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“It Goes Hand in Hand with the Parties”: Race, Class, and Residence in College Student Negotiations of Hooking Up

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Abstract

Hooking up, or sexual activity outside relationships, is a dominant feature of social life on many college campuses. However, research has yet to explore how social location intersects with campus-level factors to shape students' negotiations of this script. Interview data from 87 undergraduates at an urban commuter university demonstrate the distinction between “adopting” and “enacting” sexual scripts. Although the majority of students locate hooking up as a salient cultural scenario for their lives, the adoption of hooking up does not neatly translate into its enactment for all students. Where students live emerges as a fault line systematically structuring opportunities for hooking up. There are racial and class divisions even among students with similar residential locations, reflecting the importance of socioeconomic resources and peer group homophily to sexuality. This study points to how race, class, and residence integrally shape the interpersonal sexual scripts of college students.

Keywords

sexual scripts, intersectionality, college students, hooking up

Introduction

Research on adolescent and young adult sexuality in the past 15 years has documented a new sexual script for sexual activity outside of committed relationships: hooking up. Scholars posit that the hookup script emerged toward the end of the twentieth century as a result of change in sexual mores and the American gender structure, declines in religiosity, and rising ages of first marriage and childbearing (Arnold 2010; Bogle 2007, 2008). In addition, shifts in the collegiate landscape such as growing numbers of sex-integrated dormitories and changing student body sex ratios may contribute to the rise of hook-up culture (Heldman and Wade 2010; Uecker and Regnerus 2010; Warner et al. 2011). Recent scholarship shows that hook ups are a common experience among the majority of college-attending adults and constitute a relatively new pathway into sexual and romantic relationships (Armstrong, England, and Fogarty 2012; England, Shafer, and Fogarty 2008; England and Thomas 2006; Manning, Giordano, and Longmore 2006). It is

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important to remember that hooking up is defined as any sexual behavior outside of relationships, which may range from kissing and fondling on a dance floor to coitus, oral, or anal sex.

Hooking up has been characterized as the dominant sexual culture on many college campuses (Bogle 2008; Freitas 2008; Kimmel 2008; Wade and Heldman 2012). However, other studies question whether hooking up is ubiquitous as it seems. Recent inquiries into the demographic correlates of nonrelational sex show that not all students participate equally in hooking up. There are gender, racial/ethnic, religious, and socioeconomic divides in hook-up behavior. Also, some students appear to “age out” of hook-up culture over time (Armstrong and Hamilton 2013; Bogle 2008; Brimeyer and Smith 2012). Hooking up may be more dominant on some types of campuses than others. Residential colleges with dormitories proximate to one another construct some campuses as bounded “sexual arenas” that may foster the development of hook-up culture (Bogle 2008; Kimmel 2008). Finally, research documents widespread “pluralistic ignorance” among students, suggesting that while hooking up may be perceived as both highly normative and prevalent, its actual practice may be more limited (Lambert, Kahn, and Apple 2003).

Recent studies do not provide strong evidence about the conditions under which hooking up becomes dominant (or not) as the primary script organizing sexual practices for students (Heldman and Wade 2010). Beyond acknowledging that social location matters to hook-up behaviors, we do not fully understand why or how this may be the case, nor how social location interacts with campus-level factors (Bradshaw, Kahn, and Saville 2010; Heldman and Wade 2010; Owen and Fincham 2011; Owen et al. 2010). The majority of studies have focused on racially and socioeconomically privileged students on residential campuses, and so information on the importance of campus factors remains limited (Jackson et al. 2011; Wade and Heldman 2012). A key question for empirical research is to identify the diverse social and structural contexts in which hook-up cultures emerge (Heldman and Wade 2010).

Our study directly addresses how student social location intersects with the institutional features of higher educational spaces to shape sexual practices. As a corrective to prior studies of racially and socioeconomically privileged students on residential campuses, we focus on both residential and commuting students’ sexual experiences at a largely commuter urban public university. Our own and other research has found that hooking up is a deeply gendered sexual script (Armstrong et al. 2012; Allison and Risman 2013; Backstrom, Armstrong, and Puentes 2012). Indeed, gender has become so dominant a theme of research that other axes of social location and their interaction with gender has been neglected. This paper focuses attention elsewhere. While we highlight several ways in which student hooking up reflects gender intersecting with race and class, we do not explicitly theorize gender beyond these arguments.¹

We use Simon and Gagnon’s (1973) sexual scripting framework to examine diversity in student experiences of hooking up. As the normative blueprints organizing expectations around sexual activity, sexual scripts define the shared rules of the game for both sexual behavior and its meaning. Yet, because cultural scripts often hint at specific configurations of social and physical space, individuals with varying social locations have differential abilities to meet the normative definitions embedded in cultural scripts (Carpenter 2010). It is at the level of interpersonal scripting that students construct coherent narratives given both cultural expectations as well as their individual experiences within social structures. Our interviews with 87 undergraduates at one public, four-year university provide a glimpse into the interpersonal scripts of a diverse urban student population, one group that has been neglected in hooking-up research thus far (Heldman and Wade 2010).

Simon and Gagnon distinguish between cultural scenarios and interpersonal scripting. Similarly, we propose a distinction between “adopting” hooking up as a cultural frame of reference and “enacting” hooking up behaviorally. The majority of students adopt hooking up as a relevant cultural scenario for their lives. However, there is a strong division between residentially independent students versus commuters living with family in the enactment of hooking up. The

requirements of the hooking-up script are most easily met by students living spatially, if not financially, independent from family members. This division is clearly influenced by race and class privilege as commuters who live with parents in our sample are more likely to be Latina/o and working class compared with independent peers. In addition, even for those who live independently from their parents, race and class shape hook-up experiences through resource and peer-related mechanisms that we describe.

Sexual Scripts

Simon and Gagnon's argument about sexual scripts constitutes an early articulation of the social constructionist approach to sexuality. The theory challenged then dominant understandings of sexuality as innately biological and therefore immutable. They argued that the biological body is not the site of universal sexual meanings and desires. Instead, "it is the historical situation of the body that gives the body its sexual (as well as all other) meaning" (Simon and Gagnon 2003:492).

Sexual scripts are the "operating syntax" (Simon and Gagnon 1986:98) that assigns social meanings to sexual desires and behaviors. What Simon and Gagnon term cultural scenarios operate at the level of "collective life" and specify appropriate sexual objects and goals, spatial and time boundaries around sexuality, the sequencing of sexual events, and the feelings such events are "supposed to" invoke (Simon and Gagnon 1986). Cultural scenarios tell us who to have sex with, when, how, and what sex means to us and our partners. If cultural scenarios are by definition general and expansive, they never neatly predict behavior. Actors engage with cultural scenarios in ways that may reproduce or challenge the social order. Within Simon and Gagnon's formulation, this takes the form of both interpersonal and intrapsychic scripting.

Interpersonal scripting refers to how actors adopt cultural scenarios in their own behavioral repertoires. They are "the mechanism through which appropriate identities are made congruent with desired expectations" (Simon and Gagnon 1986:99). Through interpersonal scripting, actors become active "scriptwriters" as they make decisions on how to establish their sexual selves given available cultural scenarios. In contrast to the behavioral focus of the interpersonal level, intrapsychic scripting occurs internally through the "symbolic organization of reality in ways that make it complicit in realizing more fully the actor's many-layered and sometimes multivoiced wishes" (Simon and Gagnon 1986:99). According to Simon and Gagnon (1973), this type of scripting has become necessary as social life has increasingly linked social processes and relationships to a perceived private world of desire and selfhood.

The multiple levels of scripting—cultural, interpersonal, and intrapsychic—operate to bring the individual and the collective together. They are mechanisms by which people negotiate and create themselves as sexual beings relative to larger sets of expectations. The goal of these multileveled scripting processes is to establish a consistent narrative that reconciles competing demands of the self and the social. Consistency, though often partial or short-lived, is common and desired given the social and material power that cultural scenarios possess.

Simon and Gagnon suggest that scripts are refracted through the structures of institutions. They write, "All institutions and institutionalized arrangements can be read as semiotic systems through which the requirements and the practice of specific roles are given" (Simon and Gagnon 1986:98). Cultural scenarios have structural requirements as well as behavioral and emotional components. Thus, we bring attention to the social structural contexts in which sexual scripts operate.

Hooking Up: A New Blueprint for College Sexuality

A small but growing set of studies in the past 15 years has identified hooking up as a new sexual script for young adults on college and university campuses. Although sexual behavior outside of

monogamous, committed relationships (or “casual sex”) is certainly not new to the past several decades (Reay 2012), the hooking-up script does have several unique elements. Bogle (2007, 2008) suggests that hooking up replaced the dating script almost entirely beginning sometime during or after the 1960s (Bogle 2007, 2008). Wade and Heldman note that “What differentiates contemporary hook-up culture from the occurrence of casual sex is the virtual disappearance of the ‘going steady’ dating culture (or script) that was dominant from the postwar period forward” (2012:129). Compared with dating, hooking up involves a distinctly different ordering of sexual activity and romance, where sex precedes romantic involvement. While most hook ups do not lead to either formal dates or relationships, the majority of reported student relationships are preceded by hook ups (England et al. 2008; England and Thomas 2006). The hook-up script thus implies a lack of any necessary pre- or post-sex intention to pursue future contact although such contact, whether in the form of repeated hook ups or dates, is possible (Bogle 2007; McClintock 2010). The emergence of hooking up marks an increased acceptance of nonrelational sex in American culture and is part of a set of new scripts for youth and adolescent sexuality to emerge in the past half century, such as “hanging out” and “friends with benefits” (Backstrom et al. 2012; Downing-Matibag and Geisinger 2009; Glenn and Marquardt 2001).

Recent scholars make the case that hooking up has become the dominant sexual script for college student sexual and romantic relationships (Bogle 2008; Bradshaw, Kahn, and Saville 2010; England et al. 2008; Owen and Fincham 2011). Bogle even calls it the “hallmark of the college experience” (2007:776). Certainly, hooking up is common. Several studies show that at least 75 percent of undergraduates have ever experienced a hook up during college (Lambert et al. 2003; Paul and Hayes 2002; Paul, McManus, and Hayes 2000). However, assertions of hooking up’s dominance reflect a research focus on residential campuses to the exclusion of other institutional types. Although no study to date focuses directly on the institutional-level correlates of hooking up, several scholars do argue that the hooking-up script contains not only behavioral and cognitive or emotional requirements but also situational elements specific to the organization of campus social and physical space (Armstrong, Hamilton, and Sweeney 2006; Bogle 2008; Ray and Rosow 2010). Specifically, those studying residential campuses implicate the proximity of dormitories and spaces for socializing to one another to the dominance of hook-up culture.

Bogle (2007, 2008), for instance, argues that students’ easy access to one another is an important factor in the emergence and operation of hook-up culture. Her study of two campuses shows the relevance of a near-campus party or bar scene, as the consumption of alcohol and “partying” are central to the hook-up script (Bogle 2008). Similarly, Wade and Heldman’s interviews with first-year students show that dormitory living structured students’ sexual lives. They write that “Because hook up culture pervaded dorm life, living in the dorms meant that hook up culture was one’s life” (Wade and Heldman 2012:135). College or university policies have also been suggested as contributors to hooking up’s dominance. In Wade and Heldman’s study, a policy that first-year students must live in the dorms, in tandem with the lack of alternative sexual subcultures in dorms, meant that students came face-to-face to hook-up culture. On religiously affiliated campuses where policies enforce strict sex segregation of dormitories, hooking up may be less prevalent (Freitas 2008).

Beyond residential colleges, we do not know whether hooking up is dominant on other types of campus, or whether alternative scripts organize sexuality. Scholars have neglected to explore the diversity of structures and organizational forms that support hooking up. In an article reviewing the hooking-up literature, Heldman and Wade conclude that

Examining how institutional factors facilitate or inhibit hook-up culture or nurture alternative sexual cultures, promises to be a rich direction for research. We still know very little about how hook-up culture varies from campus to campus or whether students with a different relationship to their institution have different experiences with hook-up culture. (2010:328)

Beyond campus-level factors, there is also clear racial/ethnic, class, and religious variation in students' hooking-up behavior. Religion has important effects on sexual behavior, with conservative religious (often Evangelical) students less likely to hook up (Bogle 2008; Brimeyer and Smith 2012; Burdette et al. 2009; Freitas 2008; Penhollow, Young, and Bailey 2007). Racial and ethnic minority students hook up less than their peers (Bersamin et al. 2012; Bogle 2008; Littleton et al. 2009; Owen et al. 2010). As explanation for this finding, some scholars point to the fact that minority students negotiate gendered and racialized controlling images of sexuality and may be less likely to hook up as a result (García 2012; Kimmel 2008; Wilkins 2008). Hooking up may reflect white privilege as "white youth, even those who flout mainstream values, like Goths, can experiment with sexuality without the concern that it will be used to affirm a stereotype that whites are sexually promiscuous" (Wade and Heldman 2012:130).

There is somewhat less evidence for class difference in college student hook ups, although Owen et al. (2010) find students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds hook up less than higher SES peers. Hamilton and Armstrong's longitudinal ethnographic study of college women living on one dormitory floor calls attention to the college campus as a "classed structural location" (2009:602). They find that hooking up was a way class-privileged women navigated the competing demands of relational imperatives and the logic of self-development. Normative equations of college with partying and hooking up reflect the demands of social class beliefs that privilege the delay of commitment in order to pursue upward mobility. They find that less class-privileged women experienced the campus social space as foreign and alienating and were less likely to participate in hook-up culture.

Recent scholarship suggests that hook-up culture emerges in a complex interplay between physical space and student background characteristics. Bogle (2008) argues that student self-selection and admissions processes on residential campuses often result in demographic homophily and that the sameness of students fosters hook-up culture. In a context of sameness, students perceive their classmates to be "eligible" as sexual and romantic partners and feel a degree of safety and comfort surrounded by those from similar racial/ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds. She argues,

It is well documented that individuals tend to match for potential romantic relationships with people that are similar to themselves in terms of race, age, religion and social class. This fundamental . . . fact of life on campus creates an environment where hooking up is more likely. (Bogle 2008:57)

That hooking up is almost nonexistent on evangelical campuses, where dating and "frugal-ing"² scripts predominate, is a result not only of campus-wide policies separating the private spaces of men and women but also of the types of students who self-select into evangelical schools (Freitas 2008).

Despite mounting evidence that students' subjective attitudes toward the hooking-up script reflect racial, class, and religious divides, as well as the social and physical organization of campus, few empirical studies have addressed these questions. The dearth of research into how intersections of race, class, and gender matter across different types of campus constitutes a serious limitation to understandings of students' sexual lives, the lack of intersectional focus "leading to a flattened understanding of the factors that influence the entrenchment of hook up culture" (Heldman and Wade 2010:330). This analysis employs interview data from a diverse group of students to explore how race, class, and campus organization, residential patterns in particular, shape both the adoption and enactment of hooking up among college students. How, we ask, is the hooking-up script understood and negotiated on an urban, predominantly commuter campus in the Midwest?

Method

To answer the above question, we report on interview data from 87 undergraduate men and women enrolled at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC). UIC is a public research university in the city of Chicago that educates over 16,000 undergraduates. The university is divided into a western campus comprising the university hospital system, medical college, and other applied fields and an eastern main campus housing administration and other colleges, including the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the College of Engineering and College of Education. The university was once entirely a commuter school, but dormitories have been built in the last decade. Now, 40 percent of the first-year class lives on campus. Overall, 19 percent of undergraduates lived in campus-owned housing the school year the majority of interviews were conducted (UIC Common Data Set 2010-2011). The entire campus area stretches east-west across two miles, with the two sides of campus separated by approximately one mile. Public transportation in the form of both city buses and trains connect the two campuses, with the train also carrying passengers a few stops into the heart of downtown Chicago, the hub of transport to all parts of the city and suburbs.

We began our study of college sexuality in 2008 by joining our university to a multi-institutional survey of college life out of Stanford University, the Online College Social Life Survey. Quantitative patterns of UIC students' sexual attitudes and behaviors were of such interest to us that we planned an investigation into the meanings that students gave to their sexual experiences through qualitative, in-depth interviews. Between January and August 2010, our research team conducted 74 interviews, all of which took place on campus in sociology offices. An additional 13 interviews were conducted through May 2012 with self-identified gay, lesbian, bisexual, and queer students in an effort to further diversify the sample. Participants were recruited primarily from lower-level courses in sociology, although a few participants came from other courses in the social sciences. Many instructors offered extra credit for participation, which helped to lessen the biases attached to self-selection. We also recruited through UIC's Gender and Sexuality Center.

The qualitative portion of the project was conceptualized and carried out as a collaborative team effort involving Barbara as principal investigator and senior scholar, Rachel as a senior graduate student, two junior graduate students, and seven undergraduates majoring in sociology who took a methods practicum on qualitative interviewing with Barbara and Rachel. We viewed collaboration as advantageous to the construction of knowledge. The inclusion of undergraduate research assistants who were deeply knowledgeable about social life on campus was particularly helpful to the design and implementation of the study, as well as to the interpretation of results. The collection of interview data followed from the interpretivist team approach delineated by Weston et al. (2001). This approach begins by drawing from theory and literature prior to data collection to develop tentative sets of ideas about what is going on and why. These early models shape how data are collected and from whom. In our case, we were sensitized to the predominance of residential campuses in the literature on hooking up and were interested in talking to a diverse group of UIC undergraduates whose relationships to campus life varied to explore how commuting impacted sexual scripting. These interests motivated construction of a semistructured interview guide by the authors that was then revised with feedback from the undergraduate assistants. Semistructured interview schedules allow a degree of consistency across interviewers. They delineate a range of possible interpretations in advance, while leaving open the possibility of emergent findings (Weston et al. 2001).

Each undergraduate student conducted 4 interviews apiece, for a total of 28, while the first author conducted the remaining 46 interviews. Two additional graduate students joined on to the project after this first wave and conducted 13 interviews with gay, lesbian, bisexual, and queer students. All interviews ranged between 30 minutes and 2 hours. Interviews were transcribed, and Atlas.ti version 6.1 was used to organize and categorize data.

We roughly followed the team coding method developed by Weston et al. (2001:397), an approach through which “a team builds codes and coding builds a team through the creation of shared interpretation and understanding of the phenomenon being studied.” Rachel used a random sampling of the first 74 interviews to develop an initial coding schema. This schema was not only influenced by the questions that sparked the collection of data but was also attuned to new findings. This coding schema was then brought to the team for feedback, was tried out on the data, and revised. This process was repeated multiple times, and the codes refined. After the nine of us reached agreement about the coding schema, we then moved on to each code a different portion of the data. Sensitive to the issue of validity, the team employed discrepancy analysis, checking for both similarity and difference across interviews, and noting exceptions to broader patterns. Central themes were compared across different demographic groups of students, and further patterns emerged at the intersections of housing status, race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic background that were elaborated in written memos. Validity was also enhanced by the entrance of two graduate students partway through the project, who provided new feedback on our findings and helped in refining analytic categories.

Table 1 presents a demographic description of interview participants. Our sample is more female than male and predominantly heterosexual, with 61 percent nonwhite participants. Over 80 percent are between 18 and 23 years of age, while almost three-quarters report majoring in the Liberal Arts and Sciences. Our sample is evenly split between single students and those in committed relationships. Those born outside of the United States comprise 24 percent of the sample and over one-third transferred into UIC from another institution. While the majority (70 percent) live off campus, 22 percent live in UIC dorms, and 11 percent within walking distance to campus. Over a third of students (39 percent) live with their parents, and 45 percent are from working-class families.³

Comparing this profile with 2010 statistics from UIC’s Office for Institutional Research shows that our sample is roughly representative of the undergraduate student body in terms of gender, age, and racial and ethnic composition (UIC Common Data Set 2010-2011; UIC Student Data Book 2010a; 2010b; 2010c). Our sample somewhat overrepresents students from the Liberal Arts and Sciences, transfer students, and those who live in on-campus dorms, a likely result from recruitment in sociology courses, as well as significant recruitment over a summer school session. We do not know whether or not the number of students in committed, monogamous relationships, the social class breakdown of participants, or our sexual orientation distribution is at all similar to that of the larger student body.

Results

Congruous with previous studies, UIC students discussed hooking up beyond sexual behaviors and relational contexts to implicate the larger social and physical settings in which sexual activity takes place. Specifically, UIC students invoked a culturally dominant image of “college” to locate hooking up as part of an alcohol-fueled party scene in on-campus dorms or nearby apartments, bars, and clubs. As Sally (Middle Eastern) noted about hooking up, “It goes hand in hand with the parties.”

Important to our analysis, students identified living in dormitories surrounded by large groups of peers as central to living out the cultural ideal of college. Jon (Latino), who had served five years in the military and now lived in an apartment outside of campus, said, “You always want to have the true college experience, quote unquote. Where you live on campus in the dorms and it’s just like parties all around. I feel like I’ve missed out on that.” The idea of a “true” college student living in the dorms was also invoked by Robert (white), who described a visit to a more rural state university as the “full college experience.” He explained, “You know, like you’re secluded in dorms in like a smaller town with like the same pool of people and you’re destined to know

Table 1. Demographic Description of Sample ($N = 87$).

Demographics	Percentage
Sex	
Male	39
Female	61
Race/ethnicity	
White	39
Black	11
Latina/o	23
Asian	17
Multiracial	10
Age	
18–19	21
20–21	32
22–23	30
24+	17
Major	
Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics (STEM)	20
Liberal Arts and Sciences (LAS)	72
Humanities	6
Undecided	2
[Sociology]	21
Relationship status	
Single	48
Relationship	52
Socioeconomic background	
Middle class	45
Working class	55
Born outside the United States	24
Transfer students	37
Lives	
On campus dorm	22
Near campus	11
In city	50
In suburbs	17
[With parents]	39
Sexual orientation	
Heterosexual	76
Gay	7
Lesbian	7
Bisexual	5
Queer	2
Unlabeled	3

NOTE: Percentages may not add to 100, as parentheses indicate category overlap

them all by the time you're down there and like, that's the typical college experience." When Betty (Latina) was asked how her life would be different if she lived in the dorms, she noted, "Yeah, I would meet different people and more people, and I would have more of the college experience, I guess."

Students' identification of dorm living as key to "college" elaborates what previous studies of residential institutions have hinted at; a necessary condition for experiencing "college," including its normative sexual requirements, is spatial independence from parents or other family members and spatial proximity to peers. All students expressed clear familiarity with the hook-up script and located it as part of a normative "college experience." However, the residential, social structural requirements of this sexual script directly shaped students' ability to enact it. Through residence, UIC students were systematically situated differently in both social and physical space relative to the set of expectations embedded in hooking up.

We find three pathways through which students negotiated the hooking-up script in their own interpersonal scripting. First, a highly religious group of students living both on and off campus ($N = 16$) rejects hooking up in favor of alternative scripts placing sexuality within marriage. Second, those who live in dorms or in the city apart from family ($N = 37$) actively take up the hooking-up script and locate themselves within the normative "college experience." Compared with the larger sample, white and middle-class students are overrepresented among these residential independents, making hooking up a more common experience among privileged students. Third, commuting students who live with family ($N = 34$) emphasize their inability to fully participate in the expected "college experience." Although all have hooked up at least once, these students detail the restrictions family and commuting place on their sexual and romantic lives. As working class, and Latina/o students are overrepresented among those living at home, the hook-up script reflects class and racial differences. In addition to the strong influence of residence on students' enactment of hooking up, we also find racial and class variation within the group of residentially independent students we focus on. We suggest that socioeconomic resources and racial peer group homophily are independent mechanisms important to understanding racial and socioeconomic variation in hooking up.

Opting Out

Sixteen students (18 percent of participants) had never hooked up and explicitly rejected the hook-up script as appropriate and desirable. This group of students was evenly split in class background and diverse in residence, with nine students living on campus versus seven off campus. The majority defined themselves as highly religious and rejected hooking up in favor of a religious sexual script limiting sexual activity to marriage. All in this group actively attended religious services, often several times a week, and engaged with peers primarily through religious institutions or campus organizations. However, as substantial previous research has documented and explored the impact of religiosity on students' sexual behaviors and attitudes (Brimeyer and Smith 2012; Burdette et al. 2009; Freitas 2008; Penhollow et al. 2007; Uecker 2008), the remainder of our analysis focuses centrally on those students who did adopt hooking up as a cultural scenario relevant to their sexual lives.

Residentially Independent Students

A total of 37 students, or 43 percent of participants, lived spatially independent from family in either campus dorms or apartments in the city. Compared with the overall sample, a larger percentage of white (65 percent) and middle-class (54 percent) students lived away from family. This group of students was aware that their living situation provided opportunities to party, consume alcohol, and hook up. Independence from adult supervision played a role in facilitating hooking up. Carrie (white), who lived on campus, explained the appeal of hooking up by referencing separation from her parents, saying, "I think part of it [hooking up] is the whole I'm in college, I can do this now and I don't have to worry about going home to my house at three in the morning, worried about my parents finding me drunk or whatever." Mia and Shawn had both

lived in campus dormitories but had moved back in with their parents in the past year. This transition had made them particularly reflective about the impact that residence had on their social lives. Mia (Asian) made the case that the proximity of spaces for partying to campus, such as apartments, bars, and clubs, allowed hooking up to become normative. She noted that "Since downtown is right there, you know, hooking up on campus like with the clubs and the gatherings that they have here, it's available. It's a lot more accessible to hook up and acceptable." And Shawn (Asian) said that hooking up was common among students "in the dorms." He argued,

It's easier to party if you live somewhere on campus than off campus. If you're commuting, you may be able to do it every once in a while and crash and find a place to sleep, but like if your parents are expecting you home, it's hard because you can't drink and drive.

Residentially independent students describe an existing party and hook-up culture at UIC, located in the dorms and apartments near campus, and often extending outward into city bars. Of the three sections of dormitory housing, two on East Campus and one near the medical center, not all spaces were equally conducive to parties. Although dorm parties were "very common" or "pretty common," dorms organized into clusters of rooms with common living areas gave students more space to socialize. Dorm parties were especially prevalent on East Campus as the West Campus dorms were limited to graduate students and undergraduates over 21. When asked about parties, Tia (Asian/white) said, "A majority of them are on campus, usually on East Campus. West Campus didn't have as much."

Parties often spilled over from the dorms to nearby city apartments or bars, in part because dorm spaces limited the number of people who could attend. Robert (white) said that

Every time that I'll go to like a party usually, and if it's at the dorms, it's always just like a small gathering. It's like you know, 10, 12 people crammed into a dorm. I know that there's like those row houses over closer to [street] where people live, and usually when there is like an actual party, it'll be at one of those.

Several bars within walking distance to campus actively advertised by putting up fliers around campus. As several students acknowledged, these bars had a reputation for allowing students under 21 and were popular hotspots for parties. Steve (white) said, "Then there's the bars on [street] that all the under aged kids get into and stuff. I guess they're pretty bad with carding. I guess they don't care."

While UIC does have over three dozen active fraternity and sorority organizations, including many for students from specific racial/ethnic backgrounds, Greek life was uniformly described as small in its impact on campus culture. While campus Greek housing has been implicated in the dominance of Greek life and entrenchment of hook-up culture at some universities (Armstrong and Hamilton 2013; Armstrong et al. 2006), the converse was true at UIC. Groups of Greek-affiliated students sometimes lived together, but formal fraternity or sorority housing did not exist. Shane (white) noted the lack of housing when he said about the Greek system at UIC, "It's more of like a concept than like a living arrangement or a lifestyle." Although many Greek organizations did host apartment parties, as well as events on campus such as dances, fundraisers, or athletic competitions, Greeks did not dominate the UIC party scene. Sarah (white) said, "It's not really a big part of social life at all. And some members do tell me about a Greek party scene that they are involved in, but that's kind of exclusive."

Hooking up was described as common after parties around campus or in the city, with students in the dorms reporting hook ups mostly with other UIC students. Lisa (black) recalled that hooking up was normative the two years she dormed at UIC, saying that

Even when I was here the first time in the dorms, there was a lot of hooking up. And it was happening a lot. A lot of people were just changing it up a lot. And you know, that became just the norm. Like that's what people did.

In comparison, students living in the city described a broader group of hook-up partners, including not only other UIC students but also coworkers, students from other universities, and adults living in the city. While many attended parties and events on or near campus, they also attended a wide range of social events in the city. Once students turned 21, many frequented city bars, as Penny (white) noted when she said, "Once everyone turns 21, you go to bars and spend ridiculous amounts of money."

Hooking up was the dominant sexual culture for students who lived in the dorms. Despite being a commuter campus, hook-up culture did emerge at UIC where students were away from adult supervision, lived proximate to groups of similar aged peers, and socialized at parties. Hook-up culture was also evident in the narratives of city dwellers, present at the many city bars that students reported attending, although social norms did not appear to be as unified off campus. However, this is not to say that all residentially independent students participated equally in hook-up culture. Working class and racial minority students who lived on campus or in city apartments were less likely to actively participate in either on- or off-campus party and social scenes. Two primary mechanisms emerged to explain these patterns: socioeconomic resources and racial peer group homophily.

If hooking up took place after attending parties in apartments or bars, students who worked to support themselves reported having neither the money nor the time to party, drink, and hook up. Aaron, from a working-class household, worked a part-time job to afford living in a dorm. When explaining why he did not have many close friends on campus, Aaron (white) said, "I have to go back home to work. I work at Wal-Mart. On some weekends, I'll go back home and work." Similarly, Vince (white) said his socializing was constrained by both time and money considerations that did not exist for his wealthier peers. He explained,

I tend to prefer to spend extra time studying or working, you know. I just assume that a lot of the kids, the traditional kids, they receive a stipend from their parents or something to where, you know, they live on campus or it's included in their tuition.

In contrast, Penny (white), whose father's job as a chemist meant that she did not have to work while attending UIC, reported having a lot of free time to "go out" and attend parties. She said,

I have class Monday through Thursday. And after that, I go straight home. And then I'll sit around for an hour, read texts from last night, go on Facebook. Just like unwind from the day. And then I'll get to homework. So I do homework and sometimes like at night during the week I'll go out.

Minority students were underrepresented among residential independents because of economic issues, mirroring patterns of racialized class stratification in society more broadly. The working class minority students who did live in dorms ($N = 5$) or apartments ($N = 7$) were able to do so through holding part-time jobs, some meant to defray the cost of attending college and living independent from family. While these targeted jobs located students proximate to hook-up culture, they often placed substantial time demands on students that restricted their social lives. For instance, Michael (black) worked as a student Resident Advisor, a job that covered the cost of his dorm housing. While Michael vividly described how students on his floor partied and hooked up, often with one another, he felt his job responsibilities precluded him from taking part. Kiara (Latina) had commuted to UIC from her parents' home until she entered a Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) program. She said, "I contracted and once that happens, they're paying

for my tuition, housing, and like everything, basically. All the way until I graduate.” Kiara’s new financial situation was a welcome development and enabled her to focus more on her studies without the burden of commuting. “My grades also improved,” Kiara said. “Last year, I felt so stressed, and like my grades, they were good, but they could be better. And this year, it’s helped me out a lot.” At the same time, however, ROTC training and activities took many hours of Kiara’s time weekly and left little time to make new friends and engage with campus hook-up culture.

A second mechanism by which some students hooked up more than others was racial homophily in peer groups. Almost all residentially independent students remarked upon the visibility of racial homophily on campus. Rachel (Latina) said,

I think everybody pretty much, it’s like a racial thing. I think like mostly Hispanics are always together, like mostly Asians are always together, and in the quad, you always see like, you know, groups and everybody’s segregated.

Beyond friendship groups, students also commented on the presence of campus organizations for students of specific racial or ethnic backgrounds. For instance, Sally (Middle Eastern) noted that, “We have a lot of cool organizations. But I feel like all of them are strictly toward—if you’re Indian, you’re in this group. This group’s for Asians. And it’s like oh my gosh!” Jenny (Asian) felt that both race-specific and race-neutral campus organizations recruited on the basis of race. She said, “I guess they try to recruit, but if you’re not within their race or ethnicity, they tend to kind of just avoid you as they pass the pamphlet out.” Homophily also extended to on- and near-campus social events and parties, as Paul (white) remarked on when he said, “Here like you go to a party and like everybody kind of like stands in their own group. You know what I mean?” When Michael (black), the student Resident Advisor, was asked if campus parties reflected the racial and ethnic diversity of UIC, he responded, “I would say it doesn’t really reflect UIC’s diversity. It’s more of a traditionally white kind of thing, which is portrayed. It kind of follows that kind of stereotype here.”

Some students described strong racial network homophily as negative, particularly as it limited the friendships they felt they could make on campus. Emily (Asian) argued, “It’s kind of hard to meet new people. I don’t know. Especially because like Asians hang out with Asians. It’s like this Asian thing.” Other students, like Nikolas (white), who was born in Greece, described homophily as positive because similarity generated connection to others. He said,

I guess just the fact that if you’re really into your culture and where you’re from. I mean me, I am, and it’s fun to have people who share those same views and similar, just, cultural beliefs. Everything. You connect on a common ground.

Despite variation in students’ perspectives on the (dis)advantages of homophily, most agreed that pursuing relationships exclusively with same-race or same-ethnicity peers was an unspoken norm on campus. Erica (white) spoke to this sense of homophily as normative and peer-regulated when she said,

We see a lot of cliques. We don’t see people who can diverge from their own nationality and their own racial background and hang out with whoever they want, whoever they get along with, without going oh, well what is my friend going to say if I hang out with this nationality?

Kiara (Latina) said that she had attended events with the Latino Club but left the group because of the expectation that she would only spend time with other Latina/o students. She said, “I feel like the Latino Club there is okay. You’re Latino. But then they also expect you to fit this kind of

norm.” The majority of students also acknowledged homophily in their own lives. With a few exceptions, students described their friends and sexual and romantic partners to be of the same racial or ethnic background. When asked what she looked for in a hook-up partner, Rachel (Latina) was very clear that she looked for ethnic similarity. She said,

Probably just, like having things in common, or having the same friends. And not having like, the awkward moments, like you’re able to just get along that night or however many times you hang out with them. Usually I try to look for someone who’s Hispanic, too.

Our interviews thus support McClintock’s (2010) findings about race, social networks, and hooking up. McClintock’s research on students at Stanford University asked why racially diverse social settings, such as many college campuses, do not lead to higher levels of interracial sex and romance. She finds that social network composition is as important as physical proximity to the formation of sexual or romantic ties. Mere proximity and status equality indicators, such as education, are not sufficient for the formation of interracial hook ups or relationships. She writes that “Race-specific student organizations and social networks help to maintain the strength of racial identities and encourage the formation of intraracial friendships and sexual/romantic relationships” (2010:68). Although Stanford is a very different institutional context than UIC, the current analysis also suggests that social network composition is one mechanism through which racial and ethnic variation in hooking up is constructed. If residential independents are disproportionately white, for instance, expectations for same-race sexual and romantic relationships put minority students at a distinct disadvantage in hook-up culture by limiting their potential partners.

Students Living with Family

A total of 34 students, or 39 percent of the sample, lived with family throughout the city and its suburbs at the time of the interview. Compared with the overall sample, a larger percentage of nonwhite (82 percent) and working-class (62 percent) students live with family. Latina/o students are particularly overrepresented, comprising 41 percent of this group. Similar to residential students, commuters expressed a desire to live out the cultural vision of college and adopted hooking up as a relevant cultural scenario. However, commuters living with family clearly identified their inability to fully live out this ideal. Amanda (Latina) said she had felt excited to be on campus during freshman orientation but had not been able to attend campus events or parties since then due to her long commute home. She said,

So I remember for my orientation it was pretty cool, you’re a newcomer and you’re like wow, a party life. College finally, ya know? And then I mean all the time you see like flyers and requests on Facebook, like parties going on at UIC either in dorms or things like that. I remember the beginning of my freshmen year, it was just like, I wanted to go out but then I had school, you know, to handle, and things like that but the temptation was there, it was always there.

The theme of desire for a “normal” college social life, but reality of constraint, was articulated by the majority of commuter students living with family. Several students expressly stated that they wished they could live on campus. Katie (white), for example, said, “I think I would like to experience that [living on campus]. ‘Cause I guess if you would be living here, you would go to parties and stuff.” The major impediment to living on campus was financial. The decision to live with family had been made not only due to personal or familial desire to remain home but also due to lack of resources. Both Luis (Latino) and Armand (Pakistani) expressed a measure of ambivalence about living at home. They preferred to live on campus, in part in order to access the normative ideal of college, but acknowledged real financial constraints that prevented this from

being possible. Armand said, “Yeah! Like, who doesn’t want to [live on campus]? I want to experience college life. But my parents are paying for everything, so I’m like okay. A year, it’s like 30 grand. 35,000. I don’t have that much.” Luis echoed his UIC peer, saying,

I mean I always thought about having the normal college life. You know, living on campus and taking part in activities. But it didn’t work out. [laughs] I mean, like I said I . . . I guess it finally boils down to finances. Like money issues. Because I have to commute, because I have to live at home. And if I lived on campus, it’s more expensive.

Previous studies have found pluralistic ignorance, or “when, within a group of individuals, each person believes his or her private attitudes, beliefs or judgments are discrepant from the norm displayed by the public behavior of others” (Lambert et al. 2003:129), to be prevalent among students when asked to estimate the occurrence of hooking up. In a study of undergraduates at a residential public university in the southeastern United States, Lambert et al. (2003) found that students underestimated others’ discomfort with hooking up, believing this script to be more widely accepted as normative than it was. While UIC students living with family also believed that hooking up was highly normative and extremely prevalent, perhaps more so than it really was, they qualified that this was true only for those who did not live with family. Commuters thus exposed a degree of variation in interpersonal scripting by arguing that hooking up as a cultural scenario was less available to their group than to others because of their residential arrangement. Gabby (Latina) said that on-campus students hook up “a lot” because of the increased freedom they have living apart from family. She said,

I think they do have that freedom where their parents aren’t there. They don’t have parents worrying about when they get home or calling them. Or they are dorming or they just have that extra freedom where it’s kind of like they do as they please.

The opportunity structure facilitating hook-up experiences changed when students lived off campus, as Mike (white) also argued in saying,

No one I know that goes here has ever hooked up with anybody they met at UIC. [Why is that, do you think?] ‘Cause, like, probably most people don’t live on campus. And I guess their houses are in different places, and unless you’re gonna hook up in like the bathroom or something, I don’t think there’s very much opportunity.

Carlos (Latino) also referenced the opportunity structure for hooking up by contrasting the sexual behaviors of on-campus students versus commuters, saying,

I don’t think it [hooking up] would be more common, I just think it would be easier. Because I think if you’re going to, if you’re viable to do it then whether you live here or not, you’ll do it. But I think that it definitely, living here makes it a little more accessible.

Although all commuting students living with family reported at least one hook up since they began college, all but one student in this group located recent hook ups outside of their home. Most hook ups had taken place at events that happened only sporadically, such as house parties, weddings, and vacations. For instance, Mia (Asian) said,

I hooked up with somebody at a wedding. I guess it was the best because he lived in Hawaii and at the time I was on a break with my boyfriend and so then he was best man I was the maid of honor.

Rick (black/Latino) said that his most recent hook up had taken place at the party of a friend living in the city, made possible by his ability to stay overnight in the apartment. Ramon (Latino)

also described his most recent hook up as taking place in a unique social context. In his case, hook ups were an expected part of the transition out of military service. He explained, "It was like the dorms for military people and it was when I got back from Iraq, so the place was flooded with people's girlfriends and friends, and we were just nonstop partying." Due to residential location and the infrequent social and geographic circumstances in which hook ups occurred, students who lived with family said that their hook-up partners were rarely other UIC students and were more commonly coworkers, friends of friends, or other young adults.

Similar to residential independents, students who lived with family also reported that the majority of their sexual and romantic relationships occurred with others from the same racial or ethnic background. While many commuters living with family did acknowledge the homophily they saw on the UIC campus, they did not experience homophily as a normative pressure in the same way as students who spend substantially more time on and around campus. Homophily seemed less an expectation and more a natural outcome of associating primarily with peers in local neighborhoods. Living at home throughout the transition from high school to college, or, for others, coming back home after military service or other employment outside the neighborhood, meant the continuation or rekindling of friendships with high school classmates, others known since childhood, or extended family. These networks from the past were comprised entirely of same-race adults. When asked directly about the racial composition of her peer group, Sammy (Latina) said,

I guess I do attend parties like with my friends. But I don't really have, well, it's mostly Latinos who I hang with so like we do have a little bit of other, you know, races and ethnicities in our group, but it's mostly Latinos.

Kate (white), who described herself as coming from a "typical white suburb," acknowledged that all of her friends were white. In explaining the racial sameness of her peer group, Kate referred to the fact that she socialized primarily with friends from childhood. She said,

Again with the commuting it has been hard to meet people here on campus. Someone is actually one of my brother's friends, she goes here and is trying to get into the dental program. So I've hung out with her on campus but that's about it. But other than that it's people that I've grown up with or was in grammar school, they are still like my best friends.

In mentioning her "typical white suburb," Kate draws attention to the importance of local neighborhood context to students' peer networks. While residentially independent students' networks comprised peers met on campus or in the city bar scene, students living with family located their primary social ties off campus in their local neighborhoods and cities. If racial homophily as an organizing principle for peer relationships impacted minority students' ability to enact the hooking-up script in spaces where white students predominated, this impact was mitigated somewhat for UIC students who lived and socialized in racially, often ethnically segregated neighborhoods. Students living with family paid less attention to homophily, only bringing it up in interviews when asked directly. This suggests that when residence places students at a distance from diversity homophily itself may become more naturalized and taken for granted.

In addition to taking place in somewhat rare circumstances, and most commonly with same-race others, partying and hooking up were often planned well in advance by commuters living with family who had to consider issues like transportation, schedule coordination, financial resources, and parental monitoring that rarely existed for residential independents. As Rick (black/Latino) explained, "And they [friends] keep in touch by Facebook, but it's like a big deal if we're going out to like a pub or something. Like you'll know about it a couple weeks in advance." In some cases, partying and sexual behavior required forethought because they needed to be hidden. Jeremy (black) said that he did consume alcohol in his parents' home but tried to do so covertly. He said,

Disadvantages are parents don't approve of drinking, so gotta keep that under wraps at the house. Just a little bit. I mean, they know. But at the same time, I just think they don't want to see me actually participating.

And Jenny (Asian) kept visits to her sexual and romantic partner a secret from her parents, saying, "It's kind of secretive because my parents are like 'No, don't go down to see him. It's just you and what if something happens to you.' So I can only pull it off every once in a while." Hooking up, for students whose daily lives did not offer easy access to the residential requirements of the script, occurred more infrequently, as it required greater forethought and separation from family.

If living at home was a constraint on social and sexual activity, this was because family members served as a direct, powerful source of expectations for behavior. Wade and Heldman (2012) found that 34 percent of their respondents mentioned the absence of parents as facilitating hooking up. Here, we find the logical opposite—the presence of parents hinders hooking up. Uniformly, parents were described as disapproving of the markers of the "college experience," including alcohol consumption, partying, and nonrelational sex. However, this disapproval played out in distinctly different ways for men and women. For male students living at home, family expectations constructed the normative context in which decisions were made. However, family pressure was not described as moving beyond the verbal expression of attitudes and beliefs. For example, Sean (Palestinian) described how his family's disapproval of party culture shaped his decision to live at home. He said,

I remember I actually wanted to dorm here because the commute would've sucked, so that was a whole different thing. My mom flipped out about that 'cause I was thinking about leaving the house. My brothers brought it up that the dorming here was a party thing, and what happens in the dorm is mostly drinking and partying and all that stuff.

And Armand (Pakistani) argued that his family's religious beliefs had prevented him from drinking as a teenager, noting, "I started drinking when I was 20. Because it's one of the biggest sins in our religion for Muslims. So it took me a while."

In contrast, many women described their parents as actively monitoring and restricting their time by giving curfews, asking that they share cars with family, or disallowing peers from spending time at the house. Women living with family were often policed in their movements, reflecting societal conceptions of women as vulnerable, at risk, and in need of protection. For some minority women, policing may also reflect how gendered sexuality acts as a marker of racial or ethnic authenticity within families (García 2012). Janet (Asian) said that the curfew her parents imposed meant that "going out" was more difficult for her than for peers living independently. She said, "I think it's [going out] easier on campus. Like I said, there are no authority figures. You are your own authority you can do whatever you want. For my family, "I don't want you to go out that late." Gabby (Latina) also felt embattled with her parents due to the restrictions they placed on her. She said,

My mom believes you're a girl and you can't do this and can't do that, like stay out late. Like I'll come like at 8 o'clock from dinner with a friend during the week and she'll be like "This isn't the time you come home. Who do you think you are?" Blah blah blah.

Several women were acutely aware that the types of restriction they faced were not placed upon men and chafed at this inequality. Sammy (Latina) angrily described a gendered double standard operating within her family. She said,

My brother could get away with a lot more than I could relationship-wise or anything-wise. He had a hickey and my dad just laughed it off. You know, he's like "Oh, did you leave the window open at night?" kind of thing you know. I never even tried 'cause I don't think I would be living right now talking to you if I did that. I would . . . —I don't know what would happen. I mean, I would get I don't know it's like real bad and I don't know what else like you know he could sleepover people's houses and stuff and I couldn't ever do that ever ever ever. So, yeah big double standard still.

In sum, restriction was the dominant theme articulated by students living at home, many who commuted long distances to UIC from the suburbs outside of the city. Restriction did not take the same form for all in this group. Specifically, women navigated forms of restriction that went beyond the effect of residence to speak to cultural constructions of race, ethnicity, and gender. However, the real constraints on socializing of living with family away from UIC-attending peers, if not other peer groups, were so strong as to flatten out much of the socioeconomic and racial and ethnic variation in partying and hooking-up behavior that we find among those living independently. The mechanisms of such difference we find for other students, such as resources and racial peer group homophily, do not shape nonrelational sexuality for those living with their families to the same degree. In part, this is a result of the substantively little socioeconomic diversity among students at home, where working class backgrounds predominate. We do find that women who live with parents report more active and vigorous attempts by parents to control their sexuality than do men. Gender matters for those who live with parents. And while racial group homophily in peer networks was reported equally by all UIC students, regardless of residence, it had less bearing on the potential for sexual and romantic relationships for those students whose primary partners resided in local city or suburban neighborhoods versus in those city bars and campus spaces where white, middle-class students predominate.

Discussion

This analysis builds on prior research on hooking up among college students by exploring the ways in which campus-level factors intersect with student demographics to shape both the cultural adoption and behavioral enactment of sexual scripts. If campuses constitute something of "sexual arenas" (Bogle 2008), they are not arenas of the same size, shape, or demographic composition.

Our research finds that race, class, and the social structural organization of campus impacts student ability to perform a hooking-up script for nonrelational sexuality. Hooking up as a sexual script requires structural support as well as behavioral and relational motivations. Not only does hooking up suggest a wide range of sexual behaviors with brief acquaintances or friends, it strongly implies sexual activity that takes place in dorms or apartments, spaces where students live independent from family and proximate to peers. Regardless of where they lived or how frequently they hooked up (if ever), all UIC students invoked a media-driven perception of "college" that connected hooking up to a party scene taking place on campus or in nearby bars. The centrality of this image to the meanings of hooking up as a sexual script resulted in divisions in students' sexual experiences. Our interviews with 87 undergraduates show that where students lived was a key fault line along which sexual scripts were enacted. Commuting students who lived with family were largely unable to participate in an idealized form of hooking up that prioritized spatial, if not financial, separation from family. Our argument here supports the assertion that "Although college students may have shared blueprints for the details of a 'typical' casual sexual scenario, college students' actual casual sexual encounters may have quite different experiential realities" (Paul and Hayes 2002:641).

This primary division by residence is not race and class neutral but underscores the ways a privileged social location grants ready access to the idealized script for the "real" collegiate

experience of sexual experimentation. Descriptions of hook-up “culture” writ large reflect the sexual possibilities of privilege, then, as those who take part in the hooking-up script are predominantly white and middle class. In contrast, students who live with family are more working class and nonwhite, with Latina/o students heavily overrepresented. Residence operates as a major source of racial/ethnic and class division in nonrelational sexual behavior. In fact, the constraining effects of living with family and commuting to campus on social and sexual behaviors were so strong that racial and class divisions in hooking up were less pronounced among students living with family, compared to independents, given the low level of hook ups reported by family dwellers overall. Still, residence may be neither the sole nor primary mechanism of such divisions among all students on all campuses.

Racial/ethnic and socioeconomic divides were also apparent within the group we label residential independents. As an integral component of party culture, hooking up requires both time and money, meaning that working class students, particularly those whose schedules were filled with both coursework and part-time employment, had less of both to devote to the normative “college experience.” However, socioeconomic status is deeply racialized in the U.S. context and mechanisms such as resources are not easily disentangled from their disproportionate impact on minority students. In addition, racial and ethnic divisions among this group were constructed through the demographic composition of peer groups. Despite the racial and ethnic diversity of UIC, students identified racial homophily as a central organizing principle for both platonic and sexual or romantic relationships among students. Since the majority of students who lived independent from family and participated in party culture on and off campus were white, minority students face something of a bind, located simultaneously between the expectations of the normative “college experience” and pressures toward same-race peers. This finding is consistent with research demonstrating that peer group homophily is an important mechanism of racial variation in hook ups (McClintock 2010) and that the composition of student bodies directly matters to hooking up (Uecker and Regnerus 2010; Warner et al. 2011). We add an important point of complexity to previous arguments—the demographic composition of student bodies and peer networks matter to sexual and romantic partnering processes primarily when other students comprise the primary “market” for students’ peer interactions. That is, racial and socioeconomic variation in hooking up appears primarily among those students most strongly tied, residentially and socially, to campus life.

With regard to the question of the dominance of hooking up as a sexual script, our results suggest that the religious, racial, and socioeconomic composition of student bodies matters. Also, the socio-spatial organization of campus has consequences for how various groups of students navigate cultural expectations around young adult sexuality. The existence and prevalence of student housing, whether in the form of dormitories or apartments, as well as the proximity of housing and bars to one another, seem to be prerequisites for the development of hook-up culture. Since hook-up culture did exist among some students at UIC, this suggests that the dominance of hook-up culture may not be restricted to residential campuses but emerges across institutional types with on- or near-campus housing and bars, especially among privileged groups of residentially independent students.

Armstrong and Hamilton (2013) found that class divisions in hooking up existed because working class white women did not have access to cultural ideals around self-development and mobility to the same extent as white middle-class women. We, too, find class divisions in hooking up but argue that these are also closely related to the often racialized impacts of residence, resources, and peer group composition. The differences between our studies are instructive. Using the language we propose here, Armstrong and Hamilton’s (2013) working class white women did not adopt hooking up but rejected it as relevant or appropriate for their lives. In contrast, the majority of the working class students in our study did adopt hooking up but were unable to enact it as frequently as their middle class, often white, peers. Although we cannot

come to a definitive conclusion, we hypothesize that differences across working-class students' orientations to hooking up may be constructed through both social location and residence. Some of this difference perhaps lies in the different samples. While Armstrong and Hamilton studied only white women who lived together in one college dormitory, we interviewed a racially and ethnically diverse group of both men and women living on and off campus. In addition, the range of socioeconomic status found among UIC students is somewhat less than is present in their research, with fewer upper middle-class students. In addition to social location, it is possible that women living in a known "party dorm" are forced to interact with the dominant party culture, despite their misgivings, and so consciously reject it. In comparison, it is possible that living spatially distant from the center of UIC campus social life allowed hook-up culture to retain a degree of its media-driven allure.

Arnold (2010) argues that the developmental tasks of young adulthood, including negotiations between autonomy and peer conformity, the development of interpersonal relationships, and sexual identity formation, support hook-up culture. If "emerging adulthood" (Arnett 2004) is an "extended moratorium" from the adult responsibilities of work and family, it is conceptualized as a multiyear period of self-development and self-focus. As a sexual script that encourages sexual exploration without necessary commitment, hooking up matches the developmental stage suggested by Arnett (2004). Yet, as Hamilton and Armstrong (2009) note, cultural scenarios that prioritize self-exploration and autonomy from work and family are, in fact, class-specific scripts that reflect the values of class privileged, upwardly mobile youth.

Our research highlights the strong sense of incongruity articulated by commuters living with family as they seek to navigate dominant, media-driven definitions of college life with the realities of being working-class students at a primarily commuter university. The interpersonal scripting that takes place in context of this incongruence does not lead dependents to a wholesale rejection of the hook-up script. Instead, the most common response to inability to meet this script's residential requirements is an expressed sense of lack. While students' narratives of being less than "real" students "missing out" on important cultural markers of college living is a discursive strategy to manage competing social expectations and residential location, this discourse does little to dislodge a cultural image of undergraduate social life that is, in reality, an overly idealized, exaggerated, and media-hyped depiction of race- and class-privileged behavior.

We do not know if some students' perceived disadvantage in hook-up culture, emerging from their inability to enact this script to the extent mandated by mediated cultural depictions of college, may translate into continued feelings and experiences of marginalization after graduating from UIC. The possibility that current perceptions of disadvantage may translate into future disadvantage is suggested in recent studies of young adult sexuality and presents a troubling implication of the current study. Carpenter's (2010:164) work on virginity loss, for instance, shows that among those whose first sexual experiences did not accord with their preferred cultural scenario of virginity loss, some experienced "chains of cumulative disadvantage overall." Additionally, Armstrong and Hamilton (2013) find that white college women who did embrace the "party pathway" through college, but did not have the needed socioeconomic resources to fully enact it, were at risk of downward mobility after graduation. Additional research is needed to unpack the range of social and developmental outcomes for students who felt they failed at the "college experience" as they transition out of college.

As a study of students at one university, our findings are not generalizable beyond the bounds of this institution. In fact, our findings may not extend to all students on the UIC campus, as students self-selected into the study from courses in sociology. Future scholarship should investigate how complex intersections of social location shape both the adoption and/or enactment of a variety of sexual scripts across institutional types. In addition to race, class, and gender, sexuality remains highly understudied, with most studies of college sexual behavior employing heterosexual student samples. In particular, future research employing comparative or longitudinal

methods to study students across time and institution would provide additional insight into the conditions under which hook-up cultures emerge and change, among whom, and with what consequences.

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Notes

1. For theoretically grounded treatments of gender, hooking up, and young adult sexuality, see Armstrong and Hamilton (2013), Carpenter (2010), and Ridgeway (2011).
2. “Frugaling” is when two students spend substantial time together, often in public, without ever discussing the status of their relationship or engaging in any sexual contact. The term references “frugal people going shopping on the cheap—at thrift stores, for example” (Freitas 2008:139).
3. Here, a working-class family is defined as one in which none of the adult members have completed a two- or four-year college degree. As reported by students, the majority of these adults held blue-collar service, manufacturing, or retail jobs, or were unemployed. Although we acknowledge ours is an imperfect measurement of social class background, our division along educational and occupational lines follows other qualitative coding of social class (Silva 2012).

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