

## Personal

|                                    |                         |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Surname PhD candidate              | Emmerink                |
| First and middle names             | Peggy Margretha Johanna |
| Firstname as used on a daily basis | Peggy                   |
| Sex                                | Female                  |
| Date of birth                      | 02-02-1985              |
| Nationality                        | Dutch                   |
| Country                            | Netherlands             |
| E-mail address                     | p.m.j.emmerink@uu.nl    |

## Thesis info

|                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Date of the defence of the PhD thesis | 08-09-2017   |
| Time of the defence of the PhD thesis | 10:30  |
| Faculty                               | Social and Behavioural Sciences  |
| Title of doctoral thesis              | Gendered Sexuality<br>Exploring dynamics of the sexual double standard |
| PhD supervisor 1                      | Ine Vanwesenbeeck  |
| University                            | Utrecht University   |
| Faculty                               | Social and Behavioural Sciences  |
| PhD supervisor 2                      | Tom ter Bogt   |
| University                            | Utrecht University   |
| Faculty                               | Social and Behavioural Sciences  |
| Co-supervisor 1                       | Regina van den Eijnden   |
| University                            | Utrecht University   |
| Faculty                               | Social and Behavioural Sciences  |

|                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| Scientific abstract | <p>The sexual double standard (SDS) is a divergent set of expectations for boys and men, and girls and women for engaging in romantic and sexual behaviour. It prescribes that boys and men should be sexually active, assertive and take sexual initiative, whereas girls and women should be sexually reactive, functioning as gatekeepers and be sexually passive. These prevailing gender norms encourage unequal judgment of men and women for exhibiting similar sexual behaviour, leading to serious consequences for male and female sexual health. These consequences seem to be most detrimental to girls and women. However, many of the underlying dynamics of the SDS remain unclear. Therefore, this dissertation describes six studies that further knowledge on SDS measurement, its psychosexual correlates and its gendered display in the form of sexual</p> |
|---------------------|---|

assertiveness. These studies were conducted among heterosexual Dutch adolescents and emerging adults. Firstly, this dissertation describes the development of new and good quality measures for the SDS. These measures have subsequently been used in the studies described. These studies show that the sexual double standard is still visible in the sexuality of Dutch young people. Although SDS endorsement is not particularly strong among this population in general, the results point towards a number of vulnerable groups. Secondly, this dissertation shows that SDS endorsement is connected to decreased sexual autonomy among Dutch women only, which is in turn related to decreased positive and increased negative emotions. Furthermore, two studies using different types of measures to study the SDS and sexual assertiveness, showed that these concepts seem to exist at different cognitive levels. This is particularly apparent among Dutch women, as their respective scores on the different types of SDS and sexual assertiveness measures revealed an experienced ambiguity concerning their sexuality, that is not seen among men. The last study in the dissertation shows that people adapt their sexually assertive behaviour, i.e. they *socially tune* their sexual behaviour to gendered characteristics of sexual situations and sexual partners. Future studies should focus on influence processes that underlie sexual attitudes in line with the SDS. Moreover, increased attention needs to be paid to the personal lived experiences of sexuality and sexual autonomy, in particular among girls and women. Transcending the level of the individual studies of this dissertation, is a recommendation to make Dutch sexuality education gender-transformative, to establish cultural change towards increased gender equality.

#### Keywords

Emerging Adulthood, Gender, Instrument Development, Sexual Assertiveness, Double Standard, Sexuality

#### Main conclusions

The sexual double standard (a pattern of divergent sexual roles for men and women) is still visible among young people today, even in a relatively sexually liberal culture such as that of the Netherlands.

Among women, the endorsement of the sexual double standard is related to the experience of less positive and more negative emotions with regards to sex, through decreased sexual autonomy.

The sexual double standard seems to be related to a relatively more ambiguous experience of sexuality among women. Sexual assertiveness is an important topic with regards to sexual double standard endorsement and appears to be situationally determined.

More research is needed to understand the underlying dynamics of sexual double standard endorsement.

Main recommendations Research needs to move beyond describing the phenomenon that is the sexual double standard and should work together with practice to move towards change to increase gender equality. More attention to gender, sexual assertiveness and the sexual double standard (and related stereotypes) is needed in Dutch sexuality education.

Subject doctoral thesis, for public Seksuele dubbele standaard nog steeds zichtbaar onder Nederlandse jongeren

Short summary (dutch), for public

De (hetero)seksuele dubbele standaard (SDS) is een patroon van verwachtingen wat meisjes seksuele terughoudendheid en passiviteit voorschrijft, terwijl het jongens activiteit en assertiviteit dicteert. Het onderschrijven van deze SDS is geassocieerd met negatieve consequenties voor de seksuele en mentale gezondheid. Dit proefschrift beschrijft zes studies onder heteroseksuele jongvolwassenen in Nederland. Allereerst beschrijft het de ontwikkeling van nieuwe en kwalitatief goede meetinstrumenten voor de SDS, die vervolgens zijn gebruikt in de overige studies. Deze studies laten zien dat de SDS nog steeds zichtbaar is onder jongeren. Hoewel zij over het algemeen de SDS niet heel sterk aanhangen, zijn er wel groepen aan te wijzen die hoger scoren. Daarnaast blijkt uit het onderzoek dat het aanhangen van de SDS voor meisjes is verbonden met het ervaren van verlaagde seksuele autonomie, minder positieve en meer negatieve emoties rondom seks. Verder blijkt dat de SDS en seksuele assertiviteit op verschillende cognitieve niveaus lijken te bestaan, waaruit een vooral ambigue beleving van seksualiteit spreekt bij vrouwen. Tot slot toont de laatste studie dat mensen hun seksueel assertieve gedrag aanpassen in reactie op kenmerken van de seksuele situatie en seksuele partner. Toekomstig onderzoek kan zich richten op de beïnvloedingsprocessen die ten grondslag liggen aan het aanhangen van de SDS. Anderzijds dient (vooral bij jonge vrouwen) extra aandacht te worden besteed aan de persoonlijke belevingswereld van seksualiteit en seksuele autonomie. Overstijgend is er een lans te breken voor het gendertransformatief maken van de seksuele vorming om zo culturele verandering in de richting van gender gelijkheid te bewerkstelligen.