

# What's Sex Got to Do with It?

## Interpretation of Features of Hookups and Committed Relationships

Sal Meyers, Katharine Groehn, Sydni Loney, & Carly Warner, Simpson College

### Purpose

College students no longer go on dates, they "hook up" (Bogle, 2008). How do college students view hooking up? To answer this question, Meyers (2012) conducted a prototype study and factor analyzed the resulting centrality ratings. Five factors emerged

#### Dating

Dating  
Hanging Out  
Cuddling

#### Stereotype

Random  
Unplanned  
Drinking

#### Making Out

Making Out  
Touching

#### Sex

Sex  
Getting Some

#### Sexual Contact

Sexual Contact  
Hand Job

The present study examines how the three sex-related factors, alone or combined with the dating or stereotype features, influence perceptions of features as hookups and committed relationships.

### Method

232 college students (76.3% women) rated sets of features

Dating, Hanging Out, Cuddling	Making Out, Touching
Dating, Hanging Out, Cuddling	Sex, Getting Some
Dating, Hanging Out, Cuddling	Sexual Contact, Hand Job
Random, Unplanned, Drinking	Making Out, Touching
Random, Unplanned, Drinking	Sex, Getting Some
Random, Unplanned, Drinking	Sexual Contact, Hand Job

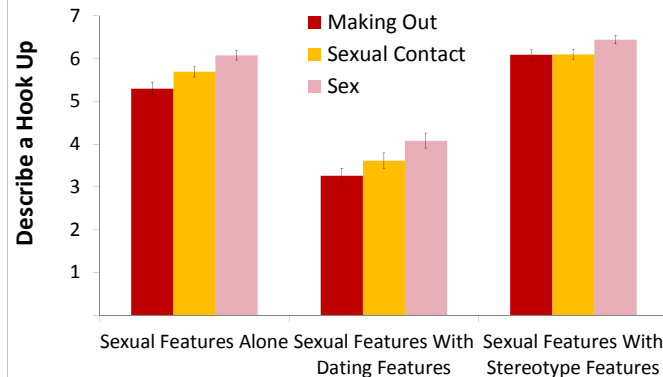
These features describe a hookup

These features describe a committed relationship

1 = strongly disagree

7 = strongly agree

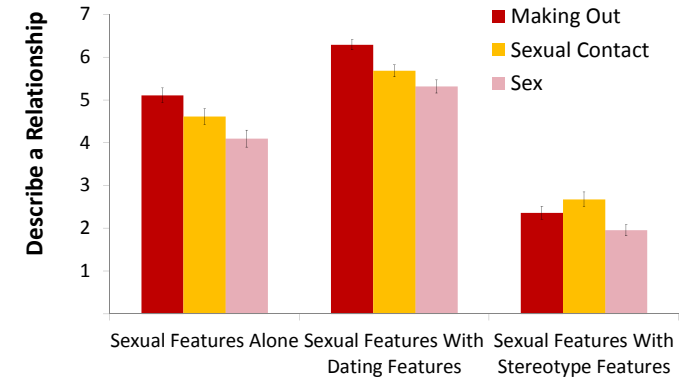
### Mean Differences



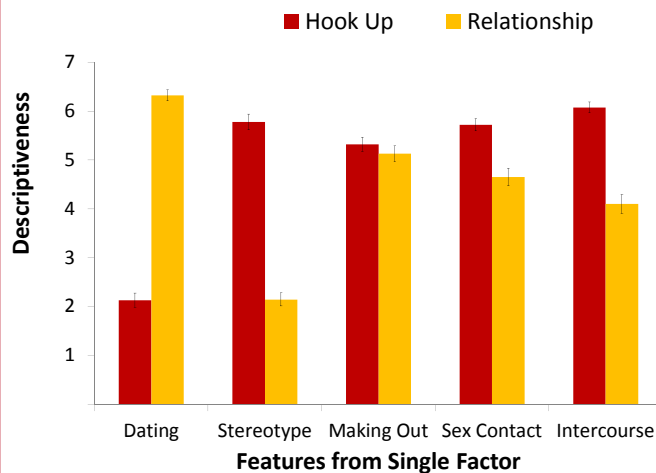
Features from Pairs of Factors

The greater the intimacy of the sexual behavior, the more likely people are to view the encounter as a hookup and the less likely they are to view it as a committed relationship. This pattern disappears when the stereotypical features are added.

### Predicting Satisfaction



Features from Pairs of Factors



Features from Single Factor

The dating and stereotype features showed the greatest discrepancy between hooking up and a committed relationship.

### Conclusion

The dating and stereotype factors distinguished most between hooking up and a committed romantic relationship.

Interestingly, the greater the sexual behavior (e.g., intercourse rather than making out), the more likely people are to view the encounter as a hookup instead of a committed relationship. This may have occurred because people had sexual encounters earlier in relationships in mind when they rated the sets of features.

### References

- Bogle, K. A. (2008). *Hooking up: Sex, dating, and relationships on campus*. New York: New York University Press.
- Meyers, S. (2012, January) Dimensions of the Prototype of Hooking Up. Poster presented at the 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology, Las Vegas, NV.