

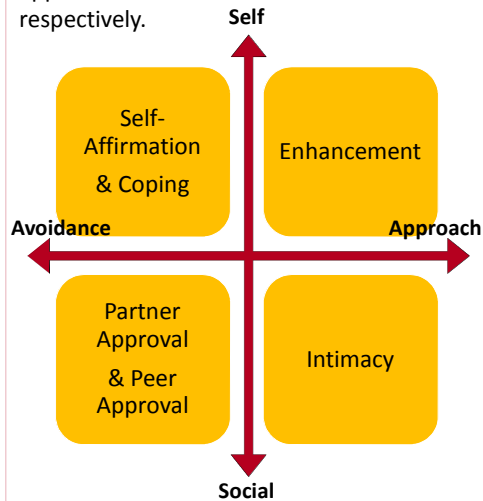
# Sexual Motives in Casual Versus Committed Relationships: Which Motives Predict Satisfaction?

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## Introduction

We examined sexual motivations and sexual satisfaction in committed versus casual relationships.

Cooper, Shapiro, and Powers (1998) identify six motives varying along two dimensions: Self versus Social, and Positive versus Negative Reinforcement. Positive and negative reinforcement are similar to approach and avoidance motives respectively.



In committed relationships, approach motives for engaging in sex are associated with greater satisfaction and avoidance motives are associated with less satisfaction (Impett, Peplau, and Gable, 2005).

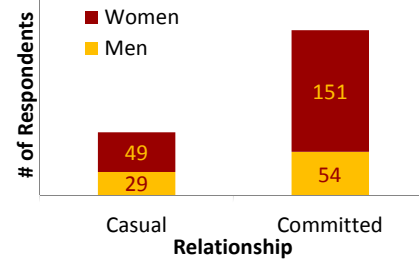
## Research Questions

How do people's sexual motives differ in committed versus casual relationships?

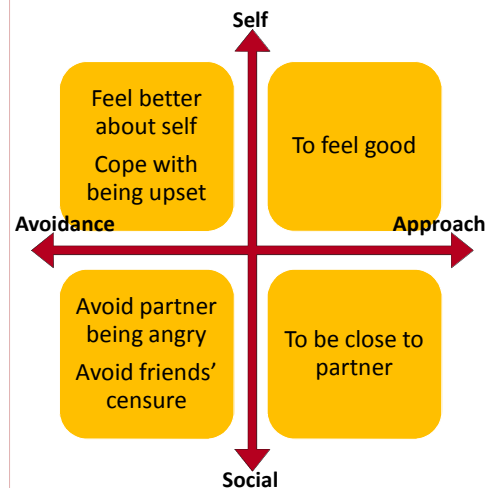
Do approach and avoidance motives predict satisfaction in the same way in casual relationships as they do in committed ones?

## Method

**Instructions:** Think about the last time you had a sexual encounter (anything from kissing to sexual intercourse)



**Sexual Motives: Sample Items**  
Adapted from Cooper et al. (1998)



**Sexual Satisfaction: Sample Items**

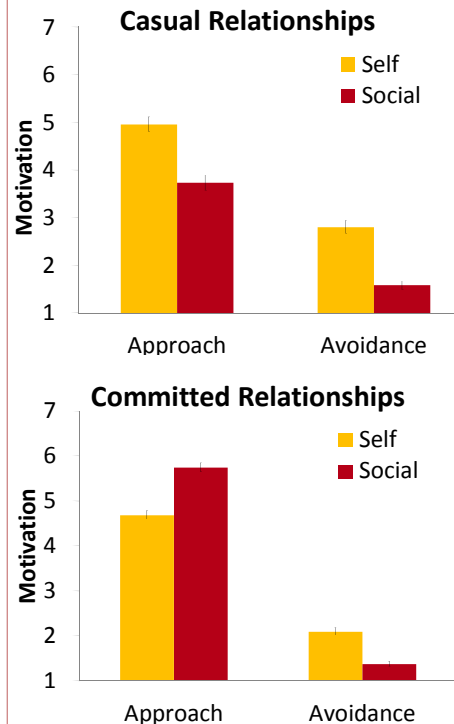
Adapted from Impett & Tolman (2006)

- I was satisfied with how well my physical needs were met.
- It made me happy.
- It was a good experience.
- I liked how my body felt.

## Sexual Motives

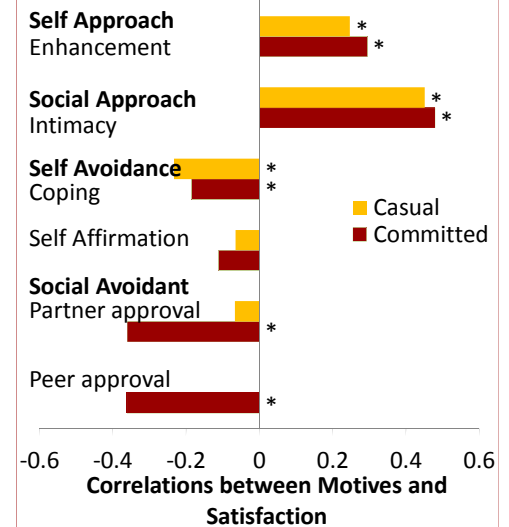
A 3-way interaction revealed that people's sexual motives in casual versus committed relationships were fairly similar with one major exception:

intimacy (a social approach motive) is a more important sexual motive in committed than casual relationships.



## Predictors of Satisfaction

Consistent with the findings of Impett et al. (2005), both approach and avoidance motives predicted satisfaction in committed relationships; however, only approach motives predicted sexual satisfaction in casual relationships.



## Conclusion

Intimacy is a more important motivator in committed than casual relationships, but is the best predictor of satisfaction in both types of relationships.

## References

- Cooper, M., Shapiro, C. M., & Powers, A. M. (1998). Motivations for sex and risky sexual behavior among adolescents and young adults: A functional perspective. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 75, 1528-1558.
- Impett, E. A., Peplau, L. A., & Gable, S. L. (2005). Approach and avoidance sexual motives: Implications for personal and interpersonal well-being. *Personal Relationships*, 12, 465-482.