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Enjoyment and Emotionally Negative Reactions in Minor–Adult Versus Minor–Peer and Adult–Adult First Postpubescent Coitus: A Secondary Analysis of the Kinsey Data

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Abstract Using the original Kinsey sample, enjoyment and emotionally negative reactions to first postpubescent coitus were examined in relation to whether the coitus occurred as a legal minor (aged under 18) with an adult (5 or more years older), a minor with a peer (within 4 years of age), or an adult with an adult (both 18 or older). These responses were further examined in subdivisions of the minor–adult and adult–adult categories. Given widely held professional and lay assumptions that minor–adult sex is intrinsically traumatic or aversive, tested was whether reactions to minor–adult coitus were characteristically negative, irrespective of gender, and distinctly more negative than minor–peer and adult–adult coitus. In general: minors with adults enjoyed the event as much as minors with peers or adults with adults; boys (i.e., male minors) enjoyed it substantially more than girls, irrespective of partner age; and minors with adults did not have more emotionally negative reactions than the other groups. Younger boys (14 and under) with women (mean ages: 13.37 and 24.27, respectively; mean age difference: 10.90 years), compared to men with peer-aged women (mean ages: 21.76 and 21.58, respectively; mean age difference: 0.18 years), enjoyed the coitus a great deal (the top scale value) significantly more often (63 % vs. 44 %) and had emotionally negative reactions no more often (15 % vs. 12 %). Younger girls (14 and under) with men (mean ages: 13.19 and 26.42, respectively; mean age difference: 13.23 years), compared to women with peer-aged men (mean ages: 22.38 and 23.78, respectively; mean age difference: 1.41 years), enjoyed the coitus a great deal at the same rate (17 % vs. 18 %) and had emotionally negative reactions no more often (18 % vs. 16 %). Assumptions of characteristic trauma or aversiveness in minor–adult first coitus, as well as gender equivalence in response, were contradicted.

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Introduction

In our culture, first coitus is a landmark event, one of "immense social and personal significance" (Hawes, Wellings, & Stephenson, 2010, p. 137), which "has a special power to shape future sexual and nonsexual adjustment" (Laumann, Gagnon, Michael, & Michaels, 1994, p. 321). As such, understanding its subjective meaning for the debuting actors involved is an important research area. Yet, though many studies on first coitus have been conducted, the focus has been almost exclusively on other issues, particularly age of debut, associated risks, and means of intervention (for a literature review, see Hawes et al., 2010). With few exceptions, examining positive aspects of the event from the actors' perspective has been absent from the literature. One study did examine degree of enjoyment, but only concerning the most recent coital experience, not the first one (Wight et al., 2008). Likewise, examining negative reactions at the time has been infrequent. The present study examined enjoyment as well as negative responses to first postpubescent coitus using the original Kinsey sample, where this information was systematically recorded by the interviewers (Albright, 2006).[1]

[1] Notably, the Laumann et al. (1994) interviews would be an excellent alternative or addition to the Kinsey interviews as a source for examining reactions to first postpubescent coitus. Their data are about a half century more recent and were based on a nationally representative sample. Generally speaking, the Laumann et al. study is considered to be an improved, updated version of the Kinsey research. Nevertheless, consistent with most research on first postpubescent coitus, it did not collect reaction data on this experience.

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First postpubescent coitus in the time of Kinsey often occurred when the actor was still a legal minor (i.e., under the age of 18); since then, it has increasingly occurred during this stage (Hawes et al., 2010; Laumann et al., 1994). Sometimes the minor's partner is peer-aged, other times significantly older. The latter situation, age-discordant first coitus between a postpubescent minor and an adult, is also a "landmark" event from the perspective of the contemporary West, as it is generally defined sociolegally as "child sexual abuse" (CSA), which imbues it with the negative properties that are assumed to characterize all CSA (cf. Rind, Tromovitch, & Bauserman, 1998, 2001).

For more than three decades, CSA has been characterized by sexual victimologists and others in the mental health field as intrinsically traumatic and damaging, especially when intercourse is involved; once articulated, this view quickly permeated popular thinking (Clancy, 2009; Jenkins, 1998, 2006; Malón, 2010, 2011a, 2011b). By "trauma" is meant intensely negative emotional reactions, similar to those experienced in response to severe threats to life (e.g., natural disasters, war) (Clancy, 2009; Rind et al., 2001). Typical articulations of this view have asserted that trauma and harm apply equally to female and male minors and to events as diverse as forced sex between fathers and prepubescent daughters and willing sexual relations between adults and adolescents (Rind et al., 1998, 2001). The Kinsey data on first coitus provide an opportunity to test the universal nature of this view with respect to reactions at the time.[2]

The Kinsey interviewers recorded the age at which participants had first postpubescent coitus (i.e., first coitus occurring anytime after the onset of puberty), the age of their first partner, and their reactions (i.e., degree of enjoyment; negative responses). Using participant–partner ages in the first coitus, participants could be categorized as minors with peers, minors with adults, or adults with adults. Thus, reactions in the minor–adult group could be assessed alone and in comparison with the other two groups. In the first approach, absence of enjoyment and considerable negative response would be expected from present-day assumptions. In the second, substantially lower reports of enjoyment and higher reports of negative response would be expected compared to the other groups. Notably, this comparative approach, rarely available in CSA research owing to lack of appropriate comparison groups, significantly improves interpretation of the reaction results.

Another common assumption is that trauma and harm are increasingly pronounced the younger and the more immature the minor is in minor–adult sexual relations (Rind et al., 1998). In the present study, under this assumption, pubescent minors (i.e., those from the onset of puberty up to, but not including, full sexual development) would be expected to show the least degree of positive response and greatest degree of negative response to first coitus. In our society, completed sexual maturity in both sexes is generally obtained by age 15 (Blanchard et al., 2009), meaning that pubescence generally lasts through age 14. In the present study, therefore, the minor–adult first coitus groups were subdivided into pubescent minors (aged 14 and under) with adults and older adolescents (aged 15–17) with adults. Different age cuts could have been made, such as those based on age-of-consent laws (e.g., from 16 to 18 in the U.S., but mainly 14 or 15 in contemporary Europe, and, before the twentieth century, usually 12; see Graupner, 2000). Ages of consent are sociolegal, arbitrary, and variable. As such, the more consistent biological cut based on sexual maturity was used in the present study. In parallel subdivisions, the adult–adult first coitus groups were divided into younger with older adults, peer-aged adults, and older with younger adults.

It is important to consider the value of the Kinsey sample in testing the view of intrinsic trauma in minor–adult sex. First, this sample is huge in size: excluding delinquent (e.g., prison) participants, who were not included in the present analyses, the sample contained nearly 13,000 participants. Second, these participants were tapped from diverse non-clinical, non-forensic populations. With respect to external validity, this sampling improves significantly over clinical and forensic samples, from which claims of intrinsic trauma and harm in minor–adult sex have been empirically argued (cf. Rind et al., 1998, 2001). Third, these participants came from a different time period and cultural milieu. This furthers extends diversity and adds importantly to critically testing victimological assumptions, which are universal in nature (i.e., place and time do not matter; CSA has essential properties). Fourth, the data were collected in face-to-face interviews conducted by researchers from multiple scientific disciplines, who were trained to elicit sexual histories, regardless of their nature, nonjudgmentally and to detect and minimize participants' under- and overstatement regarding sexual events (Gebhard & Johnson, 1979).[3]

The Kinsey sample has long been criticized as non-representative, with over-inclusion of various groups known to be biased with respect to the general population. In response to such concerns, Gebhard and Johnson (1979) "cleaned" the sample by removing known biases to produce what they called the "basic sample." Their analyses of this sample resulted in

[2] In sexual victimological theory, as it developed in the late 1970s and early 1980s, traumatic reactions at the time and long-term harmful effects were viewed as tightly and causally connected, in that the latter were held as likely or inevitable consequences of the former; and since harm was universally assumed in this theory, trauma was assumed to be necessarily pervasive as well (Clancy, 2009; Jenkins, 1998; Nathan & Snedeker, 1995). Hence, examining whether trauma is pervasive, common, or only occasional in adult–adolescent sex, as in the present study, has important implications for sexual victimological theory.

[3] Most of the interviews (93% for males, 99% for females) were conducted by four researchers from diverse disciplines (biology, psychology, anthropology). For male and female participants, respectively, these four were: Kinsey (*ns* = 3,000 and 2,231); Pomeroy (*ns* = 1,943 and 2,691); Martin (*ns* = 574 and 579); and Gebhard (*ns* = 663 and 802).

findings matching well those from the original sample, disputing claims of important bias in the original sample. This aside, representativeness was not a requirement for achieving the present study's goals. Any relevant empirical data coming from non-clinical, non-forensic samples—whether from the present or the past—are useful for testing universal assumptions based on clinical-forensic samples. The Kinsey data, owing to their many advantages as just outlined, are especially valuable in this regard.

In short, it was the purpose of the present study to examine prevailing universal assumptions about minor–adult sex by focusing on one type, postpubescent minor–adult first coitus. The original Kinsey sample, excluding delinquent participants, provided a strong means for testing assumptions about trauma (or characteristic aversiveness). If postpubescent minor–adult first coitus is akin to life-threatening events, which follows from sexual victimological discourse, then enjoyment should be absent or rare and negative response prevalent for both male and female minors. Further, this pattern should be more pronounced among pubescent, as opposed to older, adolescents. If, on the other hand, postpubescent minor–adult first coitus is not unlike other forms of first coitus (e.g., between minors or between adults), enjoyment should be more common, negative response should not be prevalent, and the overall pattern of positive and negative reactions should be similar to those in the age-concordant forms. Finally, if minor–adult sex elicits the same responses regardless of gender, as CSA researchers have often asserted (Rind et al., 1998, 2001), then male and female reactions (e.g., degree of enjoyment) to postpubescent minor–adult first coitus should be equivalent.

Method

Participants

The original Kinsey sample, exclusive of delinquent participants, was used. It consisted of 6,621 males and 6,337 females who were interviewed between 1938 and 1953. Demographics in the original sample can be gleaned from a number of sources, including: Kinsey, Pomeroy, and Martin (1948), Kinsey, Pomeroy, Martin, and Gebhard (1953), and Gebhard and Johnson (1979). Several pertinent characteristics of this sample are reviewed next.

The mean ages at puberty for males and females, respectively, were 12.91 ($SD = 1.26$) and 12.52 ($SD = 1.28$). The mean ages of participants at time of interview were 28.10 ($SD = 11.25$) for males and 28.46 ($SD = 11.14$) for females. With respect to religious beliefs held at time of interview, most participants were Protestant (males = 67 %; females = 63 %), Jewish (males = 18 %; females = 25 %), or Catholic (males = 12 %; females = 11 %). With respect to race, most participants were White (males = 92 %; females = 91 %) or Black (males = 7 %; females = 8 %). Participants still in school at time of interview were 53 % for males and 41 % for females.

Measures

The Kinsey interview schedule is described in a number of sources (e.g., Albright, 2006; Gebhard & Johnson, 1979; Kinsey et al., 1948, 1953). Albright's (2006) edited work, entitled *The Kinsey Interview Kit: Code Book*, contains the complete set of questions and their response/coding options. The key measures used in the current study are as follows:

Enjoyment

Participants, who had had coitus, were asked whether they enjoyed their first coitus, with these response options: 1 = *no*; 2 = *little*; 3 = *some*; 4 = *much*.

Emotionally Negative Reactions

Participants were also asked the main reason for why they did not enjoy their first coitus, if they had any such reasons. For males, 35 specific reasons were coded (Albright, 2006, pp. 99–100) and, for females, the number was 37 (Albright, 2006, p. 90). Reasons included problems that the participant or partner may have had, such as incompetence (e.g., male impotent), physical (e.g., painful), psychological (e.g., disgusted), and alcohol (e.g., male drunk).

For present purposes, it was of interest to determine whether participants did not enjoy their first coitus for emotionally negative reasons, which are often assumed, in both lay and professional discussions, to dominate minors' reactions to sexual events with older persons. Participants were coded as not enjoying their first coitus for emotionally negative reasons if they endorsed, or the interviewer recorded, any one of the following options: (1) *painful and embarrassed* (frightened, scared, upset, nervous, uneasy, shocked); (2) *painful and shame* (guilt, regret); (3) *embarrassed* (frightened, scared, upset, nervous, uneasy, shocked); (4) *disgusted* (revolted, offended); (5) *moral* (inhibited, conflict); or (6) *shame* (regret, guilt).[4] For females, one additional option was: *pain plus moral* (inhibit, conflict). If any of these applied, a participant was given a "1" for emotionally negative reactions, otherwise a "0."

[4] The wording for several items differed in minor ways in presentation to male versus female participants. For male participants, "emotional" was added to the list of descriptors for *painful and embarrassed* and for *embarrassed*; "annoyed" was added to the list of descriptors for *disgusted*; and "conscience" was added to the list of descriptors for *moral*.

Participant–Partner Relative Age Categories

Participants were asked their age and their partner's age at their first postpubescent coitus. From their age differences, three main participant–partner relative age categories were constructed[5]: (1) *Minor–peer*: participant was under 18 and partner's age was within 4 years; (2) *Minor–adult*: participant was under 18 and partner was at least 5 years older[6]; (3) *Adult–adult*: participant and partner were both at least 18 years old.

In addition to these three main divisions, we subdivided the minor–adult and adult–adult categories into 5 subcategories, as follows: (1) *Minor (14 and under)–adult*: participant was 14 or under and partner was at least 5 years older[7]; (2) *Minor (15–17)–adult*: participant was 15–17 and partner was at least 5 years older; (3) *Adult–younger adult*: both participant and partner were adults (at least 18) and participant was at least 5 years older than partner; (4) *Adult–peer adult*: both participant and partner were adults (at least 18), and partner was within 4 years of participant's age; (5) *Adult–older adult*: both participant and partner were adults (at least 18), and participant was at least 5 years younger than partner.

Procedure

After selecting relevant variables from *The Kinsey Interview Kit: Code Book* (Albright, 2006) and then designing analyses to address the issues discussed above, we wrote the SPSS code needed to conduct these analyses. Next, we obtained permission from the Kinsey Institute for running the study, and then submitted the code to the institute's programmer, who then ran it.

Statistical Analyses

In the statistical analyses that follow, two main types of significance tests were performed. In one, mean reactions between pairs of different participant–partner age groups were compared via planned contrasts (*t* tests). For these contrasts, correlation effect sizes (*r*s) were also computed to assess the size of the difference in the mean reactions. Following Cohen (1988), these effect sizes were interpreted as small, medium, and large with *r*s = .10, .30, and .50, respectively. In the other main set of analyses, proportions of participants with positive (or negative) reactions were compared across multiple groups via Chi square tests. Post-hoc pairwise contrasts were then performed via a Marascuilo procedure to determine which proportions were statistically significantly different from each other (Marascuilo, 1966). In the tables presenting these proportions, groups sharing the same letter did not differ significantly in their proportions. Conversely, if two groups did not share the same letter, then they had significantly different proportions.[8] In most analyses, statistical significance was assessed at the .01 level (for *t* tests, these were two-tailed) and, in the text to follow, statistically significant differences are simply referred to as "significant." Correlation tests were assessed at the .05 level, two-tailed.

Analyses were done in two stages. First, comparisons were made among the three basic groups (minor–minor, minor–adult, and adult–adult). In the literature and in the public eye, these groups have often been treated as uniform; thus, the gross results coming from them will be informative regarding general perceptions. Second, comparisons were made among the finer-graded groups, including the five subcategories of the minor–adult and adult–adult groups. These finer-graded analyses permitted examination of assumptions of greater trauma for younger and more immature adolescents involved in minor–adult first coitus.

Although the focus in these analyses is minor–adult reactions by themselves and in comparison with minor–peer and adult–adult reactions, other comparisons are presented to round out the general picture of gender differences and age-discordancy in first coitus (e.g., differences between male and female reactions in general or between various adult subcategories are presented). This general picture can help to provide context and meaning for interpreting the minor–adult results.

Results

The number of participants in each of the three basic participant–partner relative age categories was quite large compared to most other studies, especially those examining minor–adult sex. For males and females combined, the numbers in the minor–peer, minor–adult, and adult–adult categories were, respectively, *n*s = 1,560, 834, and 5,444. An additional 4,318 participants had had no first coitus and were not analyzed in the

[5] Two other participant–partner relative age groupings, not considered in the present analysis, were minor–younger minor first coitus (participant was under 18 and partner was 5 or more years younger) and adult–minor first coitus (participant was at least 18 and partner was 17 or younger and at least 5 years younger than the participant). In practice, these categories numbered relatively few cases.

[6] Technically, the *minor–adult* category is more precisely a *minor–older person* category, because, if the minor was less than 13, the older partner could have been a minor as well. In practice, more than 99% of older partners were adults aged 18 or above, justifying the "minor–adult" label.

[7] "Adult" rather than "older person" as partner was justified, because almost all older partners were adults aged 18 or above: 97.66% for boys 14 and under and 97.10% for girls 14 and under.

[8] For example, if 6 groups are listed vertically in a table, and across from them are the letters A, A, BC, BC, B, and C for groups 1–6, respectively, then: groups 1 and 2 are statistically the same (with common letter "A"), but different from groups 3–6 (which do not have "A"); groups 3, 4, and 5 are statistically the same (all have "B"); groups 3 and 4 are the same as 6 (all have "C"), but group 5 and 6 are different (they do not have a common letter).

present study. In the tables that follow, which accompany the analyses, results are presented separately for male and female participants. In the text, the results for between-gender comparisons are detailed.

Enjoyment of First Coitus

Mean Enjoyment (3 Basic Participant–Partner Age Categories)

Table 1, for each gender, shows the mean enjoyment in each participant–partner relative age category, the number of participants in each category, planned contrast statistics for significance tests between enjoyment means in the different categories pairwise, and correlation effect sizes between all category pairs. Notably, in the minor–adult groups, the chief focus here, the mean age of first postpubescent coitus for boys was 15.56 ($SD = 1.41$), the mean age of their female partners was 24.99 ($SD = 3.38$), and the mean age difference was 9.44 years ($SD = 3.51$). The mean age for girls with men was 15.51 ($SD = 1.49$), the mean age of their male partners was 26.36 ($SD = 6.76$), and the mean age difference was 10.85 years ($SD = 6.83$).

For males, mean enjoyment was significantly greater in the minor–peer group than in the other two groups (with small-to-medium effect sizes of difference). The minor–adult and adult–adult enjoyment means were not significantly different (with a near-zero effect size of difference).

For females, enjoyment was greatest in the adult–adult group although it was only slightly greater than in the other two groups (effect sizes of difference were very small). The minor–adult and minor–peer means were not significantly different (with a near-zero effect size of difference).

Between-gender contrasts were performed. On average, males enjoyed their first coitus significantly more than females did, $t(7832) = 30.02$, $p < .0001$, with a medium effect size, $r = .32$. In the minor–peer groups, boys enjoyed their first coitus significantly more than girls, $t(1558) = 23.00$, $p < .0001$, with a large effect size, $r = .50$. Likewise, boys having first coitus with women enjoyed the event significantly more than girls having first coitus with men, $t(832) = 12.09$, $p < .0001$, with a medium-large effect size, $r = .39$. Finally, adult men having first coitus with women enjoyed the event significantly more than adult women having their first coitus with men, $t(5442) = 26.15$, $p < .0001$, with a medium effect size, $r = .33$.

"Much" Enjoyment (3 Basic Participant–Partner Age Categories)

A clear indicator of enjoyment was the "much" response option in how much a participant enjoyed his or her first coitus. This response, the top scale-value, serves as a conservative measure of positive reaction. The proportions of individuals answering "much" in the three categories, by gender, were compared (see Table 2). For readability, enjoying coitus "much" is described below as enjoying coitus "a great deal."

For males, 60 % of boys having first coitus with girls enjoyed the event a great deal. This proportion was significantly greater than boys with women (41 %) and men with women (41 %).

For females, only 18 % of women enjoyed their first coitus with men a great deal. This proportion was higher, but not significantly higher, than the 13 % of girls having their first coitus with men (although it was significantly higher than the 12 % of girls having their first coitus with boys).

Between-gender contrasts were performed next. Males enjoyed a great deal their first coitus significantly more than females did, $\chi^2(1,\ n = 7{,}838) = 742.06$, $p < .0001$, with a medium effect size, $r = .31$. Boys with girls enjoyed a great deal their first coitus significantly more than girls with boys did, $\chi^2(1,\ n = 1{,}560) = 297.16$, $p < .0001$, with a medium-large effect size, $r = .44$. Likewise, boys with women enjoyed

Table 1 Mean enjoyment of first postpubertal coitus in original Kinsey sample, by 3 basic participant–partner age groupings; analyses done separately by gender

		Males			Females		
		Minor–peer	Minor–adult	Adult–adult	Minor–peer	Minor–adult	Adult–adult
M		3.16	2.66	2.68	1.63	1.61	1.83
SD		1.15	1.29	1.25	1.07	1.11	1.18
n		1,105	548	2,546	455	286	2,898
t	Minor–peer		7.74**	10.80**		0.21	−3.52*
	Minor–adult			−0.33			−3.11*
r	Minor–peer		0.19	0.18		0.01	−0.06
	Minor–adult			−0.01			−0.06

Note Enjoyment measured from 1 = *no* to 4 = *much*. Significance values (*t*s) and effect sizes (*r*s) are positive if row group has higher mean than corresponding column group, and negative if column group has higher mean

** $p < .0001$, two-tailed, * $p < .01$, two-tailed

Table 2 Percent indicating "much" enjoyment to first postpubertal coitus in original Kinsey sample, by 3 basic participant–partner age groupings; analyses done separately by gender

	Males			Females		
	Enjoy much (%)	*N*	Pairwise contrasts	Enjoy much (%)	*N*	Pairwise contrasts
Minor–peer	60	1,105	A	12	455	B
Minor–adult	41	548	B	13	286	AB
Adult–adult	41	2,546	B	18	2,898	A
Total	46	4,199		17	3,639	

Note For males, $\chi^2(2) = 122.56$, $p < .0001$. For females, $\chi^2(2) = 12.59$, $p < .01$. For each analysis (i.e., within gender), proportions without common letters (in pairwise contrasts column) are significantly different in pairwise contrasts (Marascuilo procedure)

a great deal their first coitus significantly more than girls with men did, $\chi^2(1, n = 834) = 68.63$, $p < .0001$, with a medium effect size, $r = .29$. Finally, men with women enjoyed a great deal their first coitus significantly more than women with men did, $\chi^2(1, n = 5{,}444) = 337.62$, $p < .0001$, with a medium effect size, $r = .25$.

In sum, trauma assumptions regarding age-discordant sex involving minors were contradicted. Enjoyment in these relations was far from absent, on the one hand, and not inferior to enjoyment in age-concordant relations, on the other. The assumption of equivalence in male and female reactions in minor–adult sex was contradicted. Males in all category comparisons enjoyed their first coitus substantially more than females did.

Mean Enjoyment (6 Participant–Partner Age Subcategories)

Next, we examined mean enjoyment using more finely-graded participant–partner relative age divisions. Table 3 shows the results of this analysis for males. Most boys in the 14-and-under-with-women group were aged 13 or 14 (88 %) while only a small minority was aged 10–12 (12 %). In this group, the mean age of the boys was 13.37 ($SD = 0.85$), the mean age of their females partners was 24.27 ($SD = 4.86$), and the mean age difference between them was 10.90 years ($SD = 4.91$). The corresponding means for boys 15–17 with women were, respectively, 16.18 ($SD = 0.78$), 25.20 ($SD = 2.80$), and 9.02 ($SD = 2.88$). Boys aged 14 and under with women, along with boys with peer-aged girls, had the highest mean enjoyment, significantly higher than all remaining groups. Specifically and importantly, boys aged 14 and under with women had a significantly higher enjoyment mean than all three adult–adult subcategories.

Table 4 shows the results of this analysis for females. Most girls in the 14-and-under-with-men group were aged 13 or 14 (78 %), with a minority aged 11 or 12 (22 %). In this group, the mean age of the girls was 13.19 ($SD = 0.88$), the mean age of the men was 26.42 ($SD = 9.45$), and the mean age difference between them was 13.23 years ($SD = 9.39$). The corresponding means for girls 15–17 with men were, respectively, 16.91 ($SD = 0.76$), 26.34 ($SD = 5.76$), and 10.15 ($SD = 5.70$). Notably, mean enjoyment in the girls-aged-14-and-under-with-men subcategory did not differ significantly from any other group. The effect size assessing the magnitude of difference between this group and women with peer-aged men was nearly zero.

"Much" Enjoyment (6 Participant–Partner Age Subcategories)

Again, we analyzed a conservative measure of positive reaction—the "much" enjoyment response—but this time using six participant–partner relative age subcategories. Table 5 shows the results.

For males, boys aged 14 and under with women nominally had the highest percent of enjoying first coitus a great deal (63 %). Statistically, they were equal to the minor–peer (boys with girls) group and both these groups were significantly higher than all other male-with-female subcategories. Notably, only 44 % of men with peer-aged women enjoyed their first coitus a great deal. For females, girls aged 14 and under with men were statistically inferior to no other group. Their percentage of enjoying first coitus a great deal (17 %) was at virtual parity with women with peer-aged men (18 %).

Between-gender contrasts were performed for the subcategories. Boys aged 14 and under with women enjoyed a great deal their first coitus significantly more than girls aged 14 and under with men did, $\chi^2(1, n = 179) = 742.06$, $p < .0001$, with a medium-large effect size, $r = .44$. Likewise, teenage males from 15 to 17 enjoyed a great deal their first coitus with women significantly more than teenage girls of this age did with men, $\chi^2(1, n = 655) = 40.76$, $p < .0001$, with a medium effect size, $r = .25$. Men with younger adult women and women with younger adult men did not differ in percent of enjoying the coitus a great deal, $\chi^2(1, n = 149) < 1$, with a small effect size, $r = .07$. But men with peer-aged women did enjoy a great deal their first coitus significantly more than women with peer-aged men, $\chi^2(1, n = 3{,}727) = 277.97$, $p < .0001$, with a medium effect size, $r = .27$, and men with older women enjoyed a great deal their first coitus significantly more than women with older men, $\chi^2(1, n = 1{,}568) = 47.07$, $p < .0001$, with a small-medium effect size, $r = .17$.

Table 3 Males' mean enjoyment of first postpubertal coitus in original Kinsey sample, by 6 finer-graded participant–partner age groupings

		Minor–peer	Minor (≤14)–adult	Minor (15–17)–adult	Adult–younger adult	Adult–peer adult	Adult–older adult
M		3.16	3.16	2.53	2.62	2.77	2.41
SD		1.15	1.22	1.28	1.23	1.24	1.27
n		1,105	116	432	114	1,855	577
t	Minor–peer		−0.03	9.08**	4.47**	8.39**	11.87**
	Minor (≤14)–adult			4.95**	3.35*	3.36*	6.02**
	Minor (15–17)–adult				−0.72	−3.68*	1.49
	Adult–younger adult					−1.25	1.66
	Adult–peer adult						6.11**
r	Minor–peer		0	0.23	0.13	0.15	0.28
	Minor (≤14)–adult			0.21	0.22	0.08	0.22
	Minor (15–17)–adult				−0.03	−0.08	0.05
	Adult–younger adult					−0.03	0.06
	Adult–peer adult						0.12

Note Enjoyment measured from 1 = *no* to 4 = *much*. Significance values (*t*s) and effect sizes (*r*s) are positive if row group has higher mean than corresponding column group, and negative if mean in column group is higher. In the minor (≤14)–adult subcategory, most boys were aged 13–14 ($n = 102$), with a small minority aged 10–12 ($n = 14$)

** $p < .0001$, two-tailed, * $p < .001$, two-tailed

Table 4 Females' mean enjoyment of first postpubertal coitus in original Kinsey sample, by 6 finer-graded participant–partner age groupings

		Minor–peer	Minor (≤14)–adult	Minor (15–17)–adult	Adult–younger adult	Adult–peer adult	Adult–older adult
M		1.63	1.76	1.57	2.23	1.84	1.81
SD		1.07	1.20	1.08	1.31	1.19	1.17
n		455	63	223	35	1,872	991
t	Minor–peer		−0.87	0.65	−2.95**	−3.49***	−2.76**
	Minor (≤14)–adult			1.19	−1.9	−0.51	−0.31
	Minor (15–17)–adult				−3.14**	−3.32***	−2.82**
	Adult–younger adult					1.97*	2.10*
	Adult–peer adult						0.65
r	Minor–peer		−0.04	0.02	−0.13	−0.07	−0.07
	Minor (≤14)–adult			0.07	−0.19	−0.01	−0.01
	Minor (15–17)–adult				−0.19	−0.07	−0.08
	Adult–younger adult					0.05	0.07
	Adult–peer adult						0.01

Note Enjoyment measured from 1 = *no* to 4 = *much*. Significance values (*t*s) and effect sizes (*r*s) are positive if row group has higher mean than corresponding column group, and negative if mean in column group is higher. In the minor (≤14)–adult subcategory, most girls were aged 13–14 ($n = 49$), with a minority aged 11–12 ($n = 14$)

*** $p < .001$, two-tailed, ** $p < .01$, two-tailed, * $p < .05$, two-tailed

Table 5 Percent indicating "much" enjoyment to first postpubertal coitus in original Kinsey sample, by 6 finer-graded participant–partner age groupings; analyses done separately by gender

	Males			Females		
	Enjoy much (%)	*N*	Pairwise contrasts	Enjoy much (%)	*N*	Pairwise contrasts
Minor–peer	60	1,105	A	12	455	A
Minor (≤14)–adult	63	116	A	17	63	AB
Minor (15–17)–adult	36	432	BC	12	223	AB
Adult–younger adult	36	114	BC	29	35	AB
Adult–peer adult	44	1,855	B	18	1,872	B
Adult–older adult	33	577	C	17	991	AB
Total	46	4,199		17	3,639	

Note For males, $\chi^2(5) = 172.40$, $p < .0001$. For females, $\chi^2(5) = 16.65$, $p < .01$. For each analysis (i.e., within gender), proportions without common letters (in "pairwise contrasts" column) are significantly different in pairwise contrasts (Marascuilo procedure)

In sum, these analyses permitted examination of the assumption that younger minors aged 14 and under having coitus with adults would react differently (i.e., in a more negative direction) compared to older minors with adults and to minors with peers or adults with adults. This assumption was contradicted for both sexes, especially for males, whose reactions were strikingly more positive than most other comparison groups. Additionally, the assumption of equivalence in reactions of male and female younger minors involved with adults was contradicted.

Enjoyment in Relation to Age Difference Within the Minor–Adult Groups

We examined whether greater age difference might be associated with decreasing enjoyment in a linear fashion in the minor–adult groups. With *p*s > .10 in two-tailed tests, no significant associations occurred: boys aged 14 and under with women, $r(114) = -.08$; boys aged 15–17 with women, $r(430) = .07$; girls 14 and under with men, $r(61) = -.18$; and girls 15–17 with men, $r(222) = -.01$.

Not Enjoying First Coitus for Emotionally Negative Reasons

A staple of current cultural and professional assumptions regarding age-discordant sex involving minors is that negative emotional reactions are characteristic. We first analyzed this assumption, by gender, for the three basic participant–partner relative age categories and then for the more finely-graded subcategories.

Emotionally Negative Reasons (3 Basic Participant–Partner Age Categories)

Table 6, by gender, shows the percents of minor–peer, minor–adult, and adult–adult participants who were coded as not enjoying their first coitus for emotionally negative reasons.

For males, boys with women more often did have such reasons (22 %) compared to boys with girls and men with women (both 13 %), although the effect size of difference was small, $r = .08$. For females, girls with men (17 %) did not differ significantly from girls with boys (20 %) and they were identical to women with men (17 %).

Between-gender contrasts were performed. Males less often had negative emotional reasons (14 %) than females (18 %), $\chi^2(1, n = 7{,}865) = 17.99$, $p < .0001$, although the effect size was quite small, $r = .05$. Boys with girls less often had such reasons (13 %) than girls with boys (20 %), $\chi^2(1, n = 1{,}567) = 12.24$, $p < .001$, with a small effect size, $r = .09$. Boys with women (22 %) and girls with men (17 %) did not differ significantly, $\chi^2(1, n = 842) = 2.06$, with a small effect size, $r = -.05$ (negative sign indicates a higher percent of negative reasons for males). Men with women less often had such reasons (13 %) than women with men (17 %), $\chi^2(1, n = 5{,}456) = 19.05$, $p < .0001$, although the effect size was quite small, $r = .06$.

Emotionally Negative Reasons (6 Participant–Partner Age Subcategories)

Table 7, by gender, shows the results from analysis of the more finely-graded subcategories.

For males, boys aged 14 and under with women had emotionally negative reasons in 15 % of the cases, which was not significantly different from any other category and was nearly the same nominally as men with peer-aged women (12 %). Likewise, girls aged 14 and under with men had emotionally negative reasons in 18 % of the cases, which was not significantly different from the other categories, in particular women with peer-aged men (16 %).

Between-gender contrasts revealed only one significant difference: men with peer-aged women less often had emotionally negative reasons (12 %) than women with peer-aged men (16 %), $\chi^2(1, n = 3{,}734) = 15.71$, $p = .0001$, although

Table 6 Percent not enjoying first postpubertal coitus for emotionally negative reasons in original Kinsey sample, by 3 basic participant–partner age groupings; analyses done separately by gender

	Males			Females		
	Emotionally negative (%)	*N*	Pairwise contrasts	Emotionally negative (%)	*N*	Pairwise contrasts
Minor–peer	13	1,106	A	20	461	A
Minor–adult	22	550	B	17	292	A
Adult–adult	13	2,549	A	17	2,907	A
Total	14	4,205		18	3,660	

Note For males, $\chi^2(2) = 30.12$, $p < .0001$. For females, $\chi^2(2) = 1.78$, $p = .41$. For each analysis (i.e., within gender), proportions without common letters (in "pairwise contrasts" column) are significantly different in pairwise contrasts (Marascuilo procedure)

Table 7 Percent not enjoying first postpubertal coitus for emotionally negative reasons in original Kinsey sample, by 6 finer-graded participant–partner age groupings; analyses done separately by gender

	Males			Females		
	Emotionally negative (%)	*N*	Pairwise contrasts	Emotionally negative (%)	*N*	Pairwise contrasts
Minor–peer	13	1,106	BC	20	461	A
Minor (≤14)–adult	15	116	ABC	18	65	AB
Minor (15–17)–adult	24	434	A	17	227	AB
Adult–younger adult	10	114	BC	17	35	AB
Adult–peer adult	12	1,856	C	16	1,878	B
Adult–older adult	18	579	AB	19	994	AB
Total	14	4,205		18	3,660	

Note For males, $\chi^2(5) = 49.95$, $p < .0001$. For females, $\chi^2(5) = 5.68$, $p = .34$. For each analysis (i.e., within gender), proportions without common letters (in "pairwise contrasts" column) are significantly different in pairwise contrasts (Marascuilo procedure)

the effect size was very small, $r = .06$. The statistical significance of this result was due to the large sample size for this contrast. Effect sizes in the other gender contrasts were all small and of similar magnitude: minors aged 14 and under with adults ($r = .05$), minors from 15 to 17 with adults ($r = .07$), adults with younger adults ($r = .10$), and adults with older adults ($r = .02$).

In sum, emotionally negative reasons with regards to minors having first coitus with adults occurred in only a small minority of cases overall, especially in the 14-and-under-with-adult groups. The pattern of emotionally negative reasons for the minor–adult groups was generally statistically equivalent to the patterns in the other categories. Notable was the virtual parity in responses, within each gender, of minors 14 and under with adults versus adults with peer-aged adults.

Emotionally Negative Reactions in Relation to Age Difference Within the Minor–Adult Groups

Finally, we considered whether emotionally negative reactions increased as a function of increasing age difference in the minor–adult groups. With $ps > .10$ in two-tailed tests, they did not for boys 14 and under with women, $r(114) = .12$, boys 15–17 with women, $r(432) = -.02$, or girls 15–17 with men, $r(225) = .06$, but they did for girls 14 and under with men, $r(63) = .25, p < .05$.

Discussion

Using the original Kinsey sample, the present study examined whether individuals who had first postpubescent coitus as a minor with an adult characteristically exhibited reactions indicative of trauma, which widespread popular and professional thinking holds to be intrinsic to minor–adult sex. Analyses based on 834 participants who had minor–adult first coitus, 1,560 participants who had minor–peer first coitus, and 5,444 participants who had adult–adult first coitus firmly contradicted this thinking. Notably, even lesser assumptions of intrinsic aversiveness or unpleasantness find no support in these data. The assumption that male and female reactions to minor–adult sex are equivalent was also contradicted.

Enjoyment and Emotionally Negative Responses

Males

Boys aged 10–17 who had first postpubescent coitus with women enjoyed the experience just as much, on average, as men did whose first postpubescent coitus was with women. These boys enjoyed the experience a great deal (i.e., "much," the top scale value) fairly often—in 41 % of the cases, which was exactly the same rate as men with women. Slightly more than one-fifth of these boys did not enjoy their experience for emotionally negative reasons, which was significantly more than men with women, but only slightly more. Boys with peer-aged females had the most positive reactions—60 % of them enjoyed their first coitus a great deal. In short, postpubescent boys tend to enjoy first coitus, be it age-concordant or discordant.

Younger boys aged 10–14 with women (most of these boys were aged 13 or 14) were just as positive in reaction, on average, as boys with peer-aged females and, strikingly, were significantly more positive than both older boys aged 15–17 with women and men with women. Notably, 63 % of these younger boys with women enjoyed their first coitus a great deal, while only 44 % of men with peer-aged women did (the percents were even lower for man-woman age-discordant first coitus). Only about one in seven of them did not enjoy the act for emotionally negative reasons, which was little different than men with peer-aged women (about 1 in 8).

In sum, the terms "traumatic" or even "aversive," if applied to boys' first coitus with women in the Kinsey sample, would be a substantial mischaracterization. A large minority of boys aged 10–17, and the majority of younger boys aged 10–14, enjoyed these experiences a great deal, while only a relatively small minority of them, especially those aged 10–14, had emotionally negative reasons for not enjoying the events. These high percents of enjoyment and low percents of emotionally negative responses are the opposite of what would be expected from prevailing assumptions of trauma or more moderate assumptions of intrinsic aversiveness or unpleasantness.

Among the age pairings for first coitus considered here, that between pubescent boys (14 and under) and women is the most anti-ideal according to prevailing standards, values, and assumptions in our society, while that between men and peer-aged women is the most ideal. As such, it is notable that the anti-ideal form was in no sense inferior to the ideal form regarding either enjoyment (i.e., having less of it) or emotionally negative reactions (i.e., having more of it).

Females

Girls aged 11–17 who had first postpubescent coitus with men enjoyed the experience, on average, significantly less than women whose first coitus was with men, but the difference was quite small. Mean enjoyment in the girls-with-men group was indistinguishable from that in the girls-with-boys group. In terms of proportions of enjoying the coitus a great deal—the conservative measure of positive reaction—girls with men were not significantly lower than women with men. Finally, girls with men were the same as women with men in rates of emotionally negative reasons for not enjoying first coitus (both at 17 %).

Turning to younger girls aged 11–14 with men, their mean enjoyment of first coitus was the same as women with peer-aged men (with effect size difference near zero). The percent of these younger girls with men enjoying the coitus a great deal was on virtual parity with women with peer-aged men (17 and 18 %, respectively). Likewise, the percent of younger girls with men not enjoying the coitus for emotionally negative reasons was virtually the same as women with peer-aged men (18 % vs. 16 %, respectively).

In sum, reactions to first coitus among girls with men and among women with men were more or less the same. Female positive responses in general were relatively low and it could be argued that differences between groups may have been muted by a floor effect. Against this argument, no analogous bias occurred in the opposite measure: emotionally negative responses. From a trauma perspective, differences here should have been especially pronounced and yet did not occur—an outcome that could not have been biased by a ceiling effect, as the proportions of negative responses were low. Like younger boys with women, younger girls with men constituted an anti-ideal age pairing among those considered in this study. Yet, this anti-ideal form was not inferior to the ideal form (i.e., women with peer-aged men) in positive or negative response (i.e., less of the former; more of the latter).

Males versus Females

In the CSA literature, girls' reactions have often formed the "standard" for how all minors (i.e., boys, too) react to minor–adult sex (Rind et al., 1998). This generalization was contradicted in the present analyses. On every measure of enjoyment, boys with women had significantly more of it compared to girls with men, with medium to large effect sizes. In fact, in almost every gender comparison within corresponding age-concordant or age-discordant groups, males enjoyed their first coitus significantly more than females did, with medium to large effect sizes. In general, first coitus was often an enjoyable event for males, but much less often an enjoyable one for females. For example, boys with girls enjoyed a great deal their first coitus five times as often as girls with boys (60 % vs. 12 %). Boys 14 and under with women enjoyed it a great deal 3.7 times as often as girls 14 and under with men (63 % vs. 17 %). And men with women enjoyed it a great deal 2.3 times as often as women with men (41 % vs. 18 %). In short, in the Kinsey data on first postpubescent coitus, the male experience, no matter the participant's

or partner's age, was not equivalent to the female experience in terms of enjoyment.

Another sex difference involved the relationship between increasing age difference and more emotionally negative reactions. No such relation occurred for boys 14 and under with women but did for girls 14 and under with men.

Notably, the findings from the Kinsey sample comport well with the Rind et al. (1998) meta-analysis. Rind, Tromovitch, and Bauserman (2000) revised their original estimates of reactions to events defined as CSA by eliminating an outlier study.[9] The revised positive, neutral, and negative reaction estimates were, respectively, 50, 25, and 24 % for males and 16, 18, and 66 % for females. These proportions of positive reactions (50 % for boys; 16 % for girls) are similar to the "much" enjoyment results for the minor–adult groups in the Kinsey analyses: 41 % for boys versus 13 % for girls, as well as 63 % for younger boys versus 17 % for younger girls.

Interpretation: Historical Perspective

Many in our society today would consider the preceding results to be surprising, if not incredible. A major reason for this is the continual, often sensational, repetition in mainstream media of the view of invariant destructiveness of all forms of sexual interactions between minors and older persons (Goode, 2009; Jenkins, 1998, 2006; Vogt, 2006; West, 1998). As these sources argue, most people in our society have been conditioned to reflexively regard age-discordant sex involving minors under the local age-of-consent as uniquely disturbing and damaging.

What is important to emphasize regarding this view is that it is relatively recent, tracing back to the late 1970s in the U.S. As Jenkins (1998, 2006) documented, before 1977 most mainstream professionals regarded minor–adult sex to be neither traumatic nor harmful unless accompanied by aggravating circumstances. Between 1977 and 1981, child advocates and sexual victimologists, drawing from feminist views on victimization, transformed mainstream professional thinking to the opposite position: that such relations are intrinsically traumatic and highly damaging. This transformation, however, proceeded not from a distinguished body of empirical research but from political argument (Angelides, 2004, 2005; Clancy, 2009; Jenkins, 1998, 2006; Nathan & Snedeker, 1995). The new view quickly led to sex panics in the 1980s and 1990s, including satanic-sexual-ritual abuse in daycare and recovered memories in therapy (Lancaster, 2011). These "events," in turn, cemented in the public mind the view of intrinsic trauma and damage, a view that outlasted the eventual discrediting of these phenomena and which has persisted through the present day (Jenkins, 1998, 2006; Nathan & Snedeker, 1995; Rind, 2009).

In short, this extreme view was never a scientifically established conclusion, even though it has risen to the level of an apodictic cultural belief. The Kinsey results just summarized tell a very different story, but a scientific one. It is not a new story, however, but one that has repeatedly been told in other non-clinical, non-forensic research. For example, Rind (2003) reviewed such research involving adolescents boys' sexual experiences with adults of the gender corresponding to the boys' sexual orientation. Across numerous studies, heterosexual adolescent boys with women and homosexual adolescent boys with men modally experienced their sexual relations positively. The Kinsey results just reviewed comport well, but add to this research by providing data based on a much larger sample with greater diversity in sampling. The Kinsey results also add, because they concern experiences from nearly a century ago, when the Kinsey participants were adolescents. This historical diversity vis-à-vis the more recent non-clinical studies adds to the external validity of the findings.

Limitations

The Kinsey findings do not imply that the same pattern of positive and negative reactions across all age-concordant and age-discordant groups would occur today. That is because subjective reactions and interpretations of sexual experiences are profoundly intertwined with prevailing cultural attitudes, values, and norms (Bullough, 1976; Carballo-Diéguez, Balan, Dolezal, & Mello, 2012; Ford & Beach, 1951). For example, many people were disturbed by their masturbation when this behavior was viewed as highly pathologic and pathogenic by the medical community before the mid-twentieth century (Hare, 1962). Likewise, when homosexuality was vilified and pathologized, nocebo reactions and iatrogenic damage oftentimes ensued (Murphy, 2008; Salvador, 2009). Muslim girls and women living in the West and engaging in premarital coitus, but not their Western female counterparts, have often suffered emotionally from it, given its strictly forbidden nature in their culture (Bekker & Rademakers, 1997).

Today, in comparison with Kinsey's time, non-marital female sexual behavior is more acceptable and practiced (Hawes et al., 2010; Laumann et al., 1994) while age-discordant sex involving minors is considerably more problematized and scandalized. Persons involved in minor–adult sex today can hardly escape the negative narrative defining it, which is repeatedly presented in the media; in Kinsey's day, adolescents were exposed to milder narratives and not very often, as the media were far fewer in number and much more reserved in discussing sexual topics. Thus, the changed cultural attitudes, in combination with their more pronounced and continual dissemination, are likely to impact reactions, altering the pattern found in the Kinsey sample.

[9] Rind et al. (2000) eliminated the Landis (1956) study, because it was an outlier in terms of type of sexual experiences (mostly non-sexual approaches, usually reacted to negatively) and sample size (it was much larger than the others). These factors substantially overweighted the overall estimates, skewing the results towards negative reactions.

For present purposes, what is important to note is that reactions by humans to sexual relations are not simply responses to physical sensations, but are intertwined with the cultural, as well as situational, context. This point, in combination with the Kinsey results concerning minor–adult first coitus, strikes down a basic tenet of sexual victimology regarding minor–adult sex: that it is *intrinsically* traumatic (or even aversive), irrespective of context (cf. Clancy, 2009; Jenkins, 1998, 2006; Malón, 2010, 2011a, 2011b). To be sure, the Kinsey data suggest that, in the absence of the sexual-abuse discourse that is pervasive today, postpubescent minor–adult sex might tend to be experienced similarly to, rather than quite differently from, more acceptable or tolerated forms of sex.

Conclusions

The present study described findings on responses to first coitus from an important early-to-mid twentieth century dataset on sexual behavior in the U.S. of unrivaled size and thoroughness, but does not provide any clear prescription for how society should regard or sanction first coitus or sexual behavior involving persons of different ages. In anthropology, it is well known that acceptable or tolerated versus unacceptable or taboo sexual behavior has varied considerably across societies in relation to differing social structures and cultural ideologies, which themselves have varied in relation to cultural, historical, political, and economic factors and social-physical environmental realities within those societies (Crapo, 1995; Douglass, 1966; Ford & Beach, 1951; Gilmore, 1990). Although sexual relations between postpubescent minors and adults have fit in with numerous other societies, they sizably mismatch the social structure and cultural ideologies of the present-day West (Crapo, 1995; Ford & Beach, 1951; Frayser, 1985; Greenberg, 1988; Okami & Goldberg, 1992). Societies tend to attribute intrinsic harm to behavior, especially of a sexual nature, in the face of such mismatches. This attribution serves a prescriptive and proscriptive function for directing and constraining social behavior, in relation to societal needs or dominant power structures, or reflecting past ones (Douglas, 1966), and such attributions often make claims beyond what is empirically justifiable. Since the sexual revolution of the 1970s, sexual victimology has played this prescriptive/proscriptive role in our society with respect to constructing attributions regarding adolescent–adult sex, first in amplifying its negative potential, and then in reifying this view. The Kinsey data just presented offer a reappraisal and scientific corrective.

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