2015

# College Women Hooking Up: Examining Sexual Guilt and Achievement Motivation

Michael J. Serpico

BARRY UNIVERSITY

College Women Hooking Up: Examining Sexual Guilt and Achievement Motivation

by

Michael J. Serpico, B.S.

A THESIS

Submitted to the Faculty
of Barry University in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Science

Miami Shores, Florida

March 16, 2015

## Acknowledgements

I'd like to extend my deepest gratitude to the chair of my committee, Dr. Frank Muscarella, for his investment of time and dedication to my thesis. You set the bar incredibly high, and I was determined to meet your expectations. Thank you for believing in me. I would also like to thank Dr. Stephen Koncsol for agreeing to serve on my committee. Both of your encouragement, suggestions, and criticisms were integral to my success, and I thank you. To my family: Mom, Dad, Cathy, Akka, and of course, Kiara…I love you all so much.

BARRY UNIVERSITY

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of
Master of Science

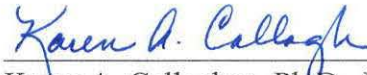College Women Hooking Up: Examining Sexual Guilt and Achievement Motivation

by

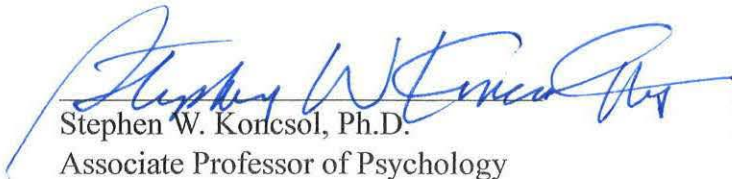Michael J. Serpico, B.S.

Approved:

_____
Frank Muscarella, Ph.D.
Professor of Psychology

_____
Karen A. Callaghan, Ph.D., Dean
College of Arts and Sciences

_____
Stephen W. Koncsol, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Psychology

April 6, 2015
_____
Date

## Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between hooking up behavior, sexual guilt, and achievement motivation in college women. *Hooking up*, a relatively common behavior among young adults, refers to a casual sexual encounter, ranging from kissing to sexual intercourse, without an expectation of ongoing physical encounters or relational commitment. Some assert that a hookup culture exists on college campuses and that individuals who attend college are socialized into a hookup script. However, researchers are finding that hookup behaviors may also be linked to serious psychological consequences, more specifically sexual guilt. For some college women, career-mindedness may take priority over personal relationship and the time commitment for a long-term relationship may deter from their ability to seek out educational opportunities that would benefit them personally. Therefore, they would be more willing to engage in hookup behavior instead of committed relationships, resulting in less sexual guilt.

Participants included 87 women who were recruited from Barry University's undergraduate Psychology department. They were asked to complete a demographic, as well as a variety of questionnaires that examined the number of hookups, sexual guilt, and achievement motivation they experienced in college. A hierarchical regression was attempted but was unsuccessful because only the independent measure of number of hookups and dependent measure of sexual guilt scores were significantly correlated. Although the hypothesis was not supported, this study does substantiate previous research that the hookup culture on college campuses can be problematic for women. Overall, this study has implications for future research.

**College Women Hooking Up: Examining Sexual Guilt and Achievement Motivation**

A widely accepted part of campus culture is engaging in casual sexual behavior (Paul, Hayes & McManus, 2000). Studies have been conducted to assess the sexual attitudes and behaviors of college students in the past decade as concern over sexually transmitted infections (STI) have been on the rise. Particularly, many high-risk behaviors, like alcohol and drug use, which college students engage in, may be connected to risky casual sexual encounters (Paul et al., 2000).

Contemporary college students live in an environment saturated with sex. They are exposed to sexual content on a regular basis from the Internet, the media, and numerous other sources during a time when self-exploration and experimentation are driving forces in their lives. It should not be a surprise then, that many college students are having sex often outside the context of a committed relationship. However, what is surprising is that while sexual experimentation appears to be a socially acceptable rite of passage when one enters college, it does not come without the potential for serious consequences, not just physically, but emotionally and socially —especially for women.

On most college campuses, a widely accepted sexual practice is called "hooking up." It explicitly permits a sexual interaction without romance, commitment, or even affection (Glenn & Marquardt, 2001). Although there is new attention focused on the hookup phenomenon, casual sex has been occurring on college campuses for decades. The hookup culture stems from the many social changes that arose in the mid-1960s, most notably the sexual revolution. Coeducation rose substantially and more students began living on campus. Residence halls typically restricted contact between the sexes and took on a "parental role," monitoring student behavior (Glenn & Marquardt, 2001).

However, students were rebelling against rules that restricted access between sexes and soon administrators were forced to set aside such policies in favor of co-ed dormitories (Bogle, 2005). Traditional dating scripts, where a date occurs first and then perhaps a sexual encounter happens later was no longer the dominant script for developing relationships. Students postponed marriage and sex outside of marriage was not as taboo as it had once been. The "college experience" became a rite of passage, where partying and sexual experimentation became commonplace. According to Bogle (2008), on campuses today, the hookup culture has flourished as casual relationships have become socially acceptable and students have gained limitless access to each other. The hookup script, a reversal of the dating script, has become increasingly dominant as college students experience sexual contact first, and later go on a "date."

Through her interviews with college students, Bogle (2005) found that they knew what dating was, but rarely went on dates. In fact, many students reported that they had never been on a date. Since hooking up rarely leads to monogamous relationships, going on a traditional date is not necessary, especially when the allure of parties, bars, or night clubs facilitates easy access between the sexes and countless opportunities for sexual interaction.

Bogle (2005) defines casual sex as sexual intercourse without commitment or emotional involvement. Unfortunately, this term no longer seems to accurately describe the defining principles of sexual behavior customary on campus. Adolescents and young adults use the term "hooking up" to describe a much broader range of sexual activities and emotional attachment. Researchers have attempted to define this complex cultural phenomenon, and the definition has developed as researchers have taken a closer look at

the different levels of sexual and emotional involvement surrounding a hookup. Paul et al., (2000) define a hookup as a "sexual encounter, usually lasting only one night, between two people who are strangers or brief acquaintances. Some physical interaction is typical but may or may not include sexual intercourse" (p. 76).

In one study of unwanted sexual experiences in hookup culture, researchers defined unwanted sex as "a general concept that includes sexual assault or rape, but may also incorporate any behavior involving sexual contact experienced as harmful or guiltful during or following the incident" (Flack, Daubman, Caron, Asadorian, D'Aureli, Gigliotti, 2007, p. 147). The study indicated that 23% of women and 7% of men reported experiencing an unwanted sexual encounter. Seventy-eight percent of all unwanted sex (vaginal, anal, and oral) took place during a hookup. Flack et al. reported that "judgment impaired by alcohol and drugs" (62.2%) was the most frequently cited reason for unwanted sex. Other frequently reported reasons were "happened before I could stop it" (37.8%), "taken advantage of because I was wasted" (32.4%), "thought I wanted it at the time" (32.4%), and "easier to go along with it than cause trouble" (24.3%). The results of the study supported the hypothesis that "hooking up is a risk factor for unwanted intercourse" (Flack et al., p. 147).

According to Bogle (2005), this particular definition does not reflect the full range of behaviors reported by students. While a hookup may resemble a one-night stand, that is only one possible hookup situation. A hookup can involve two people who are strangers, acquaintances, or close friends engaging in a wide range of behaviors including kissing, sexual touching, oral sex, and sexual intercourse. The encounter/s may happen once or multiple times (Bogle, 2007). The hookup partners may have conflicting

emotional attachment, or no emotional attachment at all. In other words, the terms "casual sex" and "hooking up" are not synonymous; rather, "casual sex" fits better under the term of "hooking up." It is possible that some students may use the term hooking up when describing a casual sex encounter resembling Paul et al.'s (2000) definition. Regardless, a common element between the varying circumstances of a hookup is that the physical encounter is not necessarily a precursor to a relationship, and there are no guarantees anything will evolve past a physical or sexual interaction (Bogle, 2007).

**Drinking and Sex**

One of the fundamental elements linked to hooking up is alcohol use. Hooking up on college campuses generally occurs at the end of an evening spent at a party or bar after alcohol has been consumed (Bogle, 2005). The Task Force of the National Advisory Council on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (2002) reports that in the span of two weeks, two out of five college students consumed alcohol in extreme excess within a short period of time, otherwise known as binge drinking. The report showed that binge drinking is directly associated with high-risk sexual behavior because alcohol impairs information processing and reasoning and heightens the salience of simple cues to action (such as sexual arousal) while blunting the more distal consequences of behavior (such as risk of HIV infection). The report goes on to also explain that students who drink are two to three times more likely to have multiple partners.

The Paul et al. (2000) study revealed that 22% of the respondents who reported having sexual intercourse in the context of a hookup felt "out of control" due to alcohol consumption. Alcohol intoxication happened to be one of the most distinguishing predictors of students who engaged in hookups. Paul and Hayes (2002) asked 187

participants to describe their hookup experiences. Thirty-two percent of the respondents reported that drinking alcohol was the main factor leading to their hookup experiences. Other factors included flirting/attraction (43%), hanging out and talking (30%), attending parties (20.5%), dancing (10%), and a friend's arrangement (5%) (p. 646). Kalish (2003) postulated that the "relationship between the parties, location, use of alcohol, and campus social capital increase the likelihood of engaging in penetrative sexual behaviors" (p. 1). The results of this study indicated that one of the most significant variables of a hookup was "beer drinking."

Bogle (2008) posits that a hookup may not always be due to alcohol intoxication. Rather, students may be abusing alcohol in order to hook up. Alcohol reduces inhibitions and alleviates anxiety which makes the social pressures of hookup culture easier to navigate. Bogle also found that alcohol may be used to justify behavior. "If students guilt their choices later, or have misgivings about going too far, they can tell themselves and others: 'I was drunk'" (p. 3). This implies that students find alcohol to be an appropriate excuse to avoid responsibility from any negative consequence that may come from a sexual hookup encounter.

An outcome to alcohol abuse is the heightened threat of a sexual assault occurring. For many students, this may lead to shame that later evolves into guilt or other more severe psychological consequences. A sexual interaction is considered unlawful if one or both of the parties is unable to consent to sex, including situations where someone is unable to consent due to intoxication (Bogle, 2005). The Task Force of the National Advisory Council on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (2002) reported that 40% of college students who were sampled indicated regular use of alcohol, which led to severe

consequences including sexual assault and rape. Furthermore, some females stated that while drinking alcohol, it was easier to give in to a sexually coercive male than to resist his advances.

**Outcomes of Hooking Up**

Respondents from the Paul et al. (2000) study reported hookup frequencies that suggest they are hooking up on a weekly basis with one or more partners. Devastating effects can occur if the hookup results in pregnancy, infection of a sexually transmitted infection, sexual assault, rape, or experiences of emotional trauma from a casual sex or hookup encounter (Paul & Hayes, 2002). Within a random sample of 555 undergraduate students, 78% of males and females reported experiencing a hookup at least once while in college. Of males, 47.5% reported having intercourse during the hookup, compared to 33.3% of females. Forty-four percent reported the hookup encounters occurred at fraternity or sorority houses (Paul et al., 2000). The results show that not only is hooking up a common practice, but is a dominant method in how heterosexual males and females "connect" on campus. Hooking up is more than sexual gratification for students. Unlike casual sex or one night stands, it is a byproduct of a larger scheme set in place for socialization and companionship (Bogle, 2005).

Bogle (2005) discusses possible outcomes after a hookup ranging from exclusive relationships to never seeing each other again. Students sometimes develop a friendship and hook up repeatedly. This is referred to as "friends with benefits" and is defined as a relationship where the couple engages in sexual activity, but does not consider the friendship to be romantic (Hughes, Morrison, & Asada, 2005). Some students begin to

date, and in such context, means they spend time together outside social gatherings.

Dating, at times, evolves into an exclusive relationship.

**Striving Towards Sexual Conformity**

As mentioned earlier, according to Bogle (2005), hooking up is more than just

sexual gratification —it is a "byproduct of a larger culture set in place for socialization

and companionship" (p. 67). Hooking up may have social rewards for both men and

women. Students anticipate positive consequences such as heightened social status and

anticipate heightened self-esteem and self-confidence (Paul & Hayes, 2002).

Socialization that occurs within hookup culture may influence an individual's decision to

engage in risky sexual behaviors. When students reach young adulthood, they may find

themselves engaging in higher rates of risk-taking behavior such as casual sex (Arnett,

2000). This is due to this period in their lives dedicated to a time of self-exploration. This

of course happens before settling down into the responsibilities of adulthood. For many

students residing at universities, most of the time is spent with friends, where they

experience much more face-to-face contact with their peers than their parents (Lefkowitz,

Boone, & Shearer, 2004). This daily peer interaction leads to the desire to form close

relationships where social influence runs high.

According to Mewhinney, Herold, and Maticka-Tyndale (1995), a common reason

reported by students for engaging in sexual hookup encounters on spring break was the

perceived acceptance. Early psychological studies found that there is a need for

individuals to be accepted by a group they desire to be a part of, and that they learn to

conform in order to be socially accepted by their peers (Argyle, 1957). Paul and Hayes

(2002) found that peoples' dependence on their friends' liberal sexual opinions has an

influence on their own sexual choices. Therefore, college students with low self-esteem may look for cues and validation from outside sources and be highly influenced by these sources (Spitzberg, Kam, & Roesch, 2005). This conformity based on approval is known as normative influence (Deutsch & Gerard, 1955). It can best be defined as individuals going along with the group in order to be more liked within their social network (Griskevicius et al., 2006). A classic study conducted by Asch (1956) showed that people were more likely to conform, not because they were in agreement, but because it was easier than facing the consequences of going against the group. Normative influence can be powerful, as often times those going against the group will be rejected or ridiculed (Griskevicius et al., 2006). These early concepts may shed light on how students may be influenced by their social group to adhere to the attitudes of sexual behaviors of their peers.

According to research by Lefkowitz et al. (2004), students with conservative sexual attitudes felt less comfortable talking about sexual behaviors and feelings than their more liberal counterparts. This lack of comfort could be due to their attitudes not fitting in with campus sexual norms. Also, when comparing their experiences with that of their social group, Lefkowitz et al. (2004) state that it is likely that there is bidirectionality; students influence each other's behaviors through their conversations, while at the same time, their conversations reflect their experiences. This uneasiness of not being able to relate sexually to their social group is reflected in a study conducted by Beausang (2000) where a student reported

Most of my friends were having sex and I with an exception of two friends were

not. We were known as the 'virgins'. Most of my friends would sit around and

talk about their sexual experiences and I would just sit there quietly just taking it all in. Sometimes I felt inferior to my friends because I hadn't had sex yet. Sometimes I would get so frustrated that I wanted to just have sex so that I would get it over with and I wouldn't be labeled a virgin anymore" (p. 184).

This young woman's desire to be a part of this conversation rather than be an outcast reveals a desire to identify with her peers. Her desire is so strong, in fact, it causes her to consider losing her virginity to be rid of the virgin label that separates her from her friends.

Theoretical perspectives like normative influence and conformity show that social influence, even in deviant behavior, is a very real aspect of the interpersonal human experience (Lefkowitz et al., 2004). But how does this relate to the current hookup culture on college campuses? Understanding hookup culture is an important facet for understanding student life on campus. However, it is also important to understand the effect hooking up has because of emotional and psychological considerations, such as shame and guilt.

**Religiosity**

Religion is another important element to understanding a student's hookup behaviors or a student's level of guilt after a hookup encounter. Oswalt, Cameron, & Koob (2005) identified four reasons for sexual guilt and the most common response was "participants' decisions were inconsistent with their values" (37%). In measuring sexual guilt and casual sex, Eshbaugh and Gute (2008) found that religious participants were more likely to report guilt than nonreligious participants.

Religious affiliation is not always an accurate predictor of hookup behavior. A study conducted by Brudette, Ellison, Hill, and Glenn (2009) examined the impact of both individual religious beliefs and institutional religious involvement on hookup behaviors. Telephone interviews were conducted with a sample of 1,100 female college students. The results of the analysis reveal important patterns. First, Catholic women were four times more likely to hook up than women with no religious affiliation. In fact, Catholic affiliation increased the likelihood of hooking up by 72%. Additionally, conservative Protestant college women were far less likely to experience a hookup than those with no religious affiliation. Church attendance seems to be the contributing factor to these results. College women who attended church services frequently were far less likely to hook up than those who did not attend. In addition, Protestant college women reported attending church services at a much higher rate than other college women. Brudette et al. suggest the results imply that students who attend church services regularly most likely have religious networks that may influence sexual behavior while in college. In contrast, Catholic college women in the study were less likely to report attending regular religious services. Brudette et al. state that "this lack of spiritual nurturing may lead some Catholics to rebel against the normative constraints of the Church" (p. 545). The results of this study, as well as the results measured in the Oswalt et al. (2005) and Eshbaugh et al. (2008) studies, reveal that religiosity is another important element to understanding hooking up behaviors and sexual values on campus.

**Valuing Relationships and Sex**

The likelihood of a hookup occurring may also depend on the student's sexual values. How one perceives acceptable sexual behavior, as well as how one behaves inside

and out of committed relationships, is dictated by one's sexual values and may permit or prevent hookup encounters. However, if students make sexual decisions contradicting their own values, sexual values may be the dynamic which leads to a negative psychological reaction after a hookup. In contrast, more liberal sexual values may enable a student to experiment freely with his or her sexuality without negative psychological consequences.

Sexual values often develop within the home, or with the guidance of a parent or parental figure. However, religion, peer influence, and society also play a major role in the development of sexual values, especially during early adulthood. Knox, Cooper, and Zuzman (2001) measured the sexual values of unmarried undergraduates by determining the value system that may be responsible for guiding the decisions students make regarding their sexual choices. Participants answered a questionnaire that revealed the value system that most represented their beliefs on sexual behavior. Knox et al. (2001) define sexual values in terms of absolutism, relativism, and hedonism. Absolutism reflects a belief in abstinence until marriage and/or a belief of religious or moral codes. Relativism represents the belief that sexual activity should depend on the nature of the relationship and how two people feel about one another. Hedonism is the belief that sex is always acceptable as long as it is between two consenting adults.

Knox et al. (2001) sampled 620 never married undergraduates at a large southeastern university. The results of the study showed that 80% of both women and men reported relativistic sexual values more than hedonism and absolutism. However, 18.7% of males identified as hedonistic, compared to only 3.6% of women. Females reported more absolutist values frequently at 11.9%, compared to males at 8.3%. The

results of this study show that while both men and women share dominant relativistic values, men may be more likely to hold hedonistic values and women more absolutistic. In a similar study conducted by Richey, Knox, and Zusman, (2009) with a sample of 783 undergraduate students, men and women reported relativism as the dominant sexual value at 62.1%. Hedonism followed at 24.6% and absolutism at 13.4%. Again, men were significantly more hedonistic at 36.7%, compared to women at 12.5%. Women were more absolutist at 15.1%, compared to men at 11.6%.

The results of these two studies reveal that most college students believe sex should remain within in the context of a relationship, reflecting relativistic sexual values. However, research also reveals that most students are regularly engaging in hookup behaviors (Oswalt et al., 2005). This suggests that some, if not most, of the students hooking up are doing so despite the fact it contradicts with their sexual values.

Meier, Hull, and Ortyl (2009) sampled 49,897 young adults from across the nation to participate in a study regarding relationship values. They discovered that nearly all the participants adhered to the "dominant relationship values inherent in the romantic love ideology" (p. 511). In other words, participants rated love, faithfulness, and lifelong commitment as extremely important for marriage or long-term relationships. Despite the high rating by both sexes, there were differences, as the romantic love ideology was more predominant for females than for males. Females valued love at 91.15%, faithfulness at 93.36%, and lifelong commitment at 82.79%, compared to males who rated love at 76.39%, faithfulness at 85.02%, and lifelong commitment at 71.43%. It must be noted that all of the participants in the Meier et al. study were in middle school through high school. Unless intense changes within their family or personal life have influenced their

belief system, they are likely to carry their relationship values with them to college. Once immersed in a hookup culture which emphasizes relationships less and sexual contact more, it is important to consider that undergraduates may be experiencing conflict between their relationship values, sexual values, and the widely accepted hookup culture on campus. On the other hand, some college students may not apply their relationship values with hookup behaviors, as most students are aware that hookup encounters rarely indicate a relationship will form (Bogle, 2005). In other words, one may believe in romantic love but not invoke those values in their decisions to engage in hookup behaviors as they do not consider the encounter to be related to a romantic relationship.

**Gender Differences**

**Sexual Double Standard**

A consistent finding across all studies measuring hookup behaviors and sexual/ relationship values lies in the differences reported by heterosexual men and women. The results of the studies on sexual values show that there are differences between the sexes. While both men and women are more likely to report relativistic attitudes, as mentioned previously, men report hedonistic values more than women and women report absolutism more than men. These differences may be a result of society's sexual double standard.

Hooking up is believed to be an equally acceptable practice for both male and female college students. However, Seaman (2005) found the behavior seems to have a disconcerting effect for women. For two years, Seaman, a reporter for *Time* magazine, participated in an ethnographic study to reveal the real story of college life today compared to the late 1960s. He lived with students in residence halls across North

America, usually 12 weeks at a time, at 13 different colleges and universities. Seaman interviewed students as well as faculty and staff and revealed that as women gain more collegiate success and honors, their stress levels are raising with the higher achievements and expectations. Many women now abuse alcohol as frequently as men and "demanding equal access to sexual gratification and freedom from the bonds of commitment to a relationship" (p. 51).

According to Seaman, at this point in our cultural revolution, women still have not reached sexual equality and find themselves caught between "old traditions and new expectations" (p. 50). These conflicting dynamics are creating a confusing environment for contemporary female college students. Seaman reported that women express feelings of anger or shame, or feel incomplete or dissatisfied by casual sexual encounters. Most women felt compelled to gain information about their hookup partner in order to build some sort of bond. The ambiguous nature of the hookup caused women to attempt to "legitimize the hook up so as not to leave the encounter undefined" (p. 46). Seaman suggests that a woman may have an unsettling reaction to an experience that is supposed to be considered a socially encouraged practice among her peers.

Oswalt et al. (2005) found that 72% of the sexually active college students of both sexes in their sample expressed feelings of guilt with at least one sexual encounter. However, their study also showed that there are distinct sex differences. Women were more likely to report sexual guilt when engaging in a sexual act, whereas men were more likely to report feelings of guilt associated that they had engaged in a sexual act.

In a similar study, Bogle (2007) conducted in-depth interviews investigating the sexual double standard occurring within hookup culture. The sample included 76 college

students from two universities in the northeast. Upon first entering college, Bogle found

that both men and women preferred to be single and enjoy the hookup scene as a way of

experimenting and finding what is available relationally and sexually. Women became

"increasingly relationship-oriented after the first year of college" (p. 5). Some women

still desired to hookup, but they preferred that the hookup evolve into some type of

relationship. Bogle's study supports Seaman's (2005) research, where women often

desired to follow up with their partner after a hookup to legitimize the interaction.

Bogle also found that both men and women were aware of their opposing hookup

expectations. Male college students reported being aware of the women's desire for the

hookup to evolve in to a relationship, so they "developed strategies for communicating

their lack of interest in pursuing anything further" (p. 6). A common strategy that men

used was avoidance, either by not returning calls or making up excuses so they would not

meet up again. After several hookup experiences, many female respondents learned not to

expect a relationship to develop. Many of the women Bogle interviewed found that

"men's desire to avoid relationships often forced hookup partners to remain just that" (p.

7). Some female participants indicated that they continued to hook up despite their

expectations, but often stopped hooking up with a partner when they discovered the male

began to hook up with other females.

Bogle argues that men have far more freedom to be sexually active within hookup

culture. "For women who are active participants, the hook up system is fraught with

pitfalls that can lead them to being labeled a 'slut'" (p. 10). The data collected from the

interviews revealed that women were labeled negatively if they hooked up too often,

went too far during an initial hook up, hooked up during the same semester with males

that were friends or fraternity brothers, or conducted themselves in an overtly sexual

manner at social gatherings where hooking up was possible (p. 9). The hookup culture

that both men and women embrace and enjoy when they first arrive at college ends up

having far more negative consequences for females. The sexual double standard "leads to

an environment where women need relationships to protect their reputations" (p. 9).

    Sex differences and consequences of hooking up may be explained by gender role

social constructions. According to Metts (2006), both sexes may be acting out and

responding to gender role expectations set by society. Male and female sex is considered

an innate, biological dichotomy, whereas gender is a socially derived, complex system of

values and behavioral expectations.

    Dating is considered to be a socially scripted relationship sequence constructed

    for mate selection, and men and women go about this selection process

    differently. In general, men look for attractiveness and youthfulness in a woman.

    Rather, women look for personality characteristics, status, resources, power, and

    financial security. The stereotypical masculine gender role in relationship

    initiation is characterized by control and proactive moves and the feminine

    counterpart by submission and reactive moves." (p. 27)

When it comes to first date sex and the socially constructed double standard,

women link sexual intimacy more closely to emotional intimacy than do men. Therefore,

traditional dating socializes men to desire frequent sexual encounters with multiple

partners, whereas women are socialized to desire sexual experiences within monogamous

relationships (Sprecher et al., 1998). Although Bogle (2005) has provided evidence that

hookup scripts are the opposite of dating scripts, women must still battle the expectation

that a sexual experience is not acceptable outside of marriage, while being viewed as a positive aspect of masculinity for their male partners (Paul & Hayes, 2002).

Milhausen and Herold (1999) conducted a study measuring college women's perceptions of the sexual double standard. They interviewed 165 women and reported that 95% of them believed a sexual double standard exists. Of those women, 49% perceived the double standard as women being harshly labeled and penalized for having multiple sexual partners. Fifty percent believed men were rewarded for having multiple sexual partners. Comments included "guys are admired by their peer and encouraged by their social circle" (p. 364). Ten percent indicated that women are not encouraged to enjoy sex for pleasure. Nine percent agreed with the sexual double standard that, indeed, it is more natural for men to look at sex for pleasure. Most female participants believed women enforced the double standard more than men, given that almost every female respondent reported a sexual double standard exists. The majority of respondents reported that women judge women more harshly for licentious behavior than do men (Milhausen & Herold, 1999). This particular study reveals that women feel oppressed under the sexual double standard.

**Sexual Guilt**

Guilt is an emotion often experienced when an individual feels they have caused harm intrapersonally (to themselves) or interpersonally (to others) (Zeelenberg & Breugelmans, 2008). Many college students use the word "guilt" to describe how they feel about one or more of their hookup experiences (Bogle, 2007; Eshbaugh & Gute, 2008; Oswalt et al., 2005; Paul & Hayes, 2002). Littleton, Tabernik, Canales, and Backstrom (2009) conducted a study reviewing college women's bad hookup and rape

scripts, and discovered that 56.7% of the women reporting bad hookups experienced negative psychological and social consequences. Seventy percent the females interviewed said the hookup was a result of manipulation and/or alcohol consumption. As a result, many experienced shame, embarrassment, or guilt post-encounter. Oswalt et al. (2005) found that 72% of sampled sexually active college students regretted at least one sexual encounter. Similarly, a study conducted by Paul and Hayes (2002) asked participants to report their feelings after a hookup. The most common response was "guiltful or disappointed (35%)". Men reported feeling satisfied, while females were more likely to reflect about a hookup and experience shame. The study also showed that during a typical hookup, the majority of students reported "feeling good, aroused or excited," as opposed to only 8% that reported feelings of guilt or embarrassment.

Glenn and Marquardt (2001) conducted interviews in the United States on 11 college campuses with 62 undergraduate women. They also had telephone interviews with a national sample of 1,000 unmarried heterosexual undergraduate women. Many of the college women interviewed for the study shared similar feelings after hooking up. Most women felt awkward (64%) or confused (56%) because they weren't sure if the hookup would lead to a monogamous relationship. They worried about running into their hookup partner on campus and having to "pretend" an intimate encounter hadn't occurred (Glenn & Marquardt, 2001). In addition, 44% reported feeling disappointed and some felt empty (27%) or exploited (23%) after the sexual encounter.

Many college students also experience depression as a result of casual sex behavior (Grello et al., 2006). This study focused on the nature of casual sex on campus and a portion of the study was dedicated to understanding the psychological functioning

of casual sex. From a sample of 404 undergraduate students, Grello et al. found that the

females who reported the highest levels of depressive symptoms were also the most

likely to have engaged in casual sex. For females, as their sexual partners increased over

the course of the year, so did their symptoms of depression. Remarkably, those with the

highest number of sexual partners suffered depressive pathology symptoms the most. In

contrast, the males who reported the lowest levels of depressive symptoms were also

most likely to have had casual sex. In addition, males and females who had feelings of

guilt about a casual sex encounter had more symptoms of depression than those who did

not have guilt (Grello et al., 2006). It's important to note that Grello et al. focused on

casual sex behaviors that may or may not reflect hookup behaviors that are physical

interactions.

### Achievement Motivation

Every year many students choose to take psychology courses. Some of these

students do not accomplish much in class. According to Monte and Lifrieri (1973), these

students may have the desire to achieve, and the ability to accomplish the task, but feel

the accomplishment has little or no value. They feel final accomplishments are not worth

the effort or the time. Others believe they may not be capable of completing the required

tasks, so they do not even begin the work. They feel it is better to receive a lower overall

grade than to prove they do not have the ability to correctly complete the task. Atkinson

and Feather (1966) describe this attitude as Achievement Motivation (AM). It is typically

a non-conscious process in which a decision about how to act or not to act is made.

Spence (1983) and Wlodkowski (1985) state that achievement can often bring benefits,

and failure can bring shame. Atkinson (1974) and Aschuler (1973) add that it is only a small number of students who fall into this category of little accomplishment.

Some students have an overwhelming desire to achieve in everything they do. Their desire for success drives them to accomplish every task, no matter what the task is, or how difficult it is to complete. Some students also feel a need for success, but weigh the value or worth of the task before attempting to complete it. If the student feels the task has no value, the student chooses not to do the task, even though they are perfectly capable of accomplishing the task (Atkinson, 1974).

There is a final group: those who choose not to do the task. These students are afraid they will not be able to complete the task. They have a fear of failure, and rather than face the humiliation of not being able to complete the task, they choose not to do the task at all. They would rather risk a poor grade than a poor self-image (Veroff, McClelland, & Marquis, 1971).

The majority of students tend to fall somewhere in the middle of this achievement motivation scale between relatively high achievers and those who may not achieve at all (Alschuler, 1973). Most have a need to achieve and a fear of failure, and these needs vary idiosyncratically and from situation to situation. Each student acts on the levels of motivation differently, but some students are predisposed to having little desire to accomplish certain tasks (Atkinson, 1999).

Research has shown there is an interest in student AM as it relates to students. Many studies have been conducted to discover what motivates students (Atkinson, 1999; Atkinson & Feather, 1966; Spence, 1983). These studies focused on how to predict an individual's task performance (Atkinson and Feather, 1966; Grabe, 1979; Mukherjee,

1964). This section will look at an individual's Need to Achieve, Fear of Failure, Probability of Success at a Task, and Perception of the Outcome of a Task.

One of the earliest theories of AM was proposed by Atkinson and Feather (1966). They stated that a person's achievement oriented behavior is based on three parts; the first part being the individual's predisposition to achievement, the second being the probability of success, and the third, the individual's perception of value of the task. Atkinson and Feather (1966) state, "The strength of motivation to perform some act is assumed to be a multiplicative function of the strength of the motive, the expectancy that the act will have as a consequence the attainment of an incentive, and the value of the incentive: Motivation = (f(Motive x Expectancy x Incentive)" (p. 13).

An individual's perception of probability for achieving the task would have a need to achieve and a fear of failure. Both are strong emotions that influence the individual's decision about whether or not to attempt the task (Bar-Tal, Frieze, & Greenberg, 1974). If a task simultaneously arouses an individual's motivation to approach the task and motivation to avoid the task, then the sum of the two motivation will be the result. If the result is more positive to approach the task, then the individual will be motivated toward the task. If the result is more positive to avoid the task, then the individual will be motivated to avoid the task. The strength of motivation is important as well. Different variables are taken into account for each task. Often this is done subconsciously. These variables factor into how much the individual is motivated to approach or avoid the task (Atkinson & Feather, 1966). With regard to a person motivated to achieve, his behavior is directed by a positive possibility. In a person motivated to avoid failure, his behavior is directed by an undesirable possibility. The same person may experience both motives at

the same time depending on the situation. Which motive the person selects depends on the relative strength of the achievement motives, either to achieve success, or to avoid failure. An individual will find a task easy if they have a high probability of successfully completing the task. On the other hand, an individual will find a task hard if they have a low probability of successfully completing the task.

Motivation, as it relates to students, is very important. Students who have high motivation to achieve generally do well academically. Students with low motivation do not do well academically. But motivation does not guarantee achievement. Similarly, achievement does not reflect motivation (Keefe & Jenkins, 1993).

## Predictors of Achievement Motivation

### The Need to Achieve

All students are influenced by a need to achieve. It causes them to want to be successful at what they attempt. But each student's desire to achieve is affected to different degrees. For some students, the desire to achieve overwhelms other factors that could cause failure: lack of skills, experience, ability, or time. The individual does whatever it takes to work through or eliminate those setbacks (Atkinson, 1974). A study conducted by Atkinson (1999) showed a percentage of students will work hard to achieve a task they do not enjoy, solely to maintain their high GPA and high class rank. This reflects back on the student's attitude toward success. Those students who hold a high attitude of success work hard to achieve success, regardless of the task. High AM and high achievement may be associated with normal perfectionism (Atkinson, 1974).

Haasen and Shea (1979) state, "If we accept the notion of intrinsic motivation, it implies that there is a powerful potential for self-actualization within each of us" (p. 94).

This potential is based on the intensity of our need to achieve, as well as our enjoyment of achieving, Students who are intrinsically motivated participate in learning activities for their own sake; they desire the outcome. They do not need rewards or praise; they find satisfaction in knowing that what they are learning will be beneficial later. They want to master the task, and they believe it is under their control to achieve mastery. The work may reflect personal interest or be a new challenge. "Academic intrinsic motivation has been shown to be positively and significantly related to students' achievement and perception of their academic competence, and inversely related to their academic anxiety" (Eskeles-Gottfried, Fleming, Gottfried, 1998).

Extrinsically motivated individuals are those who participate to receive a reward or avoid punishment, they typically do not want to do the task and believe that it is out of their control on whether they succeed or not. If they do the task, they expect some sort of gain other than knowledge, such as praise, rewards, or avoiding punishment (Keefe & Jenkins, 1993).

According to Tracy (1993), a person's expectations about his/her life are very powerful, and a person's attitude is determined by his expectations. Expectations have a great influence on one's personality. Attitude is shown by the way one reacts when under pressure. A positive attitude allows a person to response constructively. The person expects the best from his or herself, and expects to succeed. Negative attitude may contain self-limiting beliefs, which will reflect on how the person handles certain situations. A person may expect to do poorly or to even fail. "You are the person you imagine yourself to be. If you imagine that you are successful, then you will be a success. If you imagine that you are a failure, then you will be a failure. Our self-image

determines how or if we do certain things", states Murphy (1996, p. 69). Simon (1988) adds, "You need to believe in yourself. If you think that you can do no better, then that thinking will limit you. If you believe that you can, you will succeed, if you do not believe you can, you will fail (p. 44).

Successful people are confident, enthusiastic, and remain positive and optimistic. They expect to succeed. "Individuals with strong self-efficacy are less likely to give up than are those who are paralyzed with doubt about their capabilities" (Alderman, 1999). Unsuccessful people often lack confidence, are negative and pessimistic, and they rarely expect success. In fact, they expect to fail. "Everything that happens to you, everything you become and accomplish is determined by the way you think, by the way you use your mind" (Tracy, 1993).

Our self-esteem and how competent we feel is what causes certain behaviors and establishes certain goals. Some people like to try new experiences and set more challenging goals, others prefer to stay in their comfort zones and be happy with what they know they can accomplish. But it is all based on our view of our selves (Haasen & Shea, 1979).

**The Fear of Failure**

Some individuals' need to achieve is overwhelmed by their fear of failure. They are so concerned they will not be able to succeed at the task that they don't even attempt the task. They feel that if the task in not attempted, it cannot be failed. These individuals have a hard time dealing with their shortcomings, or they fear failing in front of their peers, so they avoid situations where the opportunity to fail exists or where things are out of their control (Atkinson, 1974). According to Tracy (1993), "Fear of failure is what

keeps most adults from succeeding" (p. 77). Simon (1988) adds, "Fear persuades you to set easier goals and do less than you are capable of doing. Fear triggers an internal defense system and fools you into thinking that you have perfectly good reasons not to change" (p. 175).

According to Atkinson and Feather (1966), "One of the more novel implications of a consistently applied expectancy x value-type of theory of motivation is the notion that the anticipation of a negative consequence should always produce negative motivation, that is, a tendency to inhibit activity that is expected to produce the negative consequence" (p.6). If a student anticipates failure or a similar negative response, the student will actively try to avoid being in that situation. Likewise, if the student does end up confronted with a possible negative consequence, the student does little, if anything, to achieve a positive outcome. If the task is not attempted, it cannot be failed. Alderman (1999) adds to this idea, "Students often believe that ability is the primary element for achieving success and lack of ability is the primary reason for failure. Their motive then becomes avoiding failure and protecting their self-worth from the perception that they have low ability" (p. 68). If the student attributes achievement to ability, effort may be seen as useless, and the student may actually decrease effort to protect their self-worth. "A student's motivation may be buried under years of less-than-successful experiences in school" (Canfield & Siccone, 1993, p. 67). Murphy (1996) adds, "Many people will avoid a stressful task as much as possible. Attempt to put it off as long as possible. This increases anxiety, and allows little time to accomplish the task" (p. 112).

For some students, the way to avoid failure is to succeed. Even though achieving the outcome is a success, the goal for these students is to not fail. Their goal is not to gain the rewards or benefits of the outcome, but to avoid failing at any cost (Simons, 1998).

**The Probability of Success**

People are normally motivated to act in ways that help them achieve task accomplishment. The strength of the motivation to act depends on the perceived achievability of the task as well as the importance of the task.

Atkinson and Feather (1966) further state, "When the probability of success is high, as in confronting a very easy task, the sense of humiliation accompanying failure is also very great. However, when the probability for success is low, as in confronting a very difficult task, there is little embarrassment in failing" (p. 15). For some individuals, failing a task that should be easy is humiliating. Rather than fail the task it is easier to never attempt the task, thus not completing it. But if the task is very difficult to accomplish, then a failure to achieve the task is expected. Attempting the difficult task and failing brings no shame, since failure was expected, but attempting the difficult task and succeeding brings happiness.

Alderman (1999) states that some individuals feel that success is based on ability, and failure is caused by a lack of ability. When competitive situations occur, many of these individuals often feel a need to protect themselves from failure or a perceived lack of ability, so they develop strategies such as withholding effort or setting unrealistic goals (too high or too low).

Often people have self-limiting beliefs, ideas that categorize the thinker in certain ways, according to Tracy (1993). Usually the beliefs are based on some past performance

and are untrue. Feelings of inadequacy, whether true or false, become true if the belief is strong enough. Beliefs can cause individuals to disregard information contrary to ones beliefs. Many students feel that if they make the effort and work hard, they will be successful. Effort is the key to success (Leondari, Syngollitou, & Kiosseoglou, 1998).

Alderman (1999) adds to the achievement theories, "Ability and effort have typically been found to be the most frequent reasons for success and failure in achievement contexts" (p. 25). "Ability and self-worth are often seen by students as synonymous. It is ability, often in the absence of accomplishment that defines self-worth for them. For students who believe success is unlikely, the main priority is to avoid failure that is linked or attributed to ability through the use of failure – avoiding strategies" (Alderman, 1999, p. 69). Alderman continues, "Personal experience is one of the most influential sources of efficacy information. It follows then that successes tend to raise efficacy expectations--whereas failures tend to lower them" (p. 61).

Latta (1974) postulates that the intended effort of the task also plays a part in achievement motivation. If the individual has related experiences or abilities in doing the task, the amount of intended effort to complete the task will be low, and the chances for a positive outcome are increased. Alderman (1999) adds, "We are more likely to undertake tasks we believe we have the skills to handle, but avoid tasks we believe require greater skills than we possess" (p. 60). But, people have skills and talents that are developed with education and experience. These can improve with study and practice (Tracy, 1993). With the correct attitude, one can make deliberate, conscience efforts to make improvements. Even so, Rathvon (1999) states "Improvement in on-task behavior does not necessarily

lead to increases in academic performance" (p. 114). One must gain knowledge or understand the concept to improve, not just behave in a manner conducive to learning.

Some students do not believe in additional effort. They believe that the ability to learn is fixed at birth. These students believe they can only learn so much so fast, and that any effort but forth to learn more or faster will be wasted. To avoid failure, they will arrange the circumstances so that if poor performance should occur, those circumstances will be seen as the cause rather than a lack of ability (Schommer & Dunnell, 1997).

In summary, the person in whom the achievement motive is stronger should set his/her level of aspiration in the intermediate zone where there is moderate risk. Carefully measuring where they will get the best payoff, not too easy but yet not too difficult. On the other hand, the person in whom the motive to avoid failure is stronger should select either the easiest of the alternatives or should be extremely speculative and set his/her goals where there is virtually no chance for success. These are activities which minimize his anxiety about failure (Atkinson and Feather, 1966, p. 18).

**Perception of the Outcome**

Keefe and Jenkins (1993) add, "Authentic human achievement, on the other hand, is concerned with what is significant, worthwhile and meaningful in the lives of successful adults from all walks of life – artists, business people… Authentic academic achievement, then, should concern itself with accomplishments that are significant, worthwhile, and meaningful for students preparing for adulthood (p.55). Jenkins (1997) includes, "Children are born motivated to learn. Children enter Kindergarten still possessing this enthusiasm for learning. Educators need not motivate children to learn; this was accomplished at birth. The responsibility of educators is to eliminate the loss of

innate enthusiasm" (p. 111). Keefe and Jenkins (1993) continue, "Most children begin school with enthusiasm for learning. School is firmly fixed in their positive system of values. Over time, however, the importance begins to diminish as school experiences fail to connect with their lives" (p. 154).

According to Parker and Johnson (1981), an individual's achievement motive may be seen as a personality trait. Each person has different degrees of AM. High achievers may be classified as driven, striving for success, competitive, or taking charge. Low achievers may be seen as quitters, non-participants, or failures. Each person approaches each situation with a unique combination of several achievement motives. These achievement motives are shaped by significant interactions in a child's early developmental years. They are learned motives, shaped by play, experience, and rewards or consequences for actions or behaviors. It is at this time when parents, role models, and teachers can have the greatest impact on the child's habits and values about AM.

Studies conducted by VanZile-Tamsen and Livingston (1999) showed that students who value the outcome put forth more effort and try more strategies to achieve the outcome. High achievers work harder and will try different means to accomplish success. Studies by Senecal, Koestner, and Vallerand (1995) show that even when all possibilities of failure are removed from a situation, many students will procrastinate, quit, or not attempt the task if the outcome has no perceived value.

**Achievement Motivation and College Women**

The problems of achievement motivation for the American woman in a society which maintains a sex-role distinction between masculine competitiveness and feminine noncompetitiveness are beginning to attract research attention. College women's

educational achievement is crucial to economic prosperity, as well as to the mental health of women and their families. Women's educational achievement has been essential to their participation and success in the labor force; the higher the level of education, the more likely a woman is to be in the labor force (U.S. Department of Labor, 2000).

Research in the 1950s and 60s indicated that females had a lower level of achievement motivation than males (Hoffman, 1972). However, Veroff, Depner, Kukla, and Douvan (1980) found that achievement motivation increased among American women from 1957 to 1976, and Jenkins (1987) found increases from 1967 to 1981. More recent studies show no gender differences in achievement motivation (Mednick & Thomas, 1993).

Jenkins (1987) also found that achievement motivation in college women who were seniors predicted their employment in achievement-oriented occupations 14 years later. An interesting finding in Jenkins's study is that women employed as college professors or as business entrepreneurs showed significant increases in their achievement motivation compared with their scores in college, whereas those in other occupations showed no change in achievement motivation (Jenkins, 1987).

Contemporary research on achievement motivation is framed by achievement goal theory (Pintrich & Schunk, 1996). Regarding achievement motivation, two types of goals are taken into consideration: mastery goals (also known as intrinsic goals) and performance goals (or extrinsic goals). When an individual adopts a mastery goal in a particular activity, his purpose is to develop personal competence by acquiring knowledge and skills. If the individual pursues performance goals, the objective is to demonstrate personal competence and outperform others.

Research on achievement motivation is generally scarce on the question of gender (Midgley, Kaplan, & Middleton, 2001). Two possible reasons for this suggest themselves. First, achievement-goals researches may be ignoring gender. Secondly, achievement-goal researchers may always be searching for gender differences and finding no significant differences whatsoever. Barron and Harackiewicz (2001) found a non-significant correlation between gender and performance goals ($r = .10$) and a significant but small correlation between gender and mastery goals ($r = .16$) with women being likely to adopt mastery goals. However, this conclusion must remain tentative because contemporary motivation researchers have paid little attention to gender. The recognition of gender similarities in achievement motivation is important as a counter to a possible assertion that men and women have entirely different achievement goals.

**Achievement Motivation and Hooking-Up**

According to interviews with high-achieving college women, Stepp (2007) argues that for some women, career-mindedness may take priority over personal relationships; for such females, the time commitment needed for a long-term relationship may deter from their ability to seek out career or educational opportunities that would benefit them personally. Therefore, they would be more willing to engage in hookup behavior instead of committed relationships.

Glenn and Marquardt (2001) stated that the desire to be carefree in college may motivate hookup behavior, especially for high-achieving adolescent females. They argued that young women who strive for independence prefer hookups to traditional relationships because hookups provide sexual encounters with interesting or attractive men without compromising their independence.

Bogle (2008) wrote in an e-mail message:

"Women do not want to get left out in the cold, so they are competing for men on men's terms. This results in more casual hook-up encounters that do not end up leading to more serious romantic relationships. Since college women say they generally want 'something more' than just a casual hook-up, women end up losing out."

Overall, evidence has suggested that traditional dating has been replaced by hooking up for college women.

## Summary

Risky sexual behavior on college campuses has been a major concern of researchers for decades as sexually transmitted infections have threatened the health and lives of college students. Recently, the focus of research has shifted toward the hookup culture on college campuses. Researchers are finding that hookup behaviors come with serious emotional and psychological consequences like sexual guilt (Oswalt et al., 2005). However, women with high achievement motivation that engage in sexual hookups may experience less sexual guilt than women with low achievement motivation.

## Rationale

Some research suggests hookups to be common among high achieving and career minded women who have little time to invest in committed relationships (Fielder & Carey, 2010). These women may find it more acceptable to engage in casual sexual behavior and experience less sexual guilt because their studies are far more significant to them. The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between achievement motivation and sexual guilt associated with hookups in college women.

## Hypothesis

It was predicted that a high level of achievement motivation will predict a low level of sexual guilt in college women who engage in sexual hookups.

## Method

### Participants

A total of 106 participants initiated the survey. Of the 106 participants, 19 were deleted due to missing and/or erroneous data. The total amount of participants was 87 college women aged 18 to 35 years old ($M = 20.94$, $SD = 3.47$). The participants were recruited in the following way. An electronic announcement was sent by the department secretary to all undergraduate psychology classes for students who were interested in participating in the study. The announcement included a link to a specific URL on Surveymonkey.com.

### Procedure

Participants opened the link to Surveymonkey.com, read the cover letter to the study, and completed four questionnaires.

### Materials

*Informed Consent.* An informed consent cover letter was provided on the first page of the Surveymonkey.com link (See Appendix A).

*Demographic Questionnaire.* The demographic questionnaire contained items requesting information about participants' age, sex, ethnicity, religion, and G.P.A. (See Appendix B).

*Hookups Questionnaire.* The hookup questionnaire (HQ) was a modified version of the hookup questionnaire developed by Paul et al. (2000). A definition of a hookup

was presented. It was followed by one item which asks the following, "How many hookups in college have you had to date?" (See Appendix C).

*Sexual Guilt Questionnaire.* The sexual guilt questionnaire (SGQ) was a modified version of that used by Oswalt et al. (2005; personal communication, 2014). It consisted of one item which asked "Have you ever regretted your decision to engage in a hookup?" Items were scored on a 5-point Likert scale (5 = always, 4 = often, 3 = sometimes, 2 = rarely, 1 = never). (See Appendix D).

*Achievement Motivation Scale.* The achievement motivation scale (AMS) consisted of 5 items designed to measure achievement motivation taken from the *Needs Assessment Questionnaire* by Heckert et al. (2000). An example of an item was "I try to get the best grades possible in my classes." Items were scored on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree). The total score was derived by summarizing the scores on the 5 items. The total score can range from 5 to 25. (See Appendix E).

**Results**

The mean age of the participants was 20.9 (*SD* = 3.5, range 17-35). Regarding year in college, there were 18 freshmen (20.9%), 26 sophomores (30.6%), 19 juniors (22.4%), and 23 seniors (25.9%) included in this study. Of the 87 participants, 22 reported to be white (25%), 30 reported black (35%), 24 reported latino/a (28%), and 10 reported other (12%) for their race. There were 39 Catholics (45.9%), 3 Protestants (3.5%), 3 Muslims (3.5%), 1 Buddhist (1.2%), 4 Atheists (4.7%), and 35 participants that reported Other (41.2%) for their religion. The mean score for G.P.A. was 3.20 (*SD* = .584).

A series of Pearson's correlations were performed on the measures of sexual guilt, number of hookups, and the total achievement motivation scores. See Table 1.

Table 1

*Summary of Means, Standard Deviations, Correlations and Reliability Coefficients of the Hookups Questionnaire, Sexual Guilt Questionnaire, and Achievement Motivation Scale*

| Variable | *M* | *SD* | 1 | 2 | 3 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. HQ | 2.55 | 3.99 | | | |
| 2. SGQ | 1.80 | 1.42 | 0.410* | | |
| 3. AMS | 4.36 | 0.89 | 0.087 | 0.069 | 0.140 |

*Note.* HQ = Hookups Questionnaire; SGQ = Sexual Guilt Questionnaire; AMS = Achievement Motivation Scale.
$N = 87$.
*$p < .01$.

Results of the correlations indicated that the independent measure of achievement motivation score was not related to the dependent measure sexual guilt. Consequentially, the planned hierarchical regression for the independent variables number of sexual hookups and total achievement motivation score could not be performed.

## Discussion

The hypothesis of the study was not supported. Although there was a significant positive relationship between sexual guilt and number of hookups, there was not a significant relationship between sexual guilt and achievement motivation.

The relationship between sexual guilt and number of hookups in heterosexual college women is consistent with current research. There is some concern that hooking up in college is more problematic for women. This is consistent with Seaman's (2005)

findings that a woman may feel unsettled to an experience that is supposed to be considered a socially encouraged practice among her peers. College women who engage in higher numbers of hookups are generally labeled negatively. This may cause potential psychological discomfort leading to sexual guilt for college women.

It was hypothesized that achievement motivation would mediate the amount of sexual guilt related to college women that engaged in hookups. Stepp (2007) suggests that career-mindedness may take priority over personal relationships. Time commitment towards furthering their education and focusing on the future may deter them from monogamous relationships. Therefore, they may be more likely to engage in hookups as opposed to have traditional monogamous relationships, which could potentially compromise their independence and deter them from their future goals. In the present study, however, achievement motivation was not related to the frequency of hookups, as well as sexual guilt.

There are several possible explanations for why this study did not demonstrate the relationship between achievement motivation and number of hookups. One reason is that the scales that were used were not effective in measuring what they were intended too. The measure of achievement motivation was extrapolated from a much larger scale, and the items used in the scale may not have been reliable and/or valid. One possibility to consider for future research is to examine woman attending high achieving institutions, such as Ivy League schools, and compare them with women who attend public and/or community colleges. Are there more hookups occurring at Ivy League Institutions, and is there more or less sexual regret at those institutions? Moreover, the exploratory nature of

the present study, the small number of women interviewed, and possible sampling bias make generalizations difficult.

There are important limitations to the study that must be considered when interpreting the results. First, the sample was limited to heterosexual college aged females. It is not possible to draw generalizations about another population, like bisexual or lesbian hookup behaviors from the study. Another implication of this study is selection bias. Due to the nature of the topic, it is possible that those experiencing the most amount of regret declined participation due to the anxiety of addressing such issues that cause psychological discomfort.

Another limitation of this study is that it did not take into account a college aged male population. Had it done so, based on social constructions of appropriate sexual behavior, males may skew their responses to fit sexual permissiveness norms, and females may skew their responses towards sexual restraint. This study needs to be repeated with a male population, and the relationships between number of hookups, sexual guilt, and achievement motivation all need to be explored.

Considering the limitations of the current study, questions emerge for future research. For instance, do bisexual and lesbian college aged women hook up as often as heterosexual college aged women? And if so, do they experience more or less sexual guilt? If so, are there any significant differences between heterosexuals and homosexuals? Males or females? What are the differences, if any?

There are some additional recommendations for future research. Relating to achievement motivation, using a larger sample may yield more significant results. The relationship, or lack thereof, between sexual guilt and achievement motivation merits

further study as well. Furthermore, this study contributes significantly to previous

research concerning hookups in today's culture and sexual regret in college woman.

## REFERENCES

Alderman, M. (1999). *Motivation for achievement: Possibilities for teaching and learning.* New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., Publishers.

Alschuler, A. (1973). *Developing achievement motivation in adolescents.* New Jersey: Educational Technology Publications.

Atkinson, J. (1974). *Motivation and achievement.* Washington, D.C.: V.H. Winston & Sons.

Atkinson, J. (1999). *Key factors influencing pupil motivation in design and technology.* Retrieved June 4th, 2014. Web site :

http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/ejournals/JTE/v10n2/atkindon.html

Atkinson, J. & Feather, N. (1966). *A theory of achievement motivation.* New York: Wiley & Sons.

Argyle, M. (1957). Social pressure in public and private situations. *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 54,* 172-175.

Arnett, J. J. (2000). Emerging adulthood. *American Psychologist, 55*(1), 469-480.

Aronson, E. (1968). Dissonance theory: Progress and problems. In R. Abelson, E.

Aronson, W. McGuire, T. Newcomb, M. Rosenberg, & P. Tannnenbaum (Eds.), *Theories of cognitive consistency: A sourcebook* (pp. 5-27). Chicago: Rand McNally.

Asch, S. E. (1956). Studies of independence and conformity: A minority of one against a unanimous majority. *Psychological Monographs: General and Applied, 70*(9), 1-70.

Beausang, C. C. (2000). Personal stories of growing up sexually. *Comprehensive Pediatric Nursing, 2*(3), 175-192.

Bogle, K. (2005). *The shift from dating to hooking up: What scholars have missed.*

Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Sociological Association, Philadelphia, PA.

Bogle, K. A. (2007). *Hooking up and the sexual double standard among college students.* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Sociological Association, New York City, New York.

Bogle, K. A. (2008). Hooking- up: What educators need to know. *The Chronicle of Higher Education,* 4. Retrieved from http://www. chronicle.com

Burdette, A. M., Ellison, C. G., Hill, T. D., & Glenn, N. D. (2009). Hooking up at college: Does religion make a difference? *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, 48*(3), 535-551.

Buss, D. M. (1998). Sexual strategies theory: Historical origins and current status. *The Journal of Sex Research, 35*(1), 19-31.

Buss, D. M., & Schmitt, D. P. (2003). *The evolution of desire: Strategies of human mating.* New York: Basic Books.

Canfield, J., & Siccone, F. (1993). *101 ways to develop student self-esteem and responsibility: The teacher as a coach.* Needham Heights, MA.

Deutsch, M., & Gerard, H. B. (1955). A study of normative and informational social influences upon individual judgment. *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology,51*(3), 629-636.

Eshbaugh, E. M., & Gute, G. (2008). Hookups and sexual guilt among college women. *The Journal of Social Psychology, 148*(1), 77-89.

Eskeles-Gottfried, A., Fleming, J., & Gottfried, A. (1998). Role of cognitively stimulating home environment in children's academic intrinsic motivation. A longitudinal study. *Child Development, 69,* 1448-1460.

Flack, W., Daubman, K. A., Caron, M. L., Asadorian, J. A., D'Aureli, N. R., Gigliotti, S.
N., Stine, E. (2007). Risk factors and consequences of unwanted sex among
university students: Hooking up, alcohol and stress response. *Journal of
Interpersonal Violence, 22*(2), 139-157.

Glenn, N., & Marquardt, E. (2001). *Hooking up, hanging out and hoping for Mr. Right:
College women on dating and mating today.* New York: Institute for American
Values.

Grabe, M. (1979). *Achievement motivation as a predictor of effort and achievement in
mastery learning course.* Grand Forks, N.D. Midwestern Psychological
Association Annual Meeting. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service Number
ED 176 174)

Grello, C. M., Welsh, D. P., & Harper, M. S. (2006). No strings attached: The nature of
casual sex in college students. *The Journal of Sex Research, 43*(3), 255-267.

Griskevicius, V., Goldstein, N. J., Mortensen, C. R., Cialdini, R. B., & Kenrick, D. T.
(2006). Going along versus going alone: When fundamental motives facilitate
strategic (non)conformity. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 91*(2),
281-294.

Haasen, A. & Shea, G. (1979). *A better place to work: A new sense of motivation leading
to high productivity.* New York, NY: AMA Membership Publications Division.

Hoffman, L. W. (1972). Early childhood experiences and women's achievement motives.
*Journal of Social Issues, 29*(2), 129-155.

Hughes, M., Morrison, K., & Asada, K. J. (2005). What's love got to do with it?
Exploring the impact of maintenance rules, love attitudes, and network support on
friends with benefits relationships. *Western Journal of Communication, 69*(1), 49-
66.

Kalish, R. (2007, August). *Sexual scripts and hook ups among college students: Evidence from the college social life survey.* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Sociological Association, New York City.

Keefe, J. & Jenkins, J. (1993). *Eye on education: Instruction and the learning environment.* Larchmont, NY.

Knox, D., Cooper, C., & Zusman, M. E. (2001). Sexual values of college students. *College Student Journal, 35*(1), 24-28.

Latta, R. (1974). *The influence of achievement motivation, success, and intended effort on behavioral intensity.* Iowa City, IA: Midwestern Psychological Association Annual Meeting. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service Number ED 095 461)

Lefkowitz, E. S., Boone, T. L., & Shearer, C. L. (2004). Communication with best friends about sex-related topics during emerging adulthood. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 33*(4), 339-351.

Lefkowitz, E. S., Gillen, M. M., Shearer, C. L., & Boone, T. L. (2004). Religiosity, sexual behaviors, and sexual attitudes during emerging adulthood. *The Journal of Sex Research, 41*(2), 150-159.

Leondari, A., Syngollitou, E., & Kiosseoglou, G. (1998). Academic achievement, motivation, and possible selves. *Journal of Adolescence. 21(*2), 219-222.

Littleton, H., Tabernik, H., Canales, E. J., & Backstrom, T. (2009). Risky situation or harmless fun? A qualitative examination of college women's bad hook up and rape scripts. *Sex Roles, 60*(11/12), 793-804.

Mahaffy, K. A. (1996). Cognitive dissonance and its resolution: A study of lesbian Christians. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, 35*(4), 392-402.

Meier, A., Hull, K. H., & Ortyl, T. A. (2009). Young adult relationship values at the

Intersection of gender and sexuality. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 71*(3), 510-525.

Metts, S. (2006). Gendered communication in dating relationships. In B. J. Dow & J. T. Woods (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of gender and communication* (pp. 25-40). Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Mewhinney, D. M., Herold, E. S., & Maticka-Tyndale, E. (1991). Sexual scripts and risk taking of Canadian university students on spring break in Daytona Beach, Florida. *The Canadian Journal of Human Sexuality, 4*(4), 31-49.

Milhausen, R. R., & Herold, E. S. (1999). Does the sexual double standard still exist? Perceptions of university women. *Journal of Sex Research, 36*(4), 361-368.

Monte, C. & Lifreiri, F. (1973). *The junior college of self-actualizing, drive-reducing all-purpose motivation fulfillment machine: Every ego has its price.* Terre Haute, IN: Indiana State University, School of Education.

Mukherjee, B. (1964). *Development of a forced choice test of achievement motivation.* Bloomington, IN: Indiana University.

Murphy, S. (1996). *The achievement zone.* New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons.

O'Keefe, D. J. (2002). *Persuasion: Theory and research* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Oswalt, S. B., Cameron, K. A., & Koob, J. J. (2005). Sexual guilt in college students. *Archives of Sexual Behavior, 34*(6), 663-669.

Parker, J. & Johnson, C. (1981). *Affecting achievement motivation.* Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service Number ED 226 833).

Paul, E. L., & Hayes, K. A. (2002). The casualties of "casual" sex: A qualitative exploration of the phenomenology of college students' hookups. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 19*(5), 639-661.

Paul, E. L., McManus, B., & Hayes, A. (2000). "Hookups": Characteristics and correlates of college students' spontaneous and anonymous sexual experiences. *The Journal of Sex Research, 37*(1), 76-88.

Rathvon, N. (1999). *Effective school interventions: Strategies for enhancing academic achievement and social competence.* New York: The Guilford Press.

Richey, E., Knox, D., & Zusman, M. (2009). Sexual values of 783 undergraduates. *College Student Journal, 43*(1), 1-6.

Seaman, B. (2005). *Binge.* Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons.

Schommer, M. & Dunnell, P. (1997). Epistemological beliefs of gifted high school students. *Roeper Review, 19*(3), 153-156.

Senecal, C., Koestner, R., & Vallerand, R. (1995). Self-regulation and academic procrastination. *The Journal of Social psychology, 135*(5), 607-619.

Simon, S. (1988). *Getting unstuck.* New York: Warner Books.

Spence, J. (1983). *Achievement and achievement motives.* San Francisco, CA: W.H. Freeman & Company.

Spitzberg, B., Kam, J., & Roesch, S. (2005). *You're nobody 'til somebody loves you: Seeking esteem and commitment through manipulation.* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Communication Association, New York.

Sprecher, S., Felmlee, D., Milhausen, S., Fehr, B., & Vanni, D. (1998). Factors associated with distress following the breakup of a close relationship. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 15,* 791-809.

Stepp, L. S. (2007). *Unhooked: How young women pursue sex, delay love, and lose at both.* New York: Riverhead Books.

Tracy, B. (1993). *Maximum Achievement.* New York: Simon & Schuster.

The Task Force of the National Advisory Council on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism.

(2002, April). *High-risk drinking in college: What we know and what we need to learn.* Retrieved from

www.collegedrinkingprevention.gov/media/FINALPanel1.pdf

U.S. Department of Labor (2000). *20 facts on women workers.* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau.

VanZile-Tamsen, C. & Livingston, J. (1999). The differential impact of motivation on the Self - regulated strategy use of high- and low- achieving college students. *Journal of College Student Development. 40*(1), 54-60.

Veroff, J., and McClelland, L., & Marquis, K. (1971). *Measuring intelligence and Achievement motivation in surveys.* Washington, D.C.: American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service Number ED 146 177)

Wlodowski, R. (1985). *Enhancing adult motivation to learn.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, Inc.

Zeelenberg, M., & Breugelmans, S. M. (2008). The role of interpersonal harm in distinguishing guilt from guilt. *American Psychological Association, 8*(5), 589-596.

**Appendix A: Cover Letter**

Dear Research Participant,

Your participation in a research project is requested. The title of the study is "College Women Hooking Up". The research is being conducted by Michael Serpico and Dr. Frank Muscarella, the chair of the Psychology Department at Barry University. They are seeking information that will be useful in the field of Human Sexuality. The aim of the research is to assess sexual guilt and achievement motivation in college women that engage in sexual hookup behaviors. In accordance with these aims, the following procedure will be used: you will be asked to provide demographic information, as well as complete three scales containing seven items total. It is estimated that the entire process will take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

Your consent to be a research participant is strictly voluntary and should you decline to participate or should you choose to drop out at any time during the study, there will be no adverse effects. If you are a student there will be no effect on your grades.

The risks of involvement in this study are minimal and are no greater than those you would experience in everyday life. The following procedures will be used to minimize these risks: You can skip any questions you do not want to answer. There are no direct benefits to you for participating in this study; however, your participation will contribute to research in the area of Human Sexuality. If you are a student you may be able to receive extra credit for your participation. Print a copy of this cover letter as proof of your participation.

As a research participant, information you provide is anonymous, that is, no names or other identifiers will be collected. Surveymonkey.com allows researchers to suppress the delivery of IP addresses during the downloading of data, and in this study no IP address will be delivered to the researcher. However, Surveymonkey.com does collect IP addresses for its own purposes. If you have concerns about this you should review the privacy policy of Surveymonkey.com before you begin. The anonymous electronic data file will not be destroyed, but will be kept in a locked file cabinet in the researchers' office.

By completing and submitting this electronic survey you are acknowledging that you are at least 18-years-old and that you voluntarily agree to participate in the study.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the study or your participation in the study, you may contact Michael Serpico, by phone at 786-503-5108 or by e-mail at mserpico305@hotmail.com, or Dr. Frank Muscarella, by phone at 305-899-3275 or by e-mail at fmuscarella@barry.edu.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,


Michael Serpico

## Appendix B: Demographic Questionnaire

**The following questions ask you for some basic demographic information.**

1. What is your age? _____

2. Are you:  [A] Male   [B] Female

3. In what year of college are you now?

[A] Freshman          [B] Sophomore          [C] Junior      [D] Senior

4. Do you consider yourself?

[A] White      [B] Black      [C] Latino(a)   [D] Asian American

[E] Other_____

5. What is your religion?

[A] Catholic [B] Protestant  [C] Jewish  [D] Muslim  [E] Muslim  [F] Buddhist

[G] Atheist [H] Other

6. What is your G.P.A. (grade point average)? _____

**Appendix C: Hookups Questionnaire**

"A sexual encounter, usually only lasting one night, between two people who are strangers or brief acquaintances. Some physical interaction is typical but may or may not include sexual intercourse"

1. How many hookups, according to this definition, have you had since you have been in college?

_____ Hookups

## Appendix D: Sexual Guilt Questionnaire

**The following section contains one item related to sexual guilt.**

1. Have you ever felt guilty about engaging in a hookup in college?

**Never**                                                                **Always**

[A]      1                 2                 3                 4                 5

[B] Not applicable because I haven't engaged in sexual activity.

## Appendix E: Achievement Motivation Scale

**The following questions ask you about your attitudes towards achievement motivation. For each statement, indicate your agreement or disagreement using the scale provided.**

1. I try to get the best grades possible in my classes.

**Strongly Disagree**                                              **Strongly Agree**

1                2                3                4                5

2. I am a hard worker.

**Strongly Disagree**                                              **Strongly Agree**

1                2                3                4                5

3. It is important to me to do the best job possible.

**Strongly Disagree**                                              **Strongly Agree**

1                2                3                4                5

4. I push myself to be "all that I can be."

**Strongly Disagree**                                              **Strongly Agree**

1                2                3                4                5

5. I try very hard to improve on my past performance at school.

**Strongly Disagree**                                              **Strongly Agree**

1                2                3                4                5
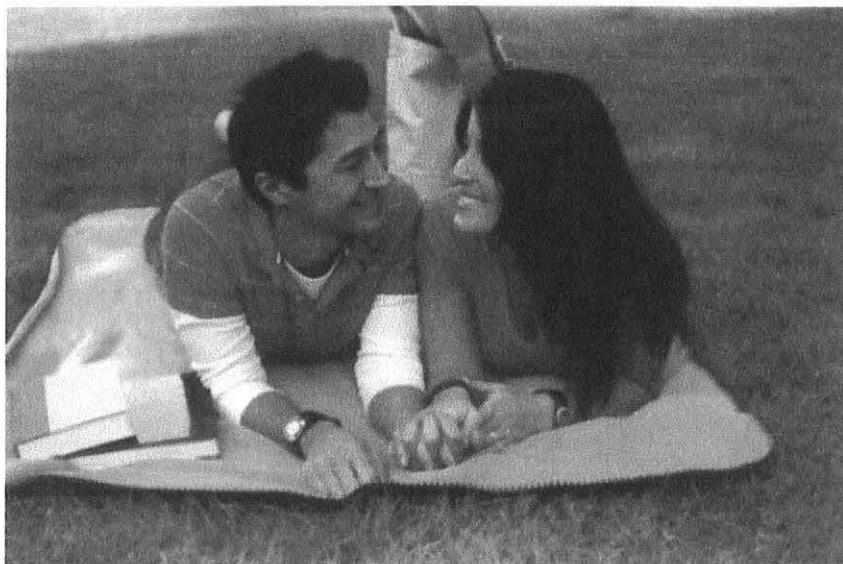
**Appendix F**

# RESEARCH OPPORTUNITY

Do you need research credits? Need extra points to boost your grade in a psychology course?
Are you interested in the hookup culture on campus?

Participation in this study will help us learn more about the attitudes of heterosexual college women who engage in hookups. The questionnaire will only take about 15 minutes and you will **receive 1 research credit.**



Please go to the link below or take a tab below:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/summary/jGs3PSwnf8YjyuGhsrB29BFdfaaL8ry337_2Flum8uz3w_3D

**For more information contact**
Michael Serpico
Email: michael.serpico@mymail.barry.edu or (786) 503-5108
> **Or**
Dr. Frank Muscarella
fmuscarella@barry.edu or (305) 899-3275
> **Or**
IRB Point of Contact
Barbara Cook bcook@mail.barry.edu or 305-899-3020