the sex education curriculum should be sex positive and not blame or shame young people or focus exclusively on the risks and dangers associated with sex.

Much of what is suggested in these recommendations for improving the sex education component of the LO programme point to Michelle Fine's (1988) influential paper in which she argues for the missing discourse of desire. According to Fine (1988), although female sexual desire is sometimes spoken about in the classroom, it is generally highly regulated. This is achieved by instilling in young women a fear of sexuality (through connotations of violence, blaming, shaming and moral judgement) that completely discounts the possibility of exploring feelings of desire or emotional closeness with an intimate other. Tolman (1994) argues that this minimises women's sexual agency and limits their sexual subjectivity.

A recommendation regarding improvement to the sex education component of the LO programme is that it should speak to the everyday experiences of the learners (Glover & Macleod, 2016). By focusing on the terminology that young people use to describe their sexual desires, practices, and subjectivities, my research seeks to foreground the understandings and experiences of young adults and allow their voices to be heard. My objective is to provide insight into the behaviours and desires of young adults that have been overlooked in much of the sexuality research in South Africa. Where sexualities research has focused on the actual experiences of young people, it has proven to be useful, for example, in making recommendations for revision of the sex education curriculum (Macleod & Jearey-Graham, 2015; Ngabaza et al., 2016; Shefer et al., 2015).

CONTESTED MEANINGS ABOUT/AROUND SEX

There are contested meanings around what sex is; according to young people, these meanings will vary according to the context in which the study was done. Some research has highlighted the definitions that young people give to abstinence. Research in the USA defined abstinence as not having penile-vaginal intercourse (Goodson, Suther, Pruitt, &

Wilson, 2003; Haglund, 2003) while research in Canada suggested that other sexual practices, such as oral sex, could be an act of abstinence (Byers, Henderson, & Hobson, 2009) and thus positioned abstinence and sexual activity in a complex relationship (Masters, Beadnell, Morrison, Hoppe, & Gillmore, 2008; Ott, Pfeiffer, & Fortenberry, 2006). The researcher suggests that there is ambiguity with regard to the constituents of sex and what it does not signify.

Yet despite certain ambiguities, research does highlight complexities in young people's talk of oral sex. The existing research points to women being positioned as less likely to refuse giving oral sex and in which oral sex is constructed as 'work' (Frith, 2013). For example, women can feel uncomfortable about how long it takes their partners to give them an orgasm (Braun, Gavey, & McPhillips, 2003). The perceived judgement women feel about their vaginal aesthetics (Lewis & Marston, 2016) and the view men have of oral sex, due to the negative constructions of vaginal discharge (Lewis & Marston, 2016; Roberts, Kippax, Spongberg, & Crawford, 1996) seem to situate women's sexual agency in contradictory positions (Braun et al., 2003). Men are assigned with more freedom than women to perform, or not to perform, oral sex. Although oral sex can be reciprocal, a woman's position remains related to obligations and responsibility for male sexual pleasure (Braun et al., 2003).

Male sexual pleasure is directly related to the penis. Research about the penis suggests that there is a heightened sense of power that comes with it, especially for those with a big penis, while those with a small penis need to enhance it. Within western cultural notions of masculinity and penis size, research (Brubaker & Johnson, 2008) shows that internet adverts for erectile enhancement construct a crisis in masculinity. The crisis lies in a lack of virility and power associated with a small penis; hence, the solution is having a larger more powerful penis, asserting a strong sense of manhood. This research by Brubaker and Johnson (2008) also highlights the postmodern consumer culture of masculinity and the

increased enhancement association with the male body, particularly with regards to penis size.

Another sexual activity that sex research looks to unpack is that of threesomes and the male-male role within it. In recent research on threesomes in the United Kingdom, in particular male-male and female encounters, Scoats, Joseph, and Anderson (2018) show that male heterosexuality is expanding. This means that there is a normalisation of men engaging in same-sex sexual contact: whether it occurs once or multiple times, it is not constructed as homosexual sexual contact. Research also shows that homo-social contact, such as, cuddling and spooning (Anderson & McCormack, 2015) and kissing (Anderson, Adams, & Rivers, 2012) between men is constructed as normal. In transgender and gender non-conforming adults, Katz-Wise, Reisner, Hughto, and Keo-Meier (2016) show that sexual fluidity, an orientation that positions people as flowing between their attractions for men and women, is more so a norm than an exception.

Some scholars argue that challenging the labels attached to same-sex experiences is due to the decrease in cultural homophobia (Anderson et al., 2012; McCormack, 2011). As seen in the research of homo-social contact (Anderson et al., 2012; Anderson & McCormack, 2015), men are not categorising these behaviours as gay. Research on men who have sex with men also investigate subjectivities of men who do not find the need to label their same sex experience (Silva, 2018).

Research has focussed on the well-being of those within casual sex cultures, and it has sought to highlight whether casual sex has a negative or positive correlation with well-being. Much of the debate concentrates on whether casual sex is harmful, rather than beneficial, to young adults' well-being. The most relevant form of this research is that conducted in the USA and done by Vrangalova (Vrangalova, 2013) and Vrangalova and Savin-Williams (Vrangalova & Savin-Williams, 2011). Both studies aim to show the effects of casual sex on well-being. Vrangalova (2013) suggests that much of the research on casual sex and well-

being is inconclusive. Vrangalova (2013) argues that it is not casual sex that is harmful, but rather the motivations for hook-up that have harmful effects. Non-autonomous reasons for casual sex include being intoxicated by drugs or alcohol, while autonomous reasons for casual sex are reasons that are based on one's own decision-making, for example, because sex is pleasurable. Vrangalova (2013) found that young adults who reported negative well-being were more likely to engage in casual sex because of intoxication, while those who reported a positive well-being were more likely to engage in casual sex because they wanted to.

A South African study looked at how the youth understands sex within the realm of sexual coercion and HIV/AIDS. Wood, Lambert, and Jewkes (2007) found that, in the former Transkei region of South Africa, the local youth's sexual culture understood that forced sex was not constructed as solely sexual and/or physical coercion, but rather that forced sex had a spectrum of understandings that made it consensual, such as being sexually persuasive towards a partner. This research highlighted that looking at the indigenous language of the youth in this area, it is important to understand the different meanings that youth give to sex and to compare it to the language within the realm of public health.

OUTLINE OF THE CHAPTERS

In this introductory chapter, I have sought to locate my research in the current sexualities research landscape. In Chapter Two, I discuss the theoretical framework informing my research. This discussion critically compares essentialist and poststructuralist conceptions of sexuality and this provides the backdrop for a later discussion of the turn to language in post-structuralism. The turn to language, I will argue, provides insight into the ways in which sexuality has become a mechanism in the operation of power. In Chapter Three, I discuss

key insights regarding the regulation of sexuality in the work of Michel Foucault, Adrienne Rich, Gayle Rubin, Judith Butler and, more recently, Rosalind Gill.

In Chapter Four, I describe the research design and provide an account of my methodological decision-making. Consideration is also given to key ethical concerns pertaining to this research. A discussion of the results of the research is presented in three parts. In Chapter Five, I discuss my findings on talk about sexual practices. In Chapter Six, I highlight the key sexual subjectivities in young adults talk and how they are spoken about. In Chapter Seven, I discuss how young adults speak about their sexual desires. Lastly, Chapter Eight provides the conclusions of this thesis.

Conclusion

The focus of sexuality research has been on political, disease and economic factors. Not much work has focused on the language used by young people to talk about sex and, in particular, the use of colloquial terms. As a result of this, my research aims to look at aspects of the sexualised socio-cultural context of young adults through investigating the colloquial language that they use in their talk about sexual practices, sexual subjectivities and sexual desires. The importance of this research lies in informing public health, social media campaigns as well as sexuality. Critics of LO in South Africa call for an incorporation of young adult's everyday experiences into the classroom. My research presents this everyday talk of young adults and therefore can aid in sexuality interventions. Towards the end of this thesis, these recommendations for interventions are dealt with in relation to my study's findings.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The past three decades have seen major theoretical shifts in the understanding of sexuality. One such shift is from understanding sexual experiences from a realist's perspective to understanding them as a social construction. This shift enables understanding facets of sexual life, its cultures, identities and communities and, more recently, exploring the complex relationships between culture and power with an increased focus on political and economic factors (Parker, 2009). Constructionist approaches challenged essentialist understandings of sexual experiences.

The overall aim of this chapter is to argue for the relevance of post-structuralism in sexualities research; in particular, the post-structuralist approach influenced by Foucault's focus on sexuality as imbedded in power relations (Beasley, 2005). To achieve this juxtaposition between essentialism and post-structuralism, conceptions of sexuality are presented. This discussion provides a backdrop for a later discussion on the turn to language and its relation to power.

CONCEPTUALISING SEXUALITY

Based on numerous findings pertaining to brain factors, genetics and hormones, sexuality was first conceptualised as based on evolution and biology. The effects of this was that many non-heterosexual behaviours were viewed as devious (DeLamater & Hyde, 1998). Liberation movements, anti-discriminatory strategies, second-wave feminism and the transformation of gay and lesbian categories were supported by shifts in theoretical thinking. The following section will discuss the conceptions of sexuality underpinned by essentialism, focussing on recent research on sexuality, attraction and sexual orientation. Post-structuralism is then presented as a more relevant alternative to essentialism.

Essentialist conceptions of sexuality

Classical essentialism is a term that refers to the belief that all phenomena have underlying true forms – Plato called these forms *eides*, but in the middle ages they began to be referred to as *essences* – which are assumed to be distinct from one another (DeLamater & Hyde, 1998). In sexology, the term is used to refer to a school of thought that assumes there is a biological basis to sexual behaviour (DeLamater & Hyde, 1998), for example, “Modern essentialism is characterised by a belief that certain phenomena are natural, inevitable, and biologically determined” and universal (DeLamater & Hyde, 1998, p.10). DeLamater and Hyde (1998) observe that the term ‘essentialism’ is more frequently used by those who are opposed to it, than by those who practice it.

Essentialism has been very influential in shaping our understanding of human sexuality and particularly with regard to sexual orientation. Early in the 1990s, Bailey and Pillard (1991, cited in DeLamater & Hyde, 1998) studied 56 gay men who had an identical twin and found

that 52% (29/56 cases) had a twin brother who was also gay. They also found a 22% (12/54 cases) concordance rate among gay men with non-identical twin brothers and an 11% (13/142 cases) concordance rate among gay men and their adoptive brothers. A few years later Bailey, Pillard, Neale and Agyei (1993, cited in DeLamater & Hyde, 1998) found a 48% concordance rate among lesbians with identical twin sisters, a concordance rate of 16% for non-identical twin sisters, and a concordance rate of only 6% among lesbian women and their adopted sisters.

While these studies suggest that there is a genetic influence on sexual orientation in both men and women, they do not provide evidence of complete genetic determination as this requires a 100% concordance rate. Matters are further complicated by the fact that self-report measures are the most common approach to measuring sexual orientation. Furthermore, very few people identify as entirely heterosexual or entirely homosexual and the degree to which men and women identify as heterosexual or homosexual changes over their lifespan (Kinsey, Pomeroy, & Martin, 1948; Kinsey, Pomeroy, Martin, & Gebhard, 1953). In other words, substantial scientific findings challenge the essentialist assumption that heterosexuality and homosexuality are discrete, mutually exclusive essences that are stable over time.

Importantly, essentialism is not limited to the biological sciences, but can also be found in some feminist scholarship. Cultural essentialism is a term describing the belief that the culture in which we are raised (rather than biologically inherited traits) determines who we become. As Simone de Beauvoir (1953, p. 301) so elegantly stated, "one is not born, but rather becomes, a woman". In the book from which this quote is taken, de Beauvoir argues that when women acquiesce to social and cultural expectations regarding their gender, they are following the dictates of an ideal created by men to ensure their hegemony over women in a patriarchal society. Masculinity is the standard by which women are measured (and found to be lacking) and which reduces women to passive objects of the male gaze so that

their agency and self-determination is constrained, and their lives confined to the needs and desires of men. Thus, as Rollins (1996, cited in DeLamater & Hyde, 1998, p. 13) explains, cultural essentialism is “the point of view that women and men do differ because of socialisation”.

In recent decades, however, there is a growing critique of early feminist scholars’ narrow focus on gender inequality to the exclusion of other dimensions of social difference impacting on women’s lives. Contemporary feminists have stressed the need to think about issues of gender in conjunction with issues of social and economic class, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, ability, and so on. These feminists (for example, Anzaldúa, 1987; Crenshaw, 1991; Hooks, 2015; Spivak, 1988) argue that differences among women must be understood in ways that avoid essentialist generalisations because such generalisations are inevitably hegemonic in that they tend to represent the problems of a particular group of women – white, Western, middle-class, heterosexual – as paradigmatic ‘women’s issues’.

Although biological determinism and cultural essentialism are distinct schools of thought, they share the idea that phenomena such as sexual orientation and gender reside within the individual (in the form of hormones, personality traits, learned behaviours and so on) and this is in sharp contrast to poststructuralist conceptions of such phenomena as embedded in social understandings and language.

Post-structuralist conceptions of sexuality

Post-structuralism is not a discrete, singular theory, but an umbrella term for a range of theoretical traditions that share a common critique of forms of knowledge production (Edley, 2001). Post-structuralism is concerned with language and meaning as well as knowledge and discourse (Fawcett, 1998). The doctrine of post-structuralism teaches that knowledge is

not discovered and then expressed through language, but is created and then produced through language (Fawcett, 1998). Post-structuralism has challenged the essentialist assumptions underpinning many of the early theories on human sexuality. Research informed by post-structuralism centres instead on the intricacies of social, cultural and historical processes shaping human sexuality. This began with the sociologists, Simon and Gagnon's (1973) work on sexual scripts. This research was ground-breaking because it proposed that human sexual activity stems from social and learned interactions, rather than essential human traits; this interaction thus marked a shift away from biology and evolution toward an understanding of the social organisation of sexual interactions and the complex dimensions of power shaping relations between intimate partners (Parker 1991). This new development focused sexuality research on the social and cultural dimensions of sexuality, which organise and define sexual subjectivities, desires, and practices (Parker, 2009).

Viewing sexuality as a social construct rather than an immutable biological essence allows an understanding that, “[t]he meanings we give to ‘sexuality’ are socially organised, sustained by a variety of languages, which seek to tell us what sex is, what it ought to be—and what it could be” (Weeks, 1986, p. 7). Poststructuralists assert that sexuality is embedded within the power relations within society (Beasley, 2005). They have challenged the assumed normalcy of sex, gender and sexuality as stable and innate identity categories and instead traced their historical emergence within the development of broader social and cultural processes, such as, industrialisation and the division of labour (Vance, 1998). Scholars influenced by post-structuralism have sought to advance the notion of pluralities (hence sexualities rather than sexuality), which they view as having the potential to disrupt gender and sexuality binaries (Beasley, 2005).

THE TURN TO LANGUAGE

A central characteristic of post-structuralism is the importance afforded language. The focus on language has been referred to as the 'turn to language' and the 'linguistic turn' (Rorty, 1992). The turn to language refers to the broad shift in the humanities and social sciences away from 'objects' of knowledge to 'processes' of knowledge (Carter, 2013). Carter (2013) argues that "[t]his shift is considered 'linguistic' in the sense that it is through language that knowledge and, indeed, reality, are constituted" (Carter, 2013, p. 583). The turn away from 'structure' and to 'language' is about refocusing on process and representation as "Poststructuralists are concerned with the process of objectification, rather than object as structure, subjectivisation rather than subject, universalisation rather than the universal, and so on" (Carter, 2013, p. 584).

The relationship between language and reality is complex in nature. This complexification is understood through Saussure's understanding of the signifier and the signified, which helped scholars to understand that the signified and signifier are not in direct relation to one another. The signifier is the word used to refer to an object in its physical form and the signified refers to the concepts the word is referring to, that is, its meaning (Edley, 2001). Saussure's equation expands on this understanding as follows:

Signifier	Physical	= Sign: (What conveys meaning)
Signified	Meaning	

This equation was used to examine the relations between the expressions and the concept or meaning of this sound. The signifier and signified relate to one another and cannot exist

without this relation. However, when the signifier and signified are separated, Saussure argued that there were relations between signifiers themselves. Hence Saussure rejected the idea that words get meaning from being direct representations of things. In establishing this complex relationship of language and reality, there is a space for shifts, slippages and changes in the relationship between the signifier and signified. Therefore, there is no certainty that a signifier must represent a certain signified. The sign is then constructed socially by engaging in everyday talk, with signifiers and the signified, where constructions of shared experiences are accepted or rejected (Burr, 1995). This creates an understanding that one word can relate to many different things, based on context and power relations.

Thus, while structuralists have taken objects of analysis for granted, post-structuralists examine how these objects are produced and seek to trace their causes and effects. This brings me to a discussion, in the section below, of 'discourse' – a construct around which much post-structuralist scholarship is focused.

Language and power

Language is a cultural artefact. The ideas or meanings that are assigned, negotiated and exchanged through social interaction are derived from the conceptual resources of a particular speech community. Through language, culture provides people with a particular commonality, a shared understanding of the world and their place in it. According to Hall (1997), the production of knowledge through everyday social interaction leads to an understanding of language as a form of action, as actively shaping the world and our place in it.

Discourse is a term that describes a particular kind of language use. "[D]iscourses do not simply describe the social world, but categorise it, they bring phenomena into sight" (Parker,

1992, p. 4). Discourse is defined by Parker, (1992) as “a system of statements which construct an object” (p. 5) and by Henriques et al. (1984) as a “regulated system of statements” (Henriques et al., p. 105). This regularity pertains to how 'truth' is formulated (Dant, 1991). According to Macleod (2002), discourses “do not simply describe the social world, but are the mode through which the world of 'reality' emerges” (Macleod, 2002, p. 18). (Fairclough, 1992) identifies three productive effects of discourse: (i) the construction of social identities, subject positions, or types of self; (ii) the construction of social relationships; and (iii) the construction of systems of knowledge and belief. Fairclough (1992) refers to these as the 'identity', 'relational' and 'ideational' functions of language. However, discourse has a dual character in that it is also restrictive.

According to (Young, 1987), discourse simultaneously enables and restricts what can be known, said or experienced. He concludes that it is this duality “through which action and understanding are simultaneously enabled and constrained, that links knowledge to power” (Young, 1987, p. 114). Much of the critical work on discourse concerns relations of power. Power can be thought of in terms of the ability to control. Social groups and institutions, for example, have power when they are able to control people's thoughts and behaviour. Specifically, the ability to influence people's minds (their knowledge or opinions) means indirectly having some degree of control over their actions – as has been demonstrated in studies on persuasion and manipulation (Harré, 1985). Thus, leveraging discourse can be a means to control the minds and actions of others. This happens when power is integrated in laws, codes, rules, norms, and habits structuring everyday life and thus taking the form of what Gramsci, (1971) calls 'hegemony'. Class domination, sexism, and racism are characteristic examples of such hegemony. It is also important to note that power is not always exercised in obviously abusive acts, but may be enacted in the myriad of taken-for-granted actions (Essed, 1991). I will illustrate this, in the next chapter, where I draw on key insights from theorists such as Foucault, Rich, Rubin, Butler and Gill to demonstrate how power operates in the constructions of sexual desires, practices and subjectivities.

There have been many shifts in theoretical thinking on sexuality. Essentialists conceptualise sexuality as a natural and biological phenomenon residing within the individual as it is developed by genetics, hormones and brain structures. Post-structuralists conceptualise sexuality as rooted not only in our bodies, but in social and cultural meanings and language. Much of this focus is on discourse and its relations of power as a controlling force over sexuality. In researching the language of young adults, the researcher found post-structuralism to be a relevant theoretical framework as it provides space for uncovering gendered and heteronormative power relations often represented in discourses. The post-structuralist focus on language and meanings highlights the turn to language as a political insight. Foucault, Rich, Rubin, Butler and Gill provide some of these insights and these are discussed in the rest of the chapter.

I have argued for the relevance of post-structuralism and the turn to language for research, examining the colloquial language that young adults draw on to talk about their experiences as desiring subjects and to examine how heteronormativity is challenged and/or undermined in this talk. In the remainder of this chapter, I draw on key insights from the work of Michel Foucault, Adrienne Rich, Gayle Rubin, Judith Butler and Rosalind Gill in a critical discussion of how power operates in the constructions of sexual desires, sexual practices and sexual subjectivities.

A SCIENCE OF SEXUALITY

In the first of the three volumes of *The History of Sexuality*, Foucault (1978) challenges a dominant discourse termed the 'repressive hypotheses' – the notion that, over the past three centuries, the history of sexuality has been a history of repression (such as sex, other than for the purposes of procreation, is taboo). Foucault (1978) argues that one consequence of

the repressive hypothesis is the suggestion that the only way to free ourselves from this repression is to be more open about our sexuality and talk frankly about it. It is this suggestion, implied in the repressive hypothesis, that leads Foucault (1978) to argue that, rather than repressing sexuality, modern Western society has in fact been incited to speak about it and that talk about sex has, in fact, intensified and proliferated in the past three hundred years.

Foucault (1978) cites Christian confessional practices and the expectation that the faithful divulge their smallest temptations and desires as one example of the incitement to speak about sex. Another of Foucault's (1978) examples of the incitement to speak is in the context of the management of public health and the economy. From the seventeenth century to the mid-twentieth century, sexual behaviour became an important object of study for demographic analysis and so sexuality began to be studied in an increasingly scientific manner.

It was this 'science of sexuality' that provided the tools to identify and to set apart the 'unnatural' as a specific dimension within the field of sexuality so that the "legitimate couple with its regular sexuality" (Foucault, 1978, p. 45) was given less scrutiny, while a range of "peripheral sexualities" were brought to the fore (Foucault, 1978, p. 45). In Foucault's (1978, p. 53) words, this was "a science made up of evasions" (p. 53) because "it concerned itself primarily with aberrations, perversions, exceptional oddities, pathological abatements, and morbid aggravations" (p. 53) while having comparatively little interest in examining the 'normal' reproductive couple.

He concluded that the science of sexuality was "subordinated in the main to the imperatives of a morality whose divisions it reiterated under the guise of the medical norm" (Foucault, 1978, p. 53). In other words, like religion before it, science was first and foremost a means to manipulate and control people and it did this through a normalising imperative. Therefore,

Foucault (1978) said that in “[c]laiming to speak the truth” (p. 53), what the science of sexuality actually did was to stir up people’s fears so that:

...to the least oscillations of sexuality, it ascribed an imaginary dynasty of evils destined to be passed on for generations; it declared the furtive customs of the timid, and the most solitary of petty manias, dangerous for the whole society; strange pleasures, it warned, would eventually result in nothing short of death: that of individuals, generations, the species itself (Foucault, 1978 p. 53-54).

Foucault (1978) observed that the classification of sexual desires as either natural or unnatural led to another shift in which particular behavioural tendencies came to be understood as essential or self-evident properties of individuals (Rajchman, 1988). Foucault (1978) identified the issue of sodomy as a case in point. Foucault (1978) acknowledged that “[i]n ancient civil or canonical codes, sodomy was a category of forbidden acts” (p. 43), but argued that the difference between ancient and modern times is that in ancient times, the person implicated was not viewed as anything other than guilty of perpetrating a forbidden act. In the nineteenth century, however, science’s separation of different types and degrees of deviance and schemas of classification and measurement made it possible to identify the perpetrator as a particular *type* of person and it is here that Foucault traces the emergence of the homosexual in nineteenth century medicine as:

...a personage, a past, a case history, and a childhood, in addition to being a type of life, a life form, a morphology, with a discreet anatomy and possibly a mysterious physiology. Nothing that went into his total composition was unaffected by his sexuality. It was everywhere present in him: at the root of all his actions because it was their insidious and indefinitely active principle: written immodestly on his face and body because it was a secret that always gave itself away. It was consubstantial with him, less a habitual sin than as a singular nature. The sodomite had been a temporary aberration: the homosexual was now a species (Foucault, 1978, p. 43).

Foucault (1978) asked how we came to view sex as key to explaining who we are, as holding the truth about us, and concluded that the answer lay in the relationship that sex has with knowledge and power. A key element of Foucault's work is his critique of the conception of power as a force that only represses and restricts. He argues, instead, for a conception of power that is as much productive as it is repressive; a power that does not operate in a top-down fashion like sovereign power did in the ancient regime, but rather as a force that is omnipresent, and which operates through "a subtle network of discourses, special knowledge, pleasures, and powers" (Foucault, 1978, p. 72). In the context of sex, the productive force of power becomes manifest not in:

...a movement bent on pushing rude sex back into some obscure and inaccessible region; but on the contrary, a process that spreads it over the surface of things and bodies, arouses it, draws it out and bids it speak, implants it in reality and enjoins it to tell the truth: an entire glittering sexual array, reflected in a myriad of discourses, the obstination of powers, and the interplay of knowledge and pleasure (Foucault, 1978, p. 72).

Thus, the tight normalising controls placed on the discipline of the body and regulation of the population (which would otherwise be viewed as repressive) have come to be viewed as exercised primarily in the interests of fostering and preserving life – and this is precisely the productive aspect of power in which Foucault is interested. As sex and the deployment of sexuality are deemed to be essential to life itself, we are expected to acquiesce to normalising controls in the interest of our own health and that of the nation. Importantly, Foucault (1978) argued that it is this idea that our sexuality is something that is at the very core of our being that masks the truth from us – which is that sex is a social construct manufactured for the exercise of power and control over not just individuals, but entire populations.

COMPULSORY HETEROSEXUALITY

Compulsory heterosexuality is a term that Adrienne Rich (1980) coined in an essay titled '*Compulsory heterosexuality and lesbian existence*'. In this essay, she argued that heterosexuality is not natural, innate, or intrinsic in human instincts, but an institution (in the form of established practice) that operates in patriarchal societies to control women and make them subordinate to men. Her reference to heterosexuality as an institution is strategic because it puts the status of heterosexuality as a 'preference' into question. Rich (1980) complicated the notion of 'preference' by comparing heterosexuality to other political institutions such as capitalism, colonialism, and racism to argue that heterosexuality is similar to these other institutions because it has also been maintained through force and violence. Like Foucault (1978), Rich (1980) argued that the notion that heterosexuality is "normal" masks us from knowing the truth, which is that heterosexuality is a social construct that gives men control over women. This is because heterosexuality, Rich (1980) argued, is "[f]ounded on male interest and prerogative" (p. 654) and she further illustrated this point by drawing on Gough's (1975) observations that men have used their power to:

...[d]eny women their sexuality or to force it upon them; to command or exploit their labour to control their produce; to control or rob them of their children; to confine them physically and prevent their movement; to use them as objects in male transactions; to cramp their creativeness; or to withhold from them large areas of the society's knowledge and cultural attainments (cited in Rich 1980, p.638).

Rich (1980) also argued that heterosexuality teaches women to put men's interests above their own. 'Male identification' is a term that Rich (1980) used to describe the process whereby women internalise the values asserted by men and come to accept men's dominant status as an immutable fact. She argued that when women internalise men's values, then men do not have to resort to violence or the threat of violence to assert their power and

control over women because women will regulate themselves. Related to this, Bordo (1993) argued that women's bodies "[a]re habituated to external regulation, subjection, transformation, 'improvement'" (p. 309) and that we participate in this subordination through the "normalising disciplines of diet, makeup, and dress" (Bordo, 1993, p. 309).

As Radzi and Musa (2017) observed, when makeup brands are called "'Lip Junkie', 'Bad Education', 'Ecstasy', 'Boyfriend Cheater', 'Striptease', 'Feminine Dangerous', 'Wicked Attraction', 'Beautiful Liar', 'Orgasm' and 'China Doll'" (p. 21), the cosmetics industry is clearly indexing the objectified status of its consumer base. The industry is also aware of the profits to be made from women's anxieties about falling short of this sexualised feminine ideal, so they market products called "'Complexion Perfector', 'Hope in a Jar', 'Camera Ready', and 'Dramatically Different'" (Radzi & Musa, 2017 p. 22).

It is interesting that in research examining slang terms for genitalia, Braun and Kitzinger (2001) found men habitually used slang terms, such as 'f*** hole' and 'wank shaft', to describe women's genitalia as passive sites for men's sexual pleasure (Braun & Kitzinger, 2001). The 'sexual dominance perspective' is a term coined by Barry (1979) to describe how treating the sexual objectification of women as natural and inevitable renders women expendable beyond the satisfaction of men's needs. At the same time, however, a sexual double standard exists in which men gain status from their sexual experiences, while women are judged negatively and labelled whores and sluts (Jackson & Cram, 2003). Rich (1980) argued that, in this context, women would often "[t]urn to marriage as a form of hoped-for-protection"; however, because they brought "into marriage neither social nor economic power", they entered into "that institution also from a disadvantaged position" (Rich, 1980, p. 643).

Power is central to both Rich (1980) and Foucault's (1978) understanding of sexuality. Rich (1980), like Foucault (1978), viewed heterosexuality as a social construct that is used to manipulate and control people. However, while Foucault's work provided a useful

examination of the ways in which concerns regarding 'deviant' and 'unnatural' sex were used to regulate and control people, Rich (1980) problematised heterosexuality's privileged status as 'natural' and 'normal' and exposed how it too is used to regulate and control. Rich's (1980) conceptualisation of heterosexuality as an institution allowed for an important "analytical shift from the individual homosexual to a social condition of normative heterosexuality" (Seidman, 2009, p. 18) in which the enforcement of heterosexuality was understood to produce and maintain the control and regulation of women by men.

THE CHARMED CIRCLE

In an essay titled *'Thinking sex'*, Gayle Rubin (1984) presented the idea of a sexual hierarchy that she calls the 'charmed circle'. The charmed circle sometimes also referred to as 'charmed sex', is the name Rubin (1984) gave to those attitudes, beliefs, and practices related to sex that are considered 'good', 'normal' and 'natural' in the dominant culture. Rubin (1984) provided a diagrammatic depiction of the charmed circle which I have reproduced in Figure 1 (below). In the diagram, Rubin (1984) presented a circle that is divided into an inner and an outer portion.



Figure 1: The charmed circle (Rubin, 1984)

Sexual behaviours in the inner circle are those that are deemed to be 'good', 'normal' and 'natural' – and thus 'charmed'. This sex is heterosexual, monogamous, and non-commercial. It involves married couples or couples in a committed relationship and is directed towards procreation. Intimate partners are of the same generation and they have sex in private. Sex is vanilla (that is, no kink), there is no pornography, and involves only their bodies. In contrast to the charmed inner circle, behaviours located in the outer circle are deemed to be 'bad', 'abnormal' and 'unnatural'. This sex is homosexual, non-monogamous, casual, inter-generational, commercial, or sadomasochistic. It is not directed towards procreation. It happens in public places, can involve pornography, or the use of manufactured objects.

The sexual hierarchy articulated in Rubin's (1984) charmed circle shared some of the same features as Rich's (1980) conceptualisation of compulsory heterosexuality, such as, the special status afforded to heterosexual couples. However, it also showed how certain kinds of heterosexual sex can be deemed 'bad', 'abnormal' and 'unnatural'. Rubin (1984) argued that we are motivated to belong within the charmed circle because we are rewarded with "certified mental health, respectability, legality, social and physical mobility, institutional support, and material benefits" (Rubin, 1984, p. 279). However, when we are positioned low down on the sexual hierarchy, we are excluded from those benefits.

Aspects of Rubin's (1983) sexual hierarchy resonated in the sexualities' research conducted in South Africa over those past two decades. I am referring, for example, to research that has identified sex workers and their clients (Chen et al., 2007; Ramjee & Gouws, 2002), women engaging in transactional sex (Kaufman & Stavrou, 2004), and especially when they were in relationships with older men (Nkosana & Rosenthal, 2007), men and women with multiple concurrent partners (Eaton, Hallett, & Garnett, 2011), and men who had sex with men (Lane, Shade, McIntyre, & Morin, 2008) as the vectors of disease in the context of the HIV epidemic. I am also referring to research findings suggesting that although sex workers and men who have sex with men are at higher risk for contracting HIV, they also experience the greatest difficulty in accessing appropriate sexual health services and this is precisely because of the stigma associated with sexual behaviours that are low down on the sexual hierarchy (Lane, Mogale, Struthers, McIntyre, & Kegeles, 2008; Scorgie et al., 2013).

Importantly, Rubin (1984) also observed that, over time, behaviour that was previously considered to be taboo, can become more acceptable and even be incorporated within the charmed circle. One example of this is the growing acceptance of same sex sexuality in most countries around the world (Smith, 2011). However, as Rubin (1984) also observed, this acceptance is only extended to "some forms of homosexuality [that] are moving in the

direction of respectability” (Rubin, 1984, p. 15). In other words, only same sex relationships that are vanilla, coupled, and monogamous may be included in the charmed circle.

An important observation that Rubin (1984) made is that we are very concerned about being able to distinguish between good and bad sex because we have been led to believe that sex is a dangerous and destructive force. This is certainly a theme emerging in critiques of the sex education curriculum in South Africa, which I discussed in the introductory chapter. Rubin (1984) went on to argue that we have also been led to believe that the only safe sex that exists is sex within a loving and committed relationship. She concluded that, because everything else is considered to be ‘bad’, we are left without any concept of benign sexual variation.

PERFORMATIVE RESISTANCE

Judith Butler’s conceptualisation of gender performativity challenged heteronormativity. Heteronormativity is a term referring to the privileged status of heterosexuality. Heteronormativity refers to a range of cultural, legal, and institutional practices that maintain normative assumptions that there are only two genders, that gender reflects biological sex, and that only sexual attraction between these opposite genders is natural or acceptable (Kitzinger, 2005).

In her book titled *Gender Trouble* (1990/1999), Judith Butler collapsed the sex/gender distinction and argued that there is no sex that is not always already gender. She argued that all bodies are gendered through a process of social inscription from the beginning of their social existence (she cites the announcement ‘it’s a girl’ or ‘it’s a boy’ when a child is born) and concluded that there is no ‘natural’ body that exists prior to its social inscription.

For Butler (1990/1999), gender is not something we *are* (that is, an identity- noun) but rather something we *do* (verb), and it is achieved through a sequence of stylised acts. Butler (1990/1999) described the process of becoming a gendered subject as follows:

Gender is the repeated stylisation of the body, a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame that congeal over time to produce the appearance of substance, of a natural sort of being (Butler, 1990/1999, p. 43-44).

Butler (1990/1999) therefore understood gender to be a corporeal style, an 'act,' that has no relation to essential truths about the body. Some have interpreted Butler's notion of gender performativity to mean that we are volitional subjects who can change our gender like we change our clothes. However, when Butler (1990) argued that gender is produced within a "highly rigid regulatory frame" (p. 25), she meant that gender is not scripted by individual subjects, but that gender scripts are always already determined within the regulatory frame that constrains the subject's choice of gender style. Butler (1990) called this regulatory frame the heterosexual matrix and described it as:

...that grid of cultural intelligibility through which bodies, genders, and desires are naturalised...a hegemonic discursive/epistemological model of gender intelligibility that assumes that for bodies to cohere and make sense, there must be a stable sex expressed through a stable gender (masculine expresses male, feminine expresses female) that is oppositionally and hierarchically defined through the compulsory practice of heterosexuality (Butler, 1990/1999, p. 151).

Butler's (1990) conceptualisation of the heterosexual matrix resonated with Rich's (1980) concept of compulsory heterosexuality and Kitzinger's (2005) notion of heteronormativity. In conceptualising gender as performative, Butler (1990) was not suggesting that we were free to choose which gender we were going to enact, but that gender scripts had always already been determined within a regulatory frame that constrained our 'choice' so that our gender performance was never free or completely within our control. However, and this is what

made the notion of gender performativity exciting, because performativity is contingent on repetition, there was always a chance that something would go wrong.

In the case of drag, for example, Butler argued that gender is acted in ways that draw attention to the constructedness of heterosexuality and this is disruptive because heterosexuality is vested in passing itself off as 'essential' and 'natural' rather than socially constructed and it is this sort of disruption that Butler (1990) referred to as gender trouble. Thus, by citing and enacting the conventions of gender that come from the social world around us, we incorporate the 'reality' that our actions have constituted to claim our identity; however, that 'reality' remains a social construction.

Butler (1988a) saw political potential in focusing on the constructed nature of gender identity; it allowed her to advocate for those who had been oppressed because they did not conform to the rules that governed normative heterosexuality. If those rules were not natural or essential, Butler (1988a) argued, they should not be afforded any special status and should certainly not be used as a measure of what can be thought of as 'normal', 'natural', or 'good'. As Butler (1988b, p. 527) put it, "if the 'reality' of gender is constituted by the performance itself, then there is no recourse to an essential and unrealised 'sex' or 'gender' which gender performances ostensibly express", in which case "the transvestite's gender is as fully real as anyone whose performance complies with social expectations" (Butler, 1988b, p. 527).

Although Butler's (1990) theory of gender performativity is about how we *do* gender – in other words, about how our actions constitute gender – she sees these performative acts as forms of authoritative speech. So, for example, when a doctor proclaims, 'it's a girl', that naming is not a statement of fact, but rather an announcement that "initiates the process by which a certain 'girling' is compelled" (Butler, 1993, p. 22) because it insists the girl recite behavioural norms consistent with the sex and gender she is assigned in order to qualify for subjecthood within the heterosexual matrix that hails her. Butler (1993) argues that "[t]he

performative is thus one domain in which power acts as discourse” (p. 17), but also asks whether language can be appropriated in such a way that it disrupts oppressive power.

In an essay titled ‘*Critically Queer*’, Butler (1993) writes on the use of the term ‘queer’ as a homophobic slur. In Butler’s words:

The term ‘queer’ emerges as an interpellation that raises the question of the status of force and opposition, of stability and variability, *within* performativity. The term ‘queer’ has operated as one linguistic practice whose purpose has been the shaming of the subject it names or, rather, the producing of a subject *through* that shaming interpellation. ‘Queer’ derives its force precisely through the repeated invocation by which it has become linked to accusation, pathologisation and insult. This is an invocation by which a social bond among homophobic communities is formed through time. The interpellation echoes past interpellations, and binds the speakers, as if they spoke in unison across time. In this sense, it is always an imaginary chorus that taunts ‘queer!’ (Butler, 1993, p. 18)

In relation to this use of the term, Butler (1993) then reminds us that “reiterations are never simply replicas of the same” (p. 18). Performatives generally succeed because the action of speech “echoes a prior action and *accumulates the force of authority through the repetition or citation of a prior, authoritative set of practices*” (p. 19, emphasis in the original). The subject is not, in fact, the “owner of what is said” and the “terms to which we...lay claim, the terms through which we insist on politicising identity and desire, often demand a turn against this constitutive historicity” (Butler, 1993, p.19). In the context of the rise of Queer Theory within the academy, Luckhurst (1995a, p. 333) observes that ‘queer’ now marks “a ‘resignification’ of a homophobic repudiation into one of affirmation of homosexuality” (p. 333) so that ‘to queer’ is now also understood to refer to actions that “perform a catachrestic operation on terms that have accrued a sedimentation of connotative range, by directing them towards new meanings” (Luckhurst, 1995b, p. 333).

While I generally agree with the observation that 'queer' has come to signify processes of re-appropriation and resignification, I am also mindful of Butler's (1993) caution that performative effects are also always contingent and provisional. In the next section, I consider Rosalind Gills' concerns regarding post-feminism and the sexual subjectification of women as a case in point.

POST-FEMINISM AND RETRO SEXISM

In America, in the 1960s and the 1970s, women removed their bras and threw them in the trash in public protests against the restrictions imposed on them by society. Removing an item of clothing that is restrictive and uncomfortable was intended to signify a desire to be liberated from the oppression of patriarchy.

I have included a photograph of one such protest in Figure 2 (above). I have included the photograph because, although I appreciate that women were protesting against the sexual objectification of their bodies and the constraints of femininity, I feel ambivalent about its political utility.



Figure 2 Anti-bra protestors in San Francisco

The woman in the photograph above looks happy about removing her bra, but I do not see any women in the crowd behind her. All I can see is a sea of male faces eager to celebrate her 'liberation'. I do not know why so many men came out to celebrate with her and why women did not, but it does make me question the performative effect. Regardless of what her personal intentions were, the woman in this photograph seems to still be a spectacle for the male gaze.

I am interested in scholarship on post-feminism that examines the ambiguities of contemporary modalities of expression of women's sexual liberation. Although the term post-feminism has been in use at least since the 1970s, there is no single definition for it and it appears that this is because it has different interpretations among scholars. Some scholars have used the term to describe a backlash against feminist scholarship that fails to properly confront dimensions of social difference that intersect with gender and sexuality (Schueller, 2005), while other scholars use the term to refer to contemporary feminist scholarship that does challenge these social dimensions. Brooks (2003, p. 1), for example, defines post-feminism as "an expression of a stage in the constant evolutionary movement of feminism" (p. 1) in which feminism has become "a confident body of theory and politics, representing pluralism and difference and reflecting on its position in relation to other philosophical and political movements similarly demanding change" (Brooks, 2003, p. 1). Post-feminism is also used to describe a backlash against feminism in the context of a growing neoliberalism (Duggan, 2004). It is this aspect of post-feminism that interests me and, within this framework, Rosalind Gill's work on post-feminism and the sexual subjectification of women also.

In the 1970s and 1980s, feminists (for example, the works of Dworkin, 1981; Mulvey, 1989; Schapiro & Chicago, 1973) targeted media representations of women as sexual objects for the male gaze and especially the tendency to render women as sexual commodities (for example, Figure 3 and Figure 4, page 41). However, Gill (2003) explored a more

contemporary phenomenon where women seemed to voluntarily participate in their own objectification, which she calls sexual subjectification and self-subjectification. Some of the examples that (Gill, 2003) draws upon are popular high street fashion, cosmetics advertisements, the covers of fashion magazines, television shows and reality television (Gill & Harvey, 2011). Gill (2003) argues that these hyper-sexualised representations of women's bodies are intended to be read as being different from earlier representations because women are liberated now in a way that they never were previously.

Gill (2003) argues that, in the past, hyper-sexualised images would prompt outrage and debate whereas "sexualisation" (Attwood, 2006) and "pornification" (Paasonen, Nikunen, & Saarenmaa, 2008) have become entirely normalised and go by almost unnoticed. Gill (2003) suggests that they are being read as innocent or ironic. The FCUK title of a magazine is, after all, just an acronym for the French Connection brand in the United Kingdom and, according to Cdeaux (the French edition of Vogue), putting a young model on the cover of their magazine was a parody intended to critique the fashion industry's unhealthy interest in young girls rather than an endorsement of it.

There is certainly much debate among contemporary feminist scholars about whether hyper-sexualised media representations reference feminist ideals of empowerment and agency (Attwood & Holland, 2009) or whether they are perpetuating women's sexual objectification under the guise of sexual liberation (Donaghue, Kurz, & Whitehead, 2011). Gill (2003) makes two important contributions to this debate. The first is her examination of the way in which empowerment has become a normatively demanded feature of young women's sexual subjectivity and the second is her problematisation of omissions and exclusions (objectification to subject) in representational practices.

Sexual empowerment has become a compulsory part of the young women's sexual subjectivity, constructed in the form of 'technologies of sexiness' (Evans, Riley, & Shankar, 2010). Normative features of young women's sexual subjectivities are positioned as being

sexually adventurous, having sexual self-confidence, sex appeal, female beauty and sexual power (Gill, 2012). In Gill's (Gill, 2008) evaluation of midriff advertising, which positions female models in sexy poses with their abdomens showing, the requirements of female beauty, the cost, labour and anxiety of disciplining the female body into working to match the technologies of sexiness needs to be invisible. The woman's body needs to conform to beauty ideals even if it is achieved unnaturally, for example, through plastic surgery, yet it needs to be represented as natural and the workings of plastic surgery need to be invisible (Gill, 2008).

Agency within these advertisements is confined to aestheticisation of physical appearance and consumerism. Midriff advertising positions women as entirely autonomous agents who are no longer constrained by inequalities and power relations. Gill (2008) argues that this power in the self-development of women as free agents does not work well for feminism and cultural understandings of sexual subjectification. It cannot account for the similar look all women pursue, if it was based on individualism, female beauty would be diverse. Because of the emphasis empowerment places on choice, it hides questions regarding the socially constructed standards of beauty, which are internalised and made a practised natural feature of the female body (Gill, 2008).

Sexualisation and pornification have allowed for a normative generalised notion of sexual representations which do not acknowledge differences in the ways bodies may be sexualised or not. Homogenisation of action representations of women eliminates differences and omits the fact that different women are sexualised in different ways and with different meanings (Gill, 2012). Gill (2009) asserts that contemporary practices of representation continue to be gendered, racist, classist, ageist, disablist and heteronormative. This positions female beauty that is white, middle class and heterosexual as privileged (Gill, 2009).

Any woman who is unable to live up to narrow standards of female beauty is excluded from being sexually empowered. Sexual empowerment excludes women who are not young, white, heterosexual, except when lesbian women are performing for men (Gill, 2003) or conforming to homogenising conceptualisations of female beauty (Gill, 2012). This positions women who are older, disabled, larger sized or of colour as not having a valid sexual subjecthood (Gill, 2003). This leads Gill (2012) to conclude that sexual subjectification is a specific and exclusionary practice and that sexual pleasure has no role to play, but rather the power of sexual attractiveness is the key in new sexual subjectivities (Gill, 2012).

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have provided theories that conceptualise how power operates in the constructions of sexualities. Firstly, Foucault (1978) emphasised that sexuality is a social construct, maintained by power and control over individuals. Secondly, Rich (1980) highlighted that heterosexuality helps to maintain this power. Thirdly, Rubin (1984) provided insight into how heterosexuality acts as a powerful tool to create good and bad sex. Fourthly, Butler (1990) highlighted the role our genders have in regulating our sexuality and gendered experiences while lastly, Gill (2003) said that the gendered experiences, especially for women, are so mainstream that it is possible they aid in maintaining power and control, especially over women's bodies.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

This study takes the form of qualitative research informed by a poststructuralist framework. My analysis focuses on how participants use discursive resources and to what effects. In other words, I am concerned with the action orientation of talk. This is an appropriate approach for research that examines how language is deployed in the construction of sexual desires, sexual practices and sexual subjectivities. This chapter begins with an explanation of what I consider to constitute colloquial language for the purposes of this research. In the remainder of the chapter, I describe the methodology employed to examine young adults' use of colloquial language.

COLLOQUIAL TERMS DEFINED

To gain a wide variety of young adults' language, I have chosen colloquialism as a broad umbrella term. It includes a range of terms that slang otherwise would traditionally have

excluded. My working definition for what constitutes colloquial terms is that they are terms that can include terms under genderlects, lavender linguistics, slang and netspeak. These colloquialisms are not often used within formal language (a set of grammatically correct rules guiding written and spoken language) and constitute terms that are often found in everyday language.

Genderlects, slang, lavender linguistics and netspeak are insufficient by themselves to highlight the range of terms young adults use. The term genderlects was originally defined as a “linguistic variety or code used predominately by one sex or gender” (Holmes, 1996, p. 720). But, more recently, rather than citing or referencing pre-existing gender identities genderlects have been understood to “cite reference points that have over time materialised in their performative connection to gender” (Motschenbacher, 2010, p. 58), that is, as resources for the performance of gender identity. The term genderlects is useful for the role it plays in highlighting “doing gender”. It is able to provide insight into hegemonic and subversive gender styles, which can interchange depending on context and gender (Motschenbacher, 2007).

Initially, slang was viewed as a means of expressing and evaluating everyday experiences (Hayakawa, 1941). Later, slang signified unrefined, derogatory expressions of things that were considered taboo or vulgar (Flexner, 1975). More recently, scholarship on slang has focused on its cultural specificity (Eble, 1996), on its use in verbal interactions between friends and to bond and to build relationships (Forsskåhl, 2001) as well as a means of distinguishing between in-group and out-group members of different social cliques (Otlogetswe & Rameba, 2014).

Lavender linguistics is the study of the communicative practices and languages of the LGBTQ community (Leap, 1995). An example of this work is authored by Cage (2003) and is titled *Gayle - The language of kinks & queens: A history and dictionary of gay language in South Africa*. In this article (Cage, 2003) describes “Gayle” as a secretive language that gay

(white) men used to identify themselves to other gay men during apartheid, a time when queer visibility was particularly risky.

Netspeak is used to refer to communication over chat software. It often incorporates abbreviations and acronyms to message others faster (Crystal, 2001). To include netspeak under my umbrella term of colloquialism allows me to include important abbreviations that would otherwise be excluded.

Genderlects, slang, lavender linguistics and netspeak are all relevant in helping this research achieve the full range of colloquialisms used by young adults. Using these concepts under colloquialism allows me to engage with the varied gender and sexualities talk. In other words, they are concepts that are inclusive of a range of linguistic features which they define. The scope of colloquialisms is broad enough to be inclusive of many other language concepts (Zuckerman, 2001).

Colloquialisms are set apart from formal language because they are used in everyday talk. With this said, a term like dating would not be considered a colloquial term. Yet I have included it as one as much of the data speaks to a dating culture and thus excluding it would take away the context of sexual practices in which young adults are engaged.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

My research objective is to highlight young adults' talk by focusing on the colloquial language they use to talk about sexual practices, sexual subjectivities and sexual desires. The purpose of looking at colloquialisms in young adult's talk is to explore meanings attached to the colloquialisms. This focus is needed based on the grassroots protests and social media campaigns, as cited in Chapter One, that show a contestation of young adult's

sexuality. While many young adults are exposed to sexuality education in school, this education is critiqued as missing a key aspect of what the students want to learn: the socio-cultural context of the young adult.

Therefore, the aim of my research is to identify, as much as is possible, the range of colloquial terminology and the way in which it is utilised in young people's talk about sexual desires, sexual practices and sexual subjectivities. This research also looks at who these colloquial terms construct and how this construction takes place. I also assess the heteronormative and gendered nature of these terms, review whom these terms affect and recommend what these terms mean for those considering interventions.

RESEARCH DESIGN

This study's design provided the researcher with an insight into the talk of young people by exploring the colloquialisms they use to speak about sex. Therefore, this study took the form of qualitative research informed by a post-structuralist framework. Data were collected online and in a group interview. The analysis focused on how participants use colloquialisms, in other words, the concern is with the action orientation of their talk. This is an appropriate approach for research that examines how language is deployed in the construction of sexual desires, sexual practices and sexual subjectivities.

The research questions

This research aimed to examine the colloquial terms that young adults draw on to speak about their experiences as desiring subjects. Below are the questions that guided the collection of data, the structuring and analysis of the findings.

1. Which colloquial terms do young adults draw on to speak about their experiences as desiring subjects?
2. How is this language deployed in the construction of sexual desires, sexual practices and sexual subjectivities?

In relation to the second question, I was particularly interested in examining how deployment of this language underpinned and/or undermined gendered and heteronormative power relations.

Research instruments

The first research instrument that I used was NVivo. It was developed by qualitative research software developer QSR International. For this research NVivo is beneficial as it can hold large amounts of data that are either collected online or with interviews (QSR, n.d.). For this study NVivo held over 100 000 references of online data, as well as a group interview recording and its transcription. The main software features I used to help maintain my data were nodding features (the ability to create and manage codes), concept maps, Memo Links (NVivo for Windows) and running word queries. The second research instrument I used was my interview schedule. It was a semi-structured interview and contained Rhodes Confession posts that I used to help generate discussion with my key informants (see Appendix 1).

Units of analysis

As the aim of this research is to examine the colloquial terms that young adults draw on to speak about their experiences as desiring subjects, I needed to access young adults everyday talk about sexualities. Two appropriate sources of evidence that I identified in this regard comprised the posts on a student-based social media site and a validity check group interview. Details of the sampling procedure for each of these sources of evidence are discussed below.

SAMPLING PROCEDURES

As the aim of this research is to examine the colloquial terms that young adults draw on to speak about their experiences as desiring subjects, I accessed young adults' everyday talk about sexualities. Two appropriate sources of evidence that I used in this regard were posts on a social media site and a validity check group interview. Details of the sampling procedure for each of these sources of evidence are discussed below.

Social media posts

I reviewed posts on a discussion group of a popular social media site where young adults frequently post on sexualities issues. This is a UCKAR-based discussion group called Rhodes Confessions. This discussion group was selected on the basis that it is open to the public and the identities of the individuals posting on the site are anonymised. I reviewed all commentary posted between January 2015 and January 2016.

A sample of posts based on these two criteria were collected: (a) posts about a sexuality related issue (b) posts containing one or more words that employed colloquialisms that are used to describe sexual desires and/or sexual practices and/or sexual subjectivities.

Validity check group interview

The purpose of the group interview was to check the validity of the interpretations of colloquial terms being analysed as well as to extend the meanings of these terms. With permission from the administrators of two other student-based Facebook groups, I posted an advertisement (see Appendix 2) inviting individuals to participate in group interviews. I also invited interested parties to invite additional participants (that is, employed snowball sampling). I also established a website with information about my research and what participation in it would entail. The website had an email application on which prospective participants could contact me anonymously to ask for more information about the research, before deciding whether or not to participate in it. I directed all prospective participants to this page.

Individuals who responded to my advertisements and who were interested in participating in the group interview were asked to invite additional participants. One outcome of snowball sampling (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2006) is that individuals participating in the group interviews are likely to belong to already established friendship groups. I expected that this would make individuals more comfortable both to express their own opinions and to challenge the opinions of others. A total of four individuals participated in the validity check group interview.

DATA COLLECTION

As a result of sampling being a two-fold process, data collection had to be done in two different areas. The first form of data collection was conducted on social media posts through an NVivo application called NCapture. The second form of data collection, the group interview, was prompted by social media posts to allow participants to express their understanding of differing contexts in which colloquial terms appeared. Details of the two-fold data collection are discussed below.

Social media posts

The social media posts were captured by the NVivo NCapture feature. NVivo allowed many characteristics of posts to be captured in addition to the comment text. This additional information included date and time as well as the number of 'likes'. Once the dataset was captured, it was exported into a Microsoft Excel document. In this document, I used the search function to eliminate all irrelevant posts. This means that I searched for words that were related to sexualities, read the post to ensure that it contained colloquial language and deleted all other posts. After I had combed through the dataset and had eliminated irrelevant posts, the final dataset was then imported back into NVivo.

This dataset was in the form of a closed and open-ended questionnaire-like structure, so NVivo could manage the data effectively. The structure was that the closed-ended question function was suited for the already proscribed information from the data. It included, the original confession number proscribed by Rhodes Confessions, whether the post was a confession or comment; the post likes and the date created. The NVivo identification code was manually changed to the original confession number given by Rhodes Confession to allow for easier reference during analysis. To minimise identification of these posts and to

ensure anonymity, I omitted these numbers from the presentation of the data in my thesis. The open-ended question function was for the actual confession and related comments. My final data corpus contained 106 049 posts.

Validity check group interview

The aim of the group interview was to explore the various and contested meanings attached to the various colloquial terms used in the posts and the ways these were employed in sexualities. These types of dynamics (in particular contestations concerning meanings) might not have been apparent in the individual posts and were unlikely to emerge in individual interviews (Stewart & Shamdasani, 1998) hence the need to clarify and check with participants the contested meanings within the social media data. Examples of social media posts were used in the interview schedule to prompt group discussions. The group interview was recorded and transcribed verbatim. There was a video and voice recording of the discussion. Both were used interchangeably in the transcription of the data.

SAMPLE POPULATION

My sample was young adults who write on Rhodes Confession as well as the UCKAR who participated in the validity check interview. These students were thus representing mostly Grahamstown's Rhodes University students. My research examined a very particular sector of the youth population. It should be noted, however, that generalisability is not an aim of this research. Instead, I was interested in producing an in-depth analysis of sexualities talk among a small group of young adults that would be illustrative of one sector of the youth population.

Participants' characteristics

All of the participants in the key informant group interview were familiar with the Rhodes Confession Facebook group and the colloquial terms employed in posts on that site, such as, 'naps' and 'the friendzone' which I was interested in examining. In Table 2 (below) I have tabulated key characteristics of the participants in the group interview.

Table 2 Characteristics of participants

Participant pseudonym	Identifies as	Relationship status	Level of study
Chris	Straight man	2-year old relationship	Undergraduate
Stella	Straight woman	4-month old relationship	Undergraduate
Lauren	Straight woman	Single; previously in a long term relationship	Undergraduate
Trevor	Straight man	4-month old relationship	Undergraduate
Nelly	Did not disclose	Did not disclose	Undergraduate

DATA ANALYSIS

Data were analysed thematically using Braun and Clarke's (2013) six-phase method, with a deductive, critical, and constructionist approach to the analysis. A thematic analysis allowed

a systematic approach to qualitative data analysis and involved identifying themes or patterns of cultural meaning which were of interest to the study and research question (Braun & Clarke, 2013). I coded and classified the coded data so as identify emergent themes and interpreted the resulting thematic structures by seeking commonalties, relationships and overarching patterns. Once the themes were developed, techniques were drawn from discourse analysis and were applied to this interpretation. In the sections below, I discuss how I analysed my data using Braun and Clarke's (2013) six-phase method.

Phase One: Familiarizing myself with the data

The first phase in Braun and Clarke's (2013) thematic analysis is to get familiar with the data. This means that during transcription of verbal data, the researcher needs to be actively working on understanding the data, for example, by keeping initial notes. Other examples for gaining a comprehensive understanding of the data are for researchers to re-read and once transcription is done, re-listen to the recordings (Braun & Clarke, 2013). In the two paragraphs below, I discuss how I familiarised myself with my social media data and my verbal data from the group interview.

As mentioned in the methods for social media data collection, to get to the appropriate online data for my study, I had to comb through it. During this process I read through all the posts, deleting ones that did not fit the criteria. These criteria have already been stated in the sampling procedures for social media data. Once I had the dataset with which I was going to work, I re-read it again and kept initial notes of preliminary extracts and findings of the social media data. I kept these to start building extracts that would aid in the discussion of my group interview.

The group interview data was transcribed by me. This transcription process allowed me to get familiar with these data, as Bailey (2008) describes the transcription process as an interpretive act, rather than a technical procedure. I primarily used the voice recorder as my source for transcription and the video recording for clarifications. Once the transcription was complete, I played the voice recording while reading through the transcription and I kept initial notes of talk that stood out for me. The guidelines I used for my transcription were adapted from Bailey (2008) and can be found in Appendix 3. It is important to note that these transcription notations do not apply to social media posts found within this thesis. They are only relevant to group interview data. However, special notations of social media posts can also be found in Appendix 3.

Phase Two: Generating initial codes

The second phase of Braun and Clarke's (2013) thematic analysis is to start generating initial codes. Braun and Clarke (2013) suggest that once the researcher has familiarised him/herself in the gathered data, he/she needs to start coding for specific things that seem interesting. These preliminary codes provide the first view of the context of the conversation that the data presents. In the subsequent section, I discuss my coding process.

Each colloquial term was formed into a code. This allowed all references of this term to be under one code. By coding in this way, it was easy to see which colloquial terms were referenced more than other terms. In the dataset there were 106 049 posts, which included main posts (confessions) and comments on these posts. These comments often did not include colloquial terms, but were still included in the thread of the confession. Because of this, the total number of references to colloquial terms within the social media data did not equal 106 049.

With regard to the group interview data, talks around colloquial terms were coded as that colloquial term, but were separate from the social media data. The group interview data were informed by the social media data. Therefore, these codes were drawn on to extend the talk within the social media data.

As the focus was on the deployment of the colloquial terms, further coding often took the form of outlining the context within which the term was deployed. For example, the term 'bae' (a term used to describe someone you care about) appeared in contexts of sharing love for someone or love for objects such as food. When the group interview data were relevant to the colloquial term, they were used to expand on the referenced talk. Therefore, the use of social media and interview data allowed for a complex look at the patterns within the data. My next phase was to form these codes into themes by creating a possible map of codes which could form a theme.

Phase Three: Searching for themes

The third phase in Braun and Clarke's (2013) thematic analysis is searching for themes. This is done when the researcher analyses the codes looking for relationships and commonalities to identify overarching themes and, when applicable, subthemes. In this phase, extracts are sorted into the relevant themes until they fit in with the conversation that the data present. Once the initial themes are sorted, a brief description can be given to show how the theme is constructed. This phase is finished when the initial themes, subthemes and extracts have been collated (Braun & Clarke, 2013). In the section below, I discuss how I searched for themes in my data.

It was becoming increasingly apparent to me that the colloquial terms were forming into three distinct main themes. This included talk on sexual practices, sexual subjectivities and

sexual desires. Within these three main themes, I started to collate the colloquial terms that related to practices, subjectivities and desires. This collating also meant I was able to provide a brief description of what was meant by these three main themes.

I developed three frequency tables to guide the analysis. The rationale for this was to establish focus for the qualitative analysis as these tables highlighted the frequency of colloquial terms, thus guiding which colloquial terms were most or least spoken about. These tables (below) are divided into sexual practices (Table 3), sexual subjectivities (Table 4) and sexual desires (Table 5). They include each colloquial term that fits under each theme, the number of times they are referenced in decreasing order. Only those referenced above 10 are included, while the full list of terms can be found in the Appendices at the end of this thesis.

Table 1 Sexual practices word frequency

Sexual practices	Frequency
Date, dating, dated	617
Naps, napping	562
Hook-up, hooking-up, hooked-up	218
Nap Buddy(ies)	73
Dump, dumped	56
Making-out, make-out	32
Ditch	28
Twerk, twerking	23
Hitting on	21
Gay naps	21

Sexual practices	Frequency
Shag (ing)	19
Kink	17
Nudes	14
Fuck, fucking, fucked, f*uck	14
Seal-clubbing	11
Sharing	10
Blow job	10
Bat	10

Table 2 Sexual Subjectivities word frequency

Sexual subjectivities	Frequency
Gay	387
Bae	208
Bro	129
Fuckboy	107
Side	97
Chicks	71
Hoe	56
Boo	56
Side chick	55
Bitch	47
Main	39

Sexual subjectivities	Frequency
Good guys	36
Slut	33
Sweet	30
Dick	25
Player	24
Sweet guy	22
Thick	20
Main chick	20
Blesser	18
Slut shaming	15
Salty	12
Side guy	12
Good girls	11
Cuddle buddy('s)	11
Homo	10

Table 3 Sexual desire word frequency

Sexual desires	Frequency
Crush	164
Friendzone	70
Thirsty	51
Vibe	38

Sexual desires	Frequency
Catching feelings, caught feels, feels	33
The D	33
Booty	19
Flame	12
Horny	12

In Table 6 (below), I show how I tabulated my thoughts on each colloquial term to help guide my thinking on possible subthemes.

Table 4 Analysis schedule

Colloquial term	Analysis
How is it deployed (contexts):	
Heteronormative/gendered power relations:	
Underpin relations:	
Undermine relations:	
Possible Extracts:	

The frequency tables along with Table 6 (above) allowed me to identify which colloquial terms were spoken about the most and to focus on how heteronormative and gendered power relations were spoken about within this talk. This allowed me to structure preliminary themes.

Phase Four: Reviewing themes

The fourth phase in Braun and Clarke's (2013) thematic analysis is to undertake a deeper revision of themes. Researchers need to question whether themes need to be combined, refined, separated or discarded. The themes need to be clear and share identifiable characteristics. There are two ways to achieve this. The first is to check the themes related to the coded extracts. In other words, to ensure they fit together. The second way is to check that the themes and Extracts are related to the entire dataset (Braun & Clarke, 2013). In the paragraph below, I give a description to how I reviewed my themes.

I reviewed the three main themes by analysing the colloquial terms that fitted into sexual practices, sexual subjectivities and sexual desires, as discussed in Phase Three of Braun and Clarke's six phase method. After this, I relooked at the Extracts I had chosen to ensure they captured each sub theme and that they were relevant to the overall discussion I needed to create within these themes.

Phase Five: Defining and naming themes

The fifth phase in Braun and Clarke's (2013) thematic analysis is to refine and define themes and subthemes. This includes developing names for themes and subthemes. The researcher needs to give clear working definitions to themes and subthemes to capture the essence of the theme. During this phase, the researcher starts to develop a unified story of the data. In the paragraph below, I discuss how I developed the unified story in my thesis.

At this phase, I had developed a detailed outline of patterns within the talk on the main three themes, sexual practices, sexual subjectivities and sexual desires. The colloquial terms that fitted into these main themes had been identified as well as the subthemes within this talk. I defined my themes by trying to develop a simple sentence that captured the essence of what

the theme tried to convey. Once the definition of each sub theme was clear, I considered the names for each theme. To review these names, I considered the flow of their definitions in the overall story-line of my thesis.

Phase Six: Producing the report

The sixth phase in Braun and Clarke's (2013) thematic analysis is to produce the analysis in a report. Researchers are encouraged to provide evidence of Extracts that support the research questions and literature presented in the study. Researchers need to write in convincing ways to show the reader that the study does have validity and merit (Braun & Clarke, 2013). In the paragraph below, I discuss my final phase of my analysis.

The last phase was to develop a good structure for the discussion by outlining the main Extracts, which I had collated since the first phase of analysis. My final phase was to take into consideration everything I had worked through in the previous five phases, while keeping in mind the definitions I had given themes and the colloquial terms that had fitted into these discussions. I also had to be aware of the theory and literature I had provided as well as my research questions. This was to ensure that the research flowed from research context to theoretical framework and, finally, analysis and conclusions.

In the analysis chapters of this thesis, I present Extracts from the social media data and group interview data. Where necessary, I disclose in brackets next to the title of the Extract the data source. The social media Extracts are either referred to as a social media post, meaning it is posted by a confessor, or a social media response, meaning that it is a response to a confessor.

LIMITATIONS

I realise that, in situating my research in our local context, I have examined a very particular sector of the youth population. There are strengths and limitations inherent in this decision. It should be noted, however, that generalisability is not an aim of this research. Instead, I am interested in producing an in-depth analysis of sexualities talk among a small group of young adults who are illustrative of one sector of the youth population.

ETHICS

The Ethical Standards Protocol of this research was reviewed and approved by the Psychology Department Research Projects and Ethics Review Committee (RPERC). The ethical clearance number is PSY2016/15.

There are unique ethical considerations when collecting data online. The most up-to-date guide is the British Psychological Society (BPS) Ethics guideline for internet-mediated research (2013). The writing of this section highlights all relevant concerns contained in the BPS guidelines that pertain to this research and the data that were collected online. This section aims to provide a clear distinction between how care was taken online and during the group interview.

Respect for the autonomy and dignity of persons

At the centre of the debate on ethics of online data collection and its analysis is whether the data are within the public or private domain (Hewson & Buchanan, 2013). The data collected

from Rhodes Confessions are public data. For the following reasons, a person does not need to register with Facebook to view posts on the page: the page is set up as a community so anyone anywhere in the world can follow the posts or join the group. In fact, the Rhodes Confessions page from which I took my data has 37 156 followers. Confidentiality is maintained by Rhodes Confession using a system that anonymises the confessor.

Although commenters are not anonymised, they are aware, based on the nature of the Facebook page, that their comments are public. Those who post on the site as confessors are doing so knowingly to admit response, seek advice or look for support from the page's followers. This aligns with notions held in observational research, whereby it is suitable to collect data in situations where those being observed would expect to be observed by strangers (as cited in Hewson & Buchanan, 2013, p.6). This also means that there are no copyright issues as in public observational research because those posting are doing so knowing that their content will be shared. Considering all aspects that make Rhodes Confessions a public forum, I still obtained consent from the next available proxy, the group administrators, and once this was gained I proceeded to download the data available on Rhodes Confessions. Although the group administrators first declined my request to advertise on their page, after clarifying a few things (that I did not need to advertise for the group interview) with my supervisor, they did agree to allow me to have access to all their posts as seen in Appendix 4.

Consent

Consent to download and use posts on Rhodes Confession could not be obtained from everyone who posted on the page, so the next available proxy was the group administrators. Consent from all the group interview volunteers was obtained. A copy of the consent form can be found in Appendix 5. During the group interview, all participants were assured they

could leave at any time. Some of them did, due to concurrent lectures. Debriefing procedures of going through the information sheet provided occurred before the group interview started. Due to participants leaving the group interview early, they could not participate in the end debriefing process. At the end of the group interview, I asked the two participants to write a few sentences on their experience of the group interview.

Scientific Value

To ensure the scientific value of this research, a number of procedures took place. During the process of filtering posts to include only those that were relevant, I used Excel's word search function. For example, I searched the words like 'love', 'sex', 'naps' and 'dating' in Excel and it brought up all confessions containing these terms. These and relevant others were highlighted and at the end of this, all confessions not highlighted were deleted. This left behind only confessions that had colloquialisms pertaining to sexualities. Group interview data were controlled using the interview schedule which included confessions used to prompt the discussions. Video and voice recordings for accurate transcription were used.

Social Responsibility

My role as a researcher was disclosed to Rhodes Confessions administrators when asking for consent to download the group's posts. My role in analysing the data on this site remained unobtrusive to the confessors as they had posted to elicit a response and their posts had been anonymised. Although those that left comments on the site had not been anonymised, I did not include their names or any sensitive personal information of theirs in this thesis, despite their comments being able to be found online. Those who commented should have been aware that their comments were in a public space, based on the nature of

the public setting of the Rhodes Confession page. Therefore, including their comments in my thesis should not have harmed them in any way as their comments had already been made public. My participants in the group interview were volunteers and they were given pseudonyms as well as having signed consent forms before engaging in my study. My social responsibility I felt lay in my recommendations for this study. This research would be shared with the Rhodes Confessions administrators who would then be free to encourage public interest in the findings.

Maximising benefits and minimising harm

To minimise harm for my group interview participants, I informed them of the student counselling centre. If there were any negative triggers during the group interview, they could go to the counselling centre offered by UCKAR. This information was given to them verbally as well as in a debriefing information sheet. This contained my supervisors, the Department of Psychology and my own contact details if there were any complaints about how I handled the group interview.

To minimise harm to the speakers in my social media data, I did not include any identifying characteristics, for example, the number of the Rhodes Confession. Based on the nature of the setting of the Rhodes Confession page, those commenting publically were doing so knowing that their personal profiles would be seen by those following the page. With this said, I did not include any sensitive personal information of those commenting on confessions that could identify them.

Presumably a reader could locate the commenter and write a comment to them. This could possibly be harmful, if the comment were negative. Nevertheless, this harm would be no

greater than the comment being in an open public space where anybody could comment on anybody's post. So this research, in and of itself, did not create extra risk.

REFLEXIVITY

A qualitative research design implies the researcher and research participants are creating knowledge together. A researcher can potentially impose his/her perceptions onto collected data, without allowing the data to speak for itself. In order to avoid self-fabricating the data on the part of the researcher, researchers need to be reflexive in their role in this process (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004). To achieve reflexivity in my research, I had to explore my role in a heteronormative environment and ensure it did not affect the analysis of my data. I did this by turning questions I had of others onto myself. For example, the idea of the normal, what made me think my actions as a monogamous person were more normal than other people's actions as non-monogamous persons? Why was I able to perceive the derogatory terms used to describe women's sexuality better than I was able to perceive derogatory terms for men? Why did I believe that women should not be more sexually active than men?

Conclusion

The purpose of this study is to showcase colloquial talk around the sexuality of young adults. This chapter has outlined my working definition of colloquial terms, which include terms that can fall under slang, lavender linguistics, genderlects and netspeak. It has further shown the intricacies of decision-making when conducting this study. Much of the research design is two-fold as there are two sources of data, data that is online and data collected from a key informant group interview. The focus has been on the sampling procedures, how the data

were collected and the data analysis of these two sources. A major ethical concern around consent to collect online data and minimising harm for these posters was addressed. This highlighted that the next available proxy to obtain consent was the group administrators, and that the young adults posting onto Rhodes Confessions had already been anonymised, and those commenting on these posts were doing so knowing that their comments could be seen by anyone online. This highlighted the observational nature of my online data, that young adults posting on the site were doing so to illicit a response. The next section of my thesis focuses on my analysis. This is broken up into three chapters, sexual practices, sexual subjectivities and sexual desires and is the focus of the rest of this thesis.

CHAPTER FOUR

SEXUAL PRACTICES

I have compiled a glossary of the colloquial terms young people use to talk about sexual practices, sexual desires, and sexual subjectivities on the Rhodes Confession page and this is appended to my report in Appendix 6. In addition to compiling a glossary, I have also compiled a table indicating the frequency with which each term occurred across my data corpus. This table is appended to my report in Appendix 7. I have also compiled three other tables, in which I have separated those colloquial terms pertaining specifically to sexual practices (Appendix 8), sexual subjectivities (Appendix 9), and sexual desires (Appendix 10). In this chapter, I present the first part of my analysis dealing with the deployment of colloquial language in talk about sexual practices. Focusing on talk about sexual practices is an appropriate place to begin the discussion because this is the focus of much of the talk on the public student-led social media platform.

GETTING IT

Colloquial terms and phrases that referred to getting sex include: `f**king` (28 references), `shagging` (19 references), `hitting it` (6 references), `making love` (6 references), `bedding` (3 references) and `hitting it raw` (3 references). Across my data corpus, with a total of 780

references, most of the talk about getting sex is about 'naps' (562 references) and 'hooking-up' (218 references). I found it difficult to differentiate between 'naps' and 'hooking-up'. I initially assumed that these were two terms that signified casual sex. This assumption was supported by numerous instances across the data corpus in which 'naps' and 'hooking-up' were used interchangeably to describe sexual experiences. When I use the term 'casual sex', I am referring to sex outside of a long term committed relationship (Kaestle & Evans, 2018; Vrangalova, 2013), between strangers or brief acquaintances (Danube, Vescio, & Davis, 2014), that can occur with concurrent or multiple partners and that lacks potential in future romantic investment and commitment (Farvid & Braun, 2017). There were multiple Extracts that supported my assumption that 'naps' and 'hooking-up' refer to 'casual sex'. In Extract 1 (below), a first-year student uses the term in a statement about having multiple sexual partners during his/her first semester at university.

Extract 1: "I've only hooked up with 5 girls" (social media post)

It's my first year and in my first semester I've only hooked up with 5 girls – I feel like it's a small number? And don't judge me for asking.³

'Hooking up' deployed in Extract 1 (above) in line 1, implies hooking up is done with multiple partners. However, as evident in Extract 2 (below), it is also deployed to signify sex outside of a romantic relationship.

Extract 2: "It doesn't have to mean anything" (social media post)

Why do people think that hook-ups must always be either a once-off or a regular thing? Surely if you had a good time the first time, it'll be good a few more times and it doesn't have to mean anything?

³ All extracts presented in the analysis chapters are copied directly from their original spoken or posted formats. This means that there will be errors in grammar and language. These errors have not been corrected on the basis that this thesis highlights young adults' talk and therefore correcting how they speak takes away authenticity.

In Extract 2 (above) in line 2-3, the speaker makes a distinction between sex that “means something” and sex that does not. I interpret “means something” to be a euphemism for emotional involvement and the speaker to be implying that although it is easier to avoid emotional involvement in a “once-off” (line 1) sexual encounter, that it can also be avoided in a “few more” (line 2) encounters with the same person.

In Extracts 3, 4 and 5 (below), there is concern about avoiding emotional involvement or being in a committed relationship in talk about ‘naps’.

Extract 3: “No one wants to commit” (social media post)

I realised that no one here actually wants to commit, it's all about naps

Extract 4: “I really love my girlfriend but...” (social media post)

I'm in a long-distance relationship and I really love my girlfriend, but the sexual frustration is running high. Is naps really the best answer?

Extract 5: “I loved the no strings vibe at the time” (social media post)

I am a first year female and quite frankly I'm sick of naps. They're great and all, I loved the no strings vibe at the time, but personally I can't do it anymore...I'm just over it now. I'm craving connection with somebody on all levels.

In Extract 3 (above), ‘naps’ are spoken about as uncommitted sex; in Extract 4 (above) ‘naps’ are contrasted to a committed relationship and in Extract 5 (above), ‘naps’ are spoken about as casual with a “no strings vibe” (line 2) which implies a lack of emotional involvement. Because of this, naps and hook-ups were often deployed in comments about casual sexual experiences, suggesting that the terms were synonymous.

Yet there were also numerous instances where the term ‘naps’ was used to describe sex with a more regular partner or within the context of a romantic relationship.

Extract 6: “Naps with my boyfriend” (social media post)

I farted while having naps with my boyfriend. He didn't lose his erection. This is love ha ha!

Extract 7: "Worried my bf is starting to find naps repetitive and boring" (social media post)

6 months into my first serious relationship and I'm really worried my bf is starting to find the naps repetitive and boring and will seek his excitement elsewhere. Guys, is this a thing? Do you get bored?

Extract 8: "I am in a relationship and I am not even having naps" (social media post)

I am in a relationship and I am not even having naps. It would not be so bad if we were waiting or have not had naps before. We used to have naps all the time, now...nothing.

Although 'naps' have been presented in talk of casual sexual experiences, in both Extracts 6 and 7 (above), the speakers share their experience of having sex with a regular partner, by referring to this person as their "boyfriend" (Extract 6 line 1) and "bf" (Extract 7 line 1). Although in Extract 8 (above) the poster mentions that 'naps' were not being had anymore (line 1), the context of the relationship is still with someone more regular ("I am in a relationship", line 1).

In the context of the group discussions, participants argued that although 'naps' and 'hook-ups' were terms that were often used interchangeably, they were also frequently deployed to differentiate between sex with a casual partner, rather than a more regular partner.

Extract 9: "Naps is a planned hook-up" (group interview)

Well if you [you're] napping in the club you wouldn't be considered napping because it's just a random hook-up cos, like, we explained the definition of naps is a planned hook-up. So it's considered a hook-up if I'm doing it on the wall in the club.

In Extract 9 (above) line 2, more regular partners will plan to have sex while casual partners randomly hook-up. This distinction is justified because the term 'naps' is used to refer to both casual sexual experiences as well as sex with a more regular partner or within the context of

a romantic relationship. The term 'hook-up' was only used in the context of talk about casual sexual experiences. As one speaker explained:

Extract 10: "At our age, most of us aren't ready to settle down" (social media post)

Hook up culture is very real mate, it's just how it is. Relax on the relationship stuff, don't get caught up in trying to find a commitment from people at our age, most of us aren't ready to settle down.

In Extract 10 (above), hook-ups are casual and to be expected amongst young people. In reference to "hook up culture" (line 1), the speaker identifies that because young people are constructed as not "ready to settle down" (line 3), casual 'hook-ups' are one way of getting sex. While 'naps' and 'hook-ups' are used to reference a variance of casual sex, 'naps' can be casual or more regular while 'hook-ups' are casual only. In talking about 'naps', the themes of heterosexuality and experimenting with non-normative sexual experiences featured, as discussed in the next section.

EXPERIMENTING

Much of the talk about 'naps' and 'hook-ups' was about heterosexual intimacy. However, this talk was not exclusively about heterosexual sex. This talk provided evidences of a range of non-normative sexual experiences: straight identifying men having sex with other straight identifying men (Extract 11), straight identifying women having sex with other women (Extract 12), experimentation with sexual roles (Extract 13), experimentation with multiple partners in three-ways (Extract 14 and 15) and polyamory, which is the desire to have romantic involvement with more than one partner (Extract 16). The colloquial terms and phrases predominately used in talk about sexual experimentation included 'gay naps' (21 references), 'heteroguy' (1 reference) and 'threesome' (15 references).

Extract 11: “My friend and I decided to try out gay naps” (social media post)

In the beginning of this year my friend and I decided to try out gay naps, being the naughty people that we are we went all the way and tried a lot of things. The naps was quite pleasurable...thought a lot about it during vac. When I saw him on campus this semester I had this huge urge to have naps with him again, I wanted to feel what I felt that other night. Long story short, we spent the night together on Monday and then Tuesday when I got back from lectures he was waiting for me by my res and I had missed him so much.

In Extract 11 (above), not only was this “try out gay naps” (line 1) an experimentation, but from line 4 the speaker desired a more regular sexual experience of ‘gay naps’ and from line 5 to 6 this sexual experimentation became more regular. However, assumptions existed in the talk in Extract 11 (above) that positioned ‘gay naps’ as something the speaker did not necessarily think they would enjoy and an experimentation they thought would not necessarily become more regular.

Extract 12 (below) highlighted experimentation between women having sex with women:

Extract 12: “They are just straight girls experimenting” (social media post)

I am a girl and I am having naps with five different girls. Sometimes my friends tell me I should be ashamed of myself but I’m not because I know they are just straight girls experimenting. They have boyfriends and I know it will never develop into something.

In Extract 12 (above), the poster shared that she had been having sex with other girls who were maintaining heterosexual relationships. In line 3, the speaker exclaimed that this relationship had been casual as “it will never develop into something”. Heterosexuality was perceived as more enduring than sexual intimacy with other women, thus trumping ‘gay naps’.

In Extract 13 (below) experimentation with the ideals of normalised heterosexual sexual roles took place, displaying particularly blurred lines between men desiring a traditional dominating sexual role often associated with other males.

Extract 13: “I want a dominating figure” (social media post)

I consider myself a heteroguy but I've been hooking up with guys a lot recently, mainly cause I want a dominating figure and a lot of girls aren't about that life.

Extract 13 (above) showed experimentation with sexual roles. The heteronormative sexual roles that positioned men as dominant and women as submissive had been switched as the “heteroguy” (line 1) desired to have a dominating figure.

In Extract 14 (below), the speaker argued that sexual experimentation could lead to the normalising of ‘non-normative’ sex.

Extract 14: “We ended-up having a threesome” (social media post)

Found out my naps buddy was hooking up with another guy from our res. I invited them over at the same time and we ended up having a threesome. It has now become an everyday thing.

In Extract 14 (above), the speaker shared that he had regular casual sex with a ‘naps’ buddy, who had a concurrent partner. It is not clear as to whether the speaker had given the invitation to these two role players with the intention of having a ‘threesome’. Yet it is interesting that the speaker positioned this experience as having ended in “a threesome” (line 2). The regularity of the experimentation positioned it as becoming the usual or common aspect of their expression of sexual intimacy (“an everyday thing”, line 3). Extract 14 (above) shared the type of outcome with Extract 11 (above): an experimentation turning into a success.

In Extract 15 (below), a couple were also interested in experimenting with ‘threesomes’:

Extract 15: “We’re thinking about inviting one of his close friends” (social media post)

So I'm a girl and my boyfriend and I have discussed having a threesome. We are both pretty keen. We are thinking of inviting one of his close friends.

The speaker in Extract 15 (above), someone in a committed relationship (line 1), highlighted that not only casual sex partners could engage in introducing simultaneous sexual partners, but that couples could experiment too. It is interesting to note that in both Extracts 14 and 15, the speakers introduced a third partner known to at least one of the three. In Extract 14 it was the 'naps' buddy's already existing 'hook-up' and in Extract 15, a close friend of the boyfriend.

In Extract 16 (below), negotiations around a polyamorous relationship were explored.

Extract 16: "I can't deny my feelings" (social media post)

I am in love with two people. Something that I've been brought up to think is not possible. But I can't deny my feelings. What do I do? They both love me too and I do not want to hurt anyone.

In Extract 16 (above), the speaker shared his/her turmoil about loving two people at the same time. In line 2, the speaker indicated believing that relationships should and could only be monogamous ("I've been brought up to think it's not possible"). From this heteronormative belief about monogamy, the speaker displayed concern about making the right choices with regards to whom to love.

A common feature between these Extracts (11-16) is that people are receptive to non-normative sexual experiences. People were open to having new sexual experiences without being concerned about what others might think, while others were not bothered by non-normative sexual experiences. Added to this is an awareness that people are sexually fluid and not being concerned about labelling their experience or sexuality.

DATING

The term `dating` had 617 references in the data corpus. Dating refers to a process by which people get to know each other which can lead to a sexual relationship. In talk about dating there was a prominent discussion around queer sexualities, dishonesty towards partners, who pays for dates and negotiations around `dating` someone of a different race.

There were distinct issues raised around dating as a queer person. This relates to disjunctions between people's sexual identities and who they are dating (Extract 17 and 18), social stigma (Extract 19), beliefs around sexuality as fluid (Extract 20 and 21) and issues around coming out as gay (Extract 22).

In Extract 17 (below), the speaker highlighted a disjunction between his sexual orientation and that of those he could and could not date.

Extract 17: "marriage for show" (social media post)

I'm a guy looking for a lesbian girl to date & perhaps marry. I'm in the closet, & I'm looking to have a "marriage for show" with someone who's also closeted, that way we can help each other hide our juicy secret lives. Just like any of the comments (not the post) & il [I will] inbox you, thanks.

In Extract 17 (above), the speaker suggested having a marriage for show with a person whom he identified as `lesbian`. The idea of a marriage for show highlighted the heteronormative belief that men and women must be together. In this case, this arrangement would be serve as a cover up of one's true identity. The use of the term "closeted" (line 2) implied that the speaker is not openly `gay` and because he is seeking a heterosexual relationship for show, he is not ready to `come out`. The term "closeted" in line 2 and "hide" in line 3 also implied that identifying as not heterosexual needed to be hidden.

In Extract 18 (below), the speaker who is female did not suggest a heterosexual relationship for show, but already being in a heterosexual relationship, still wanted to date other females.

Extract 18: "If I close my eyes and imagine a girl, it's amazing" (social media post)

I've begun to think I might be lesbian, but I've been dating my boyfriend for five years now since we were in high school. How can I convince him to accommodate my fantasies? I've tried getting him to wear a bra or "tuck it back" (you know what I'm talking abt [about]) but he seems hesitant. If I close my eyes and imagine a girl, it's amazing, and he is the most sweet, sensitive, caring guy around, paying for meals, treating me right, etc etc, but as a second-year who wants "to play the left field", I just want to get out.

In Extract 18 (above), the speaker suggested that she "might be lesbian" (line 1). The use of the word "might" denoting possibility could have been selected because the speaker, already in a five-year relationship with a male, showed a disjunction with what her sexuality might be and whom she was dating. She exclaimed that she wanted her boyfriend to "tuck it back" (line 3) to represent female genitals as she imagined being with a woman. In line 5, the speaker mentioned something interesting, that her boyfriend took care of her (he is "sweet, sensitive, caring guy who pays for her meals and treats her right), yet she wanted to "play the field". The speaker highlighted a dichotomy between wanting to be 'lesbian' and explore her sexuality, but wanting to be with a man whom she constructs as taking care of her.

In Extract 19 (below), the speaker spoke to an incident in which she experienced stigma, based on her sexuality.

Extract 19: "you are far too pretty to be a lesbian B***H [bitch]" (social media post)

A man (who had obviously seen my girlfriend and I together earlier) walked towards me on High Street and slapped me so hard then as he continued walking said, "you are far too pretty to be a lesbian B***H [bitch]". Why is there this stupid idea that one has to be ugly or undesired to date the same gender? This ideology pisses me

off. If you think this way you need to educate yourself. Also, I don't care what you think of me, I did not deserve to be slapped.

In Extract 19 (above), the speaker shared an incident, based on her sexuality. The speaker questioned why there are assumptions that queer identifying people must be ugly or undesirable to the opposite sex in order to identify that way. This highlighted heteronormative assumptions about why people identify as not heterosexual, because they are unattractive. It also highlighted that all those who are attractive need to be heterosexual.

Extract 20 and 21 (below) highlighted discussions on sexual fluidity and dating.

Extract 20: "I used to date men" (social media post)

I used to date men until I discovered how great women are. I honestly think every woman should try it. It's so great. They know what they are doing. And they tend not to cheat. And they make great companions for life. Sometimes I'm genuinely confused as to why more women aren't dating women. It makes so much sense. It's so nice :)

In Extract 20 (above), the speaker shared that she used to be heterosexual "I used to date men", but now preferred to date women. This highlighted that sexuality is fluid or at least on a spectrum, meaning that at different points in someone's life, a person can identify as either heterosexual or lesbian or other and can shift between these identities.

In Extract 21 (below), the speaker shared his/her belief that sexuality is fluid based on one's personal experience.

Extract 21: "I'm heterosexual, but for the longest time I only dated and felt attraction for women" (social media response)

It's normal. Sexuality is a fluid thing. I'm heterosexual, but for the longest time I only dated and felt attraction for women. You may be bi [bisexual], you may be pan [pan sexual], you may be whatever makes you happy. As long as you're honest to yourself

and don't hurt others, does it really matter? Labels were originally meant to make us understand things, not cause trouble. <3

In Extract 20 (above), the speaker aimed to normalise sexuality as fluid. The speaker did this by sharing her experience with her own sexuality in line 1. In line 3, the speaker urged others to do what made them happy, to stay true to who they are and to not hurt others around them. In line 4, the speaker justified the use of labels as something that helped people to understand who they are, rather than for people to have used those labels in a negative way.

In Extract 22 (below), the speaker shared his experience with the idea of coming out as gay.

Extract 22: "I am not ready to come out yet" (social media post)

I AM GAY! I AM GAY! I AM GAY! This is what I wanted to shout out while doing cart wheels at the family braai today. Afrikaans men can be such bigots sometimes, the horrible things my dad and uncles were saying about gay people today made me sick. I am not ready to come out yet, but I am going to enjoy the devastation when they discover that I am not only gay but dating a black guy too. I am so in love and I think that will give me the strength to be very theatrical in my delivery. April 2016, I can't wait any longer.

In Extract 22 (above), the speaker highlighted the environment in which he would have to come out as gay. In line 1, the use of the capital letters as well as the term "wanted" indicated that the speaker had a great desire to share his sexual identity, yet the speaker also displayed awareness of certain reactions he might receive. These highlighted a relationship between family and culture perpetuating homophobic reactions and thus resulting in uncertainty of when or if to come out. Not only do these homophobic reactions exist, but they are intersectional with race as the speaker exclaimed, "I am going to enjoy the devastation when they discover that I am not only gay, but dating a black guy too" (line 4 and 5).

Talk within dating highlighted contested opinions of exclusivity and dating. In Extract 23 (below), the speaker shared his experience with exclusivity and dating.

Extract 23: "I also nap with her man" (social media post)

I'm a guy, friends with this awesome dude...he is a ladies' man.... He is dating this girl....she is so sweet, loving. But, she been sneaking out to come nap with Me. (He is cheating too) as I was saying! I don't know what to do, cause I also nap with her man...the cheating dude...he is cheating with Me, yah. I feel so bad, he gives out of this world oral and she's sexy #mysecretetrophy...I want to tell them. But!!

In Extract 23 (above), the speaker shared that not only were they having a sexual relationship with his friend's girlfriend, but he was also having a sexual relationship with his friend, the girl's boyfriend. The speaker felt confronted with wanting to tell both people that they were cheating on each other; however, he ended the post by saying "but".

In response to posts about dating and exclusivity, much like Extract 23 (above), responses as seen in Extract 24 and 25 showed contested opinions about whether dating needed to be exclusive.

Extract 24: "Relationships are meant to be 100% exclusive" (social media response)

Relationships are meant to be 100% exclusive. You shouldn't be scouting dating apps for potential hook ups or flirting while you are already with someone else - but that's none of my business. >_>

In Extract 24 (above), the speaker suggested that dating someone implied that a relationship had formed and these needed to be "100% exclusive". Yet in Extract 25 (below), the speaker suggested that even if you felt bound by a dating relationship, that did not mean you would not have sexual attractions to other people and having sex with these people was to be expected.

Extract 25: “You don't stop being sexually attracted to someone just because you're dating someone else” (social media response)

You don't stop being sexually attracted to someone just because you're dating someone else. People like sex, and people like having sex with anyone and everyone they find attractive. It's a product of our biology. It doesn't make you a bad person, it makes you a human being like the rest of us.

The speaker in Extract 25 (above) positioned sexual attraction as a part of human's biology (line 3). This meant that it is instinctive for someone to want to have many sexual relations and that these attractions did not go away once you started dating someone. This is a contrast in opinion to Extract 24 (above). This contrast showed that young adults differ in their opinions on what dating implied in terms of exclusivity.

There were contested opinions about who pays for a date, as seen in Extract 26 (below). This post spoke to discourses of men being providers for women.

Extract 26: “I wasn't a real man coz [because] I refused to pay” (social media post)

To the lady that said I wasn't a real man coz [because] I refused to pay for our whole date, screw you. I didn't go on a date expecting you to spread your legs so why the hell do u expect me to open my wallet?! It's 2016. Gonna [going to] tell all my gents about you so that they know to avoid you.

In Extract 26 (above) in line 1, the speaker shared how his date drew an association between masculinity and paying for dates, that if men did not pay for dates, they were not “real men” (line 1). This highlighted the discourse of men being financial providers for women. By using the word “avoid” in line 4 and the explicit “screw you”, the speaker indicated finding his date's association of paying with masculinity offensive. In line 2, the speaker shared his lack of sexual expectation of the date and implied he expected his date to also have no traditional expectations of gender roles within dating. In line 3, the speaker

shared that he would “tell all my gents about you” so that he could save them the trouble of `dating’ the girl in question.

Extract 27 (below) attempted to provide the speaker in Extract 26 (above) with an explanation as to why his date expected him to pay.

Extract 27: “She would expect you to pay” (social media response)

Well to be fair if you asked her out on the date she would expect you to pay. Expecting her to pay half is like inviting someone to your house for dinner or lunch and expecting them to come with their own food, to cook their own food and perhaps even use their own cutlery. If you wanted her to pay for half, you should have made it clear from the get go. In turn, if a woman or man asks you out on a date you should expect them to pay. I think it is just common courtesy that the host pays. However not wanting to pay does not make you any less of a "real man" whatever that maybe it just makes you a bad host.

The speaker in Extract 27 (above) explained to the speaker in Extract 26 (above) that the person who had asked someone out on a date had been expected to pay for the date. If there had been confusion, then clear communication needed to take place. The speaker dissociated not paying for a date from gendered performances suggesting rather that it is just been a case of being a “bad host” (line 7).

In talk about dating, posters often mentioned wanting to date outside of their racial category such as stated in Extract 28 (below):

Extract 28: “I want to date my girlfriend’s black friend” (social media post)

I want to date my girlfriend’s black friend, but I don’t know how to break up with my current girlfriend. She’s white, please help. P.S., I don’t have any land to offer.⁴

⁴ This sentence about land invokes a range of complex radicalised politics (epitomised by, but not restricted to, land).

Response: You want to date your girlfriend's friend. But you seem more concerned about the race of both girls than the fact that you want to dump your girl for one of her friends?? This confuses me.

In Extract 28 (above), the speaker wanted to date outside of his racial category. The response to this post is interesting as it highlighted that race is not the issue here, but rather that the poster wanted to date his current girlfriends' friend. There was a questioning of the ethics of dating a girlfriend's friend, rather than the ethical questioning of dating outside of one's race taking place.

In Extract 29 (below), the two speakers mentioned how race should not play a part in whom someone wants to date.

Extract 29: "sit down.. date a human, not a stereotype or a colour.." (social media post)

I'm a black girl and I'm so tired of all these black girls who are "down for the swirl".. y'all [you all] sound so desperate for white boys.. If u like him as a normal guy then all is well.. good for u.. All men are just men..only different external appearance.. like gosh..sit down.. date a human, not a stereotype or a colour..

Response: !!!!! Been feeling this way since since. So many black girls go on about how much they wanna date a white guy. And then what must happen? Do white guys talk to each other about how much they wanna date a black girl? Lol I doubt that. Seek to engage with other humans, not with colours.

In Extract 29 (above) line 3 and then 4, the poster emphasised that although black females had a desire to date white males, the colour of their skin should not be the restricting factor when wanting to date someone. The speaker went on to say that people should date humans and not racial stereotypes. The response to this post reiterated the poster's views: in line 7 and 8, the speaker suggested that people should date humans and not skin colour. A broader concern discussed in dating is what happened when male friends want to date their ex-girlfriends. This is discussed next.

In talk about naps and hooking up, one of the main concerns about sexual practices was centred round friendship circles. Complications developed if sexual practices occurred across friendship groups. A major element of this talk was that men should not break the Bro Code. The Bro Code (12 references) contains rules of friendship etiquette between men. Most comments on the Bro Code pertained to a rule about not 'dating' a friend's ex-girlfriends as Extract 30 and 31 (below) highlighted.

Extract 30: "Bro Code 1028" (social media post)

Bro Code 1028: No bro can date and another bro's ex, even if she is Miss World

Extract 31: "She started to date my best mate" (social media post)

So I was dating this girl and then she broke up with me saying she can't be with anyone. The next thing I find out is, she started to date my best mate! Do I stay friends with him or what?

Response: No, he broke bro code.

In Extract 30 (above), dating another "bro's ex" (line 1) was condemned, no matter how beautiful she were. In Extract 31 (above), the speaker was advised not to continue his friendship with a friend after his ex-girlfriend had slept with him. This emphasised the consequences of breaking the Bro Code: you could lose a friendship.

It is interesting to point to the talk on naps and hook-ups, about the non-normative sexual experiences and to highlight how those experimentations with multiple concurrent partners are much less stigmatised than a 'bro' having sex with his 'bro's' ex-girlfriend. Yet in talk about naps and hook-ups, "seal-clubbing" was the only practice that was unanimously seen as problematic as seen in the following section.

`SEAL-CLUBBING`

`Seal-clubbing` refers to senior students (second year and up) being sexually or romantically involved with first-year students. Seal-clubbing was only mentioned 11 times in the social media data, but I have included it here because it is a specific sexual practice. The term seal-clubbing stems from the unfortunate and illegal practices of hunting baby seals for their fur. The practice of seal-clubbing in my data depicts first year students as baby seals, naïve and unsuspecting of hunters (seal clubbers), who are no longer first-year students and who are willing to exploit first-year students' lack of awareness on how casual sex cultures work at university. In Extract 32 (below), widespread knowledge of this practice was evidenced in the group administrator's message, in which first-year students ("firsties" line 1) were referred to as seals ("aka seals" line 1).

Extract 32: "Firsties, aka seals" (social media post)

Announcement: Happy New First Term. For the firsties, aka seals, the link to submit your comments is located in the 'about' section of the page.

Response: Why are you calling first years' seals?

Admin: Seals and "seal-clubbing" are two completely different terms. Seal implies a wide eyed and inquisitive-first year while `seal-clubbing` implies dating a first year.

Response: I know about `seal-clubbing`. I was trying to understand why the group admin found it okay to promote the culture!

It is precisely because there is widespread knowledge about this practice that the person responding to the message posted by the group administrator challenged his/her decision to use the term seals to address the first-year students. While the response from the administrator said that "seal-clubbing" is a term used to describe dating a first-year student (line 5), it is not difficult to understand how the image invoked is not nearly as innocent as the term dating implied. For example, "seal-clubbing" was the term used in response to this post (Extract 33 below) about a woman sharing the change in behaviour of her guy:

Extract 33: “As a lonely first year, I fell for his charm” (social media post)

As a lonely first year, I fell for his charm and I was amazed by how he knew so many people on campus. He introduced me to a few friends and he even gave me his hoodies and stuff. The guy was just amazing. Long story short, I ended up spending a weekend with him, and the weekend became every day. But now he hardly has time for me ... and whenever he asks me to come over, it just leads to naps, we don't cuddle and he's always on his phone afterwards.

Response: `seal-clubbing' at its nastiest, let him go, sweetie, he ain't worth a single second of your time.

Response: Unfortunately you have been seal clubbed. I'm so sorry. Please refrain from contacting or seeing him ever again.

In Extract 33 (above), although the poster of the confession did not use the term `seal-clubbing', those replying were able to give the poster's experience a name and stated that she had been seal clubbed.

Seal-clubbing was also mentioned in response to this post in Extract 34 (below) about the possibility of a student failing first year and getting seal clubbed again.

Extract 34: “You can be seal clubbed again next year” (social media post)

I have only been to one lecture this whole year. I nailed high school so this should be easy.

Response: On the plus side, you can be seal clubbed again next year.

The comments in Extract 34 (above) “as a lonely first year” (line 1) and in Extract 35 (above) “you can be seal clubbed again” (line 3) positioned seal-clubbing as an unfortunate consequence of being a first-year student. However, in Extract 34 (above), the phrases “seal-clubbing at its nastiest” (line 7) and “unfortunately you have been seal clubbed” (line 9) problematised the nature of seal-clubbing.

It is important to note that seal-clubbing, as a sexual practice, was the only issue across my entire data corpus that prompted explicit mention of a sexual hierarchy. Evidence of this is found in Extract 35 (below).

Extract 35: "Our standing on the food chain will be elevated" (social media post)

Nothing brings me greater joy than knowing that the end of our time as first year boys is coming to an end in less than 4 months. After which, our standing on the food chain will be elevated and our female counterparts value drops because of the new first year females who will be running the show next year. Hence gents, don't despair if the current first year chicks are giving you a hard time. Next year and the years to come will see our status at uni sky rocketing whilst theirs diminishes as they get older, lonelier and thirstier!!!! So cheer up, lads. Our time is coming and, to this year's first year females, WINTER AND DROUGHT is coming your way!! Enjoy your reign whilst you still can cause come next year and the following years, you wont be 'THE SH&T' you will be "sh&t". Deuces!!!!

Response: You're clearly quite a sad little man who hasn't been getting very much. Being a second year doesn't make you any more attractive, and desperateness is quite the leg closer as well. Nevertheless, good luck with that 'seal-clubbing' mentality.

In Extract 35 (above), the speaker argued that first-year male students were not at the top of the hierarchy and that only when they were no longer first-years could they expect that their "standing(s) will be elevated" (line 2-3), while first-year female students were on top of the hierarchy, as the speaker referred to them as "running the show" (line 4). By urging male students to "not despair" (line 4) as their positions on the "food chain" (line 2) would "sky rocket" (line 6) while female students would get "older, lonelier and thirstier" (line 6-7), a sexual hierarchy that positioned younger women as more sexually alluring than older women while maintaining that no matter the age of men, they would continue to be highly ranked on the sexual hierarchy and able to have sex with any women, was created.

In response to the sexual hierarchy in Extract 35, a speaker categorised the talk as a "seal-clubbing mentality" (line 14). I take this to mean that there is a male perception that younger

females (first-year students) will always be more sexually attractive than females older than them and that younger females will always be perceived as desiring older male students. The seal-clubbing mentality thus provided insight into the existing sexual dynamics and hierarchies of campus life.

Orientation Week is the first experience that first-year students have of the campus lifestyle. Orientation Week provides first-year students with opportunities to familiarise themselves with campus facilities, rules and to make new friends. Seal-clubbing is more likely to take place during Orientation Week. Primarily, orientation week will be the students' first experience of campus. This experience is meshed with a variety of new things, for example, the casual sex culture, negotiating their role within it and binge drinking.

With this idea in mind, UCKAR aimed to combat these practices by creating awareness of them during Orientation Week. During this week, time is allocated to students to discuss UCKAR based sexual activities and to encourage students to recognise these behaviours, to not engage in them and to protect themselves.

In Extract 36 (below), a participant in the group interview described what happened when students were told about sexual practices at UCKAR, like seal-clubbing during orientation week. The participant highlighted a lack of seriousness towards these practices.

Extract 36: "but then people start laughing about it" (group interview)

I know when we mention it to our first years, because I'm part of my house comm. in my house and we've mentioned [it] to our first years, what like 'seal-clubbing' and stuff like that is and it's like when you mention it, you serious at first. But then people start laughing about it.

In Extract 36 (above), the speaker portrayed the nonchalant position that students take when learning about practices like seal-clubbing. It is not possible to generalise the behaviour of the students across all universities, but it may highlight a nonchalant construction that

students have developed as a mechanism for dealing with the perceived uncomfortable content of this type of sex education.

Talk about seal-clubbing highlights the existing sexual dynamics and hierarchies, of which first-year students are unaware. This highlights that the seal-clubbing mentality provides a negative positioning of first year female students. Although they may desire older male students, to refer to them as seals “wide eyed and inquisitive” for example in Extract 32 line 5 presents particular gendered ideologies of women. This ideology is that women are constructed as the good sexual subject positioned in chastity, unaware of sex intricacies, which strengthens her inability to negotiate the sexual terrain. This furthers her position as being unwise concerning how things work on university campus and thus an easy target of whom to take advantage. This brings into question the consensual nature of seal-clubbing. Is seal-clubbing consensual sex, if someone is being sexually deceptive, knowingly aware of the seal’s lack in sexual awareness?

In Chapter One, I presented the following research about sexual coercion foregrounded by masculine norms: research suggested that men in fraternities sexualise women’s bodies (Bleecker & Murnen, 2005); male students are positioned as more likely to victim blame (Hayes et al., 2016) and be bystanders in sexual assault (McMahon, 2010), and that male students enjoy the conquest of women (Jozkowski et al., 2017). Considering this research and the talk I have presented about seal-clubbing above, there are gendered ideologies at play that maintain seal-clubbing practices, that maintain women as easy prey and victims to badly negotiated sex dominated by male power.

GOING DOWN: PLEASURE PARITY?

While people are all talking about having sex – whether it be casual or with a regular partner, or with one partner or many, in serial or concurrent order – there is surprisingly little talk about the kinds of sexual practices in which they are engaging. When they do get around to talking about particular sex practices, it is generally on the topic of oral sex. The colloquial term and phrases used for oral sex are ‘blow job’ or ‘bj’ (10 references) and ‘going down on’ (6 references). This talk has many features such as questioning it as an act of abstinence, as well as pleasure expectations and reciprocity. In talk about oral sex, Extract 24 (below) showed a disjuncture between what practices counted as sex and what practices did not:

Extract 37: “But I mean you darn right gone 88% of the way” (social media post)

Some people are just too judgemental. You give your boyfriend BJ's, shower together, get into heavy kissing, then come to me and be judgemental about naps before marriage? Like I know yours is not naps, but I mean you darn right gone 88% of the way.

The most interesting observation was in differences regarding expectations of pleasure. Specifically, while women clearly stated that this was something enjoyable for them as in Extract 38 (below), and that oral sex should be reciprocal (Extract 39), it was also described as something uncomfortable for them to perform on someone else (Extract 40).

Extract 38: “He went down on me and I enjoyed it” (social media post)

I have this friend that I really like. He stays alone and he invites me for sleepovers almost every time he is not busy. We are both single and he seems to like me as well. The first few times I slept over nothing went down. We could just cuddle and watch movies and end up going upstairs to sleep and wake up in the morning. So this happened a couple of times until one day I went for another sleepover and we ended up doing it. He went down on me and I enjoyed it and then we had naps.

In Extract 38 (above) line 3, the speaker positioned her partner as making her feel comfortable, by cuddling and sleeping together before engaging in sex and when engaging in oral sex, her partner was interested in pleasing her by going down on her, in line 6. Women were also quite clear that oral sex was something that they thought should be reciprocal.

Extract 39: “#ReciprocityGents” (social media post)

During naps: if you aint gonna [going to] lick it... I wont let you d**k it :)
#ReciprocityGents

In Extract 39 (above), the speaker positioned herself as able to demand pleasure. This positioned her as a woman aware of her sexual desires and acting upon them. This positioned her in a positive light in relation to the arguments made by Fine (1988) on the missing discourse of desire because the speaker displayed awareness of her desires.

However, while women stated they enjoyed oral sex and while they expected their male partners to reciprocate as in Extract 39 (above), it was also observed that many young men and women were also of the opinion that oral sex was something that women were obligated to do even if it was not something that they felt comfortable doing.

Extract 40: “Are guys put off by a girl who doesn’t give a blowjob?” (social media post)

Are guys usually put off by a girl who doesn't give a blowjob or a hand job straight away? I'm quite penis-shy and in the past guys seem to get annoyed or kinda put off. I'm scared of messing up and therefore I'll only do these things once I am comfortable around you.

In Extract 40 line 2-3, the speaker displayed concern for her lack of desire to perform oral sex and its implications for future romantic relationships. In Extract 41 (below), a speaker gave advice on how to win a guy's heart.

Extract 41: “Give him a bj without expecting anything in return” (social media post)

So to win a girl's heart, you make her feel special- flowers, chocolate, romantic dates, presents and giving her your time. But how do you win a guy's heart?

Response: Take an interest in his hobbies. Buy him a beer at the end of a long day, give him a bj without expecting anything in return.

In Extract 41 (above) line 4, "give him a bj without expecting anything in return", voiced a clear indication of women being pressurised into providing oral sex, this being without them expecting anything in return.

In Extract 42 (below), the speaker had internalised the sexual expectation that men want oral sex and tried to negotiate this.

Extract 42: "I don't want to let this get in the way" (social media post)

My boyfriend says I don't love him because I don't want to give him a bj. Is that a requirement in a relationship? We have a good thing going. I don't want this to get in the way. What am I to do?

In Extract 42 (above), the performance of oral sex by women for men came across as a sexual responsibility. In other words, to keep her "good thing going" (line 2) and to not let oral sex get in the way of her boyfriend's happiness, she was left questioning how to handle the situation.

The assumptions within Extracts 40, 41 and 42 (above) point to Rich's (1980) notions of compulsory heterosexuality. Rich (1980) argues that a central feature of compulsory heterosexuality is that it teaches women to put men's sexual needs above their own. This notion is apparent in Extracts 40, 41 and 42 (above). Within this talk, there is an element of male identification (Rich 1980), when women internalise the sexual needs of men and come to blindly accept them. Within these said Extracts, each speaker negotiated between the perceived consequences of not giving men oral sex, and the internalised satisfaction women would receive knowing they had done what the man desired.

Conclusion

Talk within this chapter revolved mostly about getting sex. The colloquial term 'naps' was referred to 562 times and 'hook-ups' were referred to 218 times. Yet, during this talk there was little reference to what people were actually doing during naps and hook-ups. Naps and hook-ups both referred to sex, while naps often referred to more regular sex. Yet, this talk only directly implicated oral sex as a sexual activity: silence reigned around the question whether this sex is penetrative and/or oral sex or both.

Talk about the experimentation of same-sex alludes to the assumption that engaging in experimentation can or cannot work. Yet, the talk mainly highlighted that threesomes were successful sexual experimentation and that there had been no intention of labelling the experience. This also positioned those involved as encouraging a fluid perception to what sexuality is. A successful sexual experimentation had been constructed as trying something new, which was enjoyed, and which often led to something more regular. People reacting to this talk were receptive to it.

A negative construction was placed on seal-clubbing. Seal-clubbing positioned first-year students as likely to be vulnerable to bad sexual interactions; first-year female students were positioned as those likely to fall victim to being seal clubbed. The assumption held that first-year students are sexually inquisitive and interested in sex. It is unclear if this assumption made them highly desirable or if they were being perceived as someone new with whom to have sex.

When the data mentioned the type of sex couples were engaging in, it was oral sex. Although within this talk on oral sex, women were sometimes able to negotiate their desires effectively, most of the talk highlighted the women's missing discourse of desire. This means that many of these women speakers had to please their men; if they did not, they ran the risk of losing them. Even in some of the talk on seal-clubbing, women had to sexually please

their men in order to keep them. This portrays a notion of men's sexual needs taking priority over women's.

CHAPTER FIVE

SEXUAL SUBJECTIVITIES

In my analysis, participants' talked about sexual hierarchies being immersed in comments pertaining to sexual subjectivities, rather than sexual practices. This speaks to Foucault's science of sexuality (Foucault, 1978). The science of sexuality provided a division of unnatural and natural sex. This shift positioned behavioural tendencies as self-evident properties of individuals. It made it possible to separate different types of deviance while measurement made it viable to identify a particular type of person. Foucault's (1978) observation was that the development of a science of sexuality allowed for the taking up of certain kinds of subjectivities constituted through sexual practices and desires. In other words, the science of sexuality made it possible for sexual practices to make people who they are. In this chapter, I look at a number of sexual subjectivities and show how talk about them is used to create subjectivities as good or bad.

I begin the discussion in this chapter by presenting talk that positions sexual practices that allow for questioning of sexual identity. Following this is a discussion of normative sexual subjectivities as good sex. I then provide challenges to normative sexual subjectivities and, lastly, I present a discussion on talk that positions bad sexual subjectivities.

DOES THIS MEAN I'M GAY?

There are numerous instances across the data corpus in which young people are prompted to question their sexual identities as a result of a particular sexual experience. The colloquial terms used in these instances were 'gay' (387 references) and 'lesbian' (106 references). For example, men having sex with men, men engaging in oral sex with men, women having sex with women and people stressing the need to not have to label a same-sex sexual experience. In Extract 43 (below), the speaker questioned his straightness after engaging in same-sex sexual experience with another man.

Extract 43: "Does this mean I'm Gay?" (social media post)

I'm totally straight and I have no desire to be with a guy or anything. But lately I've been having the urge to give another guy oral. Has anyone else ever experienced this and or does this mean I'm gay?

In Extract 43 (above), the speaker started by confirming his heterosexuality "I'm totally straight" (line 1), yet ended with questioning it, "does this mean I'm gay?" (line 3), due to his desire to perform oral sex on other men.

In Extract 44 (below), after having a same sex encounter, the speaker questioned the way forward.

Extract 44: "Is it weird that we haven't spoken about what happened?" (social media post)

My roommate and I decided to drink and wrestle after a fruitless night at Friars. I managed to pin him down and while I was on top of him he lifted his head and kissed me. I've always wondered if he was bisexual. He's probably gonna see this confession, which is okay cos we're close mates. But is it weird that we haven't spoken about what happened? I'm fairly straight (only fantasised). This could really help us both. Thanks.

In Extract 44 (above), the speaker who presented himself as heterosexual, but possibly fluid, only “fantasised” (Line 5), questioned what to do about having kissed a man and so questioned his sexual orientation.

In Extract 45 (below), the speaker questioned his sexuality about receiving oral sex.

Extract 45: “I’ve been getting oral from a guy in my tutorial” (social media post)

I would like to know something. I've been getting oral from a guy in my tut. That's all it is. He just comes to my room to give me oral then leaves. We don't kiss or grope each other in any way. There are no feelings involved and we haven't gone further than oral. Does this make me gay?

In Extract 45 (above), the poster exclaimed that his only same-sex encounter had been in receiving oral sex and even though he had performed no sexual act, and they had no feelings between them, he questioned whether he was gay or not.

In Extract 46 (below), the speaker shared an experience of helping someone who was curious.

Extract 46: “Guess he is no longer curious” (social media post)

So I finally managed to fulfil a side quest of mine to blow someone in the library bathroom. I met this guy on Grindr, he agreed, we met up and I performed my side of the bargain. All's good. He then begins his side, I point out that he initiated contact between us, but then stopped half way through, saying that he couldn't do it – which is fine. I left. I went back online a day later only to discover that he had blocked me. Guess he is no longer curious.

In Extract 46 (above), the speaker shared an encounter of giving oral sex, yet not receiving it back due to the man no longer feeling curious. This provided the only instance where engaging in a same-sex sexual experience had been met with hesitance. The hesitancy had been denoted by the phrases “stopped half way” (line 4), “he couldn’t do it” (line 4) and “he blocked me” (line 5).

In Extract 47 (below), a woman shared her same-sex sexual encounter.

Extract 47: "I think I turned lesbian today" (social media post)

So I am straight, or at least I thought I was. Working at fest [Grahamstown Festival] there was this girl working in the exhibition upstairs who always winked at me on her way past. I started to do it back and on the last day of fest she made a head gesture towards the bathroom. Well, I think I turned lesbian today.

In Extract 47 (above), the female speaker hinted at a same-sex sexual encounter with another woman. Although the speaker thought she was straight ("at least I thought I was", line 1) out of Extracts 43-45 (above), this was the first instance where a speaker had tried to admit that her sexual identity had changed based on a sexual encounter "Well, I think I turned lesbian" (line 4).

In the Extracts presented above (43-47), talk about sexual curiosity highlighted aspects of Rubin's (1984) charmed circle. Charmed sex is sex that is essentially good while other sex is bad. Sexual curiosity, especially in the form of homosexual sex, is deemed not charmed sex and is viewed as outside the charmed circle. Yet, people who made comments like these indicate that they felt confident to talk about these experiences.

Another interesting aspect is that these speakers moved from explaining a sexual practice to questioning or proclaiming a sexual subjectivity such as being gay, lesbian or curious. This movement resonates with Foucault's Science of sexuality and how sexual practices have power to form congruent sexual identities.

I also observed that responses to these kinds of comments were positive and that there was very little negative judgement. For example, in response to the comment in Extract 43 (above), "does this mean I'm gay?", a speaker posted this response:

Extract 48: "Nothing wrong with being curious" (social media response to post)

There's totally nothing wrong with being curious. Sexuality is a spectrum and potentially enjoying sexual acts with a guy does not necessarily mean you're gay.

In Extract 48 (above), the way the speaker used the phrase “there’s totally nothing wrong” (line1) and that “sexuality is a spectrum” (line 1) assumed that sexuality can be fluid. It becomes increasingly apparent in my research that speakers who responded to same sex sexual curiosity urged those posters not to feel pressure to label their experience. In response to the comment in Extract 45 (above) “I’ve been getting oral from a guy in my tutorial”, a speaker posted this response:

Extract 49: “Don’t try to put a label on it” (social media response to post)

Perhaps don't try to put a label on it. There is a culture of needing to label absolutely everything all the time. If what you are doing doesn't hurt anybody and is consensual, then just enjoy it and leave the labels alone.

In Extract 49 (above), the speaker showed a positive receptiveness to the sharing of same sex experiences by stating that it had been unnecessary to label the experience. This also stemmed from the notions of sexual fluidity. In Extract 50 (below), some speakers joked about the tutorial experience, of Extract 45 (above), in a way that dismissed the idea that it was something that anyone should be concerned about and suggested instead that the speaker of Extract 45 (above) was lucky to have a pleasant tutorial experience.

Extract 50: “Imagines people signing up rapidly” (social media post)

In your tut? I was about to ask what subject this was *imagines people signing up rapidly* (ha ha)

The speakers had confidence to talk about their same-sex experiences. There was an absence of negative judgements in this talk. This showed that there had been no need to label these experiences and humour was used to diffuse the perceived seriousness of the sexual experiences. There was a response to homophobia that worked to cement the

positive outlook on people's perception on sexual fluidity. In Extract 51 (below), homophobia was deemed an unattractive quality.

Extract 51: "My boyfriend is homophobic, now I have to end the relationship" (social media post)

I recently discovered that my boyfriend is homophobic :(Now I have to end the relationship. Oh well, he's missing out on some awesome people. Hopefully my next bae is not so ignorant.)

The sexual experiences spoken about in these data did not present major sexual hierarchies. These hierarchies only became more apparent in talk about what constituted 'good sexual subjectivities' and 'bad sexual subjectivities'. This will be the focus on the remainder of this chapter.

THE BAE LIFE: NORMATIVE SEXUAL SUBJECTIVITIES

'Bae' stands for 'before anyone else' and was referenced 208 times in the social media data. 'Bae' constructs a type of relationship: it can be used to indicate regular causal sexual relationships ('side bae' indicating concurrent partners, 3 references), but it is more frequently used to represent meaningful relationships as seen in Extract 52 (below). A feature of this talk is that having a bae is the ideal and what many posters aspire to have.

Extract 52: "I just crave all the small innocent moments" (social media post)

I just crave all the small innocent moments in a relationship. Holding hands, random texts, being silly with bae

In Extract 52 (above), the speaker referred to "small innocent moments" (line 1), invoking the romantic aspects of getting to know someone that allowed people to fall in love with each

other. These situated having a bae and, in turn, living the bae life to mean having a steady relationship, one step away from married life as Extract 53 (below) stated:

Extract 53: “Just waiting until they are old enough to get married” (social media post)

This is a shout out to all of the couples who met their baes at uni [university] and are just waiting until they are old enough to get married without their parents losing their minds. You make my heart happy and can't wait to see you all at a reunion one day, still together

The construction of bae in Extract 53 (above) provided a normative stance to relationships, for example, in line 2 “just waiting until they are old enough to get married”. This post highlighted the normative stages of a relationship, dating for a while and then getting married. There were also people who did not have baes, but wanted baes.

Extract 54: “There are actually good, relationship type of people out there” (social media post)

People who don't have baes and are hating on couples, on life, and complain about how they don't have a bae. Instead of hating on couples why not appreciate that those people have actually found someone, a decent and caring person, who loves them, makes them happy and only have eyes for each other. Just be happy for them and take it as indication that there are actually good, relationship type of people out there and you will find one for you. So no need to cry in a corner and plot the death of every couple you see that's in love.

In Extract 54 (above), people who did not have baes were depicted as desiring them so much that they “hate(d) on couples” (line 1). This constructed having a bae life as something that should be aspired to, and this was true for straight or queer couples, as seen in Extract 55 (below).

Extract 55: “Can someone please be my bae?” (social media post)

Can anyone please be my Bae? ♥ Preferably a girl. I'm a girl. Reasons to date me: I can be funny. I'm quite tall. I'm selectively fit. I will love you. Okay thanks.

Even though the bae life had been constructed as the 'ideal', much talk problematised certain features of it. There were certain ideals and expectations regarding these romantic relationships. While it was refreshing to observe that these expectations were not focused on privileging a heterosexual sexual orientation, they did call into question assumptions about interracial relationships (Extract 56), traditional ideals regarding men being the providers (Extract 57), expectations regarding sexual accessibility (Extract 58) and women's physical attractiveness (Extract 59 and 60).

Extract 56: "We praise interracial couples, yet we push for the complete opposite" (social media post)

I hate it when my friends tell you they have a potential bae for you and the guy isn't even your type. The only thing that you have in common is the race you are categorised under. For once could they show me a person of a different race? We praise interracial couples, yet we push for the complete opposite. If you like someone of a different race, go for it, what do you have to lose.

In Extract 56 (above), the speaker highlighted a disjuncture that exists in interracial dating. In line 4, the speaker suggested that although interracial couples are "praise(d)" (line 4), it is difficult to be set up by friends with a "potential bae" (line 1) who is not of the same race. This highlighted the assumption that interracial couples were not yet normalised. Despite this, in line 4, the speaker ended the comment by normalising interracial dating (just "go for it" and that there is nothing to lose).

Another element that exists in the bae life presented itself in Extract 57 (below) that showed the perception of men being providers by buying gifts.

Extract 57: "A relationship it's not about buying presents" (social media post)

In a relationship it's not about buying presents, it's about communication and loving each other. As a girl I expect u Mr 'bae' to love me and have time for us, not just being there buying gifts as if I date gifts. Guys please love your girlfriend

In Extract 57 (above), the speaker shed light on the problematisation of viewing men as stereotypical providers, women not “dating gifts” (line 2), them wanting mutual “communication and love” (line 1).

Another assumption of relationships within the bae life is based on sexual expectations. In Extract 58 (below), the speaker highlighted the disappointment after sexual expectations had not been met.

Extract 58: “Nothing heavy like carrying a condom in your pocket” (social media post)

There is nothing heavy like carrying a condom in your pocket back home after bae has switched off her phone and you had planned to meet. It's like carrying a bag of cement. #bury_me

In Extract 58 (above) line 2, after a night out, the speaker's bae had been unavailable, thus leaving behind the weight of disappointment because of the unused condom “it's like carrying a bag of cement”. This depicted having a relationship with a bae as being entitled to sexual expectations.

In Extract 59 and 60 (below), ideals around women's physical attractiveness surfaced as still being current issues within relationships.

Extract 59: “He says I can't get fat” (social media post)

Bae and I have always been a fit couple. He's a 'jock'. I don't know if he's joking when he says I can't get fat. Bae and I have been busy this year and we've been putting work over exercise when needs be. I haven't put on a lot of weight (only 2kg) but every time he squeezes my ass or thighs or stomach it feels like he's inspecting how much more fat is on them.

Extract 59 (above) dealt with the physical expectations that men have over women's bodies. In line 4, the words “inspecting” indicated the speaker's concern about being shamed by her boyfriend for her perceived weight gain.

In Extract 60 (below), the speaker questioned why women need to be smiling in order to be found physically attractive.

Extract 60: “Why must a girl always be smiling to be accepted as attractive/bae-worthy?”
(social media post)

But why must a girl always be smiling to be accepted as attractive/bae-worthy? You wouldn't tell one of your mates or any random guy in the street to wear or not wear a certain facial expression (and if you did, he'd probably deck [hit] you), so what makes it ok to do that to women?

In Extract 60 (above), the speaker questioned the need for women to be constantly expressing a smile for male satisfaction emphasising that when women were not smiling, expressing their happiness, they were not worthy of being within a relationship with other men. The speaker also reversed the gender roles in line 2 and, by so doing, drew on masculine reactions “he'd probably [hit] you” (line 3). Such reactions were not afforded to women, thus highlighting their role as passive friendly sexual beings.

An underlying feature of having a bae centred round ideas of monogamy. Extract 61 (below) spoke to faithfulness towards having a bae.

Extract 61: “Faithfulness is a principle” (social media post)

I hate how people tell me about cheating every time I talk about how my boyfriend will be working in Joburg [Johannesburg] next year. Faithfulness is a principle. U [you] either have it or u [you] don't. It's not dependent on geographical location. If u [you] are a cheat, u [you] will cheat even if your bae lives 5 min from u [you] and goes to the same school as u [you].

In Extract 61 (above), the speaker idealised staying faithful to his bae even if they were living apart from each another. The speaker also viewed cheating on a bae as an either/or dichotomy and that there was no in-between: in line 2, the speaker expressed “[you] either have it or [you] don't” and, in line 3, “if [you] are a cheat, [you] will cheat”. The speaker also

expressed that just because there would be distance separating them from their bae did mean that they could have cheated anytime when their bae was around, but they had not. Hence “faithfulness is a principle” (line 2).

People also commented on how difficult it was to find someone when most people already were in monogamous relationships as seen in Extract 62 (below).

Extract 62: “Uncuffed” (social media post)

Can someone just bae me, we could be forever!! It's so hard to find uncuffed lesbians here in Rhodes. Reveal yourselves lovers <3 ... We need you outchea <3

“Uncuffed” in Extract 62 (above) line 1 appeared to mean, in this instance, lesbians who were single, in other words, people who were not in a relationship already. This underscored the monogamous ideal in the perception of everyone being in a monogamous relationship and that being the right form of relationship thus positioning non-monogamy as bad. The overall summary of the talk presented on the normative sexual subjectivity, bae, highlighted what sexual practices are in the charmed circle. Therefore, having a bae was good sex because it was monogamous. The idealisation of monogamy was most apparent in the terms deployed in talk about individuals in relationships in which they were with concurrent sexual partners. That will be the focus of the next section of this chapter.

MAINS AND SIDES: A CHALLENGE TO NORMATIVE SEXUALITY?

The terms ‘main’ (39 references) and ‘side’ (97 references) indicate that one, that is, ‘main’, is of more importance than the other, namely, ‘side’. For example, in a full course dinner, a main course meal is the most substantial meal in the course, while the side order is a food

item that accompanies the main dish. Therefore, a main partner is one that is more regular while a side partner is one that is an extra sexual partner. Commenters often used the following subjectivities to extend on the `side` or `main`, for example, `main chick` (20 references), `side chick` (55 references), `side piece` (4 references) and `side bae` (3 references).

In much of the commentary in which these terms were deployed, speakers were critical of people who were not monogamous, for example, in Extract 63 (below):

Extract 63: "Whatever happened to loyalty? (social media post)

This whole side guy / side girl thing disgusts me. Whatever happened to loyalty?

Extract 63 (above) illustrated that both young men and women had spoken about having casual concurrent intimate partners. In other words, this had not been something that just men did. The speaker also made a judgement about non-monogamy, by stating it "disgusts me" (line 1) and characterised people who were non-monogamous as disloyal.

While the speaker in this Extract characterised everyone, who is non-monogamous as disloyal, others attempted to provide more nuanced explanations regarding the ethical problems of non-monogamy.

In Extract 64 (below), for example, the speaker argued that it is not non-monogamy per se that is ethically problematic, but rather when it occurred without the "knowledge, comfort, and consent" (line 4) of all of the partners involved.

Extract 64: "I'm all for non-monogamy if..." (social media post)

Can we please stop pretending that cheating is normal and okay?? It's not, it's despicable. When people post on here all their side-piece exploits and sob stories about cheating, I feel nothing but disgust. Don't get me wrong, I'm all for non-monogamy if it's based on the knowledge, consent and comfort of all the parties involved. But PLEASE be faithful! Cheaters are the trash of this university. Stop it.

In Extract 64 (above), the speaker resonated with the “disgust” (line 3) expressed in Extract 63 (above) of non-monogamy and “side- piece exploits” (line 2). The poster indicated later, however, that this had been exploitation only when it occurred when there had been no “knowledge, comfort and consent” (line 4) between sexual partners. Thus, non-monogamy had not been problematic in and of itself, but rather the lack of communication had.

Talk about having concurrent intimate partners was rare. However, there were instances where explicit knowledge and discussion regarding concurrent partners demonstrated ambivalence and that containing concurrent partners had been difficult, as seen in Extract 65 (below):

Extract 65: “Bae doesn't come around when side bae is trying to connect” (social media post)

So I have this bae who I am obsessed with. I get such a happy feeling when they're around. But I have this side-bae who keeps popping up just when bae and I are getting close. Like, I keep trying to 'forget' them but they keep showing up and bae then doesn't come around when side bae is trying to connect.

The situation in Extract 65 (above) is ambiguous as it suggested that the bae knew about the side bae because the bae would “not come around” (line 4), but the poster did not confirm that bae was aware of the side bae. The speaker could have been inferring from bae’s’ behaviour (of staying away) that bae knew about side bae, rather than them all being together to agree on an arrangement. Yet maybe such an agreement had been implied by bae’s’ staying away. Nonetheless, the speaker shed light on the difficulty of containing bae and side bae interactions.

Most often, however, it became quite apparent that one of the partners involved had not been aware that their relationship with an intimate partner had not been exclusive. In Extract 66, the speaker described a scenario in which a casual partner (that is, the side) had been

approached by a regular partner (that is, the main) about their relationship with a mutual intimate partner.

Extract 66: "Please control your main" (social media post)

Dear Peeps In Relationships Cheating: If you hook up with me not disclosing that you are in a relationship/dating someone: (a) please control your main so that they don't come ask me what we did or how I know you; (b) teach your main manners, it's rude to pull me aside at the bar to have a tasteless conversation about my utterly stupid mistake of hooking up with you; (c) tell your main he/she is better off without you.

The speaker in Extract 66 (above) used non-disclosure to challenge assumptions regarding responsibility. The speaker suggested that while the casual intimate partner had been implicated (through "my utterly stupid mistake", line 4), the other person's decision to withhold information about their relationship status (that is, "not disclosing that you are in a relationship", line 1), made it unfair to expect the casual sexual partner to then take responsibility for what happened by engaging in discussion with the other person's regular partner. Instead, the speaker argued that the other person should take responsibility (that is, "control", line 2) for having that discussion with his/her regular partner (compare with, "tell your main" in line 5).

Non-exclusivity was not always idealised as seen in Extract 66 (below).

Extract 67: "I have a lot of people who I want to spend a lot of time with" (social media post)

I think the idea of the monogamous relationship is dying. Look I'm not a history expert, but to me it feels like it's just a by-product of a world that's been largely dominated by oppressive religious ideology for a long time... All these confessions about the main chick and the side chick... when it comes down to it, it's you spending time with someone you enjoy spending time with. Sometimes you might like to spend time with someone else instead, I really don't see why there's anything wrong with that. Personally I have a lot of people who I want to

spend a lot of time with, but no one I want to spend ALL of my time with. That's just an exercise in endurance; I don't know why you would do that to yourself.

In Extract 67 (above) in line 1, the speaker positioned monogamy as a relationship model that had been falling apart. The speaker suggested that young people were starting to understand that relationships were meant to be with people they genuinely cared about, and if that meant being with more than one person, then there was not “anything wrong with that” (line 6). In line 8, the speaker also talked about being unable to give “ALL” his/her time to someone, referring to this as endurance. By speaking in this way, the speaker was normalising non-monogamy.

An interesting observation regarding polyamorous relationships was the emphasis placed on mutual agreement and consent. For example, Extract 68 (below) showed a response to a polyamorous relationship, highlighting the impact of knowledge.

Extract 68: “I have the opportunity to make two women happy at the same time” (social media post)

I didn't cheat because I couldn't control my d*^k, I love my girlfriend for certain reasons and I love the other girl for completely different reasons. With both of them I'm completely happy because I have the opportunity to make two women happy at the same time. This whole monogamous thing is just bullish*t.

Response: Polyamory is by mutual foreknowledge and consent of ALL parties involved. All of the parties are mutually involved as they all have to face such risks as STDs and giving their agreement to that kind of agreement, otherwise it IS cheating. Communication, honesty and consent are key. Yes, you may love them both, but if you cheated that is not polyamory. That is being a d*^k to them, regardless of how much love is in your heart. Maybe you want them both to understand you and to see that you really do care for them both, but they also need to have a choice. Love means giving the other person the choice to make their own decisions too, if there isn't honesty (which you haven't clarified so it may not be the case) then none of you are

making your own choices, even you will have to hide who you are and you're treating them badly.

In Extract 68 (above) line 4, the speaker declared that “monogamy is bullish*t” after being labelled a cheater for loving and sleeping with two different women at the same time without their knowledge. This had been precisely what the responder highlighted in line 5, that “polyamory is by mutual foreknowledge and consent of ALL parties involved”. It was not individuals in polyamorous relationships of whom speakers were critical. Instead, they were critical of people who had multiple concurrent partners and who purposefully deceived one or more of their partners about this fact. This critique was most apparent in the terms used to describe them such as ‘players’ or ‘f***boys’.

An important point to note is that while the agency of intimate partners in polyamorous relationships was stressed, the agency of main and side partners in non-monogamous relationships was often viewed as compromised. In particular, while sides and mains did not enjoy equal status, because the mains were seen as having higher status in their intimate relationship, people commenting on mains and sides frequently pitied them both – seeing them both as victims of people who were deceitful and using them at great personal cost to themselves as seen in Extract 69 (below):

Extract 69: “You’re both being screwed” (social media post)

Main chick or side chick, you’re both being screwed over by the same guy. He respects neither one, so both are just chicks.

In Extract 69 (above) similarly to Extract 69 (below), the speaker positioned sides as shameful. Yet he/she also included mains into a shameful subjectivity, questioning how mains could think they were better than sides as sides could have other concurrent partners.

However, in Extract 70 (below), the speaker praised her position as being a side, challenging the negative comments afforded to sides.

Extract 70: “Have fun while the main chick waits for her man” (social media post)

Being a side chick is so glorious. I don't have to deal with all his bs, just get the D when I want, go out, have fun while the main chick waits for her man on his night out.

In Extract 70 (above), the terms “glorious” in line 1 and the notion that only when the speaker wanted to have sex, she got it and that she could still fulfil a good social life while the main girlfriend waited at home, signified the benefits of being a side.

Although there was a challenge to the perceived negative subjectivity of the side from sides, push back to this attempted to re-position them (sides) as victims, as seen in Extract 71 (below).

Extract 71: “It's not your hand he holds in public” (social media post)

To those 'willing' side-chicks: It's not your hand he holds in public. You're not the one he takes on dates. You're not the one he kisses on the forehead in front of the cafeteria. And sadly, you're not the one he takes VOLUNTARY selfies with. So go on ladies, go on and picmix [photo collage maker] your 'relationship'.

In Extract 71 (above), the speaker highlighted the things the sides would not get compared to the main, such as, going on dinner dates, public displays of affection and picture taking. In all of these, the speaker highlighted a display of belongingness to a person which was made stronger by its visibility (Sabiniewicz, Borkowska, Serafińska, & Sorokowski, 2017). By stating all the things that someone did not get from being a side, evoked a sense of victimisation and sadness for them. Sides who did not get the opportunity to share their relationship publicly were mocked for being content with the status quo. Yet there were criticisms of mains which also highlighted their victimisation.

In comparison to the pity that speakers had for mains and sides, there were some sexual subjects that were not viewed as victims and who were subjected to significant ridicule and

contempt. In the following section f***boys, hoes, sluts and easy chicks compromise most of the subjectivities that are scorned.

FUCKBOYS, EASY CHICKS AND BLESSERS

While there was much negative judgement about non-exclusive intimate relationships, there was generally ample sympathy for both the mains and sides in these relationships. This same understanding was not afforded to those who were deemed to be deviant. In the context of this research, deviant sexual subjectivities were those for whom casual sex was their preferred modality of sexual intimacy. These subjectivities were positioned as devious precisely because they were characterised as having no serious intention of entering into a serious or committed relationship. Colloquial terms used to describe these people were `fuckboys' (107 references), `fuckgirls' (8 references), `hoes', (56 references), `sluts' (33 references), `blessers' (18 references) and `players' (24 references).

Extract 72: "Non-committers and fuckbois" (social media post)

I've been at uni for 3 years and I've been with some guys but not even one of them has ever wanted to be my boyfriend.

Response: There is noting [nothing] wrong with you. It's prolly [probably] jus that you're going through a phase where you attract non-committers and fuckbois only.

Extract 72 (above) directly linked men who did not want to commit to relationships as fuckboys, while Extract 73 (below) positioned fuckboys as users of women.

Extract 73: "Being used by f*** boys" (social media post)

For this past week I have read so many confessions where people complain about ... being used by f*** boys and not being able to get into a relationship. All

that just made me grateful for the simple relationship I have with my boyfriend. It's not perfect not at all, but he tries his best, he really tries to be the best partner.

In Extract 73 (above), f***boys were constructed as bad intimate partners who had had sex with people with no intention of getting into a relationship. In line 3 and 4, the fuckboy subjectivity was distanced from good relationship material by comparing a partner who tried his/her best to a partner who was only using someone for casual sex.

Casual sex (that is, naps and hooking up) was considered to be appropriate if intimate partners were single and had some interest in the possibility of casual sexual encounters becoming more serious (that is, developing into committed, monogamous relationships). People who wanted casual sex outside of this, however, were positioned as in some way a disappointment to intimate partners who might have been expecting more from the relationships. In Extract 74 (below), the speaker stated that if he was not looking for a committed relationship, he would be labelled f***boy.

Extract 74: "As soon as a guy doesn't want a relationship, he's labelled f***boy" (social media post)

As soon as a guy doesn't want a relationship, he's labelled a f***boy and I'm tired of it! I don't want to get in a relationship...I still want to enjoy what the single life has to offer. Would you rather have me get into a relationship that I know will not work out?

Response: There are also fuckgirls. We can't take the blame always by virtue of being male!

The term f***girl was used less frequently than f***boy. Its use nevertheless implied assumptions regarding a female equivalent to f***boy. In Extract 75 (below) line 1, the speaker positioned f***girl as someone who "betrays good guys".

Extract 75: "Don't betray a good guy when you get one" (social media post)

This is a message to all of the f***girls out there. Don't betray a good guy when you get one.

It was common, in comments posted in defence of being labelled as f***boy or f***girl, for people to argue that this was a consequence of being a victim of infidelity, as seen in Extract 76 (below).

Extract 76: Making it hard for a guy not to turn into a f***boy” (social media post)

Shout out to Rhodes Girls for not knowing how to love, ya'll are making it hard for guy not to turn into a f*** boy in this place. Well done -_-

Although this kind of explanation was challenged, the very fact that it was challenged suggested that it was viewed as being an argument that had commonly been presented in defence of such labelling and that it was not an appropriate excuse as seen in Extract 77(below).

Extract 77: “Getting cheated is not a license to be a f***boi” (social media post)

Being rejected, getting dumped, getting cheated is not a license to be a f***boi. No one makes you a f***boi. Stop being a coward and take some responsibility instead of blaming the way you act on others

F**boys and f***girls were viewed by others as likely to cause some degree of emotional harm to intimate partners who might have had expectations regarding a relationship that was not limited to casual sex. There were a number of comments about whether or not friends or other third parties should intervene as seen in Extract 78 (below).

Extract 78: “Do I tell her?” (social media post)

That time when your friend is falling in love with a f***boy and you know sh** ain't gonna end well. Do I tell her, or should I leave her and let her 'you do you boo'?

In Extract 78 (above), the speaker was experiencing internal conflict about whether to step in to prevent a friend's heartbreak or to allow him/her to make his/her decisions. The speaker

amplified this when ending the post by using the phrase “you do you boo” in line 2. The colloquial term ‘boo’ is often deployed as a term of endearment. The phrase “you do you” invokes a sense that the speaker gives the other person an opportunity to make his/her own choice.

The use of the term f***girl suggested that both men and women were interested in limiting their sexual experiences to casual sexual encounters. There were many more terms used to describe women who had relationships with other intimate partners, such as, ‘slut’. Interestingly, the slur slut was used to describe women who were not necessarily involved in casual sexual encounters. In the Extract below, for example, a jilted lover uses the slur to slander a previous intimate partner.

Extract 79: “You want to be a bimbo; you are now a s**t to me” (social media post)

So me and this chick were vibing and we liked each other, then she met some clown and tried to dump me by pretending I had done something to piss her off. Ladies, if you want to be a bimbo, just go with your new guy but don't pretend the old guy did something to piss u off coz I see you and you are now just a bimbo to me so I don't care why you left me :) thanks. PS: You are now a s**t to me who is easy so I don't really care.

Response: Just because she left you for something better, doesn't make her a slut.

Response: Try not call people names so much. You see now nobody sees the valid issue you raised because it is surrounded by filth?

Response: I call bullshit, no matter how angry you are, NEVER slut shame. It has broader, more dangerous implications than some guy not getting sex.

Response: "A chick liked me, then didn't, and didn't handle it well, therefore she is a huge slut". Wow, top marks for slut shaming and being a big baby about it bro.

The interesting thing about this post in Extract 79 (above), and in the other posts in which the word slut appeared, was that in each instance the use of the slur slut was challenged. In

Extract 79 (above), four speakers suggested that name calling had been inappropriate, “NEVER slut shame” (line 10). Some speakers even suggested that calling the woman a slut was a bad coping mechanism, for example, “a chick likes me, then didn’t...therefore she is a huge slut” (line 12). In fact, comments in a number of these posts explicitly argued that women should have been able to have casual sexual encounters and not be called sluts and essentially slut shamed, as seen in Extract 80 (below).

Extract 80 “I’m a girl who absolutely loves naps” (social media post)

I am a girl who absolutely, positively loves naps. So tired of hearing the whole ‘one-lock-many-keys’ BS. Girls should be able to enjoy naps just as much as guys without being called a sl** or whatever creative words the kids are using these days.

In Extract 80 (above), the speaker declared that women should be treated equally by stating that “girls should be able to enjoy naps as much as guys” (line 2). A number of posts also commented on the difficulty that women faced by being positioned as either too dependent on men or too loose as seen in Extract 81 (below).

Extract 81: “You’re not called an independent woman” (social media post)

Except you're not called an ‘independent’ woman, you're labelled a slut. And if you do want a relationship you're called ‘clingy’ or ‘needy’.

In Extract 81 (above), the speaker highlighted the numerous positions that women needed to negotiate: between being independent, but not too slutty (line 1) and loving, but not too clingy or needy (line 2).

Interestingly, while use of the slur slut did not go unchallenged, the term hoe did. Hoe derives from the subjectivity of a female prostitute; however, this term has merged into numerous variations such as whore, hooker and ho. These variations shared an underlying feature that women engaged in what was perceived as too much sex for women and sex that was outside of committed relationships, for example, in Extract 82 (below):

Extract 82: "You're just a hooker" (social media post)

So I hooked up with this one guy during O-Week... Then the next week I hooked up with his best friend.... Then the next week I hooked up with another one of his friends..... And then the next week I hooked up with his cousin..... Am I a bad person?

Response: No, you're just a hooker.

In Extract 82 (above), hooker in line 4 might simply have been an innocent play on the initial comments about hooking-up in line 1 to 3: suggesting that someone who was *doing* hooking-up was a hooker, implying a serial nature to always hooking-up and not necessarily someone who was having too much sex. Although this might have been the case, the term was most often used in a way that was purposefully meant to be derogatory, for example, in Extract 83 (below).

Extract 83: "Don't like the label? Well then don't whore around" (social media post)

Act however you want, sleep with the whole continent even, but when we call you cheap, loose, silly, ratchet, and easy, you have no-one but yourself to blame. Each action attracts a reaction. Don't like the label? Well then don't whore around.

Extract 83 (above), clearly indicated that if someone's sexual behaviour had been deviant, the person should accept the label society would place on them, even if it sounded hurtful.

Another pattern that was evident was that women engaging in casual sex were much more likely to be associated with sexually transmitted infections than their male counterparts as seen in Extract 84, 85 and 86 (below).

Extract 84: "You deserve an STD" (social media post)

If you leave a great loyal girl for parties and hoes of the night, congrats, you deserve an STD.

In Extract 84 (above), the speaker compared “great loyal girls” (line1) and “hoes” (line 1) indicating that hoes were more likely to have a sexually transmitted disease (STD) than a “great loyal girl”. Added to this, hoes, parties and STDs were associated with each other.

Extract 85: “Now I have HPV” (social media posts)

Hooked up with an easy chick and now I have HPV

In Extract 85 (above), the speaker associated an easy chick with a STD: Human papilloma virus (HPV).

Extract 86: “Stop using your last cents to buy AIDS.” (social media post)

So I decide to go to Joburg for the weekend. I'm in a club with my friends and a guy comes up to me and asks where the booty sellers are at? My answer was 'every girl in the club is selling booty, who do you want to buy for your d**k?'
Guys, stop using your last cents to buy AIDS.

In Extract 86 (above), the speaker also associated hoes, in this case “booty sellers” (line 2), with parties and STDs, in particular, AIDS. The speaker also assumed that all the girls in the club (line 2) were looking to “selling booty” indicating similar talk in Extract 84 that associated hoes with parties and STDs.

In relation to the terms used to refer to women involved in casual sexual relationships, such as f***girls, sluts, whores and booty sellers, the only terms other than f***boys that were used to refer to men in casual sexual relationships were `players' (24 references) and `blessers' (18 references). The terms `player' and `blesser' appeared to be much less derogatory than the other terms used to refer to women – which is why men were possibly not opposed to using them to describe themselves as seen in Extract 87 (below):

Extract 87: “Don't hate the player, hate the game” (social media post)

Everyone is going on about how much they love their BF/GF and I'm just sitting here waiting for the break ups to start so I can help provide exam stress relief. Don't hate the player, hate the game.

In Extract 87 (above), the speaker positioned himself as a player and had no trouble in using the name for himself. This highlights the casual and harmless nature of the term player. When the speaker suggested “don't hate the player, hate the game” (line 3), the person was dissociating this behaviour from himself and placing it on something external, the game, relieving himself of any responsibility for his actions, yet in Extract 88 (below), the speaker positioned being with a player as risky.

Extract 88: “He told me he was a player...I definitely dodged a bullet” (social media post)

He told me he was a player and that he would hurt my feelings. A few months later and here I am about to buy him baby clothes cos he got my 'friend' pregnant. I'm obviously upset, but I definitely dodged a bullet.

Although players might not have associated themselves with risk, the “game” (Extract 88 line 3) that they played could be risky. (For example, the speaker in Extract 88 above indicated that she “dodged a bullet” (line 3) by not being with the player and in this case, potentially falling pregnant). It would have been interesting to see if the player would then have associated the pregnancy with himself or the “game”.

'Blessers' is another colloquial term that is used to describe player-like men. Blessers is a term for men who are within casual sex cultures, and who engage in transactional sex. Blessers have sex with willing female partners and pay them in return with mostly luxurious items. Blessers are normally much older than their female partners. Extract 89 (below) showed how blessers were constructed in terms of power.

Extract 89: “you have money you know, you dignified” (group interview)

For me I'd be going for blesser bcos of the fact is blesser, you both know- willingly- what you going into and what you getting into and fuckboy that's a lot of criticism on

that because people just generally associate fuckboys with breaking hearts and going out there willingly to look to break hearts. So blesser yes..... and also if think of it if you consider yourself a blesser that mean[s] you have money you know, you dignified (Shrugs shoulders and opens arms up wide while still shrugging)

In Extract 89 (above) in line 5, “you have money, you dignified” the speaker positioned money as a source of power. Evidently, this power came with the increased potential of sexual relationships; therefore, if you were a blesser, you would get the girl and the money.

Much like f***boy and f***girl, the female equivalent to a blesser is a ‘cougar’ (3 references). A ‘cougar’ is an older woman who has a relationship with a much younger man. When talk about a cougar was brought up in the group interview, a participant had this to say:

Extract 90: “do you want like food or something to your house?” (group interview)

My hockey coach he was like what 22 when I was in matric and he had a gf [girlfriend] that was like 30-something and she literally like, he would be training and she’ll call and [say] what do you want like food or something to your house do you want me to come pick you up. So he’s like this is my, I don’t know what he named her like it wasn’t cougar he said-

Response: {sugar mommy}

In Extract 90 line 3, the speaker started to position the female subject of a blesser as a maternal figure who engaged in activities such as bringing “food” (line 3) to his work or home and offering to “pick up” (line 4) her boyfriend. Although the speaker had been looking for another term besides cougar to describe this type of woman, a response suggested that this type of woman was a “sugar mommy” (line 6). The term cougar was not used in a derogatory way, yet there was silence on the notions of power which were afforded to the term blesser rather than to the term cougar.

There are numerous derogatory colloquial terms for women compared to men and this signifies the sexual double standards that women face. Interestingly, this sexual double

standard was so obvious, there was even an instance where it was used as the punch line of a joke as seen in Extract 91 (below).

Extract 91: “But when I do it, I’m a lesbian” (social media post)

Such a double standard between men and women, like, when men have naps with lots of women they’re ‘players’, but when I do it I’m a ‘lesbian’.

In Extract 91 (above), the speaker poked fun at the sexual double standard of the use of derogatory terms for men and women. Rather than being labelled a player for having had sex with many women, because she is a woman, she was labelled a lesbian.

Conclusion

There are a variety of sexual subjectivities that were drawn on in the data of this research. In this chapter, there was a clear divide between good and bad sexual subjectivities. This talk on sexual subjectivities showed that subjectivities are linked to our behaviours in turn creating good and bad sexual subjectivities. This pertains to Foucault’s (1978) science of sexuality and the way it has shaped how we come to know others and ourselves through our sexual practices. One of the subjectivities that was dealt with in this chapter focused on a sexually fluid orientation. Within this talk, young adults did not find the need to label their experiences. While sexual fluidity and homosexual sex is outside of Rubin’s (1984) charmed circle, there was a positive receptiveness to non-normative sexual experiences. On the other hand, the bae life was constructed as charmed sex.

The bae life was constructed as the ideal romantic relationship that many speakers aspired to have. This bae life was not only privileged for heterosexual couples, but for queer couples too. There were assumptions about interracial relationships, traditional ideals of men as providers, expectations of sexual accessibility and women’s physical attractiveness.

However, talk around monogamy had the most emphasis. Monogamy and non-monogamy were categorised as opposites with an idea that you could not be engaged in both. This positioned non-monogamy as incompatible with a good relationship. In terms of the charmed circle (Rubin, 1984), non-monogamy is bad sex while monogamy is good sex. In the data I presented on the bae life, this view still held.

The idealisation of monogamy was most apparent in talk about mains and sides. This resulted from mains and sides engaging in both monogamous and non-monogamous sex. In this talk there was a concern around knowledge, comfort and consent of all partners involved. This led into a discussion of negotiations around polyamorous relationships. These relationships placed emphasis on mutual agreement and agency. At this point it is interesting to consider Rubin's (1984) charmed circle which places polyamorous relationships as bad sex. Yet the speakers in my data were receptive to polyamorous relationships, but there was a clause: all parties involved had to be in mutual agreement.

Subjectivities that were seen as deviant were those with no intention of being in a committed relationship. F***boys and F***girls were viewed as deviant as they could not commit to one sexual partner. Casual sex was okay if partners were single and shared an interest in a future relationship, yet f***boys and f***girls did not share these interests. Accordingly, based on the negative constructions of the subjectivity of f***boy and f***girl, they could belong under Rubin's (1984) outer circle and be categorised as bad sex. There were other terms that described those who might have been perceived as promiscuous. Terms such as slut never went unchallenged: speakers were constantly called out for slut shaming. Yet in talk about hoes, the slur went unchallenged. More derogatory terms were used to describe women's sexual subjectivity than men's. The only other term used to refer to men engaging in casual sex was player, which is also much less derogatory.

CHAPTER SIX

SEXUAL DESIRES

The last theme within the talk on sexuality is based on the sexual desires of young people. This talk speaks to a divide between physiological and psychological reactions of the body when desiring someone, which is the focus of the beginning of this chapter. After this, I present a discussion on talk that directly associates female desire with the penis. Lastly, I look at how young people speak about negotiating feelings within the casual sexual culture.

PHYSIOLOGICAL EFFECT: BONERS AND THIRSTY

Physiological effect refers to the workings and reactions of the body when it becomes sexually aroused, that is, the effect on physiology through sexual arousal. Colloquial terms predominately used in this talk are 'boners' (6 references) and 'thirsty' (51 references). Talk about what happened to the body when someone became sexually aroused by someone else highlighted particularly men's annoyance when it happened at the wrong time:

Extract 92: "Those random boners during tuts are real" (social media post)

I don't wanna start a debate about gender struggles, but those random boners during tuts are real, then you have to go present in front of everyone smh.

Talk regarding boners highlighted differences in the way men and women experienced bodily changes. An element of this talk was that men were unable to tell when women were sexually interested, as seen in Extract 94 (below) as the speaker said that women had no “obvious sign” (line 1).

Extract 93: "I wish women also had an obvious tell-tale sign when their horny" (social media post)

I wish women also had an obvious tell-tale sign when their horny. These random boners of mine don't leave much to the imagination.
#TakingStaresLikeTheElevatorAintWorkin'

Response: Heavy breathing, change in body stance, naughty glances, parted lips, tension of body... not as obvious as a boner, but they are telltale signs... but it differs with each woman man.

In Extract 93 (above), the speaker desired an easier way to tell when a woman is sexually aroused. The response claimed that there were signs that women might give signs, but just that they were more passive in nature, such as, “naughty glances and parted lips” (line 1).

Another term that categorised a physiological desire was ‘thirsty’. When people spoke about being thirsty, they were interested in heterosexual sex and within this talk there were women challenging traditional ideals concerning the dating roles of men and women. In Extract 94 (below), the speaker challenged traditional dating roles of women.

Extract 94: “Do some guys don't mind being asked out by a girl for coffee or eating out?” (social media post)

Do some guys don't mind being asked out by a girl for coffee or eating out? I am a shy black girl and have been seriously crushing on this white dude who happens to have also been single for a while. Is it a good idea? How do guys feel about this in general? I am not being thirsty or something, but I am just tired of watching him from a distance while all it could take is just manning up and see how fate decides the outcome.

In Extract 94 (above), “manning up” (line 4-5) implied that making the first move is a masculine thing to do. Hence, the speaker, a woman, had been asking whether it was a good idea to make the first move. In comparison to the talk in Extract 93, possibly if a woman had been interested in somebody else, the sign would simply have been her making the first move.

In this talk on heterosexual sex when people spoke about the sexual practices they desired, they mentioned traditional heterosexual ideologies as seen in Extract 94 (above). Yet when people spoke within queer identities, they did not mention these ideologies, but rather spoke about bi-sexual desires, for example, Extract 95 (below).

Extract 95: “On one end I feel sexual “thirst” towards guys. But I’m both “thirsty” and attracted to girls” (social media post)

Someone please tell me what's wrong with me. On one end I feel sexual "thirst" towards guys. But I'm both "thirsty" and attracted to girls. In that I see myself building a life with a woman. In short, am I crazy confused or something worse? I'm not frustrated but I'm just curious, don't wanna [want to] experiment as I don't trust the confidentiality of Rhodes people. External help will be appreciated.

In Extract 95 (above), the speaker assumed that being sexually curious (line 4), in this sense bi-curious, equalled being sexually confused (line 3) and that this posed as an innate struggle (by questioning what is wrong with him in line 1). Yet not all desires were sexual, as an asexual speaker said that:

Extract 96: “I’ve been looking for a companion for some casual non-sexual fun” (social media post)

So I’m a female in 2nd year and as time goes on, I’m finding it harder and harder to be asexual at Rhodes. This year is proving even lonelier than last. I’ve been looking for a companion for some casual non-sexual fun, but it’s almost impossible to find a willing partner because Rhodents are so thirsty :/

In Extract 96 (above), the speaker described herself as asexual which meant that she develops no sexual feelings. The speaker went on to say that she could not find someone to be with as a result of students always looking for sex.

When people spoke about being thirsty, an interesting aspect that arose was that the women speakers found the need to declare that they were not thirsty as seen in Extract 94 “Do some guys don’t mind being asked out by a girl for coffee or eating out?” in line 3, in Extracts 97 and 98 (below).

Extract 97: “No, I’m not thirsty, nor am I hungry for attention” (social media post)

It’s really hard being ugly, it’s really hard not having any guys ask your number or pay you compliment. No, I’m not thirsty, nor am I hungry for attention. It’s also difficult being the “plumpest” in the group picture you’re taking.... It’s lonely being single.

Extract 98: “Women should be allowed to embrace their sexuality” (social media post)

I’m not thirsty - I just want to get laid tonight. I’m a girl, but I’m not a sl**. It’s 2015. Women should be allowed to embrace their sexuality and enjoy naps, the same as men.

It is interesting that in these three contexts (Extract 96, 97 and 98 above) the speakers found the need to clear up that they were not thirsty, as if it was a bad thing. This claim made by women highlighted that there is still a stereotype in relationships that woman should behave as if they have less or not more sexual drive, desire and initiative than their male counterparts. In other words, performing femininity entailed not being horny (Butler, 1990).

This talk also highlighted the negotiations of women’s ability to share their sexual interests in relationships, with contradictory positions as to where to represent themselves along the virgins/whores dichotomy. This dichotomy appeared as a normal relationship in which women represented their sexual desires. Foucault (1978) suggests that these discourses, especially those about sexual desire, showcase social authority and power. It is possible that

young women were unable to express their sexual desires, as they constructed themselves as not thirsty, thereby conforming to the 'natural' ways of female sexuality. In terms of what Foucault (1978) suggests, this could showcase social authority and power.

PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECT: CRUSH, FLAMES, EYE CANDY AND THICK

Psychological effect, like physiological effect, is the reaction of the person to sexual arousal, but in this case, reactions do not create a bodily response. They rather develop a reaction that is psychological. Most of this talk highlights different elements of having a crush and being attracted to someone. These colloquial terms include 'crush' (164 references), 'flames' (12 references), 'eye candy' (6 references) and 'thick' (20 references). Having a crush could either work out (Extract 99 below) or it could not (Extract 100 below).

Extract 99: "And we're making out in my room!!" (social media post)

One must definitely never take the power of music for granted! Was nervous having my crush (who is way out of my league) over at my place so I played a few songs to lighten the mood. Fast forward a little bit later after a few songs have been played and we're making out in my room!! Shout-out to George Michael, Michael Buble and Bruno Mars for making it happen and helping me realise what my crush really thinks of me :D

Extract 100: "He read the message and didn't even respond" (social media post)

So I got tipsy then inboxed my crush "I've had a crush on u from the first day I laid my eyes on u".....he read the message and didn't even respond... :(

A great deal of the talk about having a crush centres on rejection. In some instances, the crush does not notice the poster, the crush likes someone else or has hooked-up with someone else. When there is talk about who the crush is, it highlights a variety of sexualities.

In certain Extracts, interestingly enough, talk centred around a straight person crushing on a gay person (Extract 101 & 102) and vice versa (Extract 103).

Extract 101: “But I want him to marry me because I love him” (social media post)

Guy's please don't judge. So there's this guy I've known since I was really young, and we're both from really conservative families. I've had a huge crush on him since I was a kid ... But he doesn't feel the same [way] about me because he's gay. Our families are really close and they want us to get married someday (they don't know of course that he's gay). The thing is ... I know that this arrangement is not what would make him happy, but I want him to marry me because I love him, I want to be the mother of his kids and I want to make our families happy.

In Extract 101 (above), conflict arose between conforming to the heteronormative ideals of family and marriage even though a key role player in this arrangement declared himself as gay. This key role player would not have fitted into the speaker's and their families' heteronormative desires. The speaker further went on to ignore this person's sexuality. This resulted in the speaker wanting to please the families more than the person he/she declared to love, whereas in Extract 102 (below) the speaker respected the different sexuality.

Extract 102: “I had no idea he was gay, all my hard effort for nothing” (social media post)

I did not have a good night out until I saw my crush make out with another guy, I had no idea he was gay, all my hard effort for nothing. Me getting all dressed up, splashing make up on my face just to impress him and me forever waving at him in lectures with a wide smile and then next thing, DOLOLO [nothing]⁵. But in anyways I respect his sexuality...

In Extract 102 (above), the speaker had put in a great deal of effort into getting her crush to notice and like her (line 2), but she had found out that her crush is gay. In line 4, the speaker who could have reacted in different ways with this information, ended off by saying she respected her crush's sexuality.

⁵ Dololo derives from the South African Zulu language term wololo which means everything; the opposite of this is dololo which means nothing

Extract 103: "I have a crush on a gay guy from my class" (social media post)

I am a girl and I have a crush on a gay guy from my class. What is my sexuality?

In Extract 103 (above) the speaker, a girl, crushed on a gay man, and further questioned her sexuality. Extracts 104, 105 and 106 (below) highlighted the negotiations of feelings and coming out that queer people went through while wanting to pursue their crushes.

Extract 104: "I think he is into guys" (social media post)

I have a ""crush on one of the guys at res. I think he is into guys, but I'm not very experienced in pursuing guys. What's the worst that could happen?

In Extract 104 (above), the negation the speaker went through had been around whether something bad could happen as a result of confronting a person whose sexual orientation was unclear and then being rejected. Similar sentiments were shared in Extract 105 and 106 (below).

Extract 105: "I think she is straight though and I'm scared to approach her" (social media post)

I'm a female and have a huge crush for this 1 girl on campus, I think she is straight though and I'm scared to approach her. I don't fear rejection, but what if she rejects me and go around telling people I approached her? I'm not ready to come out, but if I could get her, I would. ANY ADVICE ? PLZ [please]

In Extract 105 (above), the speaker negotiated around feeling scared (line 2) about being publicly known as gay (line 3, "I approached her"). In Extract 106 (below) the speaker also highlighted her fear of disclosing her sexual orientation.

Extract 106: "It's a long-term crush since I arrived last year, but I don't know what I will ever do about it." (social media post)

I have the hugest crush on another guy at Rhodes. I am not out of the closet and am not even remotely interested in telling anyone about me, but I do wish I could be with him. The sad thing is, like most guys with tendencies towards liking the same gender,

I have never liked ANYONE like this before. It's a long-term crush since I arrived last year, but I don't know what I will ever do about it.

In Extract 106 (above), the speaker negotiated around his desire to be with his crush (line 4), but was not ready to disclose that he is gay (line 1). In both Extracts 104 and 106, the speakers dealt with wanting to be with the person for whom they had desires, but not wanting their sexual orientation to be known publicly. This could be seen as a consequence of living in a heteronormative society.

Some posters' talk highlighted the perception of changing oneself, so the crush could notice one. In Extract 107 (below), the speaker resorted to hyper-femininity to get her crush's attention.

Extract 107: "I do the whole "schoolgirl" thing when I'm in the tuts" (social media post)

I am crushing so hard on one of my tutors. I do the whole "schoolgirl" thing when I'm in the tuts. I can't help it. I must giggle and laugh too hard at all of his jokes, I must look deep into his eyes and I absolutely must say his name with a prolonged, emphasized girly hint to it. I've never been this girl but okay! I'm fine with it.

In Extract 107 (above) line 2 and 3, "I must giggle" "laugh too hard at all of his jokes", "look deep into his eyes" and "girly hint" (line 3-4) positioned doing gender as hyper-feminine. According to Butler (1990), the speaker was doing gender and using hyper-feminine scripts.

Talk on having a crush that showed a desire for elements often associated with a long-term normative lifestyle were also evident. This is seen in Extract 108 and 109 (below).

Extract 108: "I stalk his mother and sister to see how our kids might look" (social media post)

Whenever I kind of have a crush on a guy and think something might happen I 1. Check eye colour, hair colour, signs of bad genetics (because my family is known to carry some pretty bad traits). 2. I stalk his mother and sister to see how our kids might look. 3. I look at his dad, to see how he will look when he is older. 4. I look to see if he has pets, likes travelling and basically stalk all his pics from when he first got Facebook until now :/ It's such a bad habit

In Extract 108 (above), the speaker had a checklist of things that she desired for her future, such as, her future partner having good genetics for children (line 2), the partner's future attractiveness (line 4) and the partner's interest in pets and travel (line 4). Being aware of this information suggested that the speaker desired a long-term romantic relationship with her crush. In Extract 109 (below), the speaker suggested a different set of characteristics that would make up her long-term romantic relationship with her crush.

Extract 109: "Loyalty, dates, selfies, long conversations, a future with someone" (social media post)

So I've been single for a bit, have a few crushes here and there and a few eye contact sessions like anyone else does, but that's where it ends. I'm just a girl that wants love and bae is that too much to ask? Loyalty, dates, selfies, long conversations, a future with someone just someone.

In Extract 109 (above), the speaker desired "a future with someone" (line 3), which meant that there must be "loyalty, dates, selfies [and] long conversations" (line 3). These features are constructed as part of long-term romantic relationships. It is possible that selfies mentioned are becoming a normative feature in a relationship and hold a high status that shows the public that people in them have a close relationship.

When people talk about someone they desire, they use the word 'flame' and phrase 'eye candy'. People talk about 'flames' as someone very attractive and someone they are drawn to, as seen in Extract 110 (below), while Extract 111 and 112 (below) construct 'eye candy' as someone who is good to behold.

Extract 110: "Have to be beautiful" (social media post)

Quick question...Was ""have to be beautiful"" part of the requirements to be a Rhodes Health Suite instructor? My gawwwd, [god] they are all flames!!!!

In Extract 110 (above) in line 1, the speaker was suggesting that beauty is a requirement for a certain type of job at UCKAR as all those who had this job had been attractive as seen by the exclamation that they had all been flames (line 2).

Extract 111: “Not motivating me to go workout, but thank you” (social media post)

To all you fit boys that go jogging without shirts on, you the real MVP. Not motivating me to go workout, but thank you for the eye candy!! #Thirsty #DontCare

In Extract 111 (above), the speaker suggested that people who been seen jogging without shirts on were attractive and in line 2, by using the hash tag thirsty, the speaker suggested that the joggers were sexually desirable.

Extract 112: “Thanks for the eye candy ;)” (social media post)

The two boys skating by Desmond Tutu Hall, you are so sexy!! Thanks for the eye candy :)

In Extract 112 (above), the speaker used the words “so sexy” (line 1) and “eye candy” (line 1) which suggested that the people the speaker had seen skating were attractive. In this talk about people who were flames or eye candy, the speakers were constructed as needing to be impressed, as seen in Extract 113 (below).

Extract 113: “Chin up, chest out, you make your way forward” (social media post)

So, you're out at the club. The music is poppin', the drink specials are lit, you're in for a good night. In the middle of the dancefloor, you see a flaming chick. Her moves are fire, her make up on fleek, you think you've found bae for the night. Chin up, chest out, you make your way forward.

In line 3 of Extract 113 (above), the use of the phrase “chin up, chest out” resonated with “flaming chicks” (line 2) who needed to be impressed. It also suggested that a great deal could be lost if rejection occurred as the speaker had made a huge effort to make a good impression. In line 2, the speaker described the girl about to be approached as attractive, not only by referring to her as “flaming” (line 2), but by describing her moves and makeup. It is

ambiguous as to whether she is flaming because of her moves or makeup or just because she is attractive, but it is possible that these characteristics play a part in what a flaming chick is.

Another aspect of the type of woman that is desirable is the thick girl. The term 'thick' represents the body type of a person someone desires. In Extract 114 (below), the speaker describes why he/she loves thick girls.

Extract 114: "Thick girls kiss better. Thick girls cuddle better" (social media post)

My friends have always wondered why I love thick girls so much and it has only hit me now why. Thick girls hug better. Thick girls are always hyperactive and full of life. Thick girls kiss better. Thick girls cuddle better. Thick girls try their best to look their best. Thick girls are the most honest and the least down to earth. Thick girls wear pencil skirts better. Thick girls are sassy. Thick girls are good company. Thick girls have the best smiles. Thick girls are playful. Thick girls have the cutest cheeks and dimples. Thick girls love hard. Thick girls are caring.

In Extract 114 (above), the speaker constructed thick girls as better than any other type of girl. The speaker listed a variety of traits that made thick girls better. Many of these traits spoke to how thick girls looked better, while most had to do with how thick girls portrayed a balance between being sexy but still having a good sensitive feminine nature, for example, "look their best" (line 3), "pencil skirts" (line 4), "sassy" (line 4), "playful" (line 5) and "caring" (line 6). Yet not all this talk about thick girls was positive as the speaker in Extract 115 (below) highlighted:

Extract 115: "This culture of judging people's appearance must stop" (social media post)

It truly hurts me so much. People go on about how society today glorifies thick, curvaceous women. Well, let me tell you something. It's all a wad of utter bull crap!! So many times, I've been turned down by guys or put in the friendzone just because of my size.....Don't say society glorifies thick women based on the reactions Kim Kardashian gets. What I'm trying to say is this culture of judging people's appearance must stop. I'm talking from a thick girls' point of view and I'm saying those struggles

because it's what I have to endure every day. Some people think society glorifies smaller girls, but they face their own struggles as well. Let's try and be more sensitive next time body types come up in conversations. Vent complete :)

In Extract 115 (above), the speaker highlighted that although thick women were glorified because of the images seen in the media, every body type had been criticised and that this needed to stop. According to Gill (2012), this is the case within the media where women are deemed unattractive because they do not fit the skinny ideal. Gill (2012) also states that the new sexual subjectivity is the one that is sexually attractive. In talk that I have presented on flames, eye candy and thick women, there is a definite emphasis on women who are sexually attractive.

THE D SIZE

The only talk that was directly linked to desiring sex was talk about The D (33 references), colloquially known as the 'dick'. Much of this talk highlighted the notions of female pleasure in having a partner with a big penis and the relationship between masculinity and penis size. For example, in Extract 116 (below):

Extract 116: "Wait till he tickles you" (social media post)

That beautiful moment when you have naps with the guy from the same res as your ex-boyfriend who has moved on quickly. I only realise now that he has a small d***. Ah, Gent, thank you for the D. And to the new girl, good luck my baby. Wait till he tickles you and then drops you with that tired "it's me, not you" quote. But aiwa, I got the beautiful D. I love the D. I worship that D.

In Extract 116 (above) by stating "I got the beautiful D. I love the D. I worship that D" the speaker was glorifying her experience with a man with a big penis. The speaker also

highlighted the unsatisfactory nature of having sex with a man with a small penis by wishing the “new girl good luck” (line 3) and emphasising her current satisfaction in line 4.

In Extract 117 (below), the speaker highlighted her feelings when confronted by a small penis after investing some time into the relationship.

Extract 117: “:(I was hacked” (social media post)

So after a few weeks I figured, he seems like a nice enough guy, he's very good looking, the thirst is real. Let me just let go of my inhibitions, I mean I'm young and single and YOLO right? So I finally let him come over to my place and we're about to get into this business, when I realise that he has the smallest D... like, I can't even capitalise it. He has the smallest d I've seen in a while. I didn't make a big deal of it and we carried on, but he lasted like 3 minutes. :(I was hacked

In Extract 117 (above), the speaker expressed disappointment (“I was hacked” line 5) not only in the penis size, but because the sexual partner could not “last long” (line 5). This suggested the possibility that although a man may have a small penis, he could be good in other aspects of sexual pleasing that would not result in the partner being disappointed. For example, in Extract 118 (below), the speaker justified his sexual pleasing by stating he did “go down on her” (line 4), which meant giving oral sex, as a means of extra sexual pleasure for his girlfriend. Yet she still told him that he had a small penis. Extract 119 (below) represented the only explicit reference of masculinity and penis size by a man.

Extract 118: “I felt so emasculated, inadequate and lost all my sexual confidence” (social media post)

My girlfriend told me I have a small D. This not only offended me, I felt so emasculated, inadequate and lost all my sexual confidence and compared to all the people she's been with, I mean size is relative after all. No she was not drunk. No she was not angry. She just said it out of the blue. Yes I make her orgasm. Yes I do go down on her. I think no woman should ever cripple somebody's manhood like that. I could insult her back but that wouldn't make me feel any better so I didn't. FYI we broke up.

In Extract 118 (above), the speaker positioned himself as “emasculated” and “inadequate” while losing all “sexual confidence” (line 1-2) and having a “cripple[d] manhood” (line 4-5). The use of these terms expressed the loss of valorised masculinity through being associated with a small penis. Furthermore, this placed a large amount of emphasis on what it is to be a man and to be masculine.

Another interesting aspect that emerged in the talk about having sex with a man with a big penis placed emphasis on penile-vaginal sex as the only way to receive sexual pleasure. However, there were women who related compromising on penis size with a man who cared. In the below Extracts, the speakers spoke about satisfaction of male partners who might lack a big penis, but who were caring with regard to their emotional needs. This talk highlighted negotiating sex with a partner with a small penis (Extract 119, below), and that there could be more to sex than penis size (Extract 120, below).

Extract 119: “That imagination has kept our relationship strong and happy” (social media post)

He is amazing, the best boyfriend I have ever had. He has the smallest D, I don't even feel him when making love, but thanks to my ex-boyfriend who I imagine and think about every time we nap, that imagination has kept our relationship strong and happy for 3 years now.

In Extract 119 (above), the speaker suggested that although her boyfriend has a small penis and every time they have sex she fantasises about her ex-boyfriend, she still wanted to be with her current boyfriend because he is “amazing and the best” (line 1). Extract 120 (below) shared similar sentiments with Extract 119 (above):

Extract 120: “Big heart” (social media post)

My boyfriend's big heart makes up for his small D

In Extract 120 (above), the speaker suggested that her boyfriend’s “big heart”, which I took to mean kindness and emotional sensitivity, meant more to the speaker than a big penis.

There was also talk about not being fazed by a man with a big penis if he could not provide pleasure with it, for example, Extract 121 (below):

Extract 121: “He is so self-involved and thinks his giant d\$#! [dick] means he's good in bed, I am bored” (social media post)

I miss making love to my ex-girlfriend, I miss being in her arms, I miss her love. My current boyfriend can't even find my clit, he is so self-involved and thinks his giant d\$#! [dick] means he's good in bed, I am bored. I don't want to leave because then I'm going to look dumb because I left my girl for him. Guess I'm stuck with a terrible big headed terrible naps buddy of a boyfriend dies.

In Extract 121 (above), the speaker implied that sex with a woman could be more pleasing than sex with a ‘self-involved’ man with a big penis. In line 2, the speaker placed emphasis on her clitoris as her sexual pleasure organ and stated that even though a man might have a big penis, it would not make up for pleasing a woman if he did not know where the clitoris is.

LET’S JUST BE FRIENDS: NEGOTIATING THE FRIENDZONE

Amongst the talk around sexual desires, there was talk that showed that rather than just sex, love and relationships were also desired. The first to be discussed is the desire to get out of the friendzone (70 references); the second revolves around the contested meanings and constructs of catching feelings (33 references). Extract 122 (below) showed how the friendzone had been understood by posters.

Extract 122: “I wish I could just tell him, but it would ruin our friendship” (social media post)

I really like this guy. We have been friends since first year. We take the same subjects, so I see him almost every day. I have never told him how I feel, but I know he is smart enough to see it. There is nothing I can do about it and I wish I could just tell him, but it would ruin our friendship. The joys of being in the friendzone.

In Extract 122 (above), the speaker highlighted the terrain of the friendzone as clearly defined. But there might have been a blurry stage in a friendship [“there’s nothing I can do about it”, line 3], where a person developed feelings, but remained unable to do anything about these feelings in case they destroyed the entire friendship (line 3) because the feelings were not reciprocated.

While there was a general desire to get out of the friendzone and move the relationship into something more romantic, when people were rejected they sometimes evidenced gendered things to say about the people rejecting them, as seen in Extract 123 (below). However, this did spark responses to rectify this gendered perception as seen in Extract 123 and 124 (below).

Extract 123: “Women are not something you put niceness into until sex falls out” (social media post)

Uhm this might sound a bit cold but...Guys, can we please stop complaining about being friendzoned... Just cause you were nice to a girl, doesn't mean she has to like you or go out with you ...Maybe she just doesn't like you like that ...and gents, you don't have to accept the friendzone ...The same way she doesn't have to accept a relationship with you, you don't have to accept a relationship with her...especially if all you're gonna [going to] do is complain about being friendzoned, but then again, I might be wrong about all this ...

Response: Women are not something you put niceness into until sex falls out

Extract 123 (above) in line 2, spoke to the gendered expectations of men getting what they wanted from a woman if they were nice to her. It highlighted the male role, as having control over the woman’s body, whereby men could determine when it became appropriate for women to give them what they wanted. An interesting response to this post highlighted the gendered perception that all women want is “niceness” (line 6). It also reiterated the perception of men who are nice to women expecting sex. In Extract 124 (below), the speaker presented his/her opinions on girls and the friendzone:

Extract 124: "So she doesn't like you- SHAME. Move on" (social media post)"

There's probably no university here in South Africa that has as many girls who like to give bat like girls at Rhodes University. The way girls here at Rhodes give so much bat you'd swear they practice in front of the mirror. On some: ""Today I'm going to curve at least 8 guys."" And the worst thing that can happen from a guy's point of view is when a girl gives you bat and you haven't even finished what you were saying. Like you're still at the introduction you haven't even gotten to the body of your ""be my girlfriend"" essay or the conclusion and already you're getting bat. Ladies, at least hear the guy out first, you never know maybe at the end he'll say: ""You see that Ferrari parked over there? It's mine."" So next time before you give bat, think of what you could be missing out on. #WiseWordsFromADecentMan.....

Response: The fact that you just implied that what you own and how much money you have would change a girl's feelings for you is utterly sexist and so pathetic. There is no friendzone. There is no 'bat'. So she doesn't like you- SHAME. Move on. No need for these teenage-angsty posts.

The speaker in Extract 124 (above) drew on a gendered stereotype of women. In line 7, the speaker mentioned that girls should not say no to a man because they might have plenty of money and therefore would have lost out on him. In so doing, the speaker was urging women to think more critically about the possibilities the man could be offering her before she said no. This draws on the discourse of men as providers. Rather than to just say no, women must think about what the men could provide for them.

The statement "there is no friendzone" in the response (Extract 124, line 12) implied that women are not beholden to men. In this sense, it is possible that masculinity cannot handle rejection, so it develops a "zone" of future possibility. Rather than just accepting the rejection, there must be a place for men to still have potential with women, that is, the friendzone. This positions 'no' as still having a possibility for action.

There was also talk that highlighted the need for people to be straight-forward about their romantic expectations, as Extract 125 (below) said that:

Extract 125: “I always make it clear to every one of my friends that I like frank people” (social media post)

I am a girl... I personally enjoy having guys as friends. However, whenever I am nice to a guy or [if] we're friends, it's always interpreted it in some other way and I end up having to have awkward conversations with people. Before you accuse me of friendzoning, I always make it clear to every one of my friends that I like frank people. So, if the brother is burning in passions he must be vocal about like and then we sort it out, you know. However, I feel like I have fallen into a habit of now shutting doors for people I might actually like.

In Extract 125 (above), the speaker explained her way of negotiating the friendzone. In line 3 to 5 the speaker suggested, multiple times, the need to have clear communication about when a friend is starting to develop romantic feelings. However, this talk was more apparent in talk about catching feelings, which is the focus of the rest of this chapter.

JUST LET ME KNOW: CATCHING FEELINGS

Much of the talk in my data is about casual sex, and catching feelings (33 references) represents talk about casual sex that highlights the complications of developing feelings in this culture. There were gendered aspects to catching feelings that highlighted the perceived differences in women's and men's ability to catch feelings as seen in Extract 126 (below).

Extract 126: “Are men just different this way?” (social media post)

Why is it not possible for women to have naps, no strings attached and not contract feelings? They say in the beginning, no its purely fun and lust and then BOOM. They drop the F and R bomb.. Feelings and Relationships... Are men just different this way?

Response: I actually see it the other way around a lot... Men also catch feelings – often

In Extract 126 (above), there were contested opinions about which gender is prone to catch feelings. The first speaker suggested that women could not have a sexual relationship without feelings getting involved, while the response to this suggested that men are also incapable of avoiding feelings. Although women might be perceived as unable to have a casual sexual relationship without catching feelings, there were women who highlighted that this exists with men too, as Extract 127 (below) highlighted:

Extract 127: “The guy has confessed to me about dem [them] feels though” (social media post)

Guys always tune girls we catch that std called feelings after a hook up... But I'm just saying a few times after I have had a successful night in friars, the guy has confessed to me about dem [them] feels though... Come on peeps, read the room

In Extract 127 (above), the speaker shed light on men having “confessed” (line 2) about catching feelings. In line 1, the speaker presented men who positioned feelings as a disease, a STD (line 1). By doing this, they positioned feelings as something to avoid that caused pain, that were difficult to get rid of, and that needed to be protected against.

To avoid the complications of catching feelings, some posters requested people to be straight-forward about their desires in the relationship, that is, the relationship being just for casual sex or if the relationship should be treated as if there is future romantic potential.

Extract 128 (below) highlighted the need for people to be frank about their intentions.

Extract 128: “I don’t want to catch feelings for someone who is unsure of his/her purpose and intentions with me” (social media post)

You're only dating me? Let me know. You like me? Tell me. You don't feel like this is going anyway, let me know so we can stop talking. Again, don't be selfish. I don't want to sit around and catch feelings for someone who is unsure of their purpose and intentions with me. Don't be selfish, be true.

In Extract 128 (above), the speaker reiterated, by using the phrase “let me know” in different ways (line 1 & 2), that there is a need for people to disclose their intentions within a

relationship to avoid catching feelings that are not reciprocated. Much of this talk related to the emotional labour of trying to negotiate feelings that were not reciprocal, as seen in Extract 129 (below).

Extract 129: “To make matters worse the person just pretends like they do not know you” (social media post)

So every time I have naps I end up catching feelings, nothing deep. This casual naps life is so hard. Having to act like you do not care, yet you do. How do people do it? To make matters worse, the person just pretends like they do not know you in public, yet online they do!

In Extract 129 (above), the speaker constructed casual sex as a great deal of emotional labour and that this labour was something that should be secret, as having feelings was not appropriate in casual sex relationships. In line 2, the speaker questioned how people managed themselves in these casual relationships. By speaking in this way, the speaker was positioning him/herself as self-aware of the emotional consequences involved in casual sex. In Extract 130 (below), the speaker shed light on a relationship that was not reciprocal.

Extract 130: “I know he can never love me” (social media post)

I'm so sick and tired of always being the one who cares more. I know it's time to let this relationship go before I catch feelings because I know he can never love me like I can love him. But maybe it's too late to get out without getting hurt.

Extract 130 (above) showed that when feelings were not reciprocal, people could get emotionally hurt. There was also talk that directly positioned having feelings as much harder to deal with than hooking-up.

Extract 131: “This life doesn't hurt you. Feelings do.” (social media post)

I feel like I'm judged for hooking up with different guys when the truth is, I want a relationship but I'm too scared to stick around because I always end up catching feelings and getting hurt. This life doesn't hurt you. Feelings do.

In Extract 131 (above), relationships were constructed as harder because of the emotional labour that casual sex lacked. Therefore, the speaker preferred to be involved in casual sex rather than relationships. In line 3, “this life doesn’t hurt you. Feelings do” could mean that “this life” is the casual sex life and “feelings” is the relationship life; if so, this implied that casual sex is easier to negotiate than relationships and therefore being involved in casual sex is easier.

Although there were negative connotations to developing feelings, for example, the emotional labour and getting hurt, there were people who urged others that catching feelings was not all bad.

Extract 132: “I am not a robot” (social media post)

I just don't get it. Why is catching feelings such a bad thing? I am not a robot. There, I just said it...I caught feelings...deal with it

In Extract 132 (above), the speaker admitted to catching feelings and declared being only human for this, (“I am not a robot” line 1). In Extract 133 (below), catching feelings and being vulnerable entailed being mature.

Extract 133: “Grow up, be vulnerable, catch feelings” (social media post)

But I immediately scratch a girl off of my list of potential dating material if I see them b****ing about f***boys. Grow up, be vulnerable, catch feelings you're all too f***ing young to be so cold. I hope this gets through to some of you more basic b****es

In Extract 133 (above) the speaker called for young adults to be vulnerable and not “so cold” (line 3). It is interesting to note that, in Extract 134 (above), the speaker described women who did not catch feelings as “bitches” (line 3). This draws on a gendered understanding of women as emotional and those who are not as bitches. Extract 134 (below) associated taking risks with developing feelings.

Extract 134: “No risk means no rewards” (social media post)

I'm scared I catch feelings. Like, people please, where is your sense of adventure if you think you might fall for someone why not take a gamble and let yourself? No risk means no reward. Maybe I'm just a hopeless romantic, but I want to feel that thrill again...

In Extract 134 (above), the speaker associated taking risks and developing feelings as rewarding. The speaker also highlighted the thrill of a new relationship and getting to know someone for the first time, as something that is exciting and possibly worth it (line 3).

An important aspect of the talk around sexual desires demonstrated how different types of people negotiated casual sex and monogamous relationships. What stood out in this talk is that some people were able to understand where they fitted into these spaces; this they based on whether they considered casual sex harmful or beneficial to their well-being.

Conclusion

In talk about the physiological effect of sexual desire there were gender differences in how bodies reacted: heterosexual dating roles were challenged, and bi-sexual desires were spoken of. When women spoke about sexual desire, they did something interesting: they found the need to declare that they were not horny for sex. This points to Fine's (1988) notion of the missing discourse of desire: these women had been unable to effectively express their desires as they positioned themselves as not thirsty because being horny was not something women claimed to be.

When people spoke about having a crush, non-normative negotiations appeared: straight people were crushing on gay people and gay people, in turn, did not know their crush's sexual orientation. Gay people were also scared of coming out; when people spoke about pursuing their crush, they declined in fear of being known as gay. Other heteronormative desires were present, such as resorting to hyper-femininity and check-listing normative

stages of a relationship. There was also emphasis placed on the value of physical attractiveness.

An interesting aspect that emerged in the talk about The D, contrasted the male gaze and the female gaze regarding sexual pleasure, and how men needed to fit into the desires set by women. The women glorified the sexual pleasure to be had from a big penis; they also expressed disappointment in the lack of satisfaction from a partner with a small penis. Nevertheless, women expressed interest in emotional satisfaction rather than sexual satisfaction. Men were concerned with their ability to please women. In this talk, there was direct reference made to the size of the penis and masculinity. This indicated the power of ideologies placed on the penis that positioned it as a sign of great manhood.

Rather than just sexual desire, there was also talk about the desire for love and relationships. This desire often entailed negotiation to get out of the friendzone. Interestingly, talk about the friendzone placed emphasis on niceness. The idea came across as gendered because of the perception that, all that men needed to do to be with a woman, meant being nice to her. Another gendered feature of this talk included the idea that there is no friendzone, and that men needed to learn to deal with rejection. This sentiment cast the friendzone as a possible phase of sexual conquest over women.

Talk about catching feelings highlighted negotiations of emotions in a casual sex sexual culture. The first aspect that emerged in this talk about the gendered perception is that women cannot have sex without catching feelings. A major concern within this talk highlighted aspects of trying to be clear in communications about intentions in the relationship. A concern about this talk is that the speakers in the data suggested that having clear communication could protect you from getting hurt in the casual sex culture, but many young adults might not know how to even communicate this or that they had these feelings. Thus, catching feelings equated simultaneously as a strength and a weakness.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this research was to identify, as much as possible, the full range of colloquial terms in young adults' talk on sexuality, and to identify what types of sexual practices, sexual subjectivities and sexual desires young adults were talking about in using these colloquial terms. It also aimed to highlight the undermining and or underpinning of heteronormative and gendered power relations inherent in this talk. The previous three chapters discussed the range of young adults' talk in relation to their sexual practices, sexual subjectivities and sexual desires. It is apparent that much of their talk is on the topic of casual sex. To conclude this research, I herein provide a summary of the main findings of this research. I first summarise the main feature of this data, talk around the practices of sex. Other findings highlight the range of heteronormative and gendered power relations, what is constituted as good and bad sex and subjectivities and talk about negotiating feelings around sex. In the second part of this chapter, I discuss the implications of the findings by extending the ideas of the charmed circle of sex. In my recommendations, I argue for the increased role of sexuality interventions for young adults. Finally, I end with the limitations of this study.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Talk around getting sex

The majority of the data corpus is based on talk about the practices of sex. Naps and hook-ups are the terms that are predominantly used to refer to sex. Although both terms can refer to casual sex, having naps is often used in reference to sex that is more regular than a hook-up. Within the data, talk around different types of sex took place, although there were contestations concerning what sex constituted: whether it be oral sex or penile-vaginal sex or both. This complex relationship of what sex is resembles research which highlights the contested meanings of abstinence. Goodson, et al. (2003) and Haglund (2003) provided findings that suggested that young people define abstinence, and in turn what sex is, in terms of penile-vaginal intercourse and research by Byers, et al. (2009) found that engaging in oral sex practices is not considered sex. With this said, my data only directly referenced oral sex as a distinct sexual practice. Although the data referred to sex as naps and hook-ups, there is little evidence to suggest what type of sex this is, whether it is penile-vaginal, oral sex or both. It may be taken for granted by posters that naps and hook-ups referred to penile-vaginal intercourse, but besides these references (naps and hook-ups), the only direct reference to what constituted sex was made to oral sex.

In talk about getting sex, the data showed that young adults are engaging in sexual same-sex experimentation. An interesting feature of this talk is that threesomes were constructed as successful. The data did not depict why threesomes were successful, so more focus into the intricacy of this construction should take place in the future.

The only negatively constructed way to get sex was that of seal-clubbing. Seals are predominately young women who are taken advantage of, based on their perceived sexual

innocence. As well as being constructed as a bad way to get sex, seal-clubbing is entrapped with gendered and heteronormative power relations.

Gendered and heteronormative power relations

In my findings there were numerous instances of heteronormative and gendered talk. In this section, I discuss the main features of this talk. The only direct reference to a sexual hierarchy within the data was made in talk relating to seal-clubbing. Seal-clubbing was depicted in terms of women being easy prey based in their perceived sexual naivety. Older males were said to find it easier to get sex from these women because they lacked knowledge of sexual cultures on a university campus.

Talk about seal-clubbing assumed that younger women are more sexually desirable than older women. This positioned younger women higher on the sexual hierarchy than older women. In contrast, men were seen as desirable to women who are younger than them. Thus, the male position on the sexual hierarchy is the highest point and women are then below them, instead of being of equal standing.

There were themes in the data that depicted a sexual double standard. This was related to talk on sexual subjectivities as there were far more derogatory terms used to describe women than men. Women were also more often the centre of STD comments. An interesting aspect in this is the reaction of speakers to defy this notion and to highlight the sexual double standard. This talk (that brings sexual double standards to light) was, however, only seen in talk about the slur slut, as the slur hoe went unchallenged. Nonetheless, the conversation of slut shaming is a positive development in young people's talk.

There was an idealisation of monogamy that underpinned conceptions of heteronormativity. This was seen in talk about the bae life and main and side relationships. Having a bae was

something to which the speakers aspired. In talk about baes, many speakers spoke about being together for a length of time and the possibilities of getting married. This resonates with the heteronormative ideals that everyone should get married. The idealisation of monogamy was strongly depicted in the talk about those people who had concurrent partners (mains and sides). These subjectivities and those of f***boy's and f***girls were constructed as deviant as they desired nothing more than a casual sexual relationship.

A gendered perception was created when there was talk about having a relationship with a blesser or cougar. These two subjectivities are easily juxtaposed. The blesser, an older male, is the provider while the cougar, the older female, is constructed as the maternal figure. Even though both the blesser and cougar can provide a house, food or luxuries, in my data the cougar was a motherly figure, while the blesser was a symbol of financial power.

The only direct reference to sexual desire made by women was that they desired to have sex with a man who had a big penis. In this talk, women put pressure on men to sexually perform and they informed those who could not. This is a distinct change, away from prioritising male desire over female (Rich 1980). When this happened, there was a direct reference to the size of the penis and masculinity. This positioned masculinity as fragile as the virility associated with the penis was taken away through references to the small D. Research by Brubaker and Johnson (2008) shows how the virility associated with the penis is in crisis. The crisis associates a lack of manliness with a small penis; the solution is then enhancement. Adding to this, the increased interest in products for penis enhancement creates a hyper-masculinity which blurs the lines of gender, as now women and men are associated with consuming both femininity and masculinity, (whereas women were previously more of a primary focus) (Gill, Henwood, & McLean, 2005).

Other than female desire for a man with a large penis, there was a positive sense that the female discourse of desire was missing (Fine, 1988). This is evident in the lack of female desire in talk about oral sex as this talk positioned men as the prominent receivers. This talk

highly resonated with the conceptions of compulsory heterosexuality and the internalisation of male desires over female desires (Rich, 1980), thus aiding the female missing discourse of desire (Fine, 1988). Women who spoke about giving oral sex to men were negotiating between their desires not to, but being aware of the possibility that men would leave them if they did not perform it. Not only in dating, but also in casual sex, men were depicted as having to have constant sexual accessibility to women. This resembles research done by Virginia Braun, et al. (2003) in which they looked at the discourses of 15 heterosexual men and women. They discovered that although the reciprocity discourse discusses both sexual partners receiving orgasm, the discourse is still bound by obligations of choice for women.

Another feature of the missing discourse of female desire was seen in talk of women who declared they were not horny. When women spoke in these ways, they positioned their sexual desires as not something natural, that is, that doing femininity is not being horny. This resonates with Butler's (1990) notions of doing gender. In this sense, women found that to perform as a woman was to state that they were not horny.

An interesting feature of heteronormative talk within these data is that there was an undermining of heteronormative aspects seen in the non-normalised sexual practices. These sexual encounters did not need to be labelled. There was a positive receptiveness to the sharing of experiences with same-sex sexual experimentation. Yet, when people spoke about the possibility of being known publicly as gay, they negotiated around feelings of fear of being outed. In the next section, I provide a summary of the talk that resonated with good and bad sex and, in turn, the subjectivities within it.

Another aspect of heteronormativity in the data is related to talk about dating and baes. These colloquial terms are closely related and highlight heteronormative features in relationships. In talk about dating, there was an emphasis on who pays for the bill of a date: is it the male, the female, both male and female or the person who asked the other on the date. Some of this talk suggested that men are not real men if they let the women pay for the

date, while others urged for there be an agreement beforehand or clear communication about who pays.

In talk about the sexual subjectivity, bae and heteronormative beliefs centred around men being providers, having constant sexual accessibility to a partner and beliefs that women always had to be physically and sexually attractive. Based on the nature of dating and the desire people had to have a bae, marry their bae and have a bae for a long period of time, bae is the main colloquial term that depicts a sexual subjectivity in dating.

Undermining heteronormative beliefs in dating were those who spoke about how they are or thought they were heterosexual, but imagine or desire someone of the same sex. Some posters were even afraid to be known publicly as queer. Another undermining heteronormative belief was that some young adults perceived dating as not having to be exclusive.

In Chapter One, I wrote about how the term whore originated as depicting a black woman in slavery who was constructed as sexually alluring to white men. It is interesting to note the intersection of race in relation to the term whore and that, in my data, it went unchallenged compared to the term slut. In other words, when there was talk around the slur slut, speakers argued that the slur is inappropriate, yet when the slur whore/hoe was used, speakers did not suggest that the term was inappropriate. In the next section, I discuss the relationship between sex and emotions.

Sex and emotions

During talk about sex, people spoke about their emotions. Much of the talk about emotions alluded to talk about a connection between emotional harm and sex. Talk about sex did not position sex itself as emotionally harmful. Rather, the manner in which people handled their

intentions with the relationship is what caused emotional harm. This resembles the casual sex research conducted by Vrangalova (2013) which highlighted that autonomous and non-autonomous motivations play a role in whether a sexual encounter is harmful or not to emotional well-being. This type of emotional harm was highlighted in talk about seal-clubbing, that is, the feelings of being used for sex. Other talk positioned casual sex as harmful to well-being when people were engaging in bad sex, for example, having sex with no intention of developing a future romantic relationship. Therefore, when these casual sexual encounters occurred and there was not a negotiation around intentions of the sexual relationship, it often left some in emotional pain, as the relationship ended abruptly.

Another focus of emotions was also seen in relation to romantic relationships. This was evident in talk about friendzone and catching feelings. This talk showed how the young adult might negotiate feelings of love and desire, rather than a predominant desire for sex. Similar to the talk on emotions and casual sex, talk about emotions and romantic relationships alluded to the idea of mutual agreement about the intentions of the relationship. In other words, when posters spoke about feelings, it was increasingly clear that there was an emphasis on communication, particularly if the relationship had been meant for an emotional or sexual connection.

There is talk in the data that depicted that sexuality is fluid or based on a continuum, highlighting the need not to label a sexual experience. Yet there was talk whereby people had engaged in same sex intercourse and questioned their sexual subjectivity, based on this experience. In this case, the sex that speakers had evoked emotions of confusion and misunderstandings of their current sexual subjectivity. Although there were comments to urge these speakers not to think too deeply about the labels used, the speakers still went through emotions of confusion, based on the sex they were having.

Good and bad sex

In talk about sexual practices it was evident that there were particular definitions of good and bad sex. Yet, when people spoke about those who were engaging in this sex, there were constructions of good and bad sex subjectivities. This related to Foucault's (1978) notions of the science of sexuality, and how the sexual practices of people have allowed for the construction of good and bad sexual subjectivities.

Because the type of sex someone was having made them who they are, talk about sexual subjectivities provided a clear distinction between good and bad sex. Sex that was good sex, whether it was heterosexual or queer, was monogamous. It had potential for a future committed relationship. It also included both partners being sexually satisfied, and it featured people who had developed clear communications about the intentions they had with each other. The sex that was constructed as bad sex was: firstly, sex that was deceitful, for example, using someone for sexual gain; secondly, sex with someone who did not communicate his/her intentions with the sexual partner; and lastly, sex resulting in a lack of sexual satisfaction.

An interesting aspect about good and bad sex is that it was irrelevant if this sex was heterosexual or queer. Thus, while sexual orientation was irrelevant, the intentions behind having sex were relevant. This had been made more prominent when highlighting deviant sex. Deviant sex was sex where the person had no interest in developing a future committed relationship. Within this talk on good and bad sex, it became increasingly clear that Rubin's (1984) charmed circle has an important implication in this research. In the section that follows, I discuss the implications that the charmed circle has for this research.

IMPLICATIONS: THE CHANGING CHARMED CIRCLE

In this research, a range of sexual practices, sexual subjectivities and sexual desires (resulting in a variety of attitudes, beliefs and practices) have been highlighted. These can be viewed in terms of a charmed circle of sex like that of Rubin's (1984), for example, in relation to sexual subjectivities seen in Chapter Six, where there is a clear divide between good and bad sex. The results of this study can aid in understanding an extension of Rubin's (1984) charmed circle with reference of young adults' sexual experiences. Below, I provide distinct differences and similarities between Rubin's (1984) charmed circle and the findings of my analysis as these create differing sexual hierarchies from that presented by Rubin (1984).

Rubin's (1984) charmed circle is best suited for this research as it already highlights the definitions and conceptions of good and bad sex. This work is influential, but it does stem from beliefs and attitudes from the 1980s in a different context. The findings of this thesis also highlight definitions and concepts of good and bad sex and are more current to the beliefs and attitudes faced by young adults today. Although Rubin's (1984) work was not done with the same research population as this thesis, looking at Rubin's (1984) work in comparison could provide interesting points of discussion and room for further research.

Similarities

The first similarity between my findings and the charmed circle is that people cannot engage in monogamy and casual sex. This is the only distinct similarity (with no variations) between the charmed circle and my findings, as those who were engaging in monogamy and casual sex were positioned within a bad sexual subjectivity.

The second is that of the bae life, which is equated with aspects of the married life and/or functions of a normative romantic committed relationship. It is similar to the charmed circle and the perceived good sex had within a relationship or marriage. Yet, this sex is not exclusive to heterosexuals as gay identities are also included.

Distinct differences

The main distinct difference in my data from Rubin's (1984) charmed circle is that casual sex is not constructed as bad compared to sex within a relationship. However, what is constructed as bad are certain features of casual sex. The main feature of casual sex that was good sex was when there was mutual agreement about the expectations within the relationship. Added to this, is that it is obvious that the sex referred to in my data was not intended for procreation, but rather for pleasure. Casual sex was only constructed as bad when there were elements of deceptiveness, in that there was no mutual agreement. In talk about sex, it was taken for granted that the speakers were not married; therefore, they were engaging in sex outside of marriage. There were no bad conceptions to this, and 'sex in sin' was not brought up as an issue.

What used to be considered deviant through the science of sexuality (Foucault, 1978) and what appears in the charmed circle (Rubin, 1984) as the opposite of being heterosexual is homosexuality. But, in my data, queer sex was not considered deviant. What was considered a deviant sexual practice were people who engaged in sexual practices with no intentions of developing the relationship into something that was exclusive. Besides this, there was positive receptiveness to non-normative sexual experiences: these are experiences that include same-sex experimentations and sex in groups (threesomes). Other non-normative sexual practices, such as threesomes, were also viewed as not bad sex, especially if there was consent, knowledge and comfort between partners. Thus, it becomes increasingly clear that the emphasis is on mutual agreement.

The terms blesser and cougar indicate both cross generational and transactional sex. In terms of cross-generational and transactional sex of the charmed circle, my data presented a neutral stance as to whether this sex is bad or good.

Aspects of the charmed circle that did not have a prominent feature in my data were slave master (sadism and masochism) or vanilla sex; sex with manufactured objects or bodies only; pornography or no pornography, and the location of the sex, whether it be at home or at the park. These four constructs in the charmed circle (Rubin, 1984) were not mentioned, while the other eight constructs in the charmed circle (Rubin, 1984) were mentioned.

With the evidence I have provided in the similarities to and differences from the charmed circle (Rubin, 1984), the definitions and concepts of good and bad sexual practices are different from the 1980s in the United States. Although Rubin's (1984) sample population is different to this research, it does provide an interesting point that there is a shift in the sexual hierarchy. Although this shift still idealises monogamy and relationships and, in turn, views non-monogamy as low on the sexual hierarchy, it is interesting that not all non-monogamy is at the bottom of this hierarchy. This non-monogamy is characterised as casual sex and casual sex that involved mutual agreement was positioned higher than casual sex that was deceitful. An important feature of this shift in sexual hierarchy is that sexual orientations had no place on the hierarchy. This means that heterosexuals were not placed above queer identities.

LIMITATIONS

This research provided rich everyday experiences of young adults' sexual practices, sexual subjectivities and sexual desires. Much of this talk was drawn from online data. The nature

of online data meant that I could not ask it questions to further probe what was being said. Although there was a group interview as a validity check, this group interview had its own limitations. The main limitation was that participants were in and out of the interview at different stages, disrupting conversation.

Participants in this research, whether those commenting within the online data or the group interview data, only represent a section of the youth population. In this research, this sector is the Rhodes University students who are primarily located in Grahamstown. This is because the online data is situated within the group of Rhodes University students. Therefore, my data may not represent all young adults in South Africa, but it does provide evidence of the everyday experiences of young adults which, based on the nature of Rhodes Confessions and its 37 156 followers, could represent a prominent sector of the youth population.

Some elements of the data present racial complexities that show a link between sexuality and race. Although briefly discussed, based on the nature of this research, these complexities could not be discussed in great detail. Adding to this is that much of the data does not include the demographic details such as race or gender of those speaking, although some speakers share their demographic details, some do not. Thus when speakers did not disclose their gender, they were referred to as he/she or him/her.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The role of sexuality interventions

In my data it become increasingly apparent that young adults are going through many negotiations within the casual sex culture, of which, some sexual practices cause more emotional harm than others. The role that sex interventions should play in young adults' lives is to be inclusive of their everyday sexual experiences (Glover & Macleod, 2016) with an understanding that young adults are already engaging in sexual practices and need information to protect themselves, rather than information to abstain (Shefer, et al., 2015). Because of this and the issues that young adults face that are brought up in my research, there needs to be a sexuality intervention in a young adults' sexual development to address positive understandings about casual sex cultures that young adults may enter. These interventions need to make use of the gendered and heteronormative findings of this thesis and use examples of the colloquial terms found in this research as examples of ways of talking about sex. Essentially these sexuality interventions need to use the language used by young adults themselves in order develop an effective sexuality intervention.

Whether young adults are unable to negotiate their feelings in casual sexual culture, or whether young adults are being deceitful in their sexual practices, they need to be given a space within sexuality interventions to assess how they could or could not cope in a casual sexual environment. Sexuality interventions should also work to aid their learners in understanding how to approach the topic of sex, how to make their intentions clear with their sexual partners; even though these conversations may be difficult and uncomfortable, they are important to have. Sexuality interventions should also work to include a debriefing and awareness of what university campus is like, in that different casual sex cultures exist, for

example, that non-normative sex experimentations, polyamorous relationships and relationships with concurrent partners exist there.

Further research

Further research could extend the ideas of this research looking at other universities' confessional pages to provide a broader understanding of young adults' everyday sexual experiences within South Africa. Providing more studies that explore the young adults' everyday sexual experiences would inform sexuality interventions that can target certain practices relevant to the sexual experiences young adults have. In other words, this research could aid the targeting of sexual practices young adults are actually engaging in and it could target specific practices for intervention instead of broad categories of sex. In addition, these future studies could develop into their own sexuality interventions targeted at the location of the sample of the confessional page. Moreover, research could aid comparisons in young adults' sexual experiences in different regions of South Africa. In regions where there is no confessional page that young adults post to, research should consider developing a regional specific confessional page which can highlight how these young adults talk about their sexual practices, sexual subjectivities and sexual desire.

Conclusion

This research has provided insight into the everyday talk concerning young adults' sexual practices, sexual subjectivities and sexual desires. This study found that there are a variety of negotiations that young adults go through within sexuality. A prominent focus of their everyday talk is related to sex and, in particular, casual sex. Within this talk on casual sex, young adults are trying to reform gendered and heteronormative notions, but it was found

that some of this talk still maintains these power relations. This is evident in the female missing discourse of desire, the internalisation of male pleasure over female pleasure and the sexual double standard. While an interesting factor is that non-normative sexual experiences are received positively, sexual subjectivities and practices that are engaging in monogamy and casual sex simultaneously are seen as deviant. Besides talk on just sex, this research also found that young adults are negotiating the terrain of sex and emotions. This talk emphasised the need for mutual agreement within sexual relationships. The young adults' talk showed a constant feature that those who were deceptive were bad. Other findings within the talk of emotions highlighted a desire for romantic relationships. In turn, this talk divided what is good sex and what is bad sex, which aided a discussion of the extension of Rubin's (1984) charmed circle of sex. A recommendation of this research is that it will be beneficial for sexuality interventions to acknowledge the actual experiences of young adults to aid their interventions at targeting the actual practices of young adults.

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APPENDIX 1 INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

“Sex Talk” Interview schedule

- Welcome everyone and introductions
- Explanatory statements about you and your research
- Brief description of process of focus group discussion – social media statements as prompts
- Ethics: clearance; consent forms; recording; confidentiality; protection of privacy; group norms

1: Naps culture

Introduction to the post: Most of the posts dealing with sexualities issues made reference to the terms “naps” and “hook-ups”, here is an example of one of these posts:

Confessor: I'm turning 21, and I think it's the right time to start dating seriously, and creating within myself the culture or habit of being in a relationship. Like, I don't want to be 26yrs old and stuck in a **hookup culture**. Old habits die hard! I just want one person to get crazy with. Honestly though, can we create a dating culture that is as healthy as the **naps culture**.

- Just to begin with, and to make sure that we are all on the same page, what exactly are “naps” and “hook-ups”?
- What do people mean when they talk about a “naps” or “hook-up” culture?
- One feature of cultures is that they are organised around social hierarchies: Is this a feature of the “naps” and “hook-up” cultures?, Who are the winners and who are the losers?

2: Fuckboys and hoes

Introduction to post: In posts about naps and hook-up's there is lots of mention of fuckboys and hoes

Confessor: I have theorised that this f*** boy crisis we're facing is not in fact to be blamed on f*** boys. Rhodes and G town are both incredibly small and therefore pretty much everyone knows eachother so when you have 185other185s sometimes

they can be random but a lot of the time you know the person or are already friends and you p***ies catch feelings and then blame it on the f*** boys. There be no f*** boys that you catch feels for in a big city, you hump and dump other***ers!

- What exactly is a fuckboy? Is a fuckboy the same as a player or a blesser? And is it a compliment or an insult to be called a fuckboy?
- What is a “fuckboy crisis”?

Confessor: I've already slept with several Rhodes guys, not that i'm cheap or a hoe like my friends say, but because i'm looking for a relationship but trying to navigate and find someone who will still respect me enough the following morning whether i slept with them or refused them. I'm a very sexually autonomous person ever, and i'm comfortable with that.....it's just that it is so sad that i havent met someone worthy to be in a relationship with here because of this sexual autonomy, and no, i will not change myself to make someone else comfortable. I'm led to believe there is no love in this place....real love that is....you just f*** and go. Maybe, maybe i'll meet someone in the workplace, maybe.....i have so much love to give...but most guys here do not realize that....because they fail to see past my vagina. :(

- When someone is called a hoe, what does that mean? Is a hoe the female equivalent of a fuckboy?
- Was it fair of her friends to call her a hoe?

3: Catching feelings

Confessor: That time you thought you were just hooking up causally he hits you with a "I don't want YOU to catch feelings." Sorry, but I didn't catch feelings so can we get back to our arrangement. Don't make assumption. Ask me and I'll let you know that I don't want a boyfriend. Just a FWB

- What does “catching feelings mean”?
- Why is catching feelings bad?
- Is it a gendered thing? Do only women catch feelings?
- Why would guys worry about women catching feelings?
- Why is “catching feelings” a problem for this arrangement?

4: Friendzone

Confessor: "I have been vibing with this guy for weeks now. We decided to have dinner at my place and after hours of spring cleaning My future boyfriend arrived. everything was perfect and he even made us a beautiful seafood meal. I hadn't been laid in a while so i was quite anxious. i gave him all the signs - shoes off, hair slicked back, lights off

and some heavy breathing on his neck. After a while i got tired and it was pretty late so it was time to go. His words of goodbye were ""goodnight Buddy""."

- What does the friendzone mean?
- Some posts say the friendzone does not exist while others say it is real. Why are there these beliefs? What is the friendzone?
- Why is it good or bad to be in the friendzone?
- Is being in the friendzone or friendzoning a gendered thing? Do men or women friendzone more?

5: Naps with bae

Introduction to post: In posts about naps and hook-up's there is also frequent mention of "bae" and "boo"

Confessor: He makes me happy. He gives me great naps. Thank you bae. Almost too good to be true.

- What is "bae", how would you define "bae", on what basis would you refer to someone as "bae"? Does calling someone "bae" confer a particular status on the relationship you have with that person? Can someone be important to you even though you are having naps with them?

5: Main and side bae

Introduction: In posts about bae people often distinguish between main and side bae

Confessor: And this weather is perfect for chilling in with Bae and Side-Bae :)

- What is a main and a side, how do you determine which is which?
- Is this also a gendered thing? Do men have main and sides but not women?
- Are women with sides judged more harshly?
- Should main and sides know about each other? Why, why not?
- Are people more judgemental about same-sex "sides"? Is keeping them secret judged more harshly?
- If there are more than two people in a relationship must someone necessarily be a "side"? Can there be three "mains" in a relationship?
- from your main Would your answer be the same if the "side" was the same gender?

6: Thirsty

Introduction: a general theme within the posts was that of casual sex through naps and hook ups. People refer to their naps lives based on being thirsty.

Confessor: I'm not thirsty - I just want to get laid tonight. I'm a girl, but I'm not a sl**.
it's 2015. Women should be allowed to embrace their sexuality and
enjoy naps, the same as men.

- What does thirst mean or refer to?
- Why are people thirsty?
- Who can be thirsty? Is there a gendered perception of who is thirstier than the other?

APPENDIX 2 ADVERT

Hey Bae, he's finally
asleep, LOL Where U?

2:13 PM

Sex Talk Research Project

This research project is about the colloquial terms that young adult use when speaking about sexuality.

Dates are: Wednesday 26 July Time: 9:30-
11:00am

Thursday 27 July

Time: 11:00-12:30pm

Both venues to be announced

If you are interested in participating in this study and would like more information about it please contact me directly at robertsoncassandra4@gmail.com or contact on my on the research site at <https://robertsoncassandra.wixsite.com/mysite>.

I look forward to hearing from you!

Colloquial terms:

Bae
Naps
Seal clubbing
Friendzone
Blesser
Catching feelings
Side chick

Anyone between the ages of 18-25 that wants to participate in a focus group discussion is welcome.

Discussions will explore your opinions and interpretations of posts selected off Rhodes Confessions.

APPENDIX 3 TRANSCRIPTION NOTATIONS

Adapted from Julia Bailey (2008)

(?)	Talk too obscure to transcribe
{	Overlapping talk begins. In Bailey's (2008) original these used the symbol [], I have changed this symbol as not to confuse it with the notation I use for the social media data.
}	Overlapping talk ends
Becau-	Cut off, interruption of a sound
<u>he</u> says.	Emphasis
(left hand on neck)	Body conduct/significant bodily gestures
.	A natural ending
,	A comma like pause
.....	Ellipses signifies omission between text
Social media notations	
[]	Shows the correct meaning of slang/incorrectly spelled words

APPENDIX 4 AGREEMENT BETWEEN STUDENT RESEARCHER AND RHODES CONFESSION ADMINISTRATOR

I Cassandra Robertson am conducting research on the colloquial terms in young adults talk about sexual desire, sexual practices and sexual subjectivities. The aim of my research is to identify (as much as is possible) the full range of this terminology and the way in which it is employed in young people's talk about sexual desires, sexual practices and sexual subjectivities. This research has the potential to benefit sexualities-based interventions by providing insight into the ways in which young people talk about and understand their experiences as desiring subjects.

My research entails reviewing posts on two discussion groups on a popular social media site where young adults frequently post on sexualities issues. These will be Rhodes-based discussion groups (i.e. Rhodes Confessions). These discussion groups are selected on the basis that they are open to the public and the identities of the individuals posting on the sites are anonymised. I will review all commentary posted between January 2015 and January 2016 and will select a sample of posts based on these two criteria: (a) the post is about a sexualities related issue (b) the post contains one or more words that employ local vernacular that are used to describe sexual desires and/or sexual practices and/or sexual subjectivities.

I am hereby asking your permission and consent to have access to your media site to review a selection of posts.

For further information contact Cassandra Robertson on 0833516746 or at robertsoncassnadra4@gmail.com or Jacqui Marx on 0466037377 or at Jacqui.marx@ru.ac.za

APPENDIX 5 COPY OF CONSENT FORM

I _____ (participant's name) agree to participate in the research project of _____ (researcher's name) on everyday colloquial terms of young adults talk about sexual desire, sexual practices and sexual subjectivities.

I understand that:

1. The researcher is a student conducting the research as part of the requirements for a Master's degree at Rhodes University. The researcher may be contacted on 0833516746 or robertsoncassandra4@gmail.com. The research project has been approved by the relevant ethics committee(s) and is under the supervision of Dr Jacqueline Marx in the Psychology Department at Rhodes University, who may be contacted on 0466037377 or Jacqui.marx@ru.ac.za.
2. The researcher is interested in colloquial terms of young adult's everyday talk about sexual desire, sexual practices and sexual subjectivities.
3. My participation will involve facilitating the group discussions on sexuality based issues which will last only one to one and a half hours.
4. Voice recordings will be taken during the focus group.
5. A video recording will be taken of the discussion to aid the researcher in transcription but once transcription has taken place the video recordings will be destroyed. The researcher is the only one who can access this video.
6. I may be asked to answer questions of a personal nature, but I can choose not to answer any questions about aspects of my life which I am not willing to disclose.
7. I am invited to voice to the researcher any concerns I have about my participation in the study, or consequences I may experience as a result of my participation, and to have these addressed to my satisfaction. A counselling center may be contacted for further support on 0466227203

8. I am free to withdraw from the study at any time – however I commit myself to full participation unless some unusual circumstances occur, or I have concerns about my participation which I did not originally anticipate.

9. The report on the project may contain information about my personal experiences, attitudes and behaviours, but that the report will be designed in such a way that it will not be possible to be identified by the general reader.

Signed on (Date):

Participant: _____ Researcher: _____

APPENDIX 6 GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Below are the full range of colloquialism found in this study. The following abbreviations have been used *n.* (as a part of speech marker) *v.* (as a verb marker) [abbr] (marks an abbreviation), [idiom] (represents an idiomatic expression. I have also shown when a term is derogatory by stating (derogatory) next to the said term. Illustrative sentences are given not from the data itself, as many are used within the chapters of this thesis but formulated to show a concise instance in which they are deployed.

AF [abbr] stands: for as f***. It is used to emphasise a statement. *“I am horny AF”*

Bae *n.* stands for before anyone else, it is used to describe a close romance or friendship with someone else. *“Bae and I went on a date”*

Bat *v.* when men or women reject sexual or romantic advancements. *“I asked if they wanted to go on a date and they gave me bat”*

Basic bitches *adj.* to describe a type of person as basic, it is deployed in a way to describe a woman who just doesn't seem to understand how things work. *“She's wearing last season's boots, what a basic bitch”*

Becky *adj.* a term used to describe the third women in a heterosexual relationship. *“His becky called to tell me who she is”*

Bedding *v.* a term used for sexual intercourse. *“We bedded over the weekend”*

Bitch (derogatory) *adj.* a woman who is perceived to be unpleasant, it can also be used to indicate a feminine character. *“I asked if she wanted to go out and she said no, what a bitch”/ “stop being a little bitch”*

Blesser *adj.* an older man with a younger woman who have a transactional relationship with or without sex. *“I got a new car, thank goodness for blessers”*

Bimbo *adj.* a woman who is described as stupid yet pretty or who is so pretty they must be stupid. A bimbo is often associated with the dumb blonde persona. *“She looks like a bimbo”*

Blow job *v.* performing oral sex on a man. *“I gave him a blowjob”*

Boner *v.* an erect penis. *“She/he gave me a boner”*

Boo *adj.* to call someone their boo is it to mean you care highly for them. *“Don’t be sad boo”*

Booty *n.* a word used to replace the word bum. *“Check out her booty”*

Boyfie *n.* a word used to replace the word boyfriend. *“My boyfie is taking me out tonight”*

Bro *n.* used to describe a man or friend. *“Hey bro, how you doing?”*

Butch *adj.* a masculine body type more likely to refer to a woman. *“This girl is butch”*

Catching feelings, caught feels, feels *v.* developing feelings within a casual sex relationship or having defined the relationship as having no potential for feelings and developing feelings. *“I had sex, now I caught feelings”*

Chicks *adj.* a term used to describe young women. *“There will be lots of chicks at the party”*

Clit *n.* is short for clitoris, it is an organ of the vagina. *“He can’t find the clit”*

Closeted *adj.* is used to describe a person’s position in relation to their sexuality, in this case it often refers to queer identities who are not ready to be publicly known as not heterosexual. *“I am a closeted bisexual”*

Coochie *n.* a term used instead of using vagina. *“She was telling me about how her coochie works”*

Cougar *adj.* a woman who is dating a much younger man than herself. *“He’s 21 and has a cougar she is 40”*

Crush *v.* to develop a desire to be with someone else, with or without their knowledge. *“I am crushing so hard on her”*

Cuddle buddy('s) *adj.* a person with which you arrange to only cuddle with. *"My cuddle buddy and I have great cuddles in when it's cold"*

Dabbing *v.* used as another term for sexual intercourse. *"I've been dabbing this girl on the side"*

Dick *n.* a male sexual organ the penis, also deployed to describe a type of person who is unpleasant. *"This person is such a dick"/ "He's dick was inside me"*

Dilf [abbr]. stands for: dad I'd like to f***. *"Your dad is such a dilf"*

Ditch *v.* means to leave something behind, whether it be *"lets ditch this place"* or *"I just ditched my girlfriend/boyfriend"*

Dong *n.* a term for a penis. *"My dong is hard"*

Dry humping *adv.* describes a sexual activity where you essentially pretend to have sex with your clothes on. *"Only virgins dry hump"*

Dump, dumped *v.* to end a relationship. *"I got dumped by my boyfriend over the weekend"*

Eye candy *adj.* a term used to describe someone who is pleasing to look at. *"Let's go to the mall for the eye candy"*

Fag *adj.* (derogatory) a term used to describe a homosexual male. *"You look like a fag"*

F*, f***ing, f***ed** *v.* to engage in sexual intercourse. *"I caught them fucking each other"*

Femme *adj.* describes a behaviour or someone as feminine. *"I saw a man wearing makeup, that's so femme"*

Fit boy *adj.* a man who looks like they are physically fit. *"Let's watch sport to stare at all the fit boys"*

Flame *adj.* a term used to describe someone who is attractive. *"This girl is flames"*

Fling *v.* a semi-causal relationship that had good potential but ended amicably. *"Over the holidays I had this fling"*

Friendzone *n.* wanting to have a more romantic/intimate partner but scared of breaking up the friendship or acting on your desires to be with someone but they are rejected as there is preference of friendship over romance. *“She told me she likes me, but I had to friendzone her, because she is like a sister to me”*

Fresh *adj.* to mean that someone is looking physically/sexually attractive. *“You look fresh tonight come over to my place”*

Fuck buddy(ies) *adj.* people who have an agreed arrangement that their relationship is just for sexual pleasure. *“My fuck buddy knows what they doing”*

Fuckboy *n.* a man who is sexually deceptive towards females by pursuing a relationship but using them solely for sex. *“These fuckboy’s are leaving us the worst feelings to deal with”*

Fuckgirl *adj.* a woman who is sexually deceptive towards females by pursuing a relationship but using them solely for sex. *“These fuckgirl’s know how to break our hearts”*

Gay *adj./n.* a sexual orientation that is used for men who have sexual interests in other men. *“I think I’m gay”*

Gay naps *adv.* men having sex with men and women having sex with women. *“My roommate and I tried out gay naps”*

Ghosted *v.* this is a phenomenon where people who have had sex or start dating randomly stop communicating with the other person completely. *“I met him at the club and now he has ghosted me”*

Good girls *adj.* girls who are perceived to have maintained a good sexual reputation by not sleeping with many or any men/women. *“I need to find a good girl to marry”*

Good guys *adj.* men who are constructed as good because they fit into desires as potential partners. *“I wish I could find a good guy to love me back”*

Grind(ing) *v.* a seductive movement of rubbing one’s body against another to create sexual intensity, excitement and allurements. *“She was grinding on me at the club last night”*

Halla v. to halla means to *let me know*, when flirting it is like the phrase “call me” to arrange romantic dates. *“I gave her a halla and she came over for the night”*

Head adv. refers to the act of giving head, i.e. giving a blow job (oral sex). *“You give great head”*

Heteroguy adj. to describe a man who identifies as heterosexual. *“He has a girlfriend, so he is a heteroguy”*

Hit it off v. people who are getting along well and have potential for romantic relationships. *“You guys really seem to be hitting it off”*

Hitting it raw adv. having unprotected sex. *“She likes it when I hit it raw”*

Hitting it v. a term used to describe sexual intercourse. *“We were hitting it last night”*

Hitting on v. the act of flirting with someone. *“They keep hitting on me”*

Hoe adj. (derogatory) used to pass judgement on women who are sexually active. *“I know she’s slept with 4 guys, what a hoe”*

Homo adj. used to describe a homosexual. *“He is a homo”*

Hooker (derogatory) adj. a term used to describe women who have an active sexual lifestyle. *“She looks like a hooker, and behaves like one to”*

Hook-up, hooking-up, hooked-up v. an unplanned sexual interaction of kissing, oral sex or sexual intercourse, that most often happens at social events. *“I met this guy last night and we hooked-up”*

Horny n. to find sexual arousal in sexual activities. *“This person is so attractive they make me so horny”*

Hump, humping v. to have sexual intercourse. *“I opened the door and they were just humping each other”*

Hyped v. to get or be excited for or from a sexual encounter. *“I’m so hyped to see my fuck buddy tomorrow”*

Kink adv. is sex that is not charmed, i.e. any sex that deviates from penile-vaginal intercourse. *“He wanted to do anal sex and bring out sex toys, he said he loves kink”*

Lasting v. in sexual encounters maintaining sexual stamina. *"I'm concerned about lasting long during naps"*

Leg closer adj. a feature/characteristic of a man which causes a woman not to want to have sex with them. *"He was so drunk, it's such a leg closer"*

Les adj. a term used to describe a woman who has sex with other women. *"I'm a les girl"*

Lesbo adj. is used to define a lesbian subjectivity. *"My friend has these lesbo tendencies and I'm into guys"*

Long-lasting relationships adj. relationships that last long. *"I'm admiring all these long-lasting relationships"*

Main adj. a person who is considered the most important person in a relationship with someone who has concurrent partners. *"My main boyfriend is coming over tomorrow"*

Make a move v. to start flirting with someone else. *"I'm going over to her to make a move"*

Making love adv. a term used to describe sexual intercourse. *"We made love for the time"*

Making-out, make-out v. to kiss another person. *"We were making-out for like 2 hours"*

Meat adj. a term used to describe women as sexually attractive. *"I would really like her piece of meat"*

Mingle v. to casually talk to others for a potential romantic or sexual encounter. *"I am single and ready to mingle"*

Mr right adj. a man who is perceived to be good husband material. *"I wish I could find Mr right in a sea of losers"*

Mrs right adj. a woman who is perceived to be good wife material. *"She looks like she could be Mrs right"*

MVP [abbr] this means: most valuable player, used to describe a very respected person. *"That outfit makes him look like he is the real MVP"*

Nap buddy(ies) *adj.* people who have an agreed arrangement to engage in only sex and not to develop feelings for one another. *"Naps with my nap buddy is so great"*

Naps, napping *v.* planned sexual intercourse with a casual, committed partner or brief acquittance. *"My roommate was napping the whole night, I couldn't sleep"*

Naughty *v.* to describe being sexually experimental, horny or devious. *"She makes me feel naughty inside"*

Needy *adj.* a person who needs/requests to have more time, effort and attention of their partner. *"My girlfriend is becoming so needy"*

Nudes *n.* often used in the online request of people to send naked pictures of themselves. *"This guy I have been talking to asked me to please send nudes"*

On fleek *adj.* to describe something or someone who is doing something well. *"Her/his body is on fleek"*

Player *adj.* a man who often deceives women by having multiple concurrent partners purely for sex while persuading them that they have more than a sexual relationship. *"Caught him texting another girls, he is such a player"*

Relationship goals *adj.* describe elements of a relationship, particularly someone else's, that is desirable and becomes a personal goal. *"They look like relationship goals"*

Resting bitch face *adj.* describes a woman face which looks unimpressed and that hardly smiles. *"No one is interested in me because I always have my resting bitch face on"*

Salty *adj.* to be left underwhelmed and or upset about an event, comment or person. *"There's no need to feel salty"*

Scumbag *adj.* a person who is disliked and, in a sense, useless. *"He is such a scumbag for cheating on you"*

Seal clubbing *adv.* when a senior student intentionally deceives a first-year student for a casual sexual relationship because they are sexually naïve. *"I caught feelings, but you were just seal clubbing"*

Sexually autonomous *adj.* to be sexually free and be sexually involved with as many people as desired no matter their sexual orientation. *“They seem to be very sexually autonomous people”*

Shag(ing) *v.* a term used for sexual intercourse. *“My girlfriend only wants to shag over the weekend”*

Sharing *v.* used in the context to share sexual partner, concurrently or at the same time. *“I wouldn’t mind sharing those two boys”*

Side *n.* given to the person who is the concurrent partner of someone who has a more committed relationship with someone else. *“My side bae is doing so well I might make her my main bae”*

Sissy *adj.* a term used to reassure toughness by urging someone not to be feminine i.e. a sissy. *“My friend is going through a break up and is acting like such a sissy”*

Situationships *adj.* describes when people have got themselves stuck between wanting a relationship but knowing it cannot happen. *“He caught feelings for me and now we in this situationship, because I don’t want to stop having sex with him but I cant be his girlfriend”*

Skank *adj.* (derogatory) women who perceived to have had lots of sex with multiple men. *“When we go to the club she acts like even more of a skank than what she is”*

Slut *adj.* (derogatory) a slur used to pass judgement on women who are sexually active. *“I found out my girlfriend has slept with a number of guys, I don’t want to date a slut”*

Slut shaming *adj.* making women feel guilty for having a sexual life or having a perceived amount of too much sex. *“So tired of all this slut shaming can’t women just be with whoever they want?”*

Sweet *adj.* a term used to describe someone or a situation that is nice. *“I met this sweet girl/guy”*

Tell-tale sign *adv.* signs that allow men or women to clearly see that someone is sexually interested in them. *“I wish I knew what women’s tell-tale signs are for when they are interested in you”*

The D *n.* a term used for a penis. *“I am missing the D”*

Thick *adj.* used to describe a body type of a women. *“Wow, that girls is so thick, I think I’m in love with her”*

Thirsty *v.* a term used to describe someone who is horny. *“I can’t wait for him/her to come over because I am so thirsty”*

Through thick and thin (idiom). used to describe a relationship of people who have been through unhappy and happy times in their relationship but have stayed together. *“I have been with him/her through thick and thin”*

Tindr *n.* a dating website/app. *“Please can more people use tindr so we can all meet up”*

Tomboy *adj.* a woman who performs and dresses in a more masculine manner. *“I feel like I don’t attract guys because I look like a tomboy”*

Twerk, twerking *v.* a seductive dance move of someone’s bum bouncing. *“I was twerking for him the whole night and he eventually gave me his number”*

Urge *v.* often referring to sexual urges. *“I have this urge to get myself involved in a threesome”*

Vagina *n.* a female sexual organ. *“Her vagina tastes great”*

Vibe *adj.* a term used to describe an atmosphere between people or within a building, often a night club or social gathering. *“We were vibing so nicely we ended up going hom together”*

Wet *n.* arousal fluid of men or women. *“He/she made me so wet”*

Whore *adj.* (derogatory) a woman who is described as having an active sexual lifestyle. *“I found out my roommate was a whore in first year, she slept with at least 10 people”*

Yolo [abbr] stands for: you only live once, and it implies living in the moment. *“Lost my virginity last night, YOLO”*

APPENDIX 7 WORD FREQUENCY

Colloquial term	Frequency
Date, dating, dated	617
Naps, napping	562
Gay	387
Hook-up, hooking-up, hooked-up	218
Bae	208
Crush	164
Bro	129
Fuckboy	107
Side	97
Nap buddy(ies)	73
Friendzone	72
Chicks	71
AF	55
Boo	56
Dump, dumped	56
Hoe	56
Thirsty	51

Colloquial term	Frequency
Bitch	47
Main	39
Vibe	38
Good guys	36
Catching feelings, caught feels, feels	33
Slut	33
The D	33
Making-out, make-out	32
Sweet	30
Fuck, fucking, fucked, f*uck	28
Ditch	28
Dick	25
Player	24
Twerk, twerking	23
Gay naps	21
Hitting on	21
Thick	20
Shag (ing)	19
Booty	19
Blesser	18
Kink	17

Colloquial term	Frequency
Slut shaming	15
Nudes	14
Fresh	13
Closeted	12
Bro code	12
Clit	12
Flame	12
Horny	12
Salty	12
Cuddle buddy('s)	11
Good girls	11
Seal clubbing	11
Blow job	10
Homo	10
Sharing	10
Bat	10
Relationship goals	9
Needy	9
Urge	9
Whore	9
Fuckgirl	8

Colloquial term	Frequency
Fling	8
Grind(ing)	8
Resting bitch face	8
On fleek	7
Head	7
Long lasting relationships	7
Les	7
Mingle	7
Becky	6
Boner	6
Eye candy	6
Bimbo	6
Hit it off	6
Hitting it	6
Halla	6
Making love	6
Yolo	6
Scumbag	5
Coitus	4
Femme	4
Hooker	4

Colloquial term	Frequency
Meat	4
Mr right	4
Naughty	4
Skank	4
Wet	4
Bedding	3
Butch	3
Coochie	3
Cougar	3
Basic bitch	3
Hitting it raw	3
Hump, humping	3
Lesbo	3
Make a move	3
Tindr	3
Tomboy	3
Fuck buddy(ies)	3
Situationships	3
Hyped	3
Boyfie	2
Through thick and thin	2

Colloquial term	Frequency
Dilf	2
Mrs right	2
MVP	2
Sissy	2
Dabbing	1
Fit boy	1
Ghosted	1
Heteroguy	1
Dong	1
Lasting	1
Dry humping	1
Leg closer	1
Sexually autonomous	1
Tell-tale sign	1
Stud	1

APPENDIX 8 SEXUAL PRACTICES WORD FREQUENCY

Sexual practices	Frequency
Date, dating, dated	617
Naps, napping	562
Hook-up, hooking-up, hooked-up	218
Kiss, kissing	115
Nap Buddy(ies)	73
Dump, dumped	56
Making-out, make-out	32
Ditch	28
Twerk, twerking	23
Gay naps	21
Hitting on	21
Shag (ing)	19
Kink	17
Fuck, fucking, fucked, f*uck	14
Nudes	14
Bro code	12
Seal clubbing	11

Sexual practices	Frequency
Blow job	10
Sharing	10
Bat	10
Fling	8
Grind(ing)	8
Head	7
Mingle	7
Long lasting relationships	7
Making love	6
Hitting it	6
Hit it off	6
Halla	6
Yolo	6
Coitus	4
Fuck buddy(ies)	3
Hitting it raw	3
Bedding	3
Hump, humping	3
Make a move	3
Situationships	3
Tindr	3

Sexual practices	Frequency
Lasting	1
Dry humping	1
Dabbing	1
Ghosed	1

APPENDIX 9 SEXUAL SUBJECTIVITIES WORD FREQUENCY

Sexual subjectivities	Frequency
Gay	387
Bae	208
Bro	129
Fuckboy	107
Side	97
Chicks	71
Hoe	56
Boo	56
Side Chick	55
Bitch	47
Main	39
Good guys	36
Slut	33
Sweet	30
Dick	25
Player	24
Sweet Guy	22

Sexual subjectivities	Frequency
Main Chick	20
Thick	20
Blesser	18
Slut shaming	15
Fresh	13
Closeted	12
Side Guy	12
Clingy	12
Salty	12
Cuddle buddy('s)	11
Good girls	11
Homo	10
Whore	9
Needy	9
Main Guy	8
Fuckgirl	8
Resting bitch face	8
Side dish	7
On fleek	7
Les	7
Side Girl	6

Sexual subjectivities	Frequency
Bimbo	6
Becky	6
<i>Main (only)</i>	5
Scumbag	5
Side piece	4
Hooker	4
Skank	4
Meat	4
Mr right	4
Femme	4
Side boyfriend	3
Side bae	3
Main boyfriend	3
Cougar	3
Basic bitch	3
Sweet girl	3
Lesbo	3
Tomboy	3
Butch	3
Boyfie	2
Side D	2

Sexual subjectivities	Frequency
Side nigga	2
Dilf	2
Sweet talk	2
Sweet things	2
Mrs right	2
MVP	2
Sissy	2
Side bitch	1
Side hoe	1
Side plate	1
Main woman	1
Main girlfriend	1
Main D	1
Leg closer	1
Sweet boyfriend	1
Stud	1
Heteroguy	1

APPENDIX 10 SEXUAL DESIRES WORD FREQUENCY

Sexual desires	Frequency
Crush	164
Friendzone	70
Thirsty	51
Vibe	38
Catching feelings, caught feels, feels	33
The D	33
Booty	19
Flame	12
Horny	12
Relationship goals	9
Urge	9
Boner	6
Eye candy	6
Wet	4
Naughty	4
Hyped	3
Through thick and thin	2

Sexual desires	Frequency
Tell-tale sign	1
