HOW ATTACHMENT, PERSONALITY, AND SEXUAL SELF-SCHEMA INFLUENCE SEXUAL BEHAVIOR

A Thesis

Presented to the faculty of the Department of Psychology
California State University, Sacramento

Submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of

MASTERS OF ARTS

in

Psychology
(Counseling Psychology)

by
Christina Villanueva

FALL
2012
HOW ATTACHMENT, PERSONALITY, AND SEXUAL SELF-SCHEMA
INFLUENCE SEXUAL BEHAVIOR

A Thesis

by

Christina Villanueva

Approved by:

__________________________________, Committee Chair
Kelly Cotter, Ph.D.

__________________________________, Second Reader
Lisa Harrison, Ph.D.

__________________________________, Third Reader
Rebecca Cameron, Ph.D.

___________________________
Date
Student: Christina Villanueva

I certify that this student has met the requirements for format contained in the University format manual, and that this thesis is suitable for shelving in the Library and credit is to be awarded for the thesis.

__________________, Graduate Coordinator
Lisa Harrison, Ph.D.                         Date

Department of Psychology
Abstract

of

HOW ATTACHMENT, PERSONALITY, AND SEXUAL SELF-SCHEMA

INFLUENCE SEXUAL BEHAVIOR

by

Christina Villanueva

People engage in sexual behaviors that vary in commitment from committed relationships, to friends with benefits, to booty calls, to one night stands. The theoretical perspectives of attachment, personality, and sexual self-schema suggest that the motives for engaging in these types of relationships may be large in number and psychologically complex. In the present study, analysis of data from 228 university students revealed that individuals with a more secure attachment style, with a more extraverted personality type, and with a higher sexual self-schema engaged in a greater variety of sexual relationships. Insights generated from the present study are useful for marriage and family therapists when formulating relationship advice and interventions promoting more stable relationships.

_______________________, Committee Chair
Kelly Cotter, Ph.D.

_______________________
Date

iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I offer my sincerest gratitude to the chair of my committee, Dr. Kelly Cotter, Ph.D., whose encouragement, guidance, and support, from the initial to the final level, allowed me to work in my own way while providing me with her patience and knowledge, and without her this thesis would not have been completed. I would also like to thank my committee members, Dr. Lisa Harrison, Ph.D. and Dr. Rebecca Cameron, Ph.D. for their encouragement and support.

I am sincerely thankful to Amy and Patricia for helping me throughout the editing process and who are always there for me when I need it.

I would like to thank my son, Antonio, for all of his support, love, and most of all patience that he has given me throughout my entire college career. Thank you to my parents for all of their encouragement and love and for always believing in me. Thank you to my siblings, Consuelo and Alvio, as well as my immediate family for their constant support and words of advice.

Thank you to Alex, who has always provided me with love and support, who always encouraged me to keep going, and who has always been an inspiration to me.

Lastly I offer my blessings and many thanks to all those who supported me throughout graduate school and during the completion of this paper.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

Acknowledgements.............................................................................................................v
List of Tables ..................................................................................................................... vii

Chapter
1.  INTRODUCTION ............................................................................................................ 1
2.  METHOD......................................................................................................................... 20
3.  RESULTS....................................................................................................................... 27
4.  DISCUSSION .................................................................................................................. 33

Appendix. Intercorrelations between Attachment, Personality, Sexual Self-Schema
  and Sexual Behavior ................................................................................................. 42
References....................................................................................................................... 44
# LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tables</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting Sexual Self-Schema for Men</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting Sexual Self-Schema for Women</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Logistical Regression Analysis Predicting Friends with Benefits Relationships</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Logistical Regression Analysis Predicting Booty Calls</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Logistical Regression Analysis Predicting One Night Stands</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 1
INTRODUCTION

Attachment theory generates important insights and empirical evidence in the science-practice field of counseling psychology (Searle, 1999). For example, Bowlby and Ainsworth examined children’s attachment to caregivers and found that attachment styles help to determine later social behavior (Schmitt et al., 2004). Personality traits also help to determine social interactions, including sexual behavior (Lippa, 2007). In addition, sexual self-schemas, a more recent addition to the literature, influence sexual behavior (Cyranowski & Andersen, 1995). Sexual self-schema is defined as cognitive views of the sexual aspect of the self (Cyranowski & Andersen, 1995), and may be informed by attachment style and personality. There has been little research that has examined the link between attachment, personality, and sexual self-schema. Therefore, I will analyze the relationships between attachment, personality, sexual self-schema, and sexual behaviors in the present study.

Attachment

Bowlby’s attachment theory proposes that there is a biological and social behavioral system, attachment, which is designed to keep infants in close contact with primary caregivers (Bowlby, 1988). These attachments, formed through interactions between the caregiver and the infant, serve the evolutionary function of providing, basic needs like food and shelter, protection from predators and other environmental threats and, a secure base for exploration (Searle, 1999).
The early attachment experience provides an emotional base by impacting the infant’s fundamental feelings of confidence, worthiness, and interpersonal trust (Schmitt et al., 2004). For example, mothers provide infants with a safe place that infants can return to when distressed and a secure foundation from which infants can explore the environment (Bowlby, 1973). According to Searle (1999), through experience with the caregiver, a person develops a positive or negative view of the self as either being worthy or unworthy of love. According to Schmitt et al. (2004), the thoughts and feelings then turn into internal working models or cognitive-emotional attitudes.

Working models provide a mechanism for cross-age continuity in attachment and are important in understanding how adult relationships are determined (Collins & Read, 1990). Evidence suggests that internal working models of self and of others tend to persist over time, affecting our ability to relate to others in close personal relationships that persist into adulthood (Schmitt et al., 2004). Attachment styles and models of self and others have an influence on social interactions such as those found in parent-child relations, peer relationships, and friendships (Schmitt et al., 2004).

The central feature to attachment theory is that children pass through a set of developmental phases and develop an evolved attachment system (Schmitt et al., 2004). According to Schmitt et al. (2004), children who experience support, consistency, and responsive caregiving have a high self-worth and a lasting feeling of comfort about depending on others. On the other hand, unresponsive, abusive, or inconsistent caregiving experiences leave a child with a negative or dysfunctional internal working model and a negative model of the self. The internal working models unknowingly become a stable
part of the child’s core personality and, according to Bowlby (1988), persist and operate on an unconscious level.

Bowlby’s theory focused on many different patterns of attachment in young children, and following his research, Ainsworth identified three primary attachment styles: secure, avoidant, and anxious/ambivalent (Simpson, 1990). People who possess a secure attachment style typically develop a model of self that is friendly, good-natured, and likable. Those who display avoidant styles often develop a model of being misunderstood and underappreciated. Lastly, those who display ambivalent styles typically develop a model of being suspicious and unreliable, or overly eager to commit themselves to relationships (Simpson, 1990).

The most common method for categorizing attachment styles in young children is by examining infants’ emotional reactions to separation from their primary caregivers (Bowlby, 1988). Bowlby identified three emotional reactions: protest, despair, and detachment. Secure attachment is characterized by infants who use the caregiver as a secure base when distressed; avoidant attachment is characterized by avoidance of the caregiver when distressed; and anxious/ambivalent attachment is characterized by overt expressions of protest and anger toward the primary caregiver when distressed (Bowlby, 1988; Simpson, 1990).

Theoretically, the attachment system develops during the first few years of life, and once developed, attachment-related motivations, feelings, mental models of self and others, and characteristic behavioral tendencies influence developing caregiving and sexual systems (Davis, Shaver, &Vernon, 2004). A weak attachment to parents, or
absence of a parent, can affect cues and decision making about dating strategies in adult environments (Bogaert & Sadava, 2002). Early relational experiences and attachment bonds influence the socialization process, gender role formation, and the ability to form healthy relationships and connections (Land, Rochlen, & Vaughn, 2011).

**Attachment and Sexual Behavior**

Attachment plays an important part in the establishment of romantic bonds, appears early in the course of an individual’s development, and lays the foundation for caregiving and sexual mating (Feeney, Peterson, Gallois, & Terry, 2000). According to attachment theory, romantic love integrates three distinct behavioral systems: attachment, caregiving, and sexual mating (Birnbaum, Reis, Mikulincer, Gillath, & Orpaz, 2006).

Attachment orientations deeply influence the way people think and feel about their romantic relationships and have been linked to patterns of conflict and stress, romantic satisfactions, and interpersonal harmony (Schmitt et al., 2004). Feeney, Noller, and Patty (1993) found that individuals have different goals for social interactions guided by working models, and goals may be exhibited in patterns of behavior across different relationships. For instance, Barber (1998) found that a poor childhood relationship with parents predicted an insecure attachment as an adult and that insecure adult attachment further predicted problems with long-term sexual relationships.

The connection between attachment and sexual expression is supported by the argument that intimate relationships between adult partners are viewed as an attachment, which influences the expression of sexual and caregiving behaviors and can also predict sexual attitudes (Feeney, Noller, & Patty, 1993; Feeney, Peterson, Gallois, & Terry,
In adulthood, as in infancy, the attachment system is characterized by the maintenance of close proximity, separation anxiety, and feelings of calm, security, social comfort, and emotional connection (Fisher, Aron, Mashek, Li, & Brown, 2002).

According to Davis, Shaver, and Vernon (2004), an individual’s personal motives for having sex can be related to the combined influences of attachment style and attachment system activation. Attachment system activation can be related to threats to a relationship and/or changes in intimacy. Sexual behavior can provide reassurance of a partner’s love as well as availability.

Empirical evidence points to a reciprocal relationship between the attachment system and the sexual system (Birnbaum et al., 2006). In a study that included 500 participants recruited from universities and community centers, Bogaert and Sadava (2002) found that attachment orientations influenced the way individuals construed their romantic relationship and sexual interactions, whereas sexual satisfaction contributed to the stability and quality of a relationship.

Simpson (1990) found that in romantic relationships, those individuals with a secure attachment style exhibited higher levels of interdependence, trust, commitment, and satisfaction, whereas people that were avoidant or ambivalent exhibited the opposite features. Avoidant people typically were concerned with avoiding excessive intimacy and commitment in relationships and ambivalent people often were preoccupied with issues regarding their partner’s predictability and dependability.
As there is a strong desire for physical contact and closeness among humans, sexual behavior is a defining feature of most romantic relationships, and most modern theories of adult love include a sexual/passionate component (Bogaert & Sadava, 2002). Sexual desire is often viewed as a sign of love and is often used to promote intimacy in relationships (Impett & Peplau, 2002; Little, McNulty, & Russell, 2009). As couples become sexually intimate, attachment styles will affect how individuals think and act in their intimate relationships.

Fisher, Aron, Mashek, Li, and Brown (2002) found that men and women can express a deep attachment for a long term partner, while simultaneously expressing an attraction for someone else or feeling sexual desire in response to stimuli unrelated to their partner. Furthermore, men and women can have sex with individuals with whom they are not in love, can be in love with someone that they have not had sexual contact with, or can have an attachment to a partner for whom they have no sexual desire or romantic passion.

Davis, Shaver, and Vernon (2004) concluded that individuals with an anxiety regarding attachment tended to have an enhanced sexual motivation for establishing relationships, whereas avoidance towards attachment was unassociated with sexual motivation for establishing relationships. Furthermore, secure individuals were least likely to report involvement in uncommitted relationships or one night stands, whereas avoidant individuals were more likely to do so.

Furthermore, according to Little, McNulty, and Russell (2009), insecure individuals respond differently than secure individuals do when there is a threat of
separation. The authors found that (1) secure individuals tended to remain satisfied with relationships during conflict, (2) ambivalent and avoidant individuals seemed to become unhappy in the relationship when there was conflict and that conflict often sabotaged the relationship, and (3) avoidant individuals felt certain that their partners would not be available and so they withdrew from their partners, becoming less satisfied as a result.

The quality of interactions with significant others shapes interaction goals, relational cognitions, and interpersonal behavior (Birnbaum et al., 2006). According to Birnbaum et al., attachment systems are related to sexuality systems in that securely attached individuals report fewer one night stands than their insecure counterparts. Similarly, secure individuals have more positive self-schemas and report greater pleasure from use of touch to express affection and sexuality.

As sexual motivation is shaped by the attachment and caregiving behavioral systems, sexual behavior can be a function of either system (Davis, Shaver, & Vernon, 2004). Although pair bonding and sexual mating systems represent distinctive behavioral systems with different primary functions, the impact of the two systems may reflect interdependence more than independence (Birnbaum et al., 2006).

**Attachment, Sexual Behavior, and Gender**

Attachment is relevant for understanding sexual behaviors as research has shown that there is substantial variability in human sexual behavior. Bogaert and Sadava (2002) note that some people have many partners, while others have only one, or possibly no, sexual partners in their lifetime. These patterns are further complicated by gender.
Fisher, Aron, Mashek, Li, and Brown (2002) identified similarities and differences between men and women regarding the expression of attachment and sexual behavior. In their sample, men and women expressed romantic love with the same degree of intensity and were attracted to partners who were dependable, mature, healthy and interested in home and family. Women, however, were noted to be attracted to men with money and an education, whereas men were more attracted to a partner’s physical appearance.

The association among attachment orientations, sexual experiences, and relationship quality incorporates socialization. Findings from studies suggest that women may be more socialized than men to view sex as a behavior to be valued and guarded. For example, Feeney, Noller, and Patty (1993) found that males reported more permissive and instrumental attitudes towards sex than females and exhibited less restricted sociosexual orientations. Furthermore, Birnbaum, Reis, Mikulincer, Gillath, and Orpaz (2006) found that men and women experienced sexual activity differently in that women had a more emotional-interpersonal orientation to sexuality where men had a more recreational orientation toward sexuality. Women often experienced intercourse as a reflection of the relationship whereas men were motivated by physical release and emphasized satisfaction from the sexual act itself.

Consistent empirical support was found by Land, Rochlen, and Vaughn (2011) regarding the negative association between intimacy and gender role conflict for men. Boys are encouraged by societal gender role expectations to separate prematurely from their primary attachment figures which may contribute to fear of abandonment and
avoidance of intimacy in relationships. The authors reported that men with a fearful attachment style exhibited more conflict with success, power, and competition as their internal model of self and others might have caused them to over identify with traditional masculine values. However, men with secure attachment styles were less restrictive in the expression of their emotions than men who were preoccupied, dismissive, or had fearful attachment styles.

Finally, research indicates that the attachment process is more evident in women than in men in a variety of social and sexual circumstances, and that men and women report different triggers regarding feelings of attachment. For example, in a study of 437 American and 402 Japanese men and women, 73% of the men and 85% of women were more likely to define emotional closeness as doing things together, and women often viewed intimacy as talking face-to-face (Fisher, Aron, Mashek, Li, & Brown, 2002).

Impett and Peplau (2002) found that women who were highly anxious were often preoccupied with intimacy and securing their partner’s commitment, viewed their partner as reluctant to commit, and underestimated how positively their partners viewed them. Furthermore, anxiously attached women often perceived themselves as being more committed than their partners. In addition, women high in avoidance felt emotionally distant in relationships and became apprehensive when their partner got too close (Impett & Peplau, 2002).

**Attachment and Personality**

Personality is the distinctive and unique pattern of thinking, feeling, and behaving that influences how individuals respond to situations (Atkins & Hart, 2008). Personality
psychologists generally accept that the five factor model provides a structured taxonomy for identifying and mapping important personality variables (Wright & Reise, 1997). The five factor model of personality is a categorical organization of personality traits that consists of five basic domains of personality: neuroticism, extroversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, and conscientiousness.

The most thorough evidence that has linked attachment and the Big Five is from a set of studies by Noftle and Shaver (2006), which involved over 8,000 college students. The study found that attachment-related anxiety was positively associated with neuroticism, and was negatively correlated with extraversion, openness, agreeableness, and consciousness. Attachment-related avoidance was positively correlated with higher scores on all of the Big Five traits.

Additional research conducted by Shafer (2001) on 374 individuals whose median age was 20 and who were ethnically diverse (with 41% Asian, 26% White, 14% Latino, 6% Persian, 4% Black, and 9% indicating some other ethnicity), concluded that attachment and the Big Five were moderately associated in that anxious attachment was positively associated with neuroticism, secure attachment was positively associated with extraversion and agreeableness, and avoidant attachment was positively associated with neuroticism, introversion, and disagreeableness.

**Personality and Sexual Behavior**

According to Markey and Markey (2007), sex is a complex behavior that has different meanings for different people, and certain personality qualities may predispose individuals to participate in different sexual behaviors. Personality factors may be
precursors, and not consequences, of sexual behavior (Atkins & Hart, 2008) because personality traits influence goals and goals allow individuals to select and shape their social environment in a way that allows for existing dispositions to be reinforced (Ingledew & Ferguson, 2006). Therefore, understanding personality has implications for understanding individuals’ sexual choices (Markey & Markey, 2007).

Personality traits are a psychological framework in which an individual’s affective and cognitive representations of sexual stimuli and sexual behavior develop (Wright & Reise, 1997). For example, personality factors may influence relationship quality and length, such as having many sexual partners or being in a committed relationship (Lippa, 2008; Wright & Reise, 1997). Although people enter into relationships with these foundational, stable personality patterns, these patterns are likely to adapt in response to a partner’s behavioral style (Collins & Read, 1990).

Markey and Markey (2007) determined that unconscientious individuals tended to have more sexual partners, whereas extraverts were more likely to have higher rates of sexual activity and have more positive attitudes about having multiple sex partners than introverts. Similarly, Markey and Markey found that individuals who were low in agreeableness were more likely to have multiple sex partners.

Research conducted by Ahmetoglu, Swami, and Chamorro-Premuzi (2010) found significant positive associations between conscientiousness, intimacy, and commitment. They also noted that conscientious individuals were more likely to engage in loving behaviors and to apply their higher-achievement orientation toward love relationships,
meaning that they apply self-control, responsibility, and achievement orientation in their interpersonal relationships.

Consistent with previous research, extraversion was found to be positively related to passion. Ahmetoglu, Swami, and Chamorro-Premuzi (2010) argued that extraverts are more able to communicate their love or affection, characterizing extraversion as a trait that serves to express positive emotions.

**Sexual Self-Schema**

Cyranowski and Andersen (1998) suggest that people’s self-views develop and undergo refinement as they observe their own affective and behavioral patterns and interactions and come to conclusions about aspects of themselves. Well-articulated self-views, or self-schemas, influence how people process and respond to relevant social cues (Cyranowski & Andersen, 1998). Sexual self-schema, specifically, describes the psychological and behavioral boundaries of sexual desire (Andersen & Cyranowski, 1995). Therefore, people’s sexual self-schemas may evolve as they observe changes in their sexual affects and behavior over time.

Sexual self-schemas are defined as cognitive views about sexual aspects of the self (Andersen & Cyranowski, 1995). The views, according to Cyranowski and Andersen (1998), derive from past experience, usually manifest in current sexual cognition, and guide sexual behavior. Cyranowski and Andersen (1998) found that one’s sexual self-schema may influence both cognitive processing and affect regulation in response to sexually relevant information. Furthermore, the intrapersonal process may guide interpersonal processes, perceptions, and interactions.
Throughout adulthood, one’s sexual self-schemas may influence attachment behaviors within romantic-sexual relationships as well as one’s view of the self as a sexually mature adult (Cyranowski & Andersen, 1995). Thus, Cyranowski and Andersen concluded that there may be a relationship between attachment representation, sexual self-schema, and personality. According to attachment theory, internalized self-representations relate to patterns of attachment, which in turn relate to the attachment component of seeking close relationships. Attachment theory suggests that affective bonds function to maintain people’s relatedness to others. The internal working models, or schemas, regarding the self and self-other interaction, lead to an organization of cognitions, affects, and behaviors in later relationships.

Cyranowski and Andersen (1998) found that the romantic/open aspects of the positive sexual self-schema dimension may relate to one’s basic beliefs about attachment figures (i.e. are potential partners responsive or desirable?), and in contrast, the embarrassed/self-conscious aspects of the negative schema may relate to the uncertain view of one’s model of self (i.e. Am I worthy? Will my partner reject me?), which may relate to the experience of anxiety in close relationships. Consistent with attachment theory, Cyranowski and Andersen (1995) found that women with positive schemas reported secure attachments, whereas women with negative schemas reported anxious and avoidant attachments. As expected, co-schematic women reported both non-avoidant and anxious attachment.

Additional research by Andersen, Cyranowski, and Espindle (1999) found that sexually schematic men experienced emotions of passion and love, saw themselves as
being powerful and aggressive, and were open-minded and liberal in their sexual attitudes. Schematic men were found to have a high frequency of sexual relationships and a broader range of sexual behaviors, whereas aschematic men had a narrower range of sexual activities, had fewer sex partners, and were more likely to not be involved with a partner even for a short-term. Furthermore, Andersen and Cyranowski (1995) discovered that when comparing data regarding the frequency of internally generated thoughts and externally prompted thoughts, young men and women indicated that men reported a greater frequency of urges than did women.

Research in personality and the relationship between sexual behavior and personality structure, which include the Big Five model and sexual self-schema, has emerged in the past decade (Andersen & Cyranowski, 1995): those scoring high on neuroticism reported lower levels of sexual information and poorer body image, whereas those scoring higher on openness reported higher levels of sexual activity. Furthermore, the results suggested that specific characteristics of extraversion may be more influential for women when they begin sexual interactions with others, whereas neuroticism may play a greater role when sexual partners are established.

**Sexual Behavior**

According to Patrick and Lee (2010), sexual motivations precede sexual behaviors. These sexual motives consist of feeling valued by a partner, expressing value for a partner, enhancing feelings of personal power, experiencing pleasure, and nurturing one’s partner. Sex can also be viewed as a resource that one person has the potential to give and that the other person may want (Meston & Buss, 2007). Additionally, Patrick
and Lee (2010) found that when college students were asked about their motivation for engaging in sex, many reported that they were motivated by experiencing pleasure, feeling valued, providing and receiving comfort, and feeling and expressing affection.

Several theoretical perspectives suggest that motives for engaging in sexual intercourse may be psychologically complex (Meston & Buss, 2007). Cooper, Shapiro, and Powers (1998) found that people can, and often do, use sex strategically to meet different psychological needs. Sexual expression differs as a function of the needs being served and different factors may maintain sexual behavior among individuals. Cooper, Shapiro, and Powers (1998) concluded that enhancement and intimacy motives seem to emerge as the primary reasons for having sexual intercourse among college students.

As the motives for engaging in sexual intercourse seem to vary, it is equitable to examine what types of sexual relationships individuals engage in. Previous research has examined relationships as a dichotomy of relationship types, ignoring those relationships that do not fall neatly into the categories of married or single (Jonason, Li, & Cason, 2009). According to Bisson and Levine (2009), there are new types of relationships that have been identified that do not fit the traditional definition of a friendship or a romantic relationship, but instead have characteristics of both.

Relationships may range in commitment from committed and romantic, to “friends with benefits,” to “booty calls,” to one night stands. Reasons for having casual sex, such as the desire to experience sexual variety, may differ from those that are associated with sex in the context of having an ongoing romantic relationship (Meston & Buss, 2007).
People exercise different amounts of discretion when deciding how many sexual partners to become involved with over their lifetime (Markey & Markey, 2007). Hoyle, Fejfar, and Miller (2000) found that 25% of a sample of unmarried sexually active people in their 20’s had sex with two or more partners while 5% of the sample had sex with five or more partners in the last year. These results suggest that a subset of sexually active people seek out multiple partners. As Jonason, Li, and Cason (2009) determined, relationships may be categorized as having separate long and short-term components, the combination of which corresponds to unique strategies of human sexuality that includes a multidimensional structure.

Friendships typically exclude romantic love and sexual contact, and are not sexually intimate (Bisson & Levine, 2009). These platonic friendships differ from friends with benefits relationships. However, Bisson and Levine found in their research that friendships and romantic relationships are more similar than different as they both involve interdependence, trust, an enjoyment of the others company, and engaging in mutual activities.

Recent change in American culture has added a new phenomenon in regards to having casual sex: an acceptance of, as well as support for, hooking up (Eshbaugh & Gute, 2008). The terms “hooking up” and “friends with benefits” have taken center stage in popular press and in research over the past decade (Owen, Rhoades, Stanley, & Fincham, 2010). According to Jonason, Li, and Cason (2009), two-thirds of casual sex reported in their study occurred among friends; these relationships were thusly called friends with benefits relationships. Research conducted by Bisson and Levine (2009)
concluded that the prevalence of university students that had experience in engaging in sexual activity with a friend ranged from 49% to 62%. Jonason, Li, and Cason (2009), found that men are more likely to seek access to numerous sex partners with a minimal investment, where women have been found to place a greater emphasis on obtaining long-term committed mates.

The labeling of friends with benefits as a friendship is found to be consistent with the fact that the individuals are not romantically committed and do not share a romantic love for one another; however, they do engage in repeated sexual activity (Bisson & Levine, 2009). According to Bisson and Levine, a friends with benefits relationship is often defined as sex in a non-romantic friendship where friends have sex, and involves the intimacy of a friendship with the sexual intimacy of a romantic relationship while avoiding the romantic label.

According to research by Puentes, Knox, and Zusman (2008), men focus on the “benefits” aspect of the relationship while women focus on the “friend” aspect. Some studies have reported that males report significantly more friends with benefits, which may stem from a disposition that women tend to characterize relationships as more substantial than they actually are, in the hope that these relationships may blossom into romantic relationships (Eisenberg, Ackard, Resnick, & Neumark-Sztainer, 2009).

One compromise to the battle of friends with benefits or hooking up is the relationship that is known as a booty call, which consists of both a sexual component as well as the possibility of further commitment (Jonason, Li, & Cason, 2009). According to Jonason, Li, and Cason, booty calls are a type of relationship that often takes on a
negative connotation, due to the fact that it often involves the solicitation of sexual activity without the solicitation of a long-term partner. Booty calls often involve an underlying friendship and some investment in longevity, and are often characterized by emotionally intimate acts such as kissing.

Research has indicated that in romantic and sexual lives, men and women want as many benefits as possible with little costs. For men, booty calls offer them a sexual access at a minimal cost, whereas for women, the booty call relationship offers more affection than a one night stand (Jonason, Li, & Carson, 2009).

Hookups have been defined as a sexual encounter that lasts only one night between strangers or brief acquaintances (Eshbaugh & Gute, 2008). Hookups range from passionate kissing and petting to oral sex or intercourse that occurs outside the context of a relationship with defined commitment.

Research has found that sexual activity with a friend distinguishes a friend with benefits from that of hookups, which often involves one single occurrence of sex between acquaintances or strangers without the expectation of developing a relationship (Bisson & Levine, 2009). According to Owen et al. (2010), young adults prefer the vagueness that hooking up implies, in terms of both the physical encounter entailed and with regard to whether there will be future encounters or any ongoing relationship. In a study conducted by Eisenberg, Ackard, Resnick, and Neumark-Sztainer (2009), 78% of undergraduate students had reported having engaged in sexual activity with a casual partner.
Hypotheses

The purpose of this study was to identify attachment and personality characteristics that are associated with sexual behavior. Based on the literature presented above, I predicted the following: 1) Participants with positive sexual self-schema will have non-avoidant attachment styles. 2) Participants who score high in secure attachment will score high in extraversion and agreeableness. 3) Participants with positive sexual self-schema, a secure attachment, and higher extraversion scores will have a more open attitude about casual sex. 4) Women who score high in neuroticism will have a more negative/disapproving sexual self-schema.

In addition to these hypotheses I plan to conduct exploratory analysis examining the relationships between sexual self-schema and sexual motivation, as well as sexual motivation and sexual behaviors (friends with benefits, booty calls, and one night stands).
Chapter 2

METHOD

Participants

Participants came from a convenience sample of 228 California State University, Sacramento students (66 men and 162 women), aged 17 to 55 years ($M = 21.37, SD=4.94$), recruited from undergraduate Psychology courses. Of these participants, 38% were Caucasian, 24% were Latino, 16% were Asian/Pacific Islander, 12% were African American, and 10% identified as other. Regarding educational class standing, 41% were juniors, 24% were sophomores, 17% were freshmen, 17% were seniors, and 1% were graduate students, and regarding relationship status, 3% were married, 2% were divorced, and 95% were never married (among those who were never married, 51% were currently in a committed relationship, 13% were casually dating, and 36% were single). In regards to engaging in sexual behaviors, 47% had engaged in friends with benefits relationships, 27% had engaged in booty calls, and 30% had experience with one night stands at some point in the past.

Procedure

All participants were led through an informed consent procedure prior to completing the study. After providing informed consent, participants were asked to complete seven surveys, presented in random order, regarding demographic information, sexual goals, sexual self-schema, personality, attachment, and sexual experience. All participants were given course credit for their participation upon completion of the study.
Materials

The demographics questionnaire was developed for the study and assessed the participants’ age, sex, grade level, relationship status, and ethnicity.

Sexual behavioral system subgoals questionnaire (SBSS)

The SBSS was developed by Birnbaum and Gillath (2006) to assess the subgoals of sexual behavior. The scale assesses individual differences in behaviors and beliefs related to the sexual behavioral system as they function in relationships. The inventory is a self-report questionnaire consisting of 18 items assessing four subgoals of sexual behavior: bringing partners together (relationship initiation), keeping partners attached (maintaining the bond), promoting frequent sexual activity (sexual pleasure and motivation), and viewing sex as aversive (negative reactions). Participants respond on a Likert response format (1 = not at all to 9 = very characteristic) and responses are averaged for each subgoal. Cronbach’s alpha coefficients for the four subgoals ranged from .68 to .84 in previous research (Birnbaum & Gillath, 2006). Internal consistency was also adequate in the present sample (relationship initiation α = .79, negative reactions α = .77, maintaining the bond α = .83, sexual pleasure and motivation α = .67).

Sexual self-schema (SSSM/SSSW)

The Sexual Self-Schema scale was developed by Andersen, Cyranowski, and Espindle (1999) to assess the cognitive aspects of sexuality. There are two versions of this scale: the form for men (SSSM) and the form for women (SSSW). The inventory for men is a self-report questionnaire consisting of 45 items arranged on a Likert response format (0 = not at all descriptive to 6 = very much descriptive). Items assess three
cognitive self-views that stem from past experience, manifest in current experience, are influenced by relevant social information, and guide future sexual behavior: 1) loving traits 2) powerful traits and 3) liberal views. Factor scores for each subscale are calculated by summing the ratings for each item in each individual factor. Factors can be combined by summing the subscales together. Based on this combined score, men fall on a continuum between schematic and aschematic. Men, who are identified as being more schematic experience emotions of passion and love, are sexually experienced, have frequent sexual relationships, and have a broader repertoire of sexual behaviors. Men who are more aschematic have a narrower range of sexual activities and have fewer sex partners. The Sexual Self-Schema (Male) scale has acceptable reliability for the full scale of $\alpha = .86$ (Andersen, Cyranowski, & Espindle, 1999). The Male Sexual Self-Schema scale has a Cronbach alpha for the current study of $\alpha = .82$.

The inventory for women is a self-report questionnaire consisting of 50 items arranged on a Likert response format (0 = not at all descriptive to 6 = very much descriptive). Items assess three cognitive self-views that stem from past experience, manifest in current experience, are influenced by relevant social information, and guide future sexual behavior: 1) passionate-romantic 2) open-direct and 3) embarrassed-conservative. The sum is calculated for each subscale. The scores for the passionate-romantic and open-direct subscales are summed together and the embarrassed – conservative subscale is deducted from the total to determine if a woman has a positive sexual-schema or a negative sexual-schema. Based on this score, women fall on a continuum between positive sexual-schema and negative sexual-schema. Women with a
more positive sexual-schema are described as viewing themselves as emotionally romantic or passionate and are open to romantic and sexual relationships and experiences. Women with a more negative sexual self-schema are described as being relatively emotionally cold or unromantic, and are behaviorally inhibited in their sexual and romantic relationships. The Sexual Self-Schema (Female) scale has acceptable reliability for the full scale of $\alpha = .82$ (Andersen & Cyranowski, 1994). The Sexual Self-Schema (Female) scale has a Cronbach alpha of $\alpha = .76$ for the current study.

**Revised adult attachment scale-revised (AAS-R)**

The AAS-R was developed by Collins (1996) to assess general orientation towards close relationships. The inventory is a self-report questionnaire consisting of 18 items that assess three subscales of attachment: comfort with emotional closeness (close), comfort with depending on or trusting in others (dependent), and anxious concern about being abandoned or unloved (anxiety). Responses are given on a five-point scale (1 = not at all characteristic of me to 5 = very characteristic of me) and averaged to create scores for each subscale. The Revised Adult Attachment Scale has an acceptable test-retest reliability ($\alpha = .86$ for the close subscale, $\alpha = .79$ for the dependent subscale, $\alpha = .74$ for the anxiety; Collins, 1996). The Revised Adult Attachment Scale also has acceptable reliability for the current study sample ($\alpha = .74$ for the close subscale, $\alpha = .74$ for the dependent subscale, $\alpha = .86$ for the anxiety subscale).

**Personality**

The personality inventory (Rossi, 2001) is a self-report questionnaire consisting of 24 items measuring the Big Five domains of neuroticism, extraversion, agreeableness,
conscientiousness, and openness to experience on a 4-point scale (1 = not at all, 2 = a little, 3 = some, 4 = a lot). Scores are averaged for each domain. The five factors have an acceptable test re-test reliability (neuroticism $\alpha = .80$, extraversion $\alpha = .88$, agreeableness $\alpha = .79$, conscientiousness $\alpha = .83$, and openness $\alpha = .89$; Rossi, 2001). For the current study sample, the five factors also have an acceptable reliability (neuroticism $\alpha = .72$, extraversion $\alpha = .84$, agreeableness $\alpha = .84$, conscientiousness $\alpha = .65$, openness $\alpha = .78$).

Sociosexual orientation inventory-revised (SOI-R)

The SOI-R inventory is a self-report questionnaire that consists of nine items that assesses the three components of sociosexuality and how they influence sexual behaviors and relationship outcomes (Penke & Asendorph, 2008). The scales measure individual differences in people’s willingness to engage in uncommitted sexual relationships. The subscales measure three domains: sexual behavior, attitude, and desire. The sexual behavior facet consists of three items asking participants to report exactly how many sexual partners they have engaged with over the past twelve months and the lifetime number of “one night stands” (1 = 0 partners to 9 = 20 or more partners); the attitude facet consists of three items asking participants to report acceptance of sex without love (1 = totally disagree to 9 = strongly agree); and desire facet consists of three items asking participants to report how often they have fantasies about having sex (1 = never to 9 = at least once a day). The scale has acceptable reliability among men and women (behavior $\alpha = .85$ for men and .84 for women, attitude $\alpha = .87$ for men and $\alpha = .83$ for women, desire $\alpha = .86$ for men and $\alpha = .85$ for women). All nine items are aggregated to obtain a total score of global sociosexual orientation $\alpha = .83$ (male) and $\alpha = .83$ (female) (Penke &
Asendorph, 2008). The subscales have acceptable reliability for the current study with combined the scores for males and females: $\alpha = .75$ for the behavior facet, $\alpha = .85$ for the attitude facet, and $\alpha = .88$ for the desire facet. The entire inventory has a reliability factor of $\alpha = .89$ for the current study.

**Brief sexual attitudes scale (BSAS)**

The scale consists of 23 items (1 = strongly agree to 5 = strongly disagree) that make up four subscales (permissiveness, birth control, communion, and instrumentality) that assess different emotional factors that are involved with attitudes about sex (Reich, 2006). The scale measures sexual attitudes in a multidimensional fashion that includes emotional and attitudinal aspects of sexual behavior. The items are reverse scored and the mean is calculated for each subscale. The permissiveness subscale reflects attitudes about casual sexuality; the birth control subscale reflects responsibility when engaging in sexual behavior; the communion subscale reflects an idealistic attitude about sexuality; and the subscale of instrumentality reflects the biological need for sexual behavior. The five factors have an acceptable reliability of: permissiveness $\alpha = .93$, birth control $\alpha = .84$, communion $\alpha = .71$ and instrumentality $\alpha = .77$ (Reich, 2006). The subscales have a reliable Cronbach alpha for the current study: permissiveness $\alpha = .92$, birth control $\alpha = .86$, communion $\alpha = .65$ and instrumentality $\alpha = .73$.

**Experiences in close relationships–revised (ECR-R)**

The ECR-R is designed to assess individual differences with respect to attachment-related anxiety and attachment-related avoidance. The self-report inventory consists of 18 items reflecting attachment-related anxiety and 18 items reflecting
attachment-related avoidance. Each item is rated on a seven point scale (1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree), and an average score is calculated for each subscale. Each subscale has an acceptable reliability: attachment-related anxiety scale \( \alpha = .95 \), attachment-related avoidance \( \alpha = .93 \) (Sibley & Liu, 2004). There is internal reliability for both scales in the current study: attachment-related anxiety scale \( \alpha = .93 \), and \( \alpha = .93 \) for attachment-related avoidance scale.
Chapter 3

RESULTS

All variables were examined for reliability and normality. Next, Pearson correlations were computed to examine each hypothesis. All correlations are reported in the Appendix. Hierarchical and logistical regression analyses were also conducted for exploration of the multivariate relationships between variables.

Hypothesis 1

A Pearson correlation was computed to assess the relationship between sexual self-schema and attachment styles. There was a positive correlation between close attachment and sexual self-schema for men ($r = .28, p = .02$), such that higher levels of sexual self-schema for men were associated with a higher level of comfort with intimacy. There were no other significant correlations between sexual self-schema and attachment.

Hypothesis 2

Pearson correlations were computed to assess the relationship between personality and attachment next. As predicted, there was a positive correlation between agreeableness and close attachment ($r = .24, p < .001$), and a negative correlation between agreeableness and anxious attachment ($r = -.14, p = .03$) and avoidant attachment ($r = -.33, p < .001$).

Exploratory analyses revealed a positive correlation of extraversion with close attachment ($r = .27, p < .001$) and dependent attachment ($r = .19, p = .01$), and a negative correlation of extraversion and both measures of anxious attachment ($r = -.25, p < .001$ for
the revised adult attachment scale, and \( r = -.26, p < .001 \) for the experiences in close relationships scale). There was also a negative correlation between extraversion and avoidant attachment style \( (r = -.27, p < .001) \).

**Hypothesis 3**

Next, Pearson correlation coefficients were computed to examine correlates of attitudes about casual sex. There was a positive correlation between sexual self-schema for women and friends with benefits \( (r = .22, p = .01) \), such that women with higher levels of sexual self-schema were more likely to engage in a friends with benefits relationship.

Furthermore, additional analyses revealed significant positive correlations with both measures of anxious attachment and engaging in booty calls \( (r = .17, p = .01 \) for the revised adult attachment scale and \( r = .14, p = .03 \) for the experiences in close relationship scale), and avoidant attachment and friends with benefits relationships \( (r = .16, p = .02) \). Overall, individuals who had a higher level of anxiety were more likely to engage in booty calls, and individuals with an avoidant attachment style were more likely to engage in a friend with benefits relationship.

Furthermore, extraversion was positively correlated with engaging in a friends with benefits relationship \( (r = .13, p = .05) \).

**Hypothesis 4**

A Pearson correlation was computed to assess the relationship between women’s sexual self-schema and neuroticism, but did not reveal a significant relationship \( (r = -.35, p < .001) \).
Exploratory Analysis:

Hierarchical regression analyses were computed to explore the multivariate relationships between the Sociosexual Orientation, Sexual Behavior Systems Subgoals, and Sexual Self-Schema. The Sociosexual Orientation Inventory and Sexual Behavior Systems Subgoals explained 37.4% (29.8% adjusted) of the variance in Sexual Self-Schema for men, $F(7, 58) = 4.95, p < .001$. As shown in Table 1, the Sociosexual Orientation Inventory subgoal of behavior and the Sexual Behavior Systems subgoal of sexual intent were both associated with Sexual Self-Schema for men, such that men who were more likely to engage in uncommitted sex had a higher sexual self-schema ($\beta = .27, p = .04$), and men who had a higher motivations for engaging in sex for pleasure had a higher sexual self-schema ($\beta = .40, p = .04$).

Table 1

Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting Sexual Self-Schema for Men

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>$\beta$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SOI Behavior</td>
<td>3.16</td>
<td>1.53</td>
<td>.27*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOI Attitude</td>
<td>-2.05</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>-.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOI Desire</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>.99</td>
<td>.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBSS Initiation</td>
<td>.37</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBSS Negative</td>
<td>-1.44</td>
<td>1.56</td>
<td>-.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBSS Bond</td>
<td>-.41</td>
<td>1.65</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBSS Sexual</td>
<td>4.97</td>
<td>2.38</td>
<td>.40*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* $p < .05$. Total $R^2 = .37$ (Adj. $R^2 = .30$). $F(7, 58) = 4.95, p < .001$.

The Sociosexual Orientation Inventory and Sexual Behavior Systems Subgoals explained 31.2% (28% adjusted) of the variance in Sexual Self-Schema for women, $F(7, 150) = 9.76, p < .001$. The Sociosexual Orientation Inventory subgoals of behavior, sexual motivation, and negative reactions were associated with Sexual Self-Schema for
women, such that women who had a higher sexual self-schema were more likely to engage in uncommitted sex ($\beta = .31, p = .001$), had higher motivations for engaging in sex for pleasure ($\beta = .18, p = .05$), and had lower negative reactions to sexual behavior ($\beta = -.28, p = .01$), as shown in Table 2.

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>$\beta$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SOI Behavior</td>
<td>4.23</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>.31*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOI Attitude</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOI Desire</td>
<td>.42</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBSS Initiation</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td>-.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBSS Negative</td>
<td>-3.16</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>-.28*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBSS Bond</td>
<td>.53</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBSS Sexual</td>
<td>1.76</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td>.18*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. *$p < .05$. Total $R^2 = .31$ (Adj. $R^2 = .28$). $F(7, 150) = 9.76, p < .001$.

Three logistic regression analyses were also computed to assess the relationship between the Sociosexual Orientation Inventory, Sexual Behavior Systems Subgoals, and engaging in specific sexual behaviors (friends with benefits, booty calls, and one night stands). The Sociosexual Orientation and Sexual Behavior Systems Subgoals explained 27.7% (37% adjusted) of the variance in engaging in friends with benefits relationships, $\chi^2(7) = 72.72, p < .001$, as shown in Table 3. The Sociosexual Orientation Inventory subgoal of behavior was associated with engaging in friends with benefits relationships, such that those that were more likely to engage in uncommitted sex were more likely to participate in friends with benefits relationships ($\beta = 22.55, p < .001$).
Further analysis revealed that the Systems Subgoals explained 33.1% (47.8% adjusted) of the variance in engaging in booty calls, $\chi^2(7) = 90.06$, $p < .001$. The Sociosexual Orientation Inventory subgoal of behavior and the Sexual Behavior System subgoal of initiating were associated with engaging in booty calls, such that those that were more likely to participate in booty calls were more likely to engage in uncommitted sex ($\beta = 32.75$, $p < .001$) and to initiate ($\beta = 4.69$, $p = .04$), as shown in Table 4.

Table 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>S.E.</th>
<th>Wald Statistic</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SOI Behavior</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>22.55</td>
<td>.000*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOI Attitude</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>2.35</td>
<td>.125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOI Desire</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.55</td>
<td>.460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBSS Initiation</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.775</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBSS Negative</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.33</td>
<td>.566</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBSS Bond</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>.288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBSS Sexual</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.787</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. *$p < .05$.

Finally, Sociosexual Orientation Inventory and Sexual Behavior Systems Subgoals explained 35.3% (50% adjusted) of the variance in engaging in one night
stands, $x^2(7) = 97.62, p < .001$. As shown in Table 5, the Sociosexual Orientation Inventory subgoal of behavior and the Sexual Behavior System subgoal of negative reactions were associated with engaging in one night stands, such that those that were more likely to participate in one night stands were more likely to engage in uncommitted sex ($\beta = 34.74, p < .001$), and to have a negative reaction to sexual behavior ($\beta = 4.21, p = .04$).

Table 5

*Logistical Regression Analysis Predicting One Night Stands*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>Wald Statistic</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SOI Behavior</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>34.74</td>
<td>.000*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOI Attitude</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>2.43</td>
<td>.119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOI Desire</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.48</td>
<td>.489</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBSS Initiation</td>
<td>-.00</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.986</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBSS Negative</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>4.21</td>
<td>.040*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBSS Bond</td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>.419</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBSS Sexual</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.935</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. *$p < .05$.*
People engage in sexual relationships that vary in commitment from committed relationships to one night stands. Examining theoretical perspectives of attachment, personality, and sexual self-schema, the present data revealed that individuals with a more secure attachment style, a more extraverted personality type, and a higher sexual self-schema engaged in a variety of sexual relationships.

**Hypothesis 1: Attachment and Sexual Self-Schema**

Using bivariate correlation analyses, I found that men with a higher close attachment style (a measure of secure attachment) had a higher sexual self-schema in the present study, consistent with hypotheses. As Birnbaum et al. (2006) and Simpson (1990) found, there appears to be a reciprocal relationship between the attachment and sexual system, and individuals with a secure attachment style exhibit higher levels of trust and have more confidence in their sexuality. In particular, men with secure attachment styles are usually less restrictive in the expression of their emotions (Land, Rochlen, & Vaughn, 2011).

Multivariate analyses were also explored and revealed that sexual desire and motivation by sexual pleasure were both associated with higher sexual self-schema for men, which is consistent with results from with Andersen, Cyranowski, and Espindle (1999) who found that men who had higher sexual self-schema were more liberal in sexual attitudes and engaged in a broader range of sexual behaviors. The present results
indicate that men who are more confident with their sexual selves are more likely to engage in uncommitted sex for pleasure.

Contrary to hypotheses, sexual self-schema was not related to attachment style for women when a bivariate analysis was conducted in the present study. However, a multivariate exploratory analysis revealed that women with lower sexual self-schema reported more anxious and avoidant attachment styles. These multivariate results are consistent with Cyranowski and Andersen (1995), who found that women with a higher sexual self-schema had non-avoidant and non-anxious attachment styles. The results indicate that women who have more confidence in their sexuality feel more secure with an attachment to others, have less fear of being abandoned, and therefore do not avoid relationships.

**Hypothesis 2: Attachment and Personality**

Consistent with previous research in which Shafer (2001) found secure/close attachment was positively associated with agreeableness, I found a positive correlation between agreeableness and attachment style in my thesis research. Also consistent with Shafer (2001), who found that secure attachment was positively associated with extraversion, I found that extraversion was positively correlated with close/secure and dependent attachment styles, suggesting that individuals who are more dependent on others and who are more concerned about being rejected may be more extraverted in their personality, seeking acceptance from others.

While secure attachment shared a positive relationship with extraversion and agreeableness in the present work, anxious attachment showed the opposite pattern.
Anxious attachment was negatively correlated with agreeableness and extraversion in the current sample, which is consistent with previous research (Noftle & Shaver, 2006). Further, consistent with Noftle and Shaver, attachment-related avoidance was negatively correlated with agreeableness and extraversion, suggesting that attachment patterns have considerable overlap with these personality traits.

**Hypothesis 3: Sexual Self-Schema, Attachment and Personality**

As Jonason, Li, and Carson (2009) stated, women place a greater emphasis than men on obtaining long-term committed mates. This may explain why women in the current study were more likely to engage in friends with benefits relationships than booty calls or one night stands, as friends with benefits relationships offer more affection than the alternative low-commitment relationship types. This preference also may be supported by sexual self-schema: I found a positive correlation between sexual self-schema and friends with benefits relationship experience for women in the present study indicating that women who are more confident about sexuality may use sex in a friendship to bring about a committed relationship.

To further examine attachment and sexual behavior, the present analyses revealed a significant positive correlation between anxious attachments and engaging in booty calls. Little, McNulty, and Russell (2009) found that individuals with an anxious attachment style tended to have an enhanced sexual motivation for relationships, which suggests that individuals who have more anxiety may engage in booty calls because they can obtain pleasure without commitment.
Additionally, my thesis study revealed a significant positive correlation between avoidant attachments and friends with benefits relationships. Results indicate that avoidant individuals may have more doubt regarding the availability of partners. This is in agreement with Simpson (1990), who argued that avoidant individuals evade excessive intimacy and commitment that comes with relationships because they do not trust that partners will be willing to commit. As avoidant individuals seem to become unhappy in committed relationships and tend to withdraw from their partner (Little, McNulty, & Russell, 2009), a friend with benefits relationship may be more satisfying because it is not completely associated with a sexual motivation. Therefore, avoidant individuals are able to maintain a balance between getting their needs met without the romantic attachment.

To further examine the working models that are prevalent in engaging in sexual behaviors, I found that, consistent with previous research where young adults preferred the vagueness that hooking up or having a one night stand implies (Eisenberg, Ackard, Resnick & Neumark-Sztainer, 2009; Owen et al., 2010), individuals in the present study who engaged in one night stands were more likely to engage in uncommitted sex. Interestingly, participants in the present study who engaged in one night stands also tended to have a more negative reaction to sex (i.e., to see sex as aversive). Because these are correlational results, it is possible that: 1) people who have a more negative reaction to sexual behavior in general may find it safer to only engage in the sexual encounter once, as opposed to the frequent intercourse that often accompanies committed relationships, 2) people who have more one night stands may be dissatisfied with sex in
this context and therefore may grow to see sex as aversive over repeated one night stands, or 3) the discomfort with sexual interaction, doubts about love and being loved, and lack of pleasure feelings can cause a preference for one night stands and account for negative reactions to sex involving a relational component.

Individuals that engage in one night stands differ slightly from those that engage in booty calls; while there is an underlying friendship and there is some investment, a booty call involves the explicit, or implicit, intent to engage in sexual activity. One night stands, on the other hand, typically involve engaging in the sexual act with a stranger only once, with no relationship investment. Consistent with this distinction, additional exploratory analyses in the present study revealed that individuals who frequently engaged in booty calls were both more likely to engage in uncommitted sex, as well as more likely to initiate relationships. This is consistent with previous research by Jonason, Li, and Carson (2009) who found that those likely to engage in sexual behaviors for the basic pleasure of the act and who are comfortable with relationships engage in booty calls because there is a relationship with minimal investment costs.

The trait of comfort with initiating relationships also has implications for friends with benefits relationships: extraversion and engaging in friends with benefits relationships were positively correlated in the present study. Extraverts were likely to have a higher rate of sexual activity and to have positive attitudes about having casual sex in previous research (Markey & Markey, 2007). Furthermore, extraverts are more able to communicate their love or affection, and have been characterized as being able to express positive emotions (Ahmetoglu, Swami, & Chamorro-Premuzi, 2010). The combination of
emotional expressiveness and positive attitudes toward casual sex may draw extraverted individuals to friends with benefits relationships. Friends with benefits relationships include trust and comfort with an individual while avoiding a romantic commitment, so for extraverts a friend with benefits can serve the purpose of fulfilling one’s sexual needs while still being open to other possibilities and/or relationships.

Furthermore, additional analyses concluded that individuals who engaged in friends with benefits relationships were more likely to do so for the pleasure, and not the commitment. This finding is consistent with results from Bisson and Levine (2009), who found that a friends with benefits relationship involves individuals who are not romantically committed and do not share a romantic love for one another.

**Hypotheses 4: Gender, Sexual Self-Schema, and Personality**

Contrary to previous research, I did not discover a relationship between neuroticism and sexual self-schema among women in my thesis research. As stated by Andersen and Cyranowski (1995), those who scored higher in neuroticism reported lower levels of sexual self-schema; however the present research was not able to replicate the findings. Findings may not have been replicated due to the previous study examining multiple factors such as depression, self-consciousness as well as body image, which were not included in this current study.

**Limitations and Strengths**

There are three primary limitations in this current study: 1) convenience sample 2) self-reporting and 3) correlative results. First, the convenience sample of 228 college students may not be representative of the entire American population. There may be
biases in the sample as more than half of the students were women, the mean age for the entire sample was 21 years, and almost half were juniors in college. These factors may limit the generalizability of the current study as college students have a less defined sense of self and are more easily influenced than older adults. Thus, college students may have different motives and desires for engaging in sexual behaviors than older adults, as they are still in the process of establishing their social roles (including family and work), while older adults tend to have already established these aspects of their identity.

A second limitation of these data was the reliance of self-reporting, as participants may have answered the questionnaires based on social desirability instead of answering the questions based solely on personal experience. In an attempt to portray themselves in a positive light, participants may have under- or over-reported their experiences. Furthermore, the most concerning limitation is that the surveys were able to provide correlative results and not causal information. The surveys were not able to provide direct causes for why individuals engage in specific behaviors. Therefore attachment style can cause personality characteristics, personality can cause attachment styles, or different external factors beyond attachment, personality, and sexual self-schema may have contributed to the results that were found.

Nevertheless, ample evidence suggests that personality predicts behavior. As supported by Atkins and Hart (2008) personality factors may be precursors, and not consequences, of sexual behavior. Furthermore, traits influence goals and goals allow individuals to select and shape their social environment in a way that allows for existing dispositions to be reinforced (Ingledew & Ferguson, 2006). Consistent with these
findings, the current study did reveal evidence that suggests that individuals have motivations for engaging in sexual behaviors that are correlated with attachment style, personality, and sexual self-schema. In addition, this study expands the existing knowledge of relationships to include friends with benefits, booty calls, and one night stands, and provides some insight into how attachment styles and personality types are related to the likelihood of engaging in sexual behaviors that fall between the dichotomies of committed versus non-committed relationships.

Future Directions

Since the exploration of sexual relationships that include friends with benefits, booty calls, and one night stands have been understudied in attachment, personality, and sexual self-schema research, I hope that the results of this study serve as a foundation for future exploration. To extend the present knowledge of these interrelationships, I encourage replication with a larger and more diverse sample, as well as an array of predictor variables including situational influences, age, race, motivation for engaging in sexual activity, as well as sexual orientation. Understanding the motivations for engaging in sexual relationships would support interventions aimed at sexually active individuals and would foster health and interpersonal development.

Conclusion

Insights generated from the present study are useful for marriage and family therapists when formulating relationship advice or interventions that will promote more stable relationships. Focusing on reasons why people have casual sex, or the functions served by casual sex, is a step toward understanding sexual behavior. The association
between affective patterns and the working models of attachment styles can help counselors to bring about change in affective functioning as well as in emotional and relational security.
### APPENDIX

#### Table 1

*Intercorrelations between Attachment, Personality, Sexual Self-Schema, and Sexual Behavior*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>One Night Stand</th>
<th>Booty Call</th>
<th>Friends With Benefits</th>
<th>Relationship</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Current</th>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>SOI Behavior</th>
<th>SOI Attitude</th>
<th>SOI Desire</th>
<th>SOI Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One Night Stand</td>
<td>.53</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Booty Call</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>.39</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends With Benefits</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>-.31</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.46</td>
<td>.46</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>-.00</td>
<td>-.20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status</td>
<td>-.16</td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td>-.11</td>
<td>-.31</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>-.14</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>-.00</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neuroticism</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>-.00</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extraversion</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Openness</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.45</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>-.35</td>
<td>-.22</td>
<td>-.30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agreeableness</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.45</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>-.35</td>
<td>-.22</td>
<td>-.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consciousness</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>-.11</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAS Close</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>-.22</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>-.14</td>
<td>-.18</td>
<td>-.18</td>
<td>-.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAS Depend</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>-.16</td>
<td>-.15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAS Anxiety</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>-.00</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.32</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECRS Anxiety</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.28</td>
<td>.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECRS Avoid</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>-.21</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.43</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>-.14</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>.34</td>
<td>.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBSS Initiation</td>
<td>.34</td>
<td>.39</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>-.27</td>
<td>.56</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>.46</td>
<td>.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBSS Negative</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBSS Bond</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.25</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.39</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>.28</td>
<td>.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBSS Sexual</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>-.15</td>
<td>-.16</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>-.17</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>.32</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td>.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSSW Total</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.25</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>-.11</td>
<td>-.00</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>.28</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSSM Total</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.32</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neuroticism</td>
<td>Extraversion</td>
<td>Openness</td>
<td>Agreeableness</td>
<td>Consciousness</td>
<td>AAS Close</td>
<td>AAS Depend</td>
<td>AAS Anxiety</td>
<td>ECRS Anxiety</td>
<td>ECRS Avoid</td>
<td>SBSS Initiation</td>
<td>SBSS Negative</td>
<td>SBSS Bond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neuroticism</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extraversion</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Openness</td>
<td>-0.12</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agreeableness</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consciousness</td>
<td>-0.09</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAS Close</td>
<td>-0.17</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAS Depend</td>
<td>-0.23</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAS Anxiety</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>-0.25</td>
<td>-0.14</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td>-0.23</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECRS Anxiety</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>-0.26</td>
<td>-0.17</td>
<td>-0.14</td>
<td>-0.30</td>
<td>-0.19</td>
<td>-0.27</td>
<td>-0.79</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECRS Avoid</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>-0.27</td>
<td>-0.10</td>
<td>-0.33</td>
<td>-0.28</td>
<td>-0.61</td>
<td>-0.48</td>
<td>-0.33</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBSS Initiation</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>-0.10</td>
<td>-0.14</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBSS Negative</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>-0.19</td>
<td>-0.12</td>
<td>-0.09</td>
<td>-0.20</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>-0.23</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBSS Bond</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>-0.00</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBSS Sexual</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>-0.09</td>
<td>-0.12</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>-0.10</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>-0.25</td>
<td>0.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSSW Total</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>-0.14</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>-0.15</td>
<td>-0.13</td>
<td>-0.18</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>-0.28</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>0.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSSM Total</td>
<td>-0.17</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>-0.12</td>
<td>-0.19</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>-0.33</td>
<td>0.43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Boldface = $p < .05$; SOI = Sociosexual Orientation Inventory; SSSW = Sexual Self-Schema (Women); AAS = Adult Attachment Scale Revised; ECRS = Experience in Close Relationships Scale; SBSS = Sexual Behavior Systems Subgoals Scale; SSSM = Sexual Self-Schema (Men). Sex coded as 1 = male, 2 = female; Status coded as 1 = married, 2 = not married; Race coded as 1 = white/Caucasian, 2 = other
References


