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### Assessing the Associations Between Friendship Length, Friendship Quality, and Comfort Level Discussing Sexual Health

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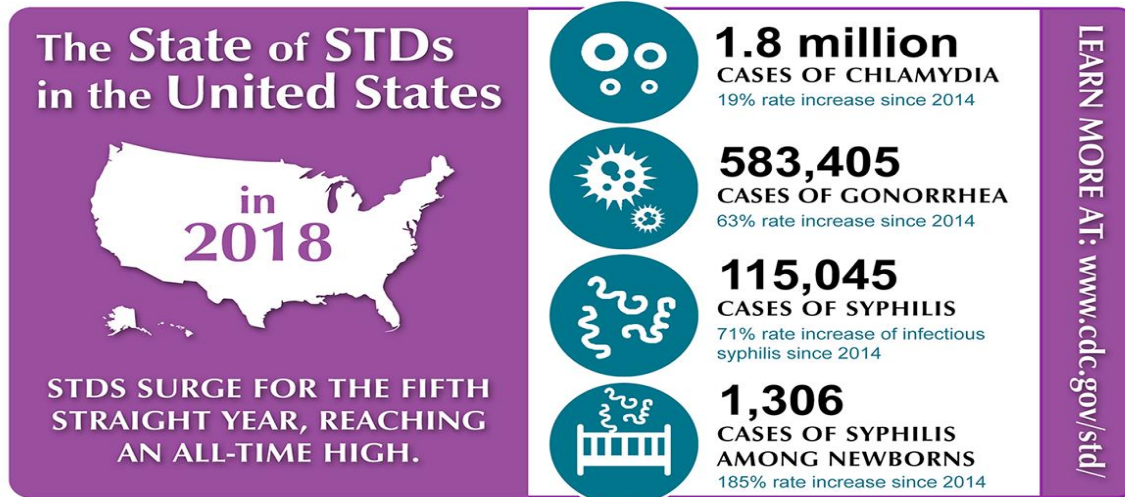
# Assessing the Associations Between Friendship Length, Friendship Quality, and Comfort Level Discussing Sexual Health

Payton Charles

Mentors: Katherine Bonafide, PhD.  
Kaitlin Flannery, PhD

# Sexual Risk Behavior

- Risk behavior is a public health interest.
- There has been a rise in the number of sexually transmitted infections, with people between the ages of 15-24 being the most at risk.
  - (Satterwhite et al., 2008)



– CDC, 2018

# Sexual Health Communication

- Previous research shows a link between sexual health practices and sexual health communication.
  - Dilorio, Bluhar, & Belcher, 2003; Noar, Carlyl, & Cole, 2006



# Sexual Health Communication Among Cross-Sex Friends

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- Previous research has focused on sexual health communication between same-sex friends and romantic partners.
- There is a lack in the literature regarding sexual health communication between cross-sex friends.
  - Lefkowitz & Espinosa-Hernandez, 2007;  
Widman, Noar, Choukas-Bradley, & Francis, 2014

# Our Study

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Are friendship length and friendship quality correlated with comfort level talking about sex?

My hypothesis:

Friendship length and friendship quality will have a positive, significant relationship with comfort level talking about sex

# Recruitment

- To recruit participants, we posted flyers around campus and sent out mass emails to SUNY Cortland students
- We provided \$10 to each participant as an incentive



## CALLING ALL STUDENTS!

Grab your friend or romantic partner and make \$10!

Come be a participant in a new study in the Psychology Department about sexual health communication!



Requirements:

- Must be 18+
- Must bring a friend or romantic partner

For more information contact the SHOS Lab:

Email: [SHOS.Cortland@gmail.com](mailto:SHOS.Cortland@gmail.com)

Text or call: 607-218-2103

## LET'S TALK ABOUT SEX, BABY!

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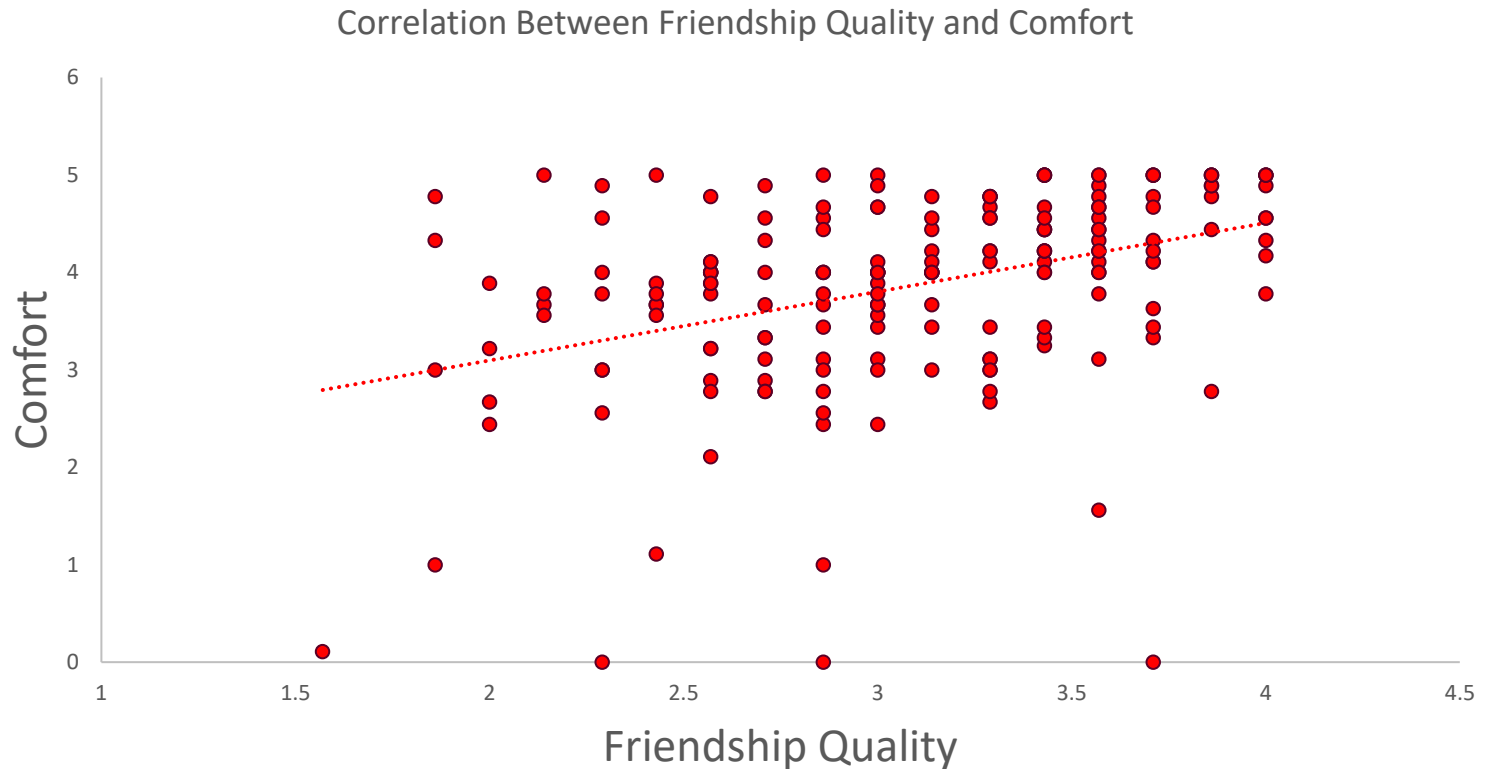
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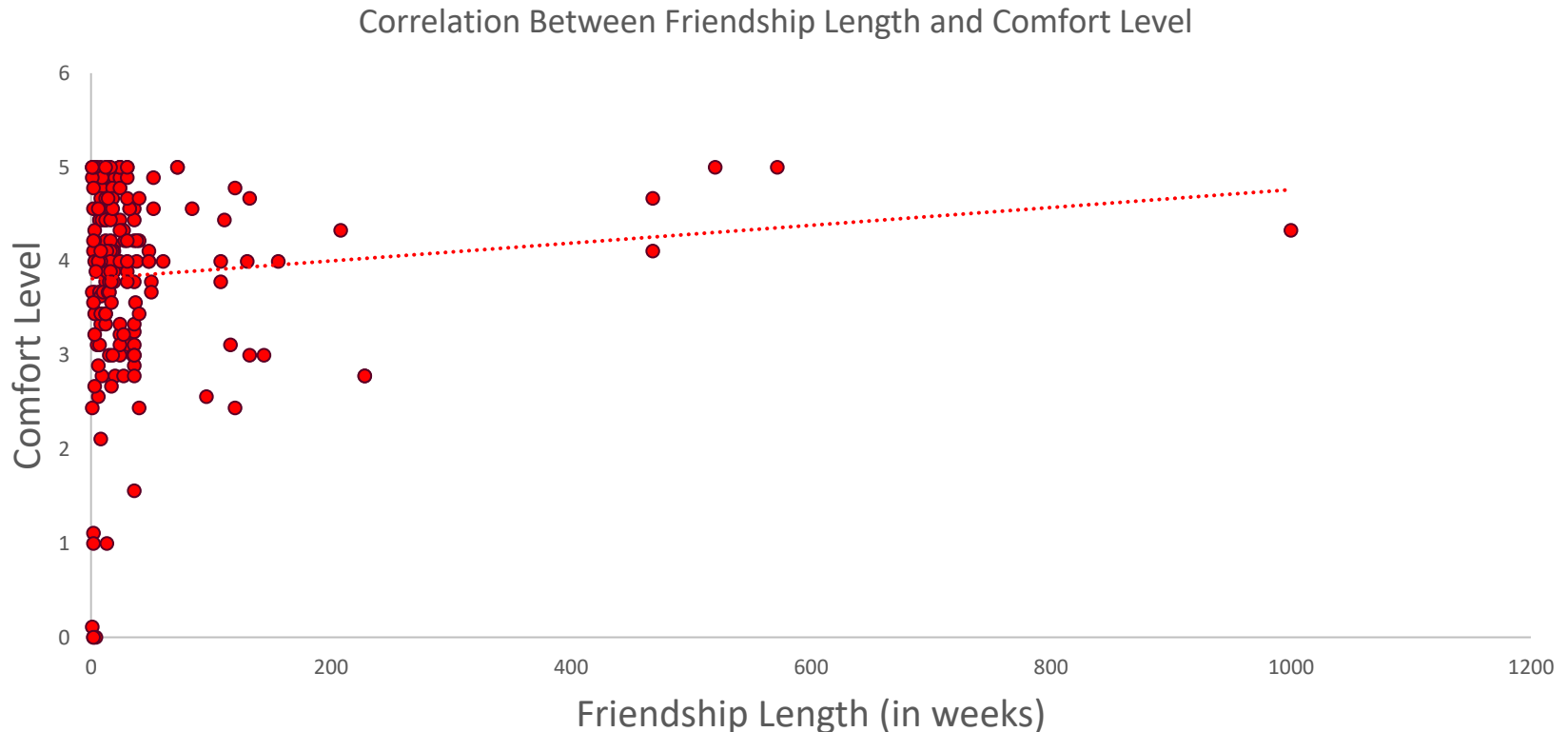
# Results: Quality of Friendship and Comfort level

- Results showed a significant positive relationship between quality of friendship and comfort level ( $r(184)=.39, p<.001$ )



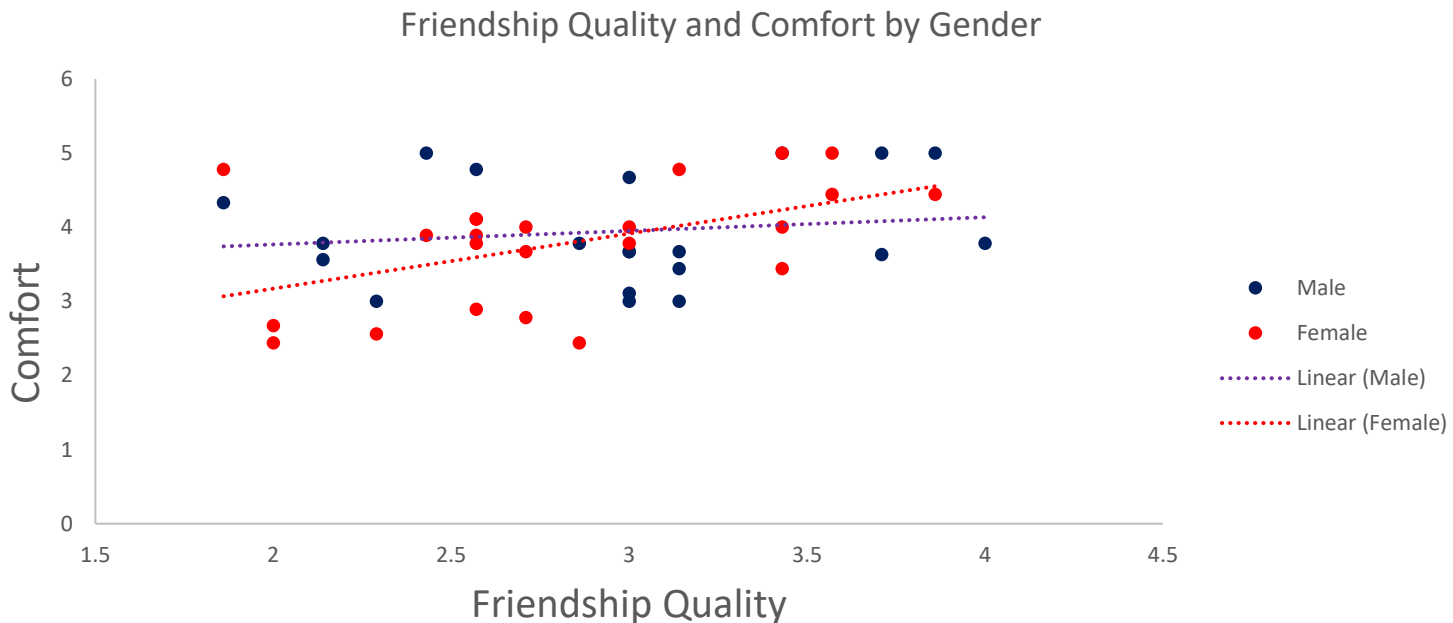
# Results: Length of Friendship and Comfort Level

- There was not a significant relationship between length of friendship and comfort level ( $r(184)=.101, p=.169$ )



# Results: Comfort Level Across Genders

- Women showed a significant positive correlation between friendship quality and comfort level ( $r(19)=.512, p=.018$ )
- Men did not show a significant relationship between friendship quality and comfort level ( $r(19)=.150, p=.528$ )



# Discussion

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- Our findings indicate:
  - Overall friendship quality is associated with level of comfort talking about sex
  - There was not a significant relationship between friendship length and level of comfort talking about sex
  - There may be a difference between comfort levels talking about sex across genders

# Limitations and Future Directions

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- Limitations

- Not a very representative sample
- Self-report biases

- Future Research Should:

- Build on this research with a representative sample
- Further investigate the differences in comfort level talking about sex across genders

# Acknowledgements

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