



Department of Sociology
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DISSERTATION DEFENSE

Acquiescence at Sexual Debut and Sexual Function in Older Adults

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ABSTRACT: This dissertation, which is organized into three individual papers, utilizes data from the National Social Life, Health, and Aging Project (NSHAP) to identify the relationship between acquiescence – or participation in sex without concomitant desire – at sexual debut and dysfunction in older adults’ sexual relationships . Paper one examines the effects of early sexual acquiescence on both physical and emotional sexual satisfaction in older adulthood. Paper two then explores whether acquiescence at sexual debut impacts the risk of experiencing sexual problems in older adulthood. Finally, paper three discusses the impact of acquiescence at sexual debut on older adults’ non-partnered sexual behavior; more specifically, prevalence of masturbation. All three papers include analysis and discussion of the moderating effects of gender. The dissertation presents one of the first population-based studies of first-sex acquiescence’s potential impacts on late-life sexual quality and sexual function, bringing attention to the role of early sexual history in long-term sexual well-being, as well as the role of gendered sociocultural influences on experiences of sexual desire and pleasure.

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Zoom option: <https://msu.zoom.us/j/99989821193>

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