Emerging Adults' Hookup Scripts: Differences Based on Sex and College Attendance?

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Introduction

- Emerging Adulthood[1]
  - Identity Exploration and Experimentation
- Hooking Up and the Hookup Script[2,3]
  - Purpose 1: Examine whether hookup scripts differed based on EA college attendance
  - Purpose 2: Examine whether men and women differed in the scripts they followed in their most recent hookup experience

Theoretical Background

- Life Course Theory[4]
  - Emerging Adulthood[1]
- Scripting Theory[5]
  - Sexual Scripts
    - A “hookup script”[3]

Hooking Up

- Most research to date has utilized samples of college-attending emerging adults
  - A college “hookup culture”[6]
- **RQ1:** Do the hookup scripts reported by college attending EAs differ from those reported by EAs who have not attended college?
- Sex-differences exist in hookup experience (number and reactions)[7,8]
  - Limited attention to actual enactment of the script
- **RQ2:** Do the hookup scripts reported by EA men differ from those reported by EA women?

Methods

Recruitment

- 803 Emerging Adults
  - 403 CA and 400 NCA
- Amazon Mechanical Turk
  - Restricted Access Online Survey (Qualtrics)
  - Demographic items, scales and measures, open-ended items

Sample

- Final Sample = 407
  - 201 CA and 206 NCA
- All between 18-25 years
- 61.9% Women
- 66.8% White/Caucasian
- 66.6% Heterosexual
- 61.2% In a Romantic Relationship

Hookup Story Item[9]

- “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.”

Analysis

- Directed content analysis of responses[10]
  - Two independent coders
  - Guided by theory and literature, but flexible for new themes to emerge
  - Counts taken for all themes and subthemes
  - Coder agreement very high (94.6%-100.0%)
- Chi-Square analyses (2X2)
  - Reported subtheme (0 = No,1 = Yes) and college attendance (0 = No, 1 = Yes)
  - Reported subtheme (0 = No, 1 = Yes) and sex (0 = Female, 1 = Male)

Results

		College Attendance		Sex	
	Overall	No	Yes	Female	Male
	N = 407	*n* = 206	*n* = 201	*n* = 252	*n* = 153
Behavior					
"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%
Partner Types					
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%

Results

		College Attendance		Sex	
	Overall	No	Yes	Female	Male
	N = 407	*n* = 206	*n* = 201	*n* = 252	*n* = 153
Alcohol Use					
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%
Reason					
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%

Results

		College Attendance		Sex	
	Overall	No	Yes	Female	Male
	N = 407	*n* = 206	*n* = 201	*n* = 252	*n* = 153
Meeting Location					
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%
Hookup Location					
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%

Results

		College Attendance		Sex	
	Overall	No	Yes	Female	Male
	N = 407	*n* = 206	*n* = 201	*n* = 252	*n* = 153
Planned					
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%
Outcome					
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%***
Reaction					
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%****

Results

		College Attendance		Sex	
	Overall	No	Yes	Female	Male
	N = 407	*n* = 206	*n* = 201	*n* = 252	*n* = 153
Technology Used					
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%

Discussion

- A great deal of variation in “hookup scripts”
- Themes and subthemes were similar, generally, based on both college-attendance and sex
- Is college a socializing agent into a “hookup culture”?
- A greater proportion of men hooked up with *strangers*, women with *acquaintances*
- Alcohol use reported or implied in almost half of responses overall (47.4%)
- Technology involved, albeit limited (online & apps)

Discussion

Limitations

- Many did not report how long ago their last hookup occurred
- Text box allowed participants to pick and choose what they wanted to share (little or a lot)
- Actual age not recorded
- Not randomly selected from population

Implications

- **Research**
  - Protective measures during hookups for NCA EAs
  - In-depth interviews and longitudinal methods
  - More attention to NCA EAs
- **Practice**
  - Familiarity with hookup partners – health risks
  - Alcohol use prominent
  - Both should be addressed when educating about sexual consent

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Thank You

- Question and/or comments?

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