

# SEXUAL HEALTH PROMOTION AND STI PREVENTION ON THE MARGINS: KINK, BDSM, AND SEXUALLY ADVENTUROUS WOMEN

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**Background:** Research has identified women connected with BDSM scenes engage in sexual practices such as blood play, fisting, and sex with multiple partners, have higher risks for both STIs and BBVs. *Claude* is a highly innovative sexual health promotion website and service for women who play with women, within a BDSM context.

**Methods:** This paper will discuss the qualitative research used in the formation of *Claude* project: Kath Albury's 2011 "Safer Sex Beliefs and Practices in Multi-Partner Heterosexuals," outline barriers to safe sex practice and how *Claude* (iloveclaud.com) was developed as a response.

iloveclaud.com provides sexual health information, safety tips, free play packs, and a list of kink friendly health services. Its innovation lies in its use of creative photography, writing, performance and video art, and strategies for health promotion focused on sexual *practice* rather than sexual *identity*. The project is updated regularly to assess the effectiveness of new art content in engaging a hard to reach community; increasing sexual health knowledge; and increasing the uptake of safe sex resources.

**Results:** The project has seen tremendous growth and popularity over the last 6 months, including:

- 322% increase in sessions
- 282% increase in users
- 264% increase in page views

Analysis of User Flow indicates that art increases engagement with the sexual health content.

Social media tracking shows a similar increase in engagement across Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

Free safe sex pack orders have increased by 91% over the same period.

**Conclusion:** The *Claude* project was formulated to implement recommendations from research regarding STI education and prevention, for women who play with women, in a BDSM context. The project has successfully overcome the challenges of sexual health promotion within a diverse and often marginalized group by the innovative use of art to engage a hard to reach community.

**Disclosure of Interest Statement:** ACON acknowledges its primary funder, the NSW Ministry of Health. ACON has not received pharmaceutical grants for this work.