



How Do College Experience and Gender Differentiate the Enactment of Hookup Scripts Among Emerging Adults?

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Abstract

Empirical attention to “hooking up” has expanded over time, yet limited attention has been devoted to understanding the hookup experiences of emerging adults (ages 18–25) who have not attended college and how they may differ from those who have attended college. Guided by life course and scripting theories, we used a storytelling methodology to content analyze the hookup stories of a large sample of college-attending and non-college emerging adults ($N = 407$). We also compared stories based on gender, as several studies report gender differences but have yet to consider how hookup scripts may differ between men and women. Overall, we found that college-attending and non-college emerging adults reported using similar hookup scripts in their most recent hookup experience, as did emerging adult men and women. However, we found that greater proportions of non-college emerging adults reported sexual touch, meeting in an “other location,” and positive reactions to their most recent hookup. Greater proportions of college-attending emerging adults reported their hookup occurred in a house/apartment. In terms of gender, greater proportions of women reported “having sex” and deep kissing, hooking up with an acquaintance, partner characteristics as a reason to hookup, and negative reactions to their most recent hookup. Greater proportions of men reported hooking up with a stranger, meeting at a bar/club, hooking up at a party, and hooking up at an “other location.” Implications for future research and sexual health education and intervention are discussed.

Keywords Hooking up · Casual sex · Emerging adulthood · College student · Non-college emerging adults

Introduction

According to Arnett (2015), two prominent features of emerging adulthood (ages 18–25) are increased identity exploration and experimentation. From this perspective, several studies have focused on emerging adults’ participation in casual sex relationships referred to as “hooking up” (see Claxton & van Dulmen, 2013; Garcia, Reiber, Massey, & Merriwether, 2012). Research has identified a “hookup script” that seems to guide involvement in this behavior (Holman & Sillars,

2012). Most of the research on hooking up among emerging adults has used college student samples (e.g., Olmstead, Pasley, & Fincham, 2013; Owen, Rhoades, Stanley, & Fincham, 2010), and some scholars suggested that a “hookup culture” exists across colleges and universities in the U.S. (Bogle, 2007; Garcia et al., 2012). Comparatively fewer studies have examined hooking up among emerging adults who have not attended college (e.g., Furman & Shaffer, 2011). The first purpose of this study was to examine whether hookup scripts differed between emerging adults who have attended college and those who have not.

Studies have also attended to differences in hookup experiences between men and women. These studies have primarily examined number of hookup partners (e.g., Owen et al., 2010) as well as responses to hookup experiences (e.g., emotional reactions; Owen & Fincham, 2011). To our knowledge, no study has considered how men and women differed in their enactment of hookup scripts. The second purpose of this study was to examine whether men and women differed in the scripts they followed in their most recent hookup experience.

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Theoretical Background

Life Course Theory

This study was guided by two theories. The first guiding theory was individual life course theory (Bengston & Allen, 1993). According to this theory, individuals follow predictable stages in their lives in which their experiences and expectations for behavior are qualitatively distinct from the stages prior and subsequent stages (White, Klein, & Martin, 2015). For our study, we focused on the life course stage referred to as emerging adulthood (Arnett, 2000).

Emerging Adulthood The period of emerging adulthood is theorized as being distinct from adolescence and adulthood (Arnett, 2015). During this stage, individuals experience a moratorium from adult responsibilities (e.g., marriage and childbearing) to engage in identity development and exploration (Arnett, 2006). This is thought to particularly occur in the areas of occupation, worldviews, and romantic relationships (Arnett, 2000). For this study, we focused on relationships as emerging adults encounter opportunities for decision making when it comes to relationship partners, as well as sexual experiences (Allen, Husser, Stone, & Jordal, 2008).

A key criticism of this proposed life course stage is that it is not applicable to all individuals between the ages of 18–25 (see Cote, 2014). That is, not all individuals experience a reprieve from making adult decisions and have the opportunity to delay responsibilities while they figure out their identity (Arnett, 2015). As such, it has been suggested that perhaps emerging adulthood is a college student phenomenon, and those who do not have the privilege of attending colleges or universities after high school do not have the chance to explore, experiment, and engage in prolonged identity development (Hendry & Kloep, 2010). Given the abundance of research on college students and hooking up, we contribute to the literature by including, and comparing, individuals between the ages of 18–25 who have and have not attended postsecondary education.

Scripting Theory

Sexual scripting theory (Simon & Gagnon, 1984) suggests that individuals follow certain patterns of behavior during their sexual interactions. For example, Simon and Gagnon (1986) proposed that there are three primary components of sexual scripts that guide sexual behavior. These include *cultural scenarios*, *interpersonal scripts*, and *intrapsychic scripts*. Through the process of socialization, individuals learn the symbols, rules, norms and expectations attached

to the enactment of particular roles and scripts (White et al., 2015). As research on hooking up has grown, scholars have identified a “hookup script” that emerging adults appear to be familiar with, but do not always follow in practice (Epstein, Calzo, Smiler, & Ward, 2009).

The Hookup Script The norms and expectations attached to the enactment of a hookup seem to be important while guiding this particular sexual interaction. Several studies provide a researcher led definition for hooking up (e.g., Owen et al., 2010; Vrangalova, 2015), whereas others have attended to how participants define hooking up for themselves (e.g., Holman & Sillars, 2012; Lewis, Atkins, Blayney, Dent, & Kaysen, 2013; Olmstead, Conrad, & Anders, 2018). These definitions tend to vary a great deal; however, the hookup script seems to be inclusive of several important components. A prominent expectation is that those involved in the hookup are not in a romantic relationship and do not have obligations for being committed after the hookup (Vrangalova, 2015). Hookup partners can be just about anyone, such as a stranger (known less than 24 h; Fisher, Worth, Garcia, & Meredith, 2012), acquaintance, friend, or an ex-romantic partner (Grello, Welsh, & Harper, 2006). Locations and motivations for hooking up can vary substantially (see Garcia et al., 2012). Also, some report positive emotional reactions, whereas others are negative or even psychologically harmful (Flack et al., 2007; Owen & Fincham, 2011; Vrangalova, 2015). Hookups can include a range of intimate behaviors. Some may define a hookup as nothing more than a make out session (deep kissing), whereas others expect that a hookup will include sexual intercourse (penile–vaginal or anal; Olmstead et al., 2018).

Much of what we know about hooking up and hookup scripts comes from samples of college-attending emerging adults (Claxton & van Dulmen, 2013). No study was found that has examined self-reported hookup scripts from emerging adults who have not attended college. Perhaps the scripts identified in research are exclusive to those who attend college, and those who do not attend college hookup in a much less scripted manner. Non-college emerging adults may not experience the same opportunities for sexuality exploration compared to those who attend college, as individuals who do not attend college tend to marry at younger ages (Arnett, 2015; Goldstein & Kenney, 2001) and begin family formation earlier (Kloep & Hendry, 2011). Some research indicates that non-college and college-attending populations differ in their sexual experiences as well (e.g., intercourse experience, casual sex, risk-taking behaviors; Bailey, Fleming, Henson, Catalano, & Haggerty, 2008). Thus, to advance what we know collectively about hooking up among emerging adults, it seems critical to know how non-college emerging adults enact hookups.

Hooking Up

The available research on hooking up suggests that this experience is common among emerging adults (see Garcia et al., 2012). Although a few studies have examined casual sex (e.g., Lyons, Manning, Longmore, & Giordano, 2014) or hooking up (e.g., Johnson, 2013) using non-college samples, or samples that include a mix of college and non-college emerging adults (e.g., Bailey et al., 2008), much of what we know comes from research that utilizes college student samples (see Garcia et al., 2012). Scholars have called for greater attention to casual sex relationships and experiences among those from varied educational backgrounds (Claxton & van Dulmen, 2013) to provide a more comprehensive picture of hookup experiences among emerging adults.

Furman and Shaffer (2011) examined the sexual behaviors of a sample of 163 emerging adults from the fifth wave of a community-based sample. At baseline, participants were 10th graders in high school. College attendance status was not reported for the wave used in this study. They compared genital and non-genital behavior for those who reported a romantic partner, friend, casual acquaintance, and friend with benefits. Generally, they found that non-genital and genital sexual behavior was higher among those in romantic relationships, followed by those in friends with benefits relationships, and the lowest mean scores were reported among those in friend and casual acquaintance relationships. Lyons et al. (2014) examined motivations for casual sex using a young adult sample (ages 18–22) from the Toledo Adolescent Relationship Study. About a third (32%) of their sample was enrolled in college. They found that the most prominent reasons for engaging in casual sex were to experience sexual satisfaction and to have fun. They also found that substance use, lack of commitment, and being in the period of emerging adulthood were strong motivators as well. We add to this literature by comparing a large sample of emerging adults from different educational backgrounds. This comparison is important given the assertion that a “hookup culture” exists on college campuses across the U.S. and that those attending college are socialized into such a culture (Bogle, 2008).

Hookup Culture Although not previously tested, it is plausible that college-attending emerging adults’ hookup scripts may differ from those who have not attended college due to the potential influence of a “hookup culture” on college campuses. From a symbolic interactionism perspective (Burr, Leigh, Day, & Constantine, 1979), individuals learn culture via the process of socialization wherein they learn the norms, rules and expectations associated with a given role (White et al., 2015). Some scholars (e.g., Bogle, 2008; Olmstead et al., 2018) suggested that the hookup culture on college campuses creates a context for individuals to become involved in hooking up and, in so doing, become familiar

with a hookup script. Aubrey and Smith (2013) developed a measure regarding the hookup culture and individuals’ endorsement of such a culture. They identified five features of this culture that were later found to be related to actual involvement in hooking up. These features included that hooking up is harmless, fun, a means of increasing one’s social status, allows individuals to demonstrate control over their sexuality, and is a means of experiencing sexual freedom. Although this culture may be a prominent feature on college campuses, research suggested that individuals arrive on college campuses already familiar with hooking up (Olmstead et al., 2018) and that pre-college hookup experience is strongly associated with hooking up during the first semester and year of college (Fielder & Carey, 2010; Olmstead, Roberson, Pasley, & Fincham, 2015). We did not develop any a priori hypotheses about whether or how hookup scripts may differ between those who have attended college (and have thus been exposed to a hookup culture) and those who have not attended college.

Gender Differences A common correlate tested in hooking up research is participant gender. Research has reported mixed findings about involvement in hooking up between men and women. For example, Owen et al. (2010) found that men and women did not differ in the number of different hookup partners they reported in the last 12 months. Others (e.g., Manning, Giordano, & Longmore, 2006) found that men reported a greater number of hookup partners than women. Research has also attended to emotional responses to hooking up and found that women and men both reported more positive emotions compared to negative emotions; however, when men and women were compared, men reported more positive and less negative emotions than did women (Owen & Fincham, 2011). Regarding hookup scripts, little attention has been given to the hookup scripts that men and women report during a hookup and whether they differ in these reports. Epstein et al. (2009) reported on a sample of 20 men who indicated they were familiar with a hookup script, but few tended to actually follow this familiar script. Instead, men reported engaging in a variety of different behaviors that were inconsistent with this script. For example, although hookups are thought to occur without expectations for emotional connection, some men found themselves feeling emotionally connected to their hookup. Such incongruence between actual experience and the hookup script led to some men reporting feelings of regret and unexpected vulnerability. From a definitional standpoint, a recent study (Olmstead et al., 2018) found that college-attending emerging adult men and women did not differ in their reports of behaviors they considered as part of a hookup. However, when considering a potential hookup partner, men tended to focus more on physical features of prospective partners, whereas women tended to focus more on the level of familiarity with the potential

partner. Given the lack of research on how hookup scripts differ between men and women, we did not test any a priori hypotheses.

Current Study

We extend the literature on hooking up among emerging adults in several ways. First, we included participants who reported having no college experience. Scholars (Claxton & van Dulmen, 2013) have called for the need to study this phenomenon among those from various educational backgrounds. We consider how influence from a hookup culture may provide insight into how hookup scripts may differ for those who have and have not attended college. Second, we consider how men and women may differ in hookup scripts. To this point, research has assumed that men and women have similar hookup experiences, although when compared, men and women report differing emotional responses to these experiences (Lewis, Granato, Blayney, Lostutter, & Kilmer, 2012; Owen & Fincham, 2011). This examination is particularly important given the reports of regret and sexual assault experiences reported to occur during hookups (see Flack et al., 2007). From a sexual health education standpoint, findings may help identify opportunities to promote sexual health and well-being, such as understanding the familiarity of hookup partners, types of behaviors reported, motivations for hooking up, and the role of alcohol in these scripts, to name a few. In review, this study addressed the following research questions:

RQ1 Do the hookup scripts reported by college-attending emerging adults differ from those reported by emerging adults who have not attended college?

RQ2 Do the hookup scripts reported by emerging adult men differ from those reported by emerging adult women?

Method

Participants

A total of 803 emerging adults (ages 18–25) consented to participate in this study. About half ($n = 403$) reported having attended college or university and 400 reported that they had never attended any college or university. Of these 803 participants, 396 were removed for the following reasons: 41 did not provide a response, 174 indicated they had never hooked up, 38 described hooking up with a committed romantic partner, 68 did not answer the question, 10 provided hypothetical hookup scenarios, and 65 did not meet the storytelling criteria established for the study (Moffitt & Singer, 1994; see below). Thus, our final sample consisted of 407 emerging adults (201 college-attending and 206 non-college).

All participants in the final sample were between the ages of 18–25, consistent with conceptions of emerging adulthood (Arnett, 2000). The majority were women (61.9%). Most (66.8%) identified their race/ethnicity as White/Caucasian, followed by Black/African American (12.0%), Latino/a or Hispanic (10.6%), Asian American/Pacific Islander (5.7%), Other race/ethnicity (3.2%), and Native American/American Indian (1.7%). The majority of participants identified their sexual orientation as heterosexual (66.6%), followed by bisexual (23.1%), gay or lesbian (4.4%), unsure (2.9%), and 2.9% reported their sexual orientation as other. At the time of the study, over half (61.2%) indicated they were in a romantic relationship.

Procedure

After receiving approval from the sponsoring university's institutional review board, we recruited a purposive sample of emerging adults using Amazon's Mechanical Turk (MTurk) in June and July of 2016. MTurk is a crowdsourcing system that is often used as a source of data collection as advertised "Human Intelligence Tasks." This form of data collection has become more common among social science researchers as it increases access to individuals who have not attended college (Ipeirotis, 2010). Compared to the general U.S. population, demographic characteristics of MTurk workers have shown to be (a) younger in age (i.e., between 21 and 30), (b) majority female, (c) lower income, and (d) have higher educational attainment (i.e., Bachelor's degree or higher; Ipeirotis, 2010). Further, the majority of U.S. MTurk workers reported completing tasks as a supplement to their income (e.g., "going out") rather than their primary income (Ipeirotis, 2010; Paolacci & Chandler, 2014). Although variable from the general population, these demographic distributions are more representative of our target population for this study (i.e., emerging adults; Arnett, 2015) due to age, income, and educational attainment.

Two distinct tasks were presented to the two populations of interest (i.e., those who had attended college, those who had not). Potential participants were presented with the following description of the tasks:

This survey examines sexuality and relationship related expectations, fears, and experiences of college attending [non-college attending] young people (between ages 18 and 25). You will be asked questions related to sexuality and relationship measures, perceptions of adulthood, brief open-ended questions, and demographic measures (e.g., age, gender).

Based on these descriptions, potential participants could choose to examine their eligibility for the task or skip this task (i.e., voluntary participation). To be eligible for participation, potential participants completed a brief eligibility

questionnaire to ensure they met the inclusion and exclusion criteria for each sample.

To participate in the study, *non-college-attending* emerging adults had to meet the following criteria: (a) be between the ages of 18–25 (i.e., emerging adulthood), (b) are not currently enrolled in postsecondary education (i.e., college or trade school), and (c) have never attended or received a degree from a postsecondary education setting, including two- or four-year institutions. Additionally, individuals were excluded if they had taken *some* college/university courses but were no longer enrolled. For *college-attending* emerging adults, they had to meet the following criteria: (a) be between the ages of 18–25, (b) are currently enrolled in postsecondary education (i.e., college), and (c) have never received a degree from a postsecondary education setting, including two- or four-year institutions prior to the data collection. Both samples were required to currently live in the U.S., and their primary language had to be English.

After determining whether individuals were eligible to participate, they were then granted access to a restricted use online survey hosted by Qualtrics. Participants first reviewed the consent form and, after consenting to participate, completed a series of open-ended questions, demographic items, and scales and measures. Participants were compensated by receiving \$1.01 for participating in the study.

Storytelling Question

The current study focused on an open-ended item regarding their most recent hookup experience, which was embedded within the larger overall study. We used a storytelling methodology (Moffitt & Singer, 1994) to learn about participants' most recent hookup experience. This approach has been used in previous studies to gain in-depth understanding about emerging adults' breakup experiences (Norona, Olmstead, & Welsh, 2017) and developmental reasons for infidelity (Norona, Olmstead, & Welsh, 2018). To avoid priming participants, we did not provide a definition for the term "hookup." For this study, participants read the following stem adapted from Moffitt and Singer (1994):

For this next question, please think about your most recent hookup experience. In your response, please identify how long ago this hookup occurred if you have previously hooked up (in weeks is sufficient). Imagine you are telling a very good friend about the story of your most recent hookup. In the course of the conversation, you describe why you decided to hookup with this particular individual. Describe the circumstances of this hookup (such as where you were, who you were with, what happened, and how you and others reacted) with enough detail to help your friend see and feel as you did.

Participants were provided with an open-ended text box to describe their most recent hookup, thus allowing participants to share as much or as little as they felt necessary; however, we only included those who had hooked up and met the storytelling criteria. To be considered a "story," participants' responses needed to not be hypothetical and contained temporal sequences of more than one clause that include more than one verb (Labov & Waletzky, 1997). The open-ended responses were on average 87.4 words ($SD = 60.8$, range = 15–401). Women ($M = 96.0$, $SD = 63.1$) wrote longer responses than men ($M = 74.0$, $SD = 54.1$), $t(403) = -3.59$, $p \leq .001$. There was no difference in response length for college-attending and non-college participants ($p = .56$).

Analyses

Two trained coders analyzed participants' responses. Open-ended responses (i.e., hookup stories) were analyzed using directed content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Coding began with the two coders independently reading each response to determine whether it met the storytelling criteria. After this initial review, the coders met to determine which responses to retain and those to remove, thus arriving at a final sample of 407 stories.

Directed content analysis was selected (among other types of content analysis) because it uses theory and existing research to guide data analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). We used theory and existing research (discussed above) to form initial categories (e.g., partner types) and subcategories (e.g., stranger, acquaintance, friend, ex-romantic partner) that could potentially emerge while coding stories. Directed content analysis is also flexible in that it allows for categories and subcategories to emerge during the coding process (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). These new categories and subcategories were not previously identified in the literature and were added based on regular recurring indicators from the data (Krippendorff, 2013). For example, a category that emerged early on was "technology use." A subcategory that emerged within the "partner types" category was "co-worker."

The coders again independently reviewed the 407 written responses and then met to discuss, in general, some of the categories and subcategories that fit with the pre-identified categories and subcategories from the theory and existing research. We also identified new categories and subcategories that were unique to the stories shared by our participants. After this meeting, a coding spreadsheet was developed to facilitate making counts, consistent with content analysis (Neuendorf, 2002). We also created a coding definitions sheet that identified categories and subcategories with definitions for each subcategory and indicators (i.e., direct quotes) that served as examples of each subcategory. As coding proceeded, the coders refined these categories and subcategories based on indicators that

emerged from the data. The first six responses were coded together to ensure coders were in agreement before beginning independent coding of the data.

Data analysis proceeded with the two coders independently coding the next 50 responses and meeting to discuss discrepancies in coding. Detailed coding meeting notes were kept throughout the process and coders discussed discrepancies until agreement was reached regarding a particular code. The next 50 responses were then independently coded and coders met again. This process was repeated until all 407 responses were coded and all codes were agreed upon. Coder agreement was very high for all categories and ranged from 94.6 to 100%.

After all responses were coded and counts made within subcategories, we conducted a series of Pearson's chi-square tests to compare stories based on college attendance and gender. Comparisons were not conducted when one or more cell sizes for the 2×2 table were < 5 cases. All analyses were conducted using SPSS 24.

Results

Ten different categories were identified from the hookup stories reported by our sample of emerging adults. These categories included: (a) Hookup behaviors, (b) Partner types, (c) Alcohol use, (d) Reasons for hooking up, (e) Meeting location, (f) Hookup location, (g) Planned nature of the hookup, (h) Outcome with partner, (i) Reaction to the hookup, and (j) Technology use. Within each of these broader categories, several subcategories were identified. After all stories were coded, chi-square analyses were conducted for each subcategory within a category to address our research questions: do scripts differ based on college attendance (RQ1) and do scripts differ based on gender (RQ2). Table 1 specifies each category, subcategory, overall reported percentage, and percentages based on college attendance and gender. Statistically significant proportional difference are bolded. We note that two participants did not report their gender, so these individuals were not included in chi-square comparisons for gender. We report below what we considered as the most relevant percentages and all chi-square tests that were statistically significant.

Time Since Last Hookup

Over half (54.3%) of participants did not report how long ago their most recent hookup occurred. Participants who did report how long ago their most recent hookup had occurred varied a great deal in how they reported this time (although the prompt asked them to report in weeks).

Hookup Behaviors

The majority of our participants (97.1%) identified engaging in one or more behaviors during their most recent hookup. The most prominent behavior that was identified was “having sex” (49.4%). For example, one non-college woman said, “We watched a TV show, then quickly moved to his bedroom and had sex.” A greater proportion of women (53.6%) than men (42.5%) used this language, $\chi^2(1) = 4.68, p = .03$. The next most common behavior reported was simply that the partners “hooked up.” For example, one non-college man said, “I have only hooked up one time, maybe a year ago.” Participants were coded as “hooked up” if they reported no other behaviors in their story. A number of participants (18.2%) reported that deep kissing was part of their hookup experience. For example, one college-attending woman said, “We played a few drinking games and started making out.” A greater proportion of women (21.8%) than men (12.4%) reported deep kissing as a part of their most recent hookup, $\chi^2(1) = 5.64, p = .02$.

In some instances, rather than using language such as “had sex” or “hooked up,” participants would imply that sexual activity had occurred. For example, one college-attending woman said, “It was with someone I knew, we went out to dinner and had some drinks and one too many drinks lead to *further activities*” [italics added]. Although less prominent, participants also identified engaging in sexual touch (9.3%). For example, a non-college man said, “...we started making out and touching each other everywhere.” A greater proportion of non-college emerging adults (14.6%) than college-attending emerging adults (4.0%) discussed engaging in sexual touch, $\chi^2(1) = 13.46, p \leq .001$. Smaller proportions of participants reported additional sexual behaviors, such as oral sex (e.g., “...she ended up giving me a blowjob on the elevator up to her room” [college-attending man]), and intercourse (e.g., “...then he climbed on top of me and inserted himself in me and it was like electricity... [non-college woman]).

Partner Types

Almost all (90.9%) of our participants identified the type of partner they had hooked up with. The largest proportion (36.6%) of participants identified their partner as a stranger. That is, they had hooked up with someone they had just met or indicated that they had known the person less than 24-h. For example, one non-college man said, “I had heard that online it was possible to contact people to hookup and I was curious. I tried it and ended up meeting someone and hooking up.” A greater proportion of men (51.0%) than women (27.8%) reported that their most recent hookup was with a stranger, $\chi^2(1) = 22.10, p \leq .001$. A smaller, but sizeable minority (18.7%) reported that they had some familiarity with their hookup partner. We

Table 1 Hookup script components overall and by college attendance ($N=407$) and gender ($N=405$)

	Overall $N=407$ (%)	College attendance		Gender	
		No $n=206$ (%)	Yes $n=201$ (%)	Female $n=252$ (%)	Male $n=153$ (%)
<i>Behavior</i>					
“Having sex”	49.4	52.4	46.3	53.6*	42.5
“Hooked up”	23.1	19.4	26.9 [†]	21.8	24.8
Deep kissing	18.2	19.9	16.4	21.8*	12.4
Sex “implied”	14.5	15.5	13.4	13.5	16.3
Sexual touch	9.3	14.6***	4.0	10.3	7.8
Oral sex	8.4	9.2	7.5	6.7	11.1
Intercourse	2.0	1.9	2.0	2.8	0.7
Not discussed	2.9	3.9	2.0	1.6	5.2
<i>Partner types</i>					
Stranger	36.6	36.9	36.3	27.8	51.0***
Acquaintance	18.7	15.0	22.4 [†]	22.6**	12.4
Friend	16.2	15.5	16.9	17.9	13.1
Friend of a friend	9.3	10.7	8.0	10.3	7.8
Ex-romantic partner	5.9	7.8 [†]	4.0	7.9	2.6
Co-worker	4.4	5.8	3.0	4.8	3.9
Not specified	9.1	8.7	9.5	8.7	9.8
<i>Alcohol use</i>					
Yes	31.2	30.1	32.3	29.8	33.3
Implied	16.2	16.0	16.4	14.3	19.6
No	1.0	0.5	1.5	1.2	0.7
Not discussed	51.6	53.4	49.8	54.8 [†]	46.4
<i>Reason</i>					
Physical attributes	31.2	29.1	33.3	29.0	35.3
To have sex	22.6	25.2	19.9	22.2	23.5
Partner character	13.0	16.0 [†]	10.0	16.7**	7.2
Emotional	9.8	9.7	10.0	11.9 [†]	6.5
Have a history	5.4	6.8	4.0	6.7	3.3
Other reasons	5.4	3.9	7.0	4.8	6.5
Form a relationship	3.7	3.9	3.5	5.2	1.3
New experience	3.7	2.9	4.5	4.0	2.6
Not discussed	27.5	25.2	29.9	25.4	30.7
<i>Meeting location</i>					
Party	17.0	16.5	17.4	14.7	20.9
Bar/club	12.5	13.6	11.4	9.9	17.0*
Online	9.1	10.7	7.5	9.1	9.2
Other location	6.4	9.2*	3.5	5.2	8.5
House/apartment	5.4	5.8	5.0	6.7	3.3
School	3.9	1.5	6.5	3.2	5.2
Work	2.7	3.9	1.5	3.2	2.0
Not discussed	43.0	38.8	47.3 [†]	48.0**	34.0
<i>Hookup location</i>					
House/apartment	49.6	42.7	56.7**	53.6 [†]	43.8
Party	8.4	10.2	6.5	6.0	12.5*
Vehicle	5.2	8.3	2.0	5.6	4.6
Other location	4.2	4.9	3.5	2.4	7.2*
Hotel	3.4	4.4	2.5	2.4	5.2
Not discussed	29.5	30.1	28.9	30.2	27.5

Table 1 (continued)

	Overall <i>N</i> =407 (%)	College attendance		Gender	
		No <i>n</i> =206 (%)	Yes <i>n</i> =201 (%)	Female <i>n</i> =252 (%)	Male <i>n</i> =153 (%)
<i>Planned</i>					
Spontaneous	75.4	72.8	78.1	72.2	80.4 [†]
Intentional	13.3	15.0	11.4	15.5 [†]	9.8
Ongoing hookup	5.9	6.3	5.5	6.7	4.6
Not Discussed	5.4	5.8	5.0	5.6	5.2
<i>Outcome</i>					
No contact	15.5	17.5	13.4	16.3	14.4
Ongoing hookup	8.8	10.7	7.0	9.9	7.2
Good terms	7.9	7.3	8.5	9.1	5.9
Relationship	5.2	5.3	5.0	6.7	2.6
Not discussed	62.7	59.2	66.2	57.9	69.9*
<i>Reaction</i>					
Positive	28.0	32.5*	23.4	29.8	25.5
Negative	14.7	16.0	13.4	17.9*	9.2
Neutral	8.1	9.2	7.0	7.9	8.5
Not discussed	51.8	46.6	57.2*	46.8	60.1**
<i>Technology used</i>					
Yes	11.1	13.6 [†]	8.5	11.1	11.1
Online	5.7	7.3	4.0	7.1 [†]	3.3
Social media apps	5.4	6.3	4.5	4.0	7.8 [†]
Not discussed	88.9	86.4	91.5 [†]	88.9	88.9

[†] $p \leq .10$, * $p \leq .05$, ** $p \leq .01$, *** $p \leq .001$

coded these partners as “acquaintances” as their language indicated that they had not just met their hookup partner, but they also did not indicate that they were very familiar (e.g., friends) with this person. For example, a non-college woman said, “The hookup was with the neighbor, the one who never wears a t-shirt.” A greater proportion of women (22.6%) than men (12.4%) reported their hookup partner was an acquaintance, $\chi^2(1) = 6.50$, $p = .011$. Another common hookup partner was a friend. For example, a college-attending woman said, “When I decided to just hook up with a person who was a friend, I felt ashamed for giving someone a part of me that meant absolutely nothing to the other person...” Beyond strangers, acquaintances and friends, participants also reported their most recent hookup partner as a “friend of a friend” (e.g., “I was at a house party with a bunch of my friends and there was a boy there that was a friend of one of the guys I knew” [non-college woman]), an ex-romantic partner (e.g., “I hooked up with an ex just for sex” [college-attending woman]), and a co-worker (e.g., “Last summer I hooked up with this guy from my job named [masked]” [non-college woman]).

Alcohol Use

The majority of participants (51.6%) did not identify whether alcohol use was present or absent during their most recent hookup; however, a large proportion (31.2%) overtly reported alcohol use as a part of their hookup. For example, a college-attending man said, “I met a girl at a party and we had some crazy, drunk sex.” Similarly, a non-college woman said, “I got drunk at a bar with my sisters. Found a super cute guy and went home with him, it was cool.” Although some were explicit about the presence of alcohol in their hookup experience, some participants (16.2%) implied that alcohol was present. Individuals were coded as “implied alcohol use” when they reported their hookup experience included being at a bar, club, party, or other venue where consuming alcohol is typical. For example, a college-attending man said, “I met a girl at a bar. I was with a group of my buddies. I just started talking to her and one thing led to another. We both understood that it was a one night thing.” Just 1.0% of participants overtly stated that their hookup did not include alcohol. For example, a college-attending woman said, “I was hanging out

with a bunch of friends and wanted sex so I found a partner, asked him for sex and he said yes. Neither of us were drinking. It was a good time.”

Reasons for Hooking Up

Given the storytelling nature of our study, participants could report a variety (i.e., more than one) reason for their most recent hookup. About a quarter (27.5%) of participants did not provide any reason for their hookup. The most prominently identified reason for hooking up was the physical attributes of their hookup partner (31.2%). For example, a non-college man said, “I hooked up with this girl because she was really physically attractive.” Similarly, a college-attending woman said, “We were up very late talking, and he ended up spending the evening in my room. I think just out of the physical attraction and being that close we ended up sleeping together.”

Another prominent reason for hooking up was the desire to have a sexual experience. This was identified in a variety of ways. For example, a non-college man said, “I was horny af [as fuck] and I literally just tried to find anyone who’s willing too. So I found a girl on Tinder, met at a bar, grabbed a few drinks, went to my car and did it.” Some participants (13.0%) also identified the characteristics/attributes of their hookup partner that provided a reason to hook up. For example, a non-college woman discussed both physical attraction and her partners’ characteristics and attributes:

I decided to hookup with my partner because firstly he was sexy. I mean his body was just the hottest you could find. But deeper than that, he was really nice to me and we shared many interests. Also, we help each other out all the time...

A greater proportion of women (16.7%) than men (7.2%) discussed their partners’ characteristics/attributes as a part of their hookup experience, $\chi^2(1) = 7.52, p = .006$.

Additional reasons that emerged from our data, although less prominent, included “emotional” distress such as experiencing a recent breakup or feelings of loneliness (e.g., “...I decided to hookup with individual because she offered sex, I was lonely, so I said okay” [non-college man]). Others discussed having a prior history with their hookup partner (e.g., “I’d been with him before and he was good” [college-attending woman]), an intent to form a romantic relationship from the hookup (e.g., “I agreed only because I liked him for so long and I thought maybe if we slept together he would want a relationship. I was hoping to change his mind and move past friendship” [non-college woman]), and the desire for a new/exciting experience (e.g., “I decided to do it because I thought it would be fun and it was” [college-attending man]). We note that 5.4% provided a variety of reasons that did not fit into any of the more prominent groups, but were too few on

their own. We coded these as “Other Reasons” and included reasons such as peer pressure, avoiding hurting another person’s feelings, and boredom, to name a few.

Meeting Location

A large proportion (43.0%) of participants did not discuss where they met their most recent hookup partner. The largest proportion (17.0%) indicated meeting their hookup partner at a party. For example, a non-college man said, “I got drunk at a party last week and I was talking to this girl. At the end of the party I invited her over and we had sex. Then she left in the morning.” The next largest proportion reported meeting their hookup partner at a bar/club. For example, a college-attending woman said, “I hooked up with someone who was the best looking person at the bar and we were both kind of drunk.” A greater proportion of men (17.0%) than women (9.9%) reported meeting their hookup partner at a bar/club, $\chi^2(1) = 4.33, p = .04$.

Various additional locations for meeting one’s hookup partner were reported. These included meeting them online (e.g., “I hooked up with a random girl from a dating app” [non-college man]), at one’s house/apartment (e.g., “After hanging out and having a few drinks with some friends at one of their apartments, I was the last one to leave and it was just me and my acquaintance...” [college-attending woman]), at school (e.g., “I hooked up with this girl that I met from school” [non-college man]), and work (e.g., “I met a guy at work who found out that I was newly single and he asked me to hang out and we ended up having sex” [college-attending woman]). Some meeting locations did not fit with these more prominently identified locations, so they were grouped together as “Other Location” and included various public and private meeting places. For example, a non-college man said, “I was getting on the elevator when a girl asked me if I wanted to hook up. We went back to her place.” A greater proportion of non-college emerging adults (9.2%) than college-attending emerging adults (3.5%) reported meeting their hookup partner at an “Other Location,” $\chi^2(1) = 5.61, p = .02$.

Hookup Location

The majority of participants (70.5%) identified the place in which their most recent hookup occurred. Although individuals may hookup at the same location in which they met their hookup partner, often times there was a change of venue in order for the hookup to occur. The greatest proportion (49.6%) reported their hookup occurred at a house/apartment. For example, a college-attending man said:

I was with a group of friends at a bar and saw a very pretty girl. I went over to her and bought her a drink and

we talked for a bit. I ended up going back to her place and hookup [sic] up with her.

A greater proportion of college-attending emerging adults (56.7%) than non-college emerging adults (42.7%) reported their hookup occurred at a house/apartment, $\chi^2(1) = 7.97$, $p = .005$.

Beyond hooking up at a house/apartment, proportions seemed to be much less for various reported hookup locations. A smaller proportion (8.4%) reported hooking up at a party. For example, a non-college woman said, “We were at a party and because of pressure I hooked up with this guy. I only did so hoping that he would have an actual interest in me.” A greater proportion of men (12.5%) than women (6.0%) reported hooking up at a party, $\chi^2(1) = 5.18$, $p = .02$. Participants also reported hooking up in a vehicle (e.g., “my first hook up was awful, I was uncomfortable and regretted it. We had sex in his car” [college-attending woman]) and at a hotel (e.g., “We met up at the store and then went to a hotel. We were both alone and feeling kinda horny” [non-college woman]). Similar to meeting locations, we found a variety of hookup locations, public and private, that were not consistent with the other more prominent locations reported. We labeled these as “Other Locations.” For example, a college-attending man said, “...we were at a party and decided to go for a walk at about two in the morning. We ended up at a lake in town where we had sex on the beach.” A greater proportion of men (7.2%) than women (2.4%) reported hooking up at an “Other Location,” $\chi^2(1) = 5.47$, $p = .02$.

Planned Nature of the Hookup

The majority (94.6%) of participants told their story in a manner that described the extent to which the hookup was planned. About three-fourths (75.4%) of hookup stories used language that indicated the hookup was spontaneous in nature. For example, a college-attending man said:

I met someone at a party I was at with a few friends, but no one I knew very well. We talked a bit and went upstairs at some point. We had both had some drinks. It was a party, so I wasn't really expecting to find my next relationship or anything. Just something to feel good, make me feel good.

A non-college woman also discussed the spontaneous nature of her hookup when she said, “4 months ago I hooked up with an ex from 4 years ago because we happened to run into each other at the grocery store.” Not all hookups were spontaneous. Some participants in our sample described their hookup as being intentional in nature (13.3%). For example, a non-college man explained:

One of my better friends had a girl he knew through work that was single, and very horny. They were cow-

orkers and couldn't get together; however, he thought she would like to hook up with me. He arranged it with both of us—we'd all meet at a local bar and eventually he would leave, and she would come to my place and fuck. It did happen exactly that way, and it was phenomenal...

A smaller proportion (5.9%) indicated that their most recent hookup was an ongoing hookup experience, making it distinct from being spontaneous and intentional. For example, a college-attending woman said:

My last hookup was about 8 weeks ago. I had been hooking up with the same guy every weekend for about 5 months. Every time I was drunk, high, or (most times) both and every time it was at my best friend's house...

Outcome with Partner

The majority (62.7%) of participants did not specify in their stories the outcome of the hookup with their most recent hookup partner. A greater proportion of men (69.9%) than women (57.9%) did not discuss the outcome of the hookup, $\chi^2(1) = 5.84$, $p = .02$. The greatest proportion (15.5%) of those who did discuss the outcome indicated that after the hookup they did not have any additional contact with their hookup partner. For example, a non-college woman said, “I decided to hook up with someone a few years ago. I thought we were dating, but it wasn't the same relationship status in the other person's eyes. We had sex and he stopped talking to me.” Additional outcomes with one's hookup partner included becoming involved in an ongoing hookup (e.g., “We still hang out with mutual friends and have hooked up a few times since. We are not dating and do not plan on having more of a relationship” [college-attending woman]), remaining on good terms (e.g., “It was a friend and we were both horny and agreed it wouldn't hurt our friendship so we did it. And we have remained friends” [non-college man]), and developing the hookup into a romantic relationship (e.g., “...But what started as an innocent hookup turned into the best relationship of my life” [college-attending woman]).

Reaction to the Hookup

A little over half (51.8%) of participants did not discuss their reaction to the hookup experience. A greater proportion of college-attending emerging adults (57.2%) than non-college emerging adults (46.6%) did not discuss a reaction, $\chi^2(1) = 4.59$, $p = .03$. A greater proportion of men (60.1%) than women (46.8%) did not discuss a reaction, $\chi^2(1) = 6.75$, $p = .009$.

The largest proportion (28.0%) of those who reported a reaction to their hookup experience indicated that the experience was positive. For example, a non-college man said,

My last hookup was on my birthday. I was looking for a special treat and I knew exactly whom I wanted to serve it to me. It was a wild night of sex and drugs in an awesome themed room hotel.

A greater proportion of non-college emerging adults (32.5%) than college-attending emerging adults (23.4%) reported a positive reaction to their most recent hookup, $\chi^2(1) = 4.22$, $p = .04$.

Less prominent were those who reported a negative reaction to their most recent hookup experience (14.7%). For example, a college-attending woman said, “I decided to have a hook up because it was in the heat of the moment. Looking back on my decision, I believe I made a horrible choice and I won’t make that choice again.” A greater proportion of women (17.9%) than men (9.2%) reported a negative reaction, $\chi^2(1) = 5.80$, $p = .02$. A few participants (8.1%) reported a neutral reaction to their most recent hookup experience. For example, a non-college woman said, “I spent the night and left the next morning. We were definitely amicable, and nothing bad happened, but it was a pretty blah experience for me.”

Technology Use

Most (88.9%) did not discuss technology use (i.e., the Internet) as a part of their most recent hookup experience. The remaining 11.1% discussed two primary types of technology that facilitated the hookup. About half of these (5.7%) reported meeting their hookup partner “online.” For example, a non-college woman said:

My most recent hookup was with a guy I met online. He came over to my house late one night to hang out and drink some beer and watch TV. I figured we would end up hooking up, but I let him make all the advances.

The other proportion (5.4%) specified the use of a social media application to help facilitate the hookup experience. For example, a college-attending woman said:

I had hooked up with someone yesterday. They were horny and found me attractive, I hadn’t had sex in a while and thought the person looked decent enough. I was in my bedroom taking it easy and met this person on Tinder, we ended up exchanging numbers and then he came over and we had sex.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine the hookup scripts described in participants’ most recent hookup encounters. Limited attention has been devoted to understanding hooking up among emerging adults who have not attended college and how men and women may differ in their self-reported hookup

stories. Therefore, we compared how these scripts differed between college-attending and non-college emerging adults. We also examined how men and women might differ in their hookup experiences.

Generally, we found that our participants described experiences consistent with findings on the hookup script. Most described a spontaneous hookup experience (Owen et al., 2010) that included a range of sexual behaviors (Olmstead et al., 2018). Participants reported positive and negative emotional reactions (Owen & Fincham, 2011) and that they hooked up for a variety of reasons, including the physical attributes of their partner and the desire to “have sex” (Armstrong & Reissing, 2015). Meeting locations for hookup partners frequently included bars, clubs, and parties (Kuperberg & Padgett, 2015), and many discussed alcohol use as a part of this experience (Fielder & Carey, 2010). Although our findings are consistent with past research, we also found important nuances in these scripts that are counter to the literature. For example, the greatest proportion reported hooking up with a stranger, rather than a friend (Grello et al., 2006). Also, research has yet to examine in detail the role of technology in facilitating hookup experiences, which was identified by a number of our participants.

The Role of College Attendance

Studies seem to suggest that a sexual hookup culture exists on college campuses (e.g., Garcia et al., 2012), and the context of college may serve as a means to socialize emerging adults into a hookup script (Olmstead et al., 2018). From this perspective, it seems that those who have not attended college, and subsequently undergone this socialization into a hookup script, would report different hookup scripts in the stories shared in their most recent hookup encounter. Based on our findings, we conclude for this sample that college-attending and non-college emerging adults overall have similar hookup experiences and follow similar hookup scripts. One explanation for overall similarities is that research has shown that individuals are exposed to a hookup culture, to some degree, well before entrance into college or the workforce, often during middle or late adolescence (e.g., Fielder & Carey, 2010; Manning et al., 2006; Olmstead et al., 2015).

Although there were limited differences, we did find that a greater proportion of non-college participants reported a hookup in an “Other Location.” Recall that this subcategory was developed due to the array of locations shared in hookup stories that was more prominent among non-college students. One explanation for this difference is that perhaps the hookup script for college-attending emerging adults dictates more normative and centralized hookup locations that are nearer to campus locations and residences and reduces the proximity between meeting locations (e.g., a party, the club/bar, online; Kuperberg & Padgett, 2015) and hookup locations.

For non-college emerging adults, their hookup locations may vary much more due to a lack of clustering of locations, which is more common to a college environment.

Another interesting difference was that a greater proportion of college-attending participants reported hooking up in a house/apartment. Although common among non-college participants (42.7%), the change of venue from the meeting location to a house/apartment to hookup may help explain this difference. It may be that part of the hookup script for college-attending emerging adults is to find a more private environment to complete the hookup experience. For college-attending emerging adults, it was common to report going back to one's dorm or apartment. In terms of proximity, for college students, their home/apartment or dorm room may be close enough to walk or drive from the meeting location to find privacy for a hookup. This close proximity may be what helps to facilitate this change of venue.

We also found that a greater proportion of non-college emerging adults reported a positive reaction to their hookup experience. More research is needed to unpack the reasons for these differences in positive responses to hooking up, as no study, to our knowledge, has compared emotional reactions to hooking up using non-college samples. Perhaps this finding is influenced by the methodology used in that more non-college emerging adults felt the need to engage in impression management, particularly if they were telling a "friend" where the expectation may be that hookups are only worth discussing if they are enjoyable experiences. We cannot draw any firm conclusions, as we did not ask specifically about their positive and negative emotional reactions to their hookups, just how they and others responded.

The Role of Gender

Although overall men and women in our sample appeared to report similar hookup experiences in the stories they shared, we found more statistical differences in our comparisons of men's and women's stories than when comparing college-attending and non-college stories. One interesting finding is that a greater proportion of men reported hooking up with a "stranger" and a greater proportion of women reported hooking up with an "acquaintance." Previous research on hookups indicated that the most common type of hookup partner was a friend (e.g., Grello et al., 2006). Our findings are not consistent with this research. Men and women may go about selecting hookup partners based on gendered sexual scripts. For example, men are expected to be much more dominant (Allison & Risman, 2013) and as a result may be more comfortable selecting a hookup partner whom they have known for a short period of time (i.e., a stranger). Women may be more selective of familiar partners due to their greater attention to safety (assault avoidance) and seeking to avoid the stigmatization of having sexual interactions with strangers,

which is consistent with the sexual double standard (Allison & Risman, 2013). Recent research on definitions of hooking up indicated that women, more so than men, include relational familiarity with a hookup partner as a feature that may qualify one as a hookup partner (Olmstead et al., 2018). Our findings here appear consistent with this research.

A greater proportion of women also included characteristics of a hookup partner as part of their reason for hooking up. Although women and men discussed other reasons at similar proportions (e.g., to have sex), perhaps women also included these characteristics due to gendered sexual scripts. Previous research indicated that women tend to focus more on the characteristics of a sexual partner as a part of a stereotypical gendered role as "sexual gatekeepers" (Connell, 1987). Further, women may also increase their familiarity and feelings of safety with their hookup partner by focusing on the partner's traits and characteristics as evidenced by a greater proportion of women discussing this in their hookup scripts.

Another prominent finding was that a greater proportion of women reported a negative reaction to their most recent hookup encounter. Owen and Fincham (2011) found that women were more likely to report less positive and more negative emotional reactions to hookups than men. Other studies have also documented that women commonly report feelings of regret and bad hookup experiences (Eshbaugh & Gute, 2008; Littleton, Tabernik, Canales, & Backstrom, 2009). Our findings are consistent with these studies.

Limitations

The findings of our study should be considered in light of the following limitations. First, although we asked participants to specify in their responses the time since their last hookup encounter, many opted to not report a time length or were vague in this reporting. Further, some participants reported their last hookup was several years before participating in our study. Thus, participants' responses may be influenced by a recall bias, which may have limited their ability to accurately describe different features of their last hookup. Second, participants filled in a text box with the instruction to tell about their experience at a level they would tell their friend. Although this approach has been used in other studies (e.g., Norona et al., 2017, 2018), participants could pick and choose what seemed relevant to share (although we provided general prompts), thus limiting consistent responses across participants. This approach also allowed participants to write as much or as little as they desired. Some responses were quite brief (e.g., 15 words), but met the storytelling requirements for the study (Labov & Waletzky, 1997).

Third, due to a technical error, participants' individual ages were not recorded. To participate in the study potential participants indicated that they met the inclusion criteria of being between the ages of 18–25. Thus, all participants met

the age range commonly specified in the emerging adulthood literature and are consistent with the proposed life course stage of emerging adulthood (Arnett, 2000). Last, we note that our sample was not randomly selected from the population of emerging adults in the U.S. Although we had a heterogeneous sample in terms of gender, race/ethnicity, and sexual orientation, our participants had to meet specific criteria to participate. Prominent among those is that they had to be registered as “workers” on MTurk. Thus, our findings are limited in terms of their generalizability to those who have access to and participate in internet-based studies.

Implications

The findings from this study hold important implications for future research and practice. Future research is necessary to unpack the hookup experiences of those who do not attend college. Although the scripts were similar between college-attending and non-college emerging adults, the prevalence, correlates, and outcomes may differ. For example, it is important to know the extent to which condoms or other protective measures are involved in these hookup scripts. This topic was rarely broached in the stories offered from our participants. For college-attending emerging adults, condom use is inconsistent based on the behaviors being reported (e.g., oral sex or penile–vaginal intercourse; Downing-Matibag & Geisinger, 2009). Also, research using college student samples indicated that unwanted pregnancy and contracting sexually transmitted infections (STIs) is uncommon as a result of hooking up (Lewis et al., 2012), but much less is known about these two health outcomes among non-college emerging adults who hookup. Studies should also consider positive hookup experiences among both college-attending and non-college emerging adults, as recent evidence using college student samples indicates that many report positive emotional responses and outcomes associated with their hookup experiences (e.g., Shepardson, Walsh, Carey, & Carey, 2016; Snapp, Ryu, & Kerr, 2015).

Future research should also draw upon other methods, such as in-depth interviewing, to allow for follow-up questions to clarify aspects of the hookup script that remain unclear from responses in an open-ended text box. For example, follow-up questions would help clarify how technology helped to facilitate hookups or how hookup partners navigate the change in proximity from a particular meeting location to a new hookup location. Also, interviews would help clarify whether protection was used and how hookup partners negotiate condom or other prophylactic use during the hookup based on the behaviors that occur during the hookup.

In terms of sexual health education and promotion, educators could draw attention to the differences in reported experiences based on both college attendance and gender. One prominent difference was the level of familiarity with

a hookup partner reported between men and women. Practitioners and educators should encourage men and women to be attentive to particular indicators of safety and well-being when choosing a hookup partner. Individuals may be at greater risk given their lack of familiarity with a hookup partner. One important topic that may be overlooked, given this lack of familiarity, is a discussion about sexual histories and negotiation of contraceptive use. Sliding through these discussions, rather than deciding to address these issues (Stanley, Rhoades, & Markman, 2006) may increase exposure to health risks unnecessarily. Although there were some gender differences, educators can also discuss that men and women often hookup for the same reasons. Women and men as well as college-attending and non-college participants indicated “physical attributes” and “to have sex” as primary reasons for hooking up. These motives are consistent with previous studies, suggesting that it is not just men who hookup up for physical pleasure, but women also report this as a primary motivation (Armstrong & Reissing, 2015; Weaver & Herold, 2000).

Practitioners and educators should also address the ongoing concern of sexual coercion or rape/sexual assault that may occur during these hookup experiences. Almost half (47.4%) of these stories included overt or implied alcohol use in conjunction with hooking up. Many emerging adults consume alcohol as a part of the hookup experience (Bogle, 2008; Vander Ven & Beck, 2009), which is associated with reports of negative emotional responses such as regret and shame (Eshbaugh & Gute, 2008) as well as reports of sexual coercion (Flack et al., 2007). Educating emerging adults about alcohol use and the ability to consent to sexual activity and attending to the role of alcohol as a facilitator of rape may help decrease the inclusion of alcohol in emerging adults’ hookup scripts.

Compliance with Ethical Standards

Ethical Approval All procedures performed in studies involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional and/or national research committee and with the 1964 Helsinki Declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards.

Informed Consent Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

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