

Not-so-casual sex: Definitions and scripts for modern sexual relationships

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## General Abstract

Casual sexual relationships are common forms of modern sexual relationships. Researchers are paying increased attention to these relationship types, but have been remiss in ensuring that the definitions of the relationships under investigation match participants' conceptualizations. Thus, the purpose of this dissertation is to determine whether definitions and behavioural scripts for casual sexual relationships can be identified. In Study 1, 23 young adults discussed initiation, maintenance, and termination components of various casual sexual relationships in focus groups and developed consensus definitions for each relationship. Each focus group independently identified four casual sexual relationships: One Night Stand, Booty Call, Fuck Buddies, and Friends with Benefits. These four relationships were the focus of subsequent exploration. Building on the qualitative descriptions created in the focus groups, an online survey was used to determine whether relationship definitions and associated script behaviours could be confirmed in a larger sample ( $N = 885$ ). In Study 2, a restricted age subsample (i.e., 18-29 years) was used to determine if emerging adults endorsed the proposed definitions. A majority of the sample endorsed the definitions for One Night Stand (96%), Booty Call (93%), Fuck Buddies (83%), and Friends with Benefits (87%). A larger proportion of individuals with sexual intercourse experience endorsed the definitions compared to those without sexual intercourse experience, while previous casual sex experience did not affect definition endorsements. Women demonstrated greater precision in identifying the definitions. In Study 3, the full sample of 885 participants was used to identify the specific script behaviours associated with each relationship. Using behaviourally descriptive items ( $N = 62$ ) derived from Study 1, participants identified 12 script items for One Night Stand, Booty Call, and Friends with Benefits and 10 script items for Fuck Buddies. Individuals with previous sexual intercourse experience were more adept at identifying the specific behavioural script items, while previous casual sex

experience did not affect script endorsements. Again, women were particularly adept at identifying the specific script items. Overall, these findings suggest that specific definitions and respective scripts exist for the One Night Stand, Booty Call, Fuck Buddies, and Friends with Benefits relationships. This knowledge appears broad and may be considered as socio-cultural knowledge of young adults. Numerous implications flow from the understanding that young adults implicitly know what behaviours are associated with these popular forms of casual sexual relationships. Researchers need to ensure they use scientifically sound definitions in order to develop a more sophisticated lexicon of (casual sex) relationships and understand how modern sexual relationships fit within the scope of potential relationship options.

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## General Introduction

Individuals engage in a variety of sexual relationships over their lifetimes. These relationships may include long-term, committed, monogamous relationships (e.g., marriage) as well as short-term mating partnerships (e.g., One Night Stand [ONS]). In between these two ends of the spectrum, there exist a multitude of additional sexual relationships, often referred to as “casual sex,” that are neither committed nor happen only one time. Researchers have used various definitions of casual sex ranging from sexual intercourse with a person that occurs only once (e.g., Kilman, Boland, West, Jonet, & Ramsey, 1993) to sexual intercourse between individuals who meet each other on the same day (e.g., Herold & Mewhinney, 1993) to sexual activity between individuals who are not involved in a long-term relationship with each other (e.g., Regan & Dreyer, 1999). Regardless of the wording used and/or whether the definition includes sexual intercourse, there is a common element to these definitions of casual sex: they include some type of sexual activity that occurs outside the context of a committed relationship.

Researchers have recently started to examine specific types of casual sexual relationships (CSRs), such as ONS (e.g., Cubbins & Tanfer, 2000), Booty Calls (BC; e.g., Jonason, Li, & Cason, 2009), Fuck Buddies (FB; e.g., Stone & McCabe, 2011), and Friends with Benefits (FWB; e.g., Lehmiller, VanderDrift, & Kelly, 2011; Mongeau, Knight, Williams, Eden, & Shaw, 2013). In these and other studies on individual CSRs, the wide variation of definitions used to measure these relationships is noted as a serious caveat, preventing an appreciation of the overall findings. In this thesis, qualitative methods were used to develop preliminary definitions of various CSRs and their respective script behaviours that were then quantitatively tested in order to develop scientifically sound definitions of CSR relationships.

## **Background**

This dissertation research is timely given the significant interest in CSRs - both from a societal and scientific perspective. It is important to examine the historical context in which casual sex has occurred to understand how casual sex has evolved. Similarly, it is important to examine the current cultural context in which casual sex is occurring in order to identify and understand how various societal factors are impacting modern day casual sex relationships. Finally, the current “culture” of casual sex research must be acknowledged in order to recognize how the findings from this dissertation can advance the body of casual sex literature. Identifying where the historical and current cultural context of casual sex intersects with the current state of the research literature will help determine how to situate the findings from this research program within the larger body of relationship and sexuality research.

## **Societal Context**

Evolutionary theorists posit that short-term mating (i.e., casual sex) is not a modern phenomenon. Buss and Schmitt’s (1993) Sexual Strategies Theory outlines short-term and long-term mating strategies that are deployed depending on the specific environment within which individuals find themselves. Although men and women both have the propensity to engage in short-term mating, motivations differ between the genders. According to Sexual Strategies Theory, the challenges that men face in regards to short-term mating include increasing access to sexually available women while minimizing investment. Women also face challenges; these include using short-term partners to assess potential long-term mates. Evolutionary researchers have supported these mating preferences in a number of studies (e.g., Gangestad & Simpson, 2000; Mathes, King, Miller, & Reed, 2002; Regan, 1998; Schmitt et al., 2003; Shackelford, Schmitt, & Buss, 2005). For example, in a cross cultural study including 16,000 individuals from 52 cultures, Schmitt and colleagues (2003) reported that compared to women, men desire more

sexual partners, require less time to consent to sexual intercourse, and actively pursue more short-term mating opportunities.

Outside of evolutionary theory, studies have also confirmed these gendered preferences with regard to uncommitted sex (e.g., Petersen & Hyde, 2010). In one study of 100 undergraduate participants, men were more willing to engage in intercourse with: (1) someone they met 3 hours before; (2) two females within a 6 hour time period; (3) someone they did not love; and (4) someone with whom they did not have a good relationship (Knox, Sturdivant, & Zusman, 2001). Men are more likely to have higher expectations for sexual activity on a first date compared to women, especially when the woman initiates the date (Morr & Mongeau, 2004). Intentions to engage in casual sex represent another area where gender differences exist. Maticka-Tyndale, Herold, and Mewhinney (1998) surveyed university students before and after they returned from reading week vacations regarding their intended and actual sexual behaviour while away. Before going on vacation, 55% percent of men intended to engage in sex and made ‘pacts’ with their friends to help them in this process, whereas only 15% of women intended to engage in sex but made ‘pacts’ with their friends to remove them from situations that were escalating sexually. Interestingly, post-vacation reports indicated that an equal proportion of men (15%) and women (13%) engaged in sex while away. Patterns of casual sexual behaviour rooted in our evolutionary past appear to be present in current dating and sexual relationships.

### **Other examples of casual sex**

Historical references also confirm gendered patterns of uncommitted sexual behaviour. The notion that high status males retain sexual access to multiple women is seen in historical accounts. Recent analyses suggest that Mulay Ismael, a Moroccan emperor, sired 888 children during his rule from 1672 to 1727 (Grammer & Oberzaucher, 2010) and it is suspected that Genghis Khan’s decades of war, pillaging, and rape resulted in 16 million present day male

descendants (Weatherford, 2004). Cross culturally, polygamy is more common than polyandry and continues to be practiced today in multiple cultures (Kilbride, 1994; Zeitzen, 2008) even though females may be less reproductively successful because the male's resources are divided among the females. The Victorian era (circa 1837-1901) was a period of sexual repression, but analyses suggest society was more sexually permissive than what appeared on the surface. It was tacitly tolerated that men with high social status had mistresses while women were expected to be sexually restrained (Dellamora, 2010; Griffith, 2009). More recently, researchers suggest that men are more likely than women to engage in extra-dyadic behaviour while in committed relationships (Laumann, Gagnon, Michael, & Michaels, 1994; Wiederman, 1997); however, other researchers are beginning to suggest a convergence in these gender differences (e.g., Mark, Janssen, & Milhausen, 2011). Historically, men have been afforded increased sexual access and freedom in terms of uncommitted sex compared to women.

### **Sexual revolution**

The sexual revolution (circa 1960) was a pivotal turning point in regards to dating and sexual behaviour in Western cultures. Although there was no one single factor that led to the sexual revolution, a number of societal factors facilitated the adoption of more sexually liberal attitudes (Allyn, 2000). For example, Alfred Kinsey's *Kinsey Reports* (Kinsey, Pomeroy, Clyde, & Gebhard, 1953; Kinsey, Pomeroy, & Martin, 1948) revealed a wide range of common sexual behaviours and, as a result, are credited for encouraging sexual dialogue at the societal level that had not been seen previously. One of the most important developments during this time was the legalization and widespread use of various contraceptives, most importantly, the birth control pill (Gordon, 1976). Use of hormonal contraceptives had an enormous impact on women's sexuality because women obtained reproductive control in a number of ways (e.g., delaying childbirth, limiting the number of children conceived) which had a great impact on other aspects of their

lives, such as pursuing further education, and most importantly, having sex without fears of becoming pregnant. The demarcation of sex from reproduction was a seminal event in the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Post-sexual revolution, a number of sexual attitudes and behaviours once considered taboo (e.g., masturbation, sex before marriage, contraception, public nudity, abortion, same-sex behaviours) were brought to mainstream attention and subsequent discussion. The result was a more sexually liberal society in the years to follow.

### **Emerging adulthood**

The period between 18 and 25 years of age has recently been identified as ‘emerging adulthood’ – a unique developmental stage between adolescence and adulthood observed in Western cultures (Arnett, 2000). Specifically, this stage is marked by five key features: 1) a focus on identity exploration (e.g., personal, academic, and/or professional role exploration); 2) a sense of instability as future plans are created and revised with experience; 3) a sense of self-focus while independence and self-sufficiency are established; 4) a feeling of being in an in-between state (e.g., no longer feeling like a ‘kid’ but not yet feeling like an ‘adult’); and 5) an optimistic outlook that life holds infinite possibilities for the future. As a result, young adults are afforded a high degree of latitude to engage in various activities and try out different roles before “real adulthood” begins. This delay of adulthood is marked by an increased desire to experiment with different lifestyle configurations, such as vocational training or enrolling in post-secondary education (e.g., Knapp, Kelly-Reid, & Ginder, 2011; Statistics Canada, 2009) and engaging in forms of relationship exploration, such as sex outside of marriage (Halpern, Waller, Spriggs, & Hallfors, 2006) or cohabitating with a partner (Copen, Daniels, & Mosher, 2013; Willoughby, 2012). Together, this stage of post-adolescence provides individuals with an extended period within which to engage in identity exploration and may help explain the delayed age of first marriage.

**Age of marriage.** The older age at first marriage has important implications for relationships during this life stage. In Canada, the average age at first marriage is 29 years for women and 31 years for men (Statistics Canada, 2011) while the average age of first intercourse in Canada is approximately 17 years (Reissing, Andruff, & Wentland, 2010; Roterman, 2012). Therefore, this period may be an opportunity for sexual and relationship experimentation for many young adults. Several studies have explored the number of desired sexual partners among young adults (Buss & Schmitt, 1993; Fenigstein & Preston, 2007; Pedersen, Miller, Putchabagavatula, & Yang, 2002). Buss and Schmitt (1993) asked college students to predict the number of desired lifetime sexual partners: women reported an average of 4 to 5 partners, while men reported more than 18 partners. It appears that neither women nor men report that they only want only one sexual partner, which may provide indirect support of individuals wanting to experiment with different relationships configurations before getting married. A CSR may be a viable relationship option during this life stage where young adults are intensely self-focused and lack the stability or desire to engage in long-term committed relationships. Understanding how CSRs fit within the variety of relationship options available to young adults during this time is an important purpose of this research.

### **Social media**

Casual sex may 'look' different today due the changes in social media and related technologies. Social media has changed the way individuals connect with potential dating and sexual partners. Modern technologies like text messaging and video chat (e.g., Skype) allow partners to virtually communicate even when geographically separate. Online dating sites (e.g., Lavalife, Plenty of Fish, Match.com) allow partners in various geographical locations to meet and start romantic and/or sexual relationships, as well as indicate the level of relationship commitment they are most interested in pursuing (e.g., sexual activity only, casual dating, serious

relationships). Facebook is another common way for individuals to meet potential relationship and sexual partners, either through their own or their friends' social networks (Ellison, Steinfeld, & Lampe, 2007; Subrahmanyam & Greenfield, 2008).

Virtual dating behaviours are becoming part of the accepted modern dating script (Wentland, Muise, & Desmarais, 2011) whereby individuals can communicate with partners in ways that were not seen in the past (e.g., asking someone out on a date via text). Certain populations, such as young adults, may be the most likely to adopt these modern means of connecting with potential dating and sexual partners (Taylor, Rappleyea, Fang, & Cannon, 2013). Given the rapid changes in dating and sexual behaviours as a result of these emerging technologies, it is important to explore the current technological context in which casual sex exists. Thus, young adults' use of modern technologies (e.g., use of Facebook communication, text messaging) is an important component to examine in regards to communication patterns with potential, new, and/or current casual sex partners.

### **Research Context**

From a research perspective, the academic literature on CSRs has dramatically increased over the past two decades. Some of the pioneering studies on casual sex (e.g., Maticka-Tyndale et al., 1998; Paul, McManus, & Hayes, 2000; Weaver & Herold, 2000) focused on how to measure casual sex (i.e., how do we define casual sex in sexuality research?) and how specific research questions affect the resultant statistics (i.e., "Have you ever engaged in casual sexual activity?" versus "Have you ever engaged in casual sexual intercourse?"). In Paul and colleagues' (2000) seminal paper on the pervasiveness of casual sex hookups, 78% of 555 male and female undergraduate students reported experience with at least one hookup defined as a sexual encounter that lasted one night. Of these, 47% of men and 33% of women reported that the hookup involved sexual intercourse. Similar patterns of results were seen in Weaver and Herold's

(2000) study of casual sex experience among 237 female undergraduate students. In their study, 13% of women reported sexual intercourse with someone they had met the same day or night, 36% reported sexual intercourse with someone with whom they were not in a committed relationship, 51% reported non-coital sex (e.g., hand-genital, oral sex) with someone they had met the same day or night, and 73% reported non-coital sex with someone with whom they were not in a committed relationship. Clearly, how we define and subsequently measure casual sex has a large impact on prevalence rates.

An examination of *PsycINFO* references to “casual sex” (including empirical research studies and associated books) illustrates an increase in the number of studies and resultant references to casual sex over the past 15 years (See Table 1). This pattern of results has also been noted by other researchers; Monto and Carey (in press) state that before 2006, the term “hooking up” was only sporadically used (i.e., cited in four studies) compared to 2006 and onwards, when the term became omnipresent (i.e., cited in 84 studies) in the casual sex literature. Neither Monto and Carey nor other researchers have identified what occurred circa 2006 that resulted in the surge of research attention on casual sex and/or hooking up. More importantly, no study is available to indicate how the term “hooking up” was originally coined.

Table 1

<i>PsycINFO Searches of Various Casual Sex Research Terminology</i>			
	≤2000	2000-2005	2006-2013
Casual sex	13	82	230
Hooking up		1	73
Friends with Benefits	-	1	46
One Night Stand	-	4	21
Booty Call	-	-	4
Fuck Buddies	-	1	1

The rise in publications on the various CSRs suggests that researchers are not only aware of the changes in societal patterns of sexual behaviour and respective sexual partnerships, but are studying the evolution of these modern sexual relationships. In the casual sex literature, various definitions for CSRs are used but, regrettably, no formal definitions, operationalizations, and/or validation information of the terms are provided (e.g., Afifi & Faulkner, 2000; Bisson & Levine, 2009; Jonason et al., 2009). For example, in a recent paper published in the *Archives of Sexual Behavior* by Jonason (2013), the functions of the ONS, BC, and FWB were compared to what the author referred to as serious committed romantic relationships. Jonason did not provide a definition of the relationships under investigation to participants, stating instead that “familiarity with these relationships was assumed” (p. 1409). The lack of definitions provided to participants was not cited as a potential methodological limitation of the study. This example demonstrates how researchers’ interpretation of these relationships has a direct impact on the subsequent measurement of CSRs.

The lack of emphasis on the development of explicit operational definitions is problematic in the casual sex literature. The hallmark of rigorous psychological research is validity and

reliability of the constructs under investigation, but many casual sex researchers have failed to meet these requirements at the most basic level. Cronbach and Meehl (1955) stated: “Construct validity must be investigated whenever no criterion or universe of content is accepted as entirely adequate to define the quality to be measured” (p. 282). Given the recent emergence of many of these modern sexual relationships, researchers cannot assume that participants share the researchers’ conceptualizations of the relationships under investigation, nor can researchers assume that participants themselves share a common understanding of these relationships when no operational definitions are provided. Thus, the existing literature on casual sex can be called into question because: a) valid definitions of CSRs have not been developed and, consequently, no consensus terms are used across studies; b) the validity of each study’s results is tenuous; c) results can only be examined on a study-by-study basis due to the differing definitions (if any) used; and d) because prevalence rates cannot be compared, large scale generalizations about casual sex are not possible.

### **Purpose**

Due to the current definitional issues in the CSR research, it was necessary to take a methodological step back from the current literature to develop consensus definitions of various CSRs. Most importantly, researchers must begin by establishing that the definitions they use accurately match the target population’s own conceptualization of those relationships. Examining how participants conceptualize CSRs is both timely and imperative to ensure future research is valid at the outset and can be replicated with subsequent studies to improve our general understanding of the casual sex literature. In this doctoral thesis, definitions were solicited from young adults as they are the most likely to be exposed to various CSR arrangements (Bogle, 2008; Lambert, Kahn, & Apple, 2003). These initial definitions served as a starting point to determine if consensus definitions of CSRs exist and subsequently, to examine overall script behaviours

associated with the various CSRs. The latter not being possible thus far given the lack of validated definitions in the existing literature. Thus, the dissertation research consists of three specific studies.

The purpose of the first study was to use an inductive approach to create definitions of CSRs based on qualitative focus group explorations.<sup>1</sup> The approach for Study 1 was purposefully atheoretical and exploratory to ensure that the definitions created emerged from the qualitative data (Attride-Stirling, 2001) and were thus based on the participants' own conceptualizations of the relationships. The definitions created in Study 1 were used to develop the survey instrument for the second phase of the dissertation research. A larger and more diverse sample of participants was surveyed to determine whether participants endorsed the proposed definitions of the various CSRs (Study 2) and if specific script behaviours could be identified for each CSR (Study 3). The deductive approach of Studies 2 and 3 allowed for the CSR definitions and related scripts to be examined in a larger sample and determined if the definitions and scripts accurately reflect participants' conceptualizations of the relationships. This confirmation step was crucial to ensure the ecological validity of the CSR definitions created.

## **Hypotheses**

### **Study 1**

Due to the exploratory nature of Study 1, there were no a priori hypotheses about how many or which specific CSRs would be identified and subsequently discussed by the focus group participants. It was, however, expected that participants would be able to identify several CSR and agree on their definitions. The definitions were expected to be related to the initiation, maintenance, and termination behaviours specific to each CSR.

### **Study 2**

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<sup>1</sup> Study 1 has been published in the *Canadian Journal of Human Sexuality* (Wentland & Reissing, 2011).

The subsequent step in this Ph.D. research program was to confirm if definitions of identified CSRs were generally endorsed by a larger and more diverse sample (i.e., non-undergraduate student participants) and, subsequently, identify where patterns of error exist (i.e., which groups do not endorse the definitions). Three specific hypotheses were tested in Study 2. First, because the costs of casual sex are higher for women, women were expected to be more adept (i.e., demonstrate a higher degree of precision) at identifying the subtle nuances between the various CSRs. Second, individuals with sexual intercourse experience would also be more adept at identifying the subtle nuances between the various CSRs. And third, individuals with casual sex experience (i.e., those who report at least one casual sexual partner or those who report experience with the specific CSR) would be more adept at identifying the various CSRs.

### **Study 3**

The final step was to identify the detailed behavioural scripts associated with each CSR. In line with the hypotheses for Study 2, three specific hypotheses were tested in Study 3. First, women would be more adept at identifying the behavioural scripts for the various CSRs. Second, individuals with sexual intercourse experience would be more adept at identifying the specific scripts associated with each CSR. And third, individuals with previous casual sex experience would be more adept at identifying the various CSRs.

**Taking casual sex not too casually: Exploring definitions of casual sexual relationships<sup>2</sup>**

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### **Abstract**

Researchers are beginning to explore the variety of casual sexual relationships that individuals engage in. These relationships, and the subtle nuances that differentiate them, have not been studied collectively. The purpose of the present study was to qualitatively examine casual sexual relationships (CSRs), ranging from a single encounter to an ongoing sexual relationship with a friend. Male and female focus group participants identified a number of implicit and explicit rules that guide the initiation, maintenance, and termination of four types of casual sexual relationships: One Nights Stands, Booty Calls, Fuck Buddies, and Friends with Benefits. Participants identified these rules regardless of gender or whether they had previous personal experience with any of these CSRs. The results suggest that each of these relationship types can be placed on a continuum of casual sex according to various dimensions, including frequency of contact, type of contact (sexual and/or social), personal disclosure, discussion of the relationship, and friendship. Participants' shared understanding of these sexual relationships suggests that young adults may have common cultural knowledge of them and a fluid conceptualization of what they identify as a relationship.

Sexual encounters outside committed relationships, often referred to as casual sexual relationships (CSRs), are common for young adults in Western countries, especially among college and university students (Bisson & Levine, 2009; Grello, Welsh, & Harper, 2006; Hughes, Morrison, & Asada, 2005; Puentes, Knox, & Zusman, 2008). Media references to CSRs are widespread and the formal academic literature on CSRs has steadily increased over the last decade (e.g., Jonason, Li, & Cason, 2009; Lambert, Kahn, & Apple, 2003; Owen & Fincham, 2011a). Few studies, however, have systematically investigated definitional caveats with regards to various forms of casual sexual interactions ranging from one-time encounters to ongoing sexual relationships. In the available literature, definitions of ‘casual sex’ differ significantly from study to study making interpretation of the results problematic and generalizability of findings limited. The objective of this study was to examine whether various casual sex encounters follow specific patterns that make it possible to reliably differentiate distinct forms of CSRs along a continuum.

Researchers have used various terms to describe CSRs. Earlier terms include permissiveness without affection (Reiss, 1960), premarital coitus (Hunt, 1975), or premarital sex (Tavris & Sadd, 1975). More recent terms include sex that occurs only once (Kilman, Boland, West, Jonet, & Ramsey, 1993), sex outside a committed relationship (Regan & Dreyer, 1999), non-relational sex (Epstein, Calzo, Smiler, & Ward, 2009), or the commonly used One Night Stand (ONS; Cubbins & Tanfer, 2000; Montoya, 2005). The ONS is often used as the representative term for a range of non-committed sexual relationships (Forster, Ozelsel, & Epstude, 2010; Greitemeyer, 2007; Zeigler-Hill, Campe, & Myers, 2009), but the term fails to capture the temporal variations and specificities that exist within CSRs that extend over more than ‘one night.’ Another increasingly popular term for CSRs is hooking up (Bogle, 2008). This term is currently used to describe single, episodic, or ongoing sexual activity between individuals who

are not in a committed relationship (Fielder & Carey, 2010; Owen, Fincham, & Moore, 2011; Regnerus & Uecker, 2011).

Regardless of terms used to describe various forms of casual sex, it is often unclear what form of sexual activity determines the definition (e.g., intercourse vs. kissing), the temporal characteristics (one encounter vs. ongoing), or the degree of intimacy in the relationship (none vs. sharing activities/revealing emotions). Prevalence rates for casual sex differ significantly if researchers use any sexual activity (75%; Paul, McManus, & Hayes, 2000) versus sexual intercourse (15-35%; Maticka-Tyndale, Herold, & Mewhinney, 1998; Weaver & Herold, 2000). Without clear definitions, it is difficult to determine actual prevalence and how individuals engage in, manage, and terminate different CSRs. Studies have noted a number of consequences of casual sex, such as greater likelihood of engaging in risky sexual behaviours (Cho & Span, 2010), differences in attachment styles (Gentzler & Kerns, 2004), feelings of regret (Eshbaugh & Gute, 2008), emotional distress (Fielder & Carey, 2010), or depression and/or loneliness (Owen & Fincham, 2011b) after sexual activity. However, these and other such factors are difficult to interpret in the absence of a fuller understanding of the specific context in which the encounters occur.

### ***Friends with Benefits***

Friends with Benefits (FWB) is a commonly used term to describe a sexual relationship that develops between friends. FWBs have been investigated with regards to negotiation of rules (Bisson & Levine, 2009; Hughes, Morrison, & Asada, 2005), varying sub-categories of FWBs (Williams, Shaw, Mongeau, Knight, & Ramirez, 2007), gender differences in FWB experiences (Owen & Fincham, 2011a), and men's sexual scripts (Epstein et al., 2009). The prevalence of FWB relationships is estimated at approximately 50% in studies of college or university participants (e.g., Afifi & Faulkner, 2000; Bisson & Levine, 2009; Hughes, et al., 2005; Owen &

Fincham, 2011a). In Afifi and Faulkner's survey study of 315 university participants, 51% reported having ever engaged in at least one FWB relationship. Of these individuals, 49% had engaged in more than one FWB relationship. In Bisson and Levine's (2009) survey study, 60% of 125 university participants reported having ever engaged in a FWB relationship (36% of whom were currently in a FWB relationship). Hughes and colleagues' (2005) survey study examined participants' self-reported rules for FWB relationships. The complexity of maintaining a sexual relationship within the context of a friendship appears to be facilitated by following a number of rules (e.g., not telling other friends, not becoming too emotionally involved). Recently, Weaver and colleagues (2011) interviewed 26 university students with FWB experience. Although participants noted that FWB relationships have their 'benefits' and are relevant to college/university life, FWB partners may not communicate their feelings explicitly in regards to attachment or sexual involvement outside the FWB, resulting in complications. Despite research on FWBs, a consistent definition of a CSR with a friend has not emerged. Furthermore, no definition is available for an ongoing sexual relationship between two individuals who are not otherwise friends.

### ***Booty Call***

A meeting for impromptu sex is sometimes referred to as a Booty Call (BC). In a study on the sexual practices of African American and Puerto Rican young adults, Singer and colleagues (2006) categorized the BC as an uncommitted and non-monogamous relationship in which one person calls the other for sexual purposes. In a more formal study on BCs, Jonason, Li, & Cason (2009) defined a BC as "communication initiated towards a non-long-term relationship partner with the urgent intent either stated or implied, of having sexual activity and/or intercourse" (p. 4). In their survey of 61 university students, these authors found that 64% of participants had engaged in a BC that resulted in some type of sexual activity. The telephone was the most common method

used to contact a BC. In the second part of this study, both male and female participants ( $N = 42$ ) reported that the top reason for accepting or rejecting a BC was the physical attractiveness of the partner. In a subsequent study, Jonason, Li, and Richardson (2010) compared the BC relationship to both ONS and serious romantic relationships. Emotionally intimate acts (e.g., handholding, kissing partner's face) were restricted in BCs compared to romantic relationships, suggesting that participants had an implicit understanding of the appropriate behaviour for a BC. In a recent study on African American adolescent mothers, the term 'Booty Call' described the person contacted for the purpose of immediate sexual activity or was the verb used to describe arranging the sexual encounter (Nelson, Morrison-Beedy, Kearney, & Dozier, 2011). Additional examination of BCs is required to independently validate these initial BC studies with larger samples and determine where BCs are situated on the continuum of CSRs.

### ***Operational definitions of CSRs and goals of the present study***

The existing literature suggests that the different types of CSRs cannot be captured by one single definition. CSRs are complex forms of non-committed sexual relationships that vary in emotional and sexual involvement and range from one-time encounters to ongoing friendships that include a sexual component. In the literature to date, most researchers have failed to provide explicit descriptions or justifications for the operational definitions used for the relationship under investigation. This limitation has been identified as a problem for researchers examining data on self-reported sexual behaviour (Byers, Henderson, & Hobson, 2009). Use of the general term "casual sex" or one of the specific terms (e.g., ONS) without adequate description leaves participants at liberty to interpret the constructs. The result is data that is difficult to compare across studies.

The present study represents the first step in an attempt to simultaneously delineate definitions for various CSRs in order to: identify subtle differences and similarities, clarify

temporal characteristics, assess emotional involvement, and examine possible rules of engagement, management, and termination. Given the heterogeneous nature of the existing literature, the first step was to use focus groups to document current cultural knowledge of CSRs. It was expected that participants would be able to differentiate between different casual sexual encounters on a number of dimensions including temporal patterns, CSR management strategies, and relationship termination. We anticipate that CSR patterns identified here will provide a basis for subsequent validation studies with larger samples.

## **Methods**

### **Participants**

Twenty-three individuals participated in one of four separate focus groups (male, female, mixed-gender, and sex educators). For the sex educator group, a total of six sexuality organizations (e.g., Planned Parenthood, university peer sexual health educators) were contacted in person with letters of invitation to participate; individuals from four of these organizations accepted. Individuals from these organizations were invited to participate because they are involved in sexual health education for younger adults and are familiar with current terms used to describe CSRs. Non-sex educator participants were recruited through the participant pool for course credit at a large, urban university in Eastern Canada ( $n = 12$ ) and through campus poster advertisements ( $n = 6$ ). Inclusion criteria included fluency in English and being 18 to 24 years of age; there was no age restriction for the sex educator group. If there is indeed a general cultural understanding of terms and behavioural scripts for different kinds of CSRs, individuals with and without casual sex experiences should be cognizant of those scripts; therefore, previous CSR experience was not required.

## **Measures**

Participants completed a background questionnaire before the focus group discussions began. Demographic information included age, gender, ethnicity, age at first intercourse, and lifetime number of both committed and casual sexual partners. This information was used to characterize the participants as a group but was not used in any way that identified an individual participant.

The letter of invitation to participate in the study made it clear that the purpose was to discuss CSRs. Discussion in each of the four focus groups was semi-structured. The facilitators began each discussion group with the same specific lead-in question: “What are some of the names that are used to describe casual sexual relationships?” After participants had generated a list of specific terms, each term was put on its own poster board, and participants were asked to describe each relationship (e.g., “Tell me how this relationship works.”). When necessary, the facilitator asked participants to provide details on how each relationship starts, whether the individuals know each other before engaging in any sexual activity and if so, what is the nature of their relationship, how the relationship is managed and terminated, and what happens post-termination. Facilitators wrote participants’ responses on the poster boards and asked participants to share as much detail as they wished in regards to the various relationships regardless of whether they had such personal experience. Facilitators also sought to stimulate a rich and varied discussion by encouraging participants to comment regardless of whether they agreed or disagreed with other group members.

## **Procedure**

Participants contacted the laboratory for further information and discussion of the study details. The groups were facilitated by a same-sex facilitator and by a male and female facilitator for the mixed gender group. Upon arrival, participants reviewed the consent form and filled out a

demographics form that was filed independently from the information shared in the focus groups for anonymity. To further protect privacy, participants chose a pseudonym that would replace their own name for citation of quotes. The authors subsequently changed those pseudonyms during transcription to names that were not the real name of any participants or the pseudonym used by any other participant. Group discussions were initiated with the lead-in question regarding the different casual sexual terms. The terms generated by the group were written on separate poster boards and participants were prompted to provide further detail. Discussions took an average of 90 minutes and concluded with the distribution of a sexuality resource brochure. The Research Ethics Board at the university approved the study.

### **Analysis**

The audio files were transcribed in full and then analyzed by two female researchers. Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) was used to thematically code the data from the focus groups, an approach used to identify salient themes that emerge from the data (Braun, Terry, Gavey, & Fenaughty, 2009; Hogarth & Ingham, 2009). In Phase 1, the data was transcribed verbatim. The female coders read all the transcripts and separately noted initial ideas regarding common ideas and thoughts expressed in the focus groups. In Phase 2, the coders discussed the initial ideas together. In Phase 3, the coders independently re-read the transcripts to search for the identified themes. In Phase 4, the coders reviewed the themes together to discuss how the various themes reflected the data. In Phase 5, the themes were revised until a final list of themes was identified and mutually agreed upon. And finally, in Phase 6, extracts were identified to illustrate the identified themes. The purpose of this inductive qualitative approach was to ensure that participants' conceptualizations of the various CSRs were presented accurately and not guided by previous research.

## Results

### *Participant characteristics*

The demographic characteristics of the sample reported in Table 1 include age and number of both committed and casual sex partners. With the exception of two participants who described themselves as European Canadian, the majority of participants ( $N = 21$ ) self-described as having a Canadian/Caucasian cultural background. One male participant reported no sexual intercourse experience. Of the participants who had engaged in sexual intercourse, 19 participants (81%) reported at least one casual sex partner ( $Mdn = 3.00$ ).

Table 1

<i>Participant Characteristics</i>			
Focus group (number of participants)	Age ( $M$ )	Committed sexual partners ( $M$ )	Casual sexual partners ( $M$ )
Sex Educator Group (5)	22.40 (range = 19-27)	3.20 (range = 1-6)	3.00 (range = 0-8)
Mixed Group* (5)	19.40 (range = 19-20)	1.80 (range = 0-3)	6.80 (range = 0-12)
Female Group (7)	19.42 (range = 18-24)	1.86 (range = 1-4)	4.00 (range = 0-9)
Male Group (6)	19.83 (range = 18-21)	1.50 (range = 0-4)	3.50 (range = 0-11)

\*One male participant reported no sexual intercourse experience

Participants identified a number of specific CSRs. The specific relationships that were discussed in each respective group are listed in Table 2. The terms identified consistently by all four focus groups were: BC, FWB, Fuck Buddy (FB), and ONS. Furthermore, participants often used one of these CSRs to describe the range of interactions and temporal patterns of the other CSRs. Thus, these four CSRs are the focus of the following analysis.

Table 2

*Names of Various Casual Sexual Relationships Discussed in Focus Groups*

	Male Group	Female Group	Mixed Group	Sex Educator Group
Booty Call	x	x	x	x
Boy Toy	x	x		x
Casual Dating		x		
Dick ‘Em and Dump ‘Em	x			
Fling				x
Fooling Around	x	x		
Friends With Benefits	x	x	x	x
Fuck n’ Chuck	x		x	
Fuck Buddy(Buddies)/Fuck Friends	x	x	x	x
Hit It and Quit It	x			
Hook-ups/Hooking Up		x	x	x
Last Call			x	
No Strings Attached	x	x		x
One Night Stand	x	x	x	x
Part-Time Girlfriend/Boyfriend	x			
Use ‘Em and Lose ‘Em	x			

***Qualitative analysis***

Participants readily identified the code of conduct that guides individuals’ behaviour, including detailed hypothetical situations to illustrate the typical scripts for the four common CSRs (i.e., BC, FWB, FB, and ONS). The majority of the participants’ discussion involved heterosexual interactions as indicated by the gender roles discussed. However, numerous participants stated that these sexual relationships were not limited to heterosexual individuals. The detailed conversations of the focus groups resulted in a final list of 11 themes and related subthemes and second-order subthemes. The analysis that follows focuses on five of those themes, chosen because they were clearly related to the initiation, management, and termination of the four types of CSRs under consideration (Table 3). There were six other themes (three with related subthemes) footnoted in Table 3 but not included in the analysis.

Table 3

*Final Themes and Sub-themes Related to Four Types of Casual Sexual Relationships*

<b>Theme**</b>	<b>Subthemes and second-order subthemes**</b>
<b>Initiation</b>	How the relationship begins Alcohol/drugs
<b>Code of Conduct</b>	Explicit rules Discussion of what the relationship is Discussion of monogamy Discussion of ending relationship Rules of the relationship Implicit rules Arranging interactions Monogamy
<b>Communication</b>	Communication within relationship Intimate disclosure Method of planning interactions Tacit communication Communication outside relationship Secrecy Terminology
<b>Interaction</b>	Frequency Sexual or non-sexual activity
<b>Termination</b>	Other relationship for one individual Level of interest Too attached Loss of interest Contact after the relationship

\* The four CSRs that focus groups discussed were: Booty Call, Friends with Benefits, Fuck Buddies and One Night Stands.

\*\* The six other themes that emerged (Progression [between different relationships, test relationship], Sexual Activity [type of sexual activity, orgasm], Reasons for Interaction [filling the void/boredom, sexual desire, fall back plan], Attachment, Power Dynamics, and Regret) are not included in the analysis.

**Theme 1: Initiation**

The initiation theme had two subthemes related to starting CSRs and the role of association of alcohol with such relationships.

### *How the relationship begins*

With the exception of ONSs, the other three CSRs involve individuals who know each other, either as friends or acquaintances. Participants agreed that BCs know each other prior to engaging in the actual ‘booty call’ because they have one another’s contact information, but are not necessarily former sexual partners and are not friends. Participants mentioned that compared to FBs, the friends aspect in FWBs is much stronger because these individuals are friends prior to engaging in sexual activity. However, in regards to FBs, these individuals may become friends as a result of engaging in sexual activity with each other. One participant drew the following distinctions:

I think Friends with Benefits implies someone you were friends with before, whereas Fuck Friends [FBs] is someone you would have met just to fuck and then you would continue.

But Friends with Benefits implies that there was a friendship to begin with. (Kristen, female group)

Participants’ comments indicated a fluid progression of becoming sexually involved with someone, especially if the individuals were friends or previous sexual partners. In regards to FWBs, a mixed group member stated:

Well...say, if you’re in elementary school and everyone progresses and develops. And all of a sudden you guys just hang out one day and sex just happens, right? It’s just a random act and then you guys just keep doing it. Or, it could just be a hook up that two friends put together. Like if I went out with friends and I was like “Hey, I have a friend, meet him.”

And then you have that hook up. And then you become good friends. And then it turns into Friends with Benefits. And then after X amount of time, it stops. (Paul, mixed group)

Participants indicated that either gender can initiate any CSR. However, men in the male group commented that men were more likely to initiate the ONS.

### ***Alcohol/drugs***

All groups agreed that alcohol is involved in the initiation of ONSs. BCs commonly involve alcohol due to the context in which the individuals contact each other (e.g., late at night, after one individual has been drinking). In regards to BCs, a female participant stated “I always think of the ‘middle of the night drunk dial’” (Kate, sex educator group). Alcohol was only mentioned in the context of the very first time FWBs engage in any sexual activity because of the unique and potentially awkward shift from a platonic friendship to a sexual relationship. As one group member noted: “I think Friends with Benefits could be started by a really intoxicated night because it’s not something you would normally do with that friend” (Kristen, female group).

### ***Theme 2: Code of conduct.***

The Code of Conduct theme was divided into Explicit Rules and Implicit Rules, which were further divided into subthemes. Participants in each of the focus groups agreed that some rules were explicitly discussed between the individuals (Explicit Rules), while there were other scripted rules that the individuals were expected to know/follow even if not discussed (Implicit Rules).

### ***Explicit rules:***

#### *Discussion of what the relationship is.*

All four groups unanimously stated that FWBs discuss the relationship with one other. Ben stated: “With the Friend with Benefit, there is definitely more communication and you talk about where both of you stand and what you want out of this” (male group). Participants noted that FBs, BCs, and ONS do not have this discussion with one another.

#### *Discussion of monogamy.*

Given the temporally limited nature of ONSs and BCs, participants stated that discussions regarding monogamy are unnecessary. However, the discussion regarding sexual monogamy is very important for FWBs in regards to whether or not condoms are used. Female participants in the sex educator group discussed the negotiation of monogamy in FWBs in the following exchange:

Kate: The one thing I wanted to add to Friends with Benefits would be that you're not necessarily monogamous. But I would see it as when you're together, you're just sleeping with each other and you have to inform your Friend with Benefit if you became involved with someone else.

Candace: I agree.

Female facilitator: Does everyone agree with that? [agreement from everyone]. So if one partner starts sleeping with someone else...

Kate: Uh-huh. So you're open to possibilities of dating other people, because you are only Friends with Benefits, but you're basically filling the void until something better comes along.

Female facilitator: But there should be disclosure of that with each other?

Kate: Yes. Yes, because if you weren't having that kind of disclosure, then you'd be Fuck Buddies, not Friends with Benefits.

Allison: Talking about partial monogamy there, that could almost be stemming from wanting to be safe sexually, not exposing yourself to too many different viruses and whatnot. So if you're Friends with Benefits, that may be better than One Night Stands. Not even just the disclosure, but actually less exposure to new viruses.

Participants were clear that discussing whether or not people were sexually active outside the context of the FWBs relationship is an essential component of the FWB script, making the FWB

relationship the most sexually exclusive. Monogamy rules are less stringent for FBs, but participants from all groups stated that a person usually only has one FB at a time due to the frequency of the sexual activity.

*Discussion of ending the relationship.*

Participants stated that there is no need for a formal termination conversation for ONSs, BCs, and FBs. For the ONS, one woman said: “To me, by definition, it almost ends before it starts” (Tara, female group). In the case of BCs and FBs, female group participants indicated that they would either stop contacting the person or stop responding to the other’s efforts to contact them when they were no longer interested in continuing the sexual relationship. The following conversation in the female group discussed how a BC relationship ends:

Nicole: A Booty Call could just disappear.

Heather: One of them starts casually dating [someone else] or some other bigger and better Booty Call comes along.

Angela: You just kind-of move on or your just stop talking to that person. It doesn’t have to be spoken that we’re not gonna do this anymore. It is just kind-of done.

Tara: I also think there’s the potential for animosity to develop if one person turns down the other person at a given point.

Kristen: I think when a certain person stops being available, then a Booty Call is easily replaced.

In the context of FWBs, there are specific rules regarding appropriate behaviour (i.e., termination of the sexual aspect of their friendship) if the relationship ends because one of the partners starts dating someone else.

*Rules of the relationship.*

A discussion of the rules was commonplace for FWBs, including how public their relationship is within their group of friends and what happens when the relationship ends. One woman observed:

I think it's something where you have to have rules, like ground rules with the person.

They have to be set in stone, what you think. If you're in a Friends with Benefits relationship, if you go from being friends and the one friend goes to another relationship obviously nothing, right? There are ground rules. (Sarah, mixed group)

This theme also included rules in regards to posting information about the relationship on social networking sites, such as Facebook. For example, FWBs and FBs would be added to Facebook. However, partners explicitly agree that neither person will post information on the other's Facebook that alludes to their sexual relationship.

***Implicit rules.***

*Arranging interactions.*

Participants discussed general rules such as when to contact the person and when someone stays overnight. Some relationships involve an understanding that sexual activity occurs separately from social interactions. A male participant noted that: "You can go to a Booty Call and then go drinking with your buddies afterwards, whereas with a One Night Stand, you probably wouldn't" (Adam, male group). Others mentioned that it is not acceptable to contact a FWB late at night after the bar, whereas this behaviour is commonly associated with a BC or FB. In this sense, FWBs indicates a greater sense of commitment regarding the quality of time spent together. Participants unanimously agreed that staying overnight is acceptable for a ONS. To avoid potentially awkward situations, it was expected that the person leaves in the morning. "You

wake up and leave. You don't stay and have coffee and breakfast or anything like that" (Allison, sex educator group).

*Monogamy.*

Participants discussed whether or not individuals are monogamous within the various CSRs. For FWBs, monogamy is expected unless stated otherwise, whereas for the FB, there is an unspoken understanding that the relationship is not monogamous given that it is possible (although not common) to have more than one FB at a time. There was a similar understanding for BCs: "You have to assume that if you're Booty Call'ing her, there's probably someone else Booty Call'ing her, too" (Adam, male group).

***Theme 3: Communication.***

***Communication within relationship.***

*Intimate disclosure.*

Many of the participants' comments indicated that FWBs include more disclosure of personal details compared to any of the other relationships. For example: "I think your friendship with your Fuck Buddy would be on a more superficial level than say a Friend with Benefit" (Nicole, female group). The FB is considered a better friend than the BC because the BC is only contacted in order to engage in sexual activity, whereas it is possible that FB have sex and do something social (e.g., watch a movie).

Another issue related to the disclosure of personal information is whether or not an individual would be added to Facebook. A male participant commented on the secrecy involved with having anyone on Facebook: "They're all back-door Facebook. You just don't write anything about the sex." (Paul, mixed group). Participants agreed that FWBs are likely to have been friends on Facebook before the sexual relationship started. FBs would likely be added to Facebook, but again, individuals would discuss what is deemed appropriate information to share

publicly on Facebook. Participants stated that a longstanding BC may be added to Facebook, but that this was an exception because BCs are not considered true friends. All participants were in agreement that a ONS would not be added to Facebook unless the ONS took place between friends.

*Method of planning interactions.*

The method of contact used depends on the relationship. With the exception of FWBs, whom individuals would most likely speak with on the telephone, participants said that text messaging (i.e., texting) is the most common method of contact for BCs and FBs because fears of rejection are minimized. If texting is not used, another form of instant communication (e.g., MSN, Facebook chat) is used to make arrangements. For example, “MSN or something like that. Anything that is more instant. You don’t have to wait on a reply” (Travis, male group). A ‘Booty Caller’ would sometimes make a telephone call if the caller was too intoxicated to compose a legible text message or if a text message notification would not be loud enough to wake the other individual. One male stated: “If you’re drunk at three in the morning, you’ll probably call instead of text” (Eric, mixed group).

*Tacit communication.*

Participants discussed the manner in which individuals communicate with each other and noted that the context of the invitation effectively communicates the person’s intentions for both BCs and FBs. Individuals arranging BCs may not explicitly discuss whether or not they were going to engage in any type of sexual activity. As one woman put it:

I’d say after twelve, a text, that’s just like “Come over” or “What are you doing?” or

“Where are you?” type of text. You know what they’re getting at. (Sarah, mixed group)

The sex educator group also discussed tacit communication in relation to BCs.

Mike: I don't know if the indication is like "Come over, let's do it." It's more like "How about you come over?" It's not exactly really descriptive. But each party knows what they are getting into. It's insinuated what's going to happen.

Allison: I don't think it's just girls who are discrete about it. I think guys are discrete about it too.

Female facilitator: So it's not explicitly stated in the invite?

Jason: Yeah, I think its all about the context in which you get the invite. You know what to expect when you go there if you go.

In relation to BCs, the sex educator group's comments indicated that type and level of communication varied depending on the type of relationship.

Discussion within the female group concerning the differences in communicating with a FB/FF and a FWB yielded the following exchange:

Kristen: I think with Fuck Friends there is more fucking in the relationship and that's it.

Jennifer: I think the difference between Fuck Friends [Fuck Buddies] and Friends with Benefits is when you hang out with a Friend with Benefits, it is not expected that you are going to have sex or do anything. But with Fuck Friends, it's guaranteed that you are going to do it [have sex].

Kristen: Yeah, that is what you are there for.

***Communication outside relationship.***

*Secrecy.*

The only CSR that was discussed in regards to secrecy was FWBs. Individuals may terminate the sexual component of their friendship if mutual friends within their group of friends learned of the sexual activity because this may ruin group dynamics. In the context of friends

finding out about FWBs, a male participant noted that the repercussions may be more negative for the female:

You'd be more worried about that happening to the girl. For the guy, it's almost glorious in a way. You know...“You're the man!” or “Way to hook up!” Meanwhile, for the girl, it's like...It's that whole thing: “Dude, you're a pimp” [for hooking up] and then you say to the girl “You're a slut” (Mike, sex educator group).

*Terminology.*

Participants identified a number of terms to describe the various CSRs (as detailed in Table 2). Not all participants were familiar with all of the terms identified and these differences appeared to be gender related. For example, Fuck n' Chuck was identified by men in the mixed gender group and in the male only group while the terms Dick 'em and Dump 'em, Hit It and Quit It, and Use 'em and Lose 'em were identified only by the male group. Last Call was identified only by the mixed gender group.

Also in relation to terminology, the male group was the only group to discuss whether or not FWBs and FBs are two terms describing the same relationship. The following exchange in the male group reflects this discussion:

Ben: I'm mixed up between Friends with Benefits and Fuck Buddies. I always felt they were a synonym. I just thought Fuck Buddy was the word used between the guys and Friends with Benefits was how you establish the relationship with her.” [agreement from the room]

Male Facilitator: So you're saying that when girls hear us talk, it's a Friend with Benefit. And if you're talking to guys, you're just gonna say Fuck Buddy?

Ben: I agree. It's all about the presentation.

Adam: Or you just say that 'chick' [instead of calling her FB].

Trevor: There isn't really a difference. I wouldn't see a difference between both of them. It's just terminology.

Adam: I think there are kinda the same, they are on the same spectrum, but one is kind-of a gentler one than the other.

As the conversation proceeded, the men's group discussed the ways in which the terms FWB and FB denote two specific relationships: for example, FWBs respect one another compared to FBs who do not and FWBs always start with friendship first, whereas for FBs the friendship is formed from the sexual relationship.

The other three groups also discussed FWBs and FBs, For example, the sex educator group considered why some people used the FWBs and FBs terms interchangeably. One group member stated:

I don't think when people say them [FWB or FB], they're thinking about all these different distinctions. But when they say them, it comes out as to how much they respect the person, whether they call them a *friend* with a benefit of just a *fuck* friend [emphases made by person] (Allison, sex educator group).

In the female group, a member noted: "I really think it's important, in the title of Fuck Friend [FB] or Friend with Benefit, the implication of whether the fuck comes *first* or the fuck comes *after*. I do think that their names define them" [emphases made by person] (Nicole, female group).

Other than these excerpts, participants discussed the terms as distinct relationships.

#### **Theme 4: Interaction.**

##### *Frequency.*

The frequency of contact often determines the type of sexual relationship. Participants unanimously agreed that a ONS is usually one night and no further contact (sexual or otherwise). Even if the individuals have sex multiple times or the following morning this would still be

considered a ONS. However, if individuals who had previously had a ONS meet for sex again, this would be considered a BC.

Frequency of contact also determines whether an interaction is called a BC or a FB as reflected in the following quote:

The more often the Booty Call, then you actually wouldn't call it a Booty Call. You would call it a Fuck Buddy. I think a Booty Call is once in awhile. If it's more often than that, say a couple times in a week or more than that, then I think you would call it a Fuck Buddy [agreement from room] (Travis, male group).

*Sexual or non-sexual activity.*

FWB is the only relationship among the four under consideration here to be demarcated by non-sexual activity. Because there is an existing friendship with FWBs, these individuals may spend time together and not engage in any type of sexual activity. This is an important distinguishing feature between FWBs and FBs as reflected in the observation that follows:

I think with Fuck Buddies, the only time you would see that person is when you're having sex. But with Friends with Benefits, you could possibly hang out with them and there would not necessarily be sex. You could hang out with other mutual friends or just have a night without sex (sex educator group).

### ***Theme 5: Termination.***

#### ***Other relationship for one individual***

An important factor in the termination of one of these four relationships is whether someone enters into a new relationship. In the case of FWBs, the relationship ends if one of the individuals starts dating someone else: "It would stop. If the person said they were dating someone, it would stop" (Candace, sex educator group). Participants had similar expectation for FBs whereas BCs were thought to be more fluid in their initiation and termination. For example, a

BC may end when either partner simply ceases to respond to/send text messages. As one female group members stated: “You just kinda move on or you just stop talking to that person. It doesn’t have to be spoken that ‘We’re not gonna do this anymore.’ It’s just kinda done” (Angela, female group).

### ***Level of interest***

#### *Too Attached.*

Participants indicated that each of the four CSRs could be successful if neither individual is emotionally attached: “For a Friend with Benefit, yeah, that brings attachment into it. Like if one person’s gonna fall for the other one and it just ruins it and it’s not the same for both sides anymore.” (Jessica, mixed group). An exchange between two women in the sex educator group reflects these views about attachment in FWB relationships:

Allison: I think it can sometimes be when someone just becomes too invested and isn’t getting enough out of it

Candace: And hopefully, from the other side, the person who is less invested senses that the other person is more invested and they will cut it off.

Similar comments were made in regard to FBs and BCs. Interestingly, participants were steadfast in their belief that either partner is responsible for ending any relationship if one of the partners becomes too attached – either the individual who becomes too attached or the individual who observes the other individual becoming too attached.

#### *Loss of interest.*

There was a general understanding among the participants that the four relationship types under consideration are temporary and can end at any time. However, none of the participants discussed losing interest in FWBs, which suggests that the friendship aspect of FWBs may sustain both individuals’ interests (at least until someone starts a relationship with someone else). For FBs

and BCs, communication often simply ends, signaling to either individual that the relationship is over. For example, “Fuck Buddies are more likely to just drift apart. Communication stops. Just goes poof over time” (Mike, sex educator group). The same is true for BCs as they are easily replaced.

***Contact after the relationship.***

Participants were divided on whether or not FWBs would remain friends once they were no longer engaging in sexual activity. None of the participants in any group provided a clear answer on this issue. The following discussion took place between three women in the female group regarding what would happen after FWBs are no longer having sex:

Kristen: It could end with you losing a friend.

Heather: It could also end with just staying friends. You could just be friends because it’s better that way.

Kristen: It could also be an awkward friendship afterwards. [agreement around the room]

Angela: Your friendship would kind-of change.

Kristen: Yeah, I don’t think it would ever be the same. You know, you started fooling around then ‘Okay, we shouldn’t.’

Heather: I also think you could always go back to them somehow. Maybe you’ll cut it off and then there will be a time when you are both available, you might go back to them. I think Friends with Benefits are more likely to go back to than all the others.

Participants indicated that one of the key differences between FWBs and FBs was the difference in the relationship status once the individuals ceased engaging in sexual activity. In general, they thought that individuals who stopped being FWBs could maintain some type of friendship post-sexual activity. In contrast, FBs were considered unlikely to maintain any form of friendship post-sexual activity. One participant expressed it this way:

I think with Fuck Friends you stopped fucking and it didn't really become anything and no reason to hang out with each other after. But with Friends with Benefits, there's the possibility that you'll stay friends after. (Jennifer, female group)

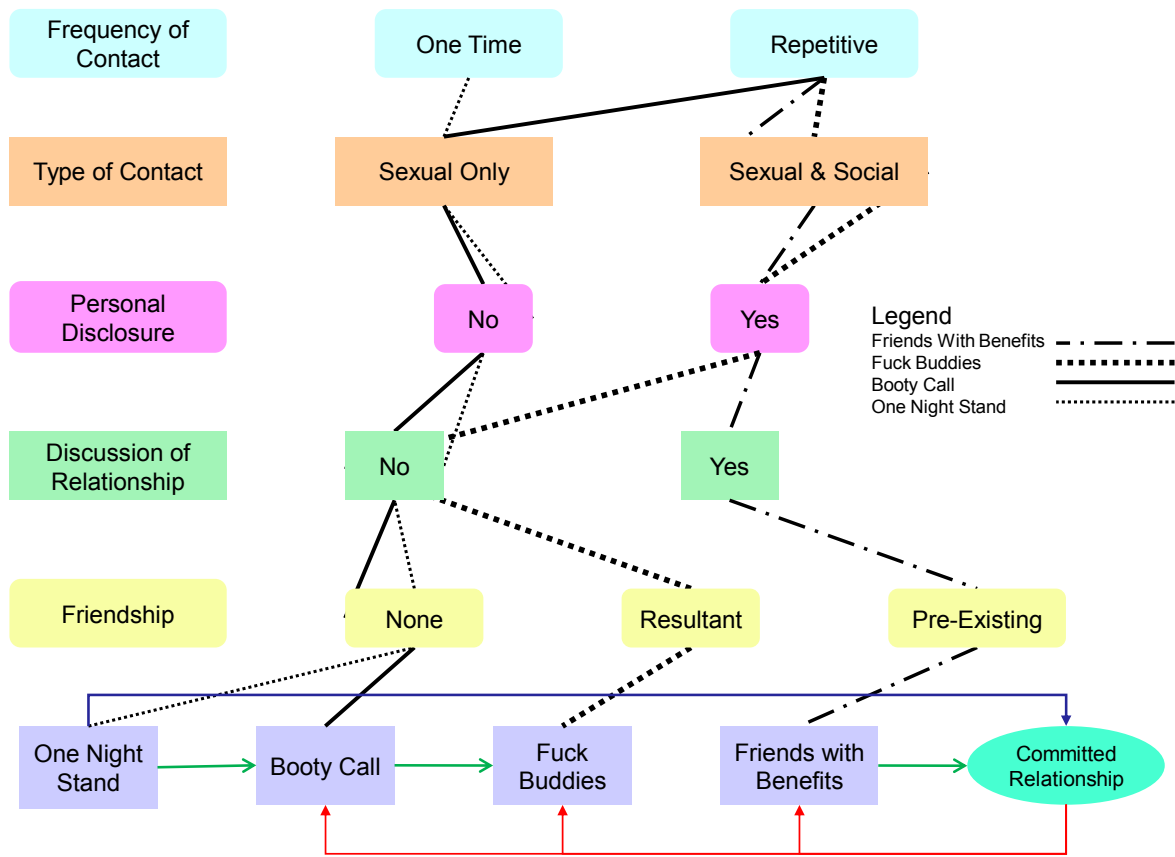
In the case of ONS and BC, participants indicated that the possibility of staying in contact would depend on how any relationship ended.

### **Discussion**

CSRs are increasingly common in both media representations and in the academic literature (Owen & Fincham, 2011a; Bogle, 2008; Weaver et al., 2011). While prevalence rates suggest that these sexual relationships are common expressions of non-committed dyadic sexual interactions in young adults (e.g., Bisson & Levine, 2009; Jonason et al., 2009), clear definitions of these various casual sexual interactions have eluded the research field. In this exploratory qualitative analysis, a number of different types of CSRs were identified and discussed with remarkable agreement both across focus groups and between focus group members. Discussing multiple CSRs in one study marks an important step in defining and distinguishing multiple CSRs along a continuum specific to casual sex.

Participants provided elaborate hypothetical scenarios to demarcate these sexual relationships including the degree of friendship and/or familiarity between the individuals (e.g., how the individuals meet or know each other), the extent to which the individuals discuss the relationship with one another (e.g., whether or not the individuals discuss initiation, termination, or monogamy), the amount of personal disclosure (e.g., whether or not individuals add each other to Facebook), the type of activity between the individuals (e.g., sexual or non-sexual activities), and the frequency of contact (e.g., whether or not sexual activity occurs once or repeatedly). See Figure 1 for a graphical representation of the four CSRs.

Figure 1 Flow chart of casual sexual relationships



There was consensus among the various focus groups on appropriate and/or inappropriate behaviour for each CSR. The participants’ shared understanding of the implicit and explicit rules that govern these relationships, regardless of participant gender, focus group assignment, or previous experience with any CSR, suggests common cultural knowledge of these sexual relationships.

ONSs represent the least emotionally intimate CSR because of the limited amount of time the partners know each other before engaging in sexual intercourse. The ONS most often involves strangers or brief acquaintances (e.g., individuals who meet at a bar or party), occurs only once (even if the individuals engage in sexual activity multiple times during the course of the interaction), and ends when the individuals part company. The environment where the individuals meet is an important factor for ONSs. College students in Bersamin and colleagues’ (2011) large

survey study ( $N = 7,414$ ) reported that fraternity/sorority house parties, residence-hall, and off-campus house parties were the most commonly reported settings for students (especially if under the legal drinking age) to engage in sexual intercourse with a stranger while under the influence of alcohol. The purpose of the ONS is not to lead to a romantic relationship; thus, an important rule of the ONS is that neither individual become attached. However, while this is the general rule, partners involved in an ONS may choose to continue meeting either for ongoing sexual activity without attachment (BC or FB) or to develop a romantic relationship. Interestingly, as partners meet more than once for sex, the possibility of a dating relationship decreases.

The purpose of the BC is to engage in repeated sexual activity with an acquaintance. According to participants, BCs usually occur between individuals who contact each other for sex by texting. Individuals participating in a BC do not stay overnight, share minimal affection, and participate in no other shared activities (other than possible group activities such as attending class). Jonason and colleagues' (2009) participants reported that BCs were arranged via the telephone. Similarly, participants in the present study were very clear that texting was the main method of communication unless the person was too inebriated to compose legible text messages. Although BCs can be arranged for later the same evening, they are not planned in advance. The unpredictability and spontaneity with which BCs are initiated and terminated are defining features of this relationship.

Individuals in a BC relationship do not consider each other friends (e.g., a BC would not be added to Facebook); these individuals are convenient, transient sexual partners with no emotional investment. Our results contrast the findings of Jonason and colleagues (2009), who suggested that the BC involves a certain degree of investment and/or longevity that includes an underlying friendship. Based on our participants, the unemotional, perfunctory manner in which BCs are initiated and terminated points towards the lack of an existing friendship between these

individuals. Our participants stated that if a BC becomes too regular and/or frequent (i.e., every week), it would be considered a FB, suggesting a limit in regards to the frequency of BCs.

The FB relationship represents a new addition to the continuum of CSRs in the academic literature. Scientific exploration of the FB relationship is sparse in the existing literature. One study exploring homosexual identity in older males briefly used the term FB to refer to “friendships largely limited to sexual interaction” (Sullivan & Reynolds, 2003, p. 154). Williams and colleagues (2007) suggest that FBs may be a variation of the “Just Friends” FWBs. Participants in Weaver and colleagues’ (2011) study used the terms FWB and FB interchangeably with some participants stating that FB has a more negative connotation compared to FWB. According to participants in the present study, FBs often develop between individuals who are either previous acquaintances or individuals who have been involved sexually with one another, such as a former ONS or a previous BC. An important component of the FB relationship is that the individuals always engage in sexual activity with each other even if they also engage in social activities. This is in contrast to both the ONS and BC, which are centred strictly on sexual activity. FBs often develop a friendship as a result of repeated sexual activity between the individuals. For the FBs, the sexual activity that these individuals engage in is the very reason they may develop a friendship, which is an interesting variant of mere exposure theory (i.e., individuals to whom one is repeatedly exposed are more likely to become friends and/or romantic partners; Zajonc, 1968) and proximity theory (i.e., individuals with whom one is in contact are more likely to become friends and/or romantic partners; Back, Schmukle, & Egloff, 2008; Priest & Sawyer, 1967). While FBs may develop a friendship as a result of spending time together, this friendship is superficial and ends with the termination of the sexual relationship. Additional research is necessary to understand the specific components of FBs and determine how FBs compare to other CSRs.

The participants identified individuals who have an existing friendship prior to sexual activity as FWB. These relationships are the most complicated CSR to negotiate, maintain, and terminate. In line with previous research (Hughes et al., 2005), our participants identified various rules specific to FWBs relationships. FWB is the only CSR to include formal discussions on initiation of the sexual relationship, sexual monogamy, and termination of the sexual component of the relationship and the only relationship in which the partners are likely to continue contact after the sexual aspect of the relationship has ended. The extensive discussion of participants in this study regarding communication in a FWB relationship contrasts with Owen and Fincham (2011a) who suggest that participants who require explicit discussion of relationship transitions (e.g., engaging in sexual activity for the first time) would not engage in FWB relationships. Participants in our study stated that explicit discussions are one aspect that specifically differentiate FWB from the other types of CSRs, which contrasts with Weaver and colleagues' (2011) finding that FWB engage in minimal direct communication. According to our participants, FWBs genuinely respect and care for one another, which is likely due to the friendship that exists prior to the individuals engaging in any sexual activity. This pre-existing friendship may explain why these individuals place a high value on ensuring both partners 'agree' to the FWB rules of engagement.

Findings from this study suggest that the FB relationship, albeit similar to the FWB relationship, has its own distinct characteristics. Participants identified a number of key differences: FWBs commence with an existing friendship which then leads to sexual activity while FBs commence with sexual activity which then leads to a friendship that ends with the termination of sexual activity. Following termination of the benefits aspect of FWBs, individuals often remain friends. The pre-existing friendship and respect in FWBs may explain why

participants stated that FWB is the most likely to lead to a committed romantic relationship. We postulate that both FWBs and FBs represent discrete relationships along the continuum of CSRs.

There were minimal gender differences noted in this study. Male and female participants identified the same code of conduct including implicit and explicit rules that guide the expected behaviours of the various CSRs. Regardless of group, men stated that men are more likely to initiate a ONS. An additional gender difference observed was in regards to the names that (some) men identified in reference to CSRs that occur only one time. These names were only used with other men (i.e., not used in front of the female partner) in order to retain the possibility of future sexual liaisons. Gendered patterns for various CSRs need to be further examined to identify gender roles.

Due to the asymmetrical time devoted to parental investment (Trivers, 1972), women should be more discerning when engaging in short-term mating. According to Buss and Schmitt's (1993) Sexual Strategies Theory, women use short-term mates to assess potential long-term mates. In line with this theory, Jonason and colleagues (2009) suggest that men use BCs to gain increased sexual access to women, while women use BCs to evaluate potential romantic partners. However, participants in this study, regardless of gender, stated that not only are they *less* interested in pursuing a relationship with a BC partner, but are more likely to date an individual with whom they have had a ONS. Engaging in repeat sexual encounters where sexual activity is the primary reason for spending time with one another (i.e., BCs, FBs) seems to negate the possibility of a committed relationship developing. The findings from this study appear to blur some of the traditional gender differences in regards to why men or women engage in casual sex and points toward a genderless code of conduct for some CSRs.

### *Limitations and concluding observations*

This research sheds important light on the rich and distinct nuances of CSRs, but limitations of the study should be noted. Given the exploratory nature of this first study, four focus groups were conducted in order to create preliminary definitions to be validated in a subsequent study. Both the sex educator and student participants live in a modern Canadian city and therefore, results may not be generalizable. Participants self-selected for this study, and therefore, individuals with positive experiences or specific expectations of CSRs may have chosen to participate (even though previous experience was not required) resulting in an overly optimistic account of these sexual relationships. Conversely, participants with no experience with CSRs participated (as indicated by five participants with zero casual sexual partners) and only shared hypothetical accounts of the relationships. Thus, further examination of individuals with varying experience of CSRs (positive, negative, no experience) is needed to determine how experience affects participants' conceptualizations. Exploring how various groups (men and women, older individuals, lesbian/gay/bisexual) conceptualize these CSRs is also needed.

Young adults appear to be developing broader conceptualizations of what constitutes a relationship. Subsuming different types of non-committed sexual relationships under the term "casual sex" oversimplifies and obscures the varied CSRs that exist. It also prevents researchers from further differentiating these relationships from one another. Future research should continue to examine how CSRs, including ONSs, BCs, FBs, and FWBs, are conceptualized, negotiated, and ultimately experienced by the individuals who engage in them. Researchers, clinicians, and sexuality educators should incorporate these forms of sexual interaction into their discussion of CSRs to more accurately reflect the reality of sexual relationships among young adults.

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**Casual sexual relationships:  
Consensus definitions for one night stands, booty calls, fuck buddies,  
and friends with benefits**

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### **Abstract**

This research examined whether young adults (18-29 years) endorsed qualitatively derived definitions of casual sexual relationships (CSRs). Men ( $n = 247$ ) and women ( $n = 388$ ) were asked to identify definitions for One Night Stand, Booty Call, Fuck Buddy, and Friends with Benefits. Participants had a high degree of knowledge of characteristics associated with CSRs as illustrated by definition endorsements (i.e.,  $\geq 83\%$ ). A higher proportion of participants with sexual intercourse experience endorsed the definitions; previous casual sex experience did not affect endorsements. Women were particularly adept at identifying the definitions, possibly reflecting their focus on subtle relationship cues. The fact that young adults agree on consensus definitions for the four CSRs highlights the pervasiveness of CSRs among sexually active young adults in the current cultural context. Given the resultant research attention on CSRs, consensus definitions contribute to reducing participant bias and allow for broader interpretation of research findings across studies.

Casual sexual relationships (CSRs) are common forms of sexual encounters among young adults and represent a modern type of sexual relationships (e.g., Claxton & van Dulmen, 2013; Lehmiller, VanderDrift, & Kelly, 2011). Researchers are paying close attention to these sexual relationships and, as a result, the research literature on CSRs has grown considerably (e.g., Bisson & Levine, 2009; Mongeau, Knight, Williams, Eden, & Shaw, 2013; Monto & Carey, in press). Hooking up is used to describe sexual activity that occurs outside the context of a committed relationship (e.g., Lambert, Kahn, & Apple, 2003; Lewis, Atkins, Blayney, Dent, & Kayson, 2012), but fails to capture the details of CSRs observed on a range of characteristics, such as the nature of the relationship between the individuals. Identifying the characteristics of various CSRs is a necessary first step towards identifying consistency in definitions of different CSRs, which can help identify valid terminology to facilitate the investigation, generalization, and comparison of findings on the prevalence and correlates of these modern sexual relationships. Thus, the objective of this study was to determine whether young men and women endorse qualitatively derived definitions of four specific CSRs.

Casual sex is not a new phenomenon. Evolutionary psychology outlines the adaptive advantages of sexual encounters outside long-term, committed relationships throughout our ancestral past (e.g., Sexual Strategies Theory; Buss & Schmitt, 1993). Presently, a number of social developments in Western culture, such as an increased permissiveness towards sex before marriage (Halpern, Waller, Spriggs, & Hallfors, 2006) and increased rates of post-secondary enrollment (Knapp, Kelly-Reid, & Ginder, 2011; Statistics Canada, 2009), contraceptive use (Fisher & Black, 2007; Reece et al., 2010), and cohabitation before marriage (Copen, Daniels, & Mosher, 2013; Raley, Crissey, & Muller, 2007; Willoughby, 2012) have culminated in a period of “suspended adolescence” or “emergent adulthood” defining the period between 18 and 25 years

(Arnett, 2000). Together, these factors have resulted in a delayed age of first marriage in North America (e.g., Copen, Daniels, Vespa, & Mosher, 2012; Statistics Canada, 2011) and potentially an extended period for individuals to experiment with various relationship formations. Thus, these broad social changes may help explain the emergence of an expanding (sexual) relationship lexicon to describe the variety of relationship configurations available to emergent adults beyond the labels of ‘short-term mating’ and/or ‘casual sex.’

Sexuality research has highlighted the challenges of definitional limitations. For example, researchers report widespread variation when participants provide definitions of sexual intercourse (e.g., Byers, Henderson, & Hobson, 2009; Hans & Kimberly, 2011; Horowitz & Spicer, 2013; Trotter & Alderson 2007). Likewise, when queried via open-ended questions on the definition of “hooking up,” university participants ( $N = 1468$ ) reported divergent perceptions (Lewis and colleagues’ 2012). The definitions varied according to sexual behaviour (e.g., whether sexual intercourse occurred) and the pre-existing friendship between the individuals engaging in sexual activity. In another study, Mongeau and colleagues (2013) asked 258 men and women between the ages of 18 and 30 to define “Friend with Benefits.” Based on these descriptions, the authors identified seven Friends with Benefits sub-types with a high degree of variation between the sub-types regarding the amount of nonsexual interaction, level of friendship at first sexual interaction, and previous relationship history with the Friends with Benefits partner. In other studies investigating casual sex, some researchers provide participants with an operational definition of the relationship(s) under investigation, typically without further explaining the development of the definition. Some researchers use terms common to social and entertainment media such as “hooking up” or “friends with benefits” but do not provide an operational definition. This is problematic because it is assumed that participants either concur with the

definition chosen by the researchers and/or have enough familiarity with the term and do not require an operational definition, either of which can result in interpretational biases.

Recently, researchers have shifted focus to more detailed descriptions of specific sexual encounters and/or relationships (e.g., Claxton & van Dulmen, 2013; Jonason, 2013). The Friend with Benefits relationship, in particular, has received considerable attention (e.g., Bisson & Levine, 2009; Hughes, Morrison, & Asada, 2005; Lehmillier et al., 2011; Mongeau et al., 2013; Owen & Fincham, 2011). These relationships are assumed to combine the characteristics of a pre-existing friendship with aspects of a sexual relationship. Researchers consistently report that 50% of first year undergraduates report experience with at least one Friend with Benefits relationship (e.g., Bisson & Levine, 2009; Mongeau et al., 2013; Owen & Fincham, 2011). These relationships have been investigated with regard to gender differences (Owen & Fincham, 2011), sexual motivations (Lehmillier et al., 2011; McGinty, Knox, & Zusman, 2007), and relationship satisfaction (Eisenberg, Ackard, Resnick, & Neumark-Sztainer, 2009; VanderDrift, Lehmillier, & Kelly, 2012). Casual sex, however, is also experienced outside the context of a pre-existing friendship and researchers are beginning to expand the terminology used to describe additional CSRs, such as “Booty Calls” (e.g., Jonason, Li, & Cason, 2009; Jonason, Li, & Richardson, 2010) and “Fuck Buddies” (e.g., Stone & McCabe, 2011; Weaver, MacKeigan, & MacDonald, 2011; Wentland & Reissing, 2011). However, definitions for these encounters can differ significantly between studies and are likely to be perceived differently by participants. One attempt at understanding different facets of casual sexual encounters and whether young adults share a common language to label specific CSRs was carried out by Wentland and Reissing (2011).

In their study, Wentland and Reissing recruited 23 adults between the ages of 18 and 27 to discuss CSRs in a focus group setting (i.e., female-only, male-only, mixed-gender, and mixed-gender sex educators). Group facilitators posed one specific question to begin the discussion:

“What are some of the names used to describe casual sexual relationships?” Participants described elaborate hypothetical and actual scenarios to illustrate the specific components of 17 different CSRs and provided summary definitions of each relationship at the end of the discussions. Although numerous CSR types were discussed across the focus groups, four specific CSRs were identified by each focus group: One Night Stand, Booty Call, Fuck Buddy, and Friend with Benefits. Thematic analysis was used to identify the behaviour scripts demarcating the specific stages of these four relationships from beginning to end (e.g., initiation, maintenance, termination). “Hooking up” was discussed as a general term to describe casual sexual activity between individuals, but was not identified as a stand-alone relationship.

The differentiation between the Fuck Buddy and Friend with Benefits relationships was a particularly poignant finding in Wentland and Reissing’s (2011) study because, to date, examination of the Fuck Buddy relationship is conspicuously absent in the published casual sex literature outside the context of gay male sexual relationships (e.g., Halkitis, Wilton, & Galatowitsch, 2005; McMillan, 2002; Sullivan & Reynolds, 2003; van den Boom, Stolte, Sandfort, & Davidovich, 2012). In the general casual sex literature, references to Fuck Buddy relationships are brief and it has been suggested that Fuck Buddy is an iteration of Friends with Benefits, either as a sub-type (Mongeau et al., 2013) or a term used interchangeably (Weaver et al., 2011). According to Mongeau and colleagues, the “true friends” sub-type is the most accurate portrayal of Friends with Benefits because friends interact in both sexual and non-sexual situations, but do not consider their relationship romantic. In direct contrast, the “just sex” sub-type is based exclusively on sexual interactions. Furman and Hand (2006) suggest that Fuck Buddy relationships are less intimate compared to Friends with Benefits because sexual behaviour is the primary purpose of the relationship. And finally, in an unpublished study, Stone and McCabe (2011) compared the two CSRs using an Australian sample of non-university adults

(ages 18-38) and suggest that the Fuck Buddy relationship, with an exclusive focus on sexual activity and minimal friendship and/or social engagement, is significantly different from Friends with Benefits. Quantitative examination is required to determine if Fuck Buddy is a specific CSR, and thus, distinct from Friends with Benefits.

The purpose of the present study was to determine whether CSR definitions derived from Wentland and Reissing's (2011) qualitative analyses could be confirmed using a large sample. Given that the costs of sexual activity are higher for women in regards to pregnancy risks (Civic, 2002; Yusuf & Siedlecky, 2006), reputation concerns (Graham, Sanders, Milhausen, & McBride, 2004; Hynie & Lydon, 1995; Weaver & Herold, 2000), and exposure to sexual violence (Cronholm, Fogarty, Ambuel, & Harrison, 2011; Ehrhardt et al., 2002), it was expected that women would be more attentive to relationship characteristics and be more likely to differentiate between the different types of casual sexual interactions. Young adults were expected to distinguish between Friends with Benefits and Fuck Buddy relationships (Mongeau et al., 2013; Weaver et al., 2011). Late adolescence appears to be an important period during which experimentation with different types of sexual interactions is normative; some studies suggest this sexual learning may have positive effects on later sexual adjustment (e.g., Reissing, Andruff, & Wentland, 2012; Roterman, 2012; Woo & Brotto, 2008). In line with this argument, it was expected that individuals with sexual intercourse experience may be more adept at differentiating CSR definitions compared to individuals without sexual intercourse experience and those with personal CSR experience would be best at identifying the CSRs.

## **Method**

### **Participants**

A sample of 637 participants between the ages of 18 and 29 completed the survey. Two participants who reported high numbers of sex partners (i.e., 40704, 40765) were removed from

the dataset resulting in 635 participants. Three-hundred and forty-six (54%) participants were recruited at a large, urban university in Eastern Canada via the Integrated System for Participation in Research, which includes undergraduate students from a variety of programs at the university. Students received 1% course credit for participating in the study. The remaining 46% of participants were recruited via advertisements posted (e.g., at coffee shops) and online links shared via social networking sites (e.g., Facebook, Twitter). For all participants, inclusion criteria required fluency in English. No previous sexual intercourse or casual sexual experience was necessary to participate. The sample was highly educated: 84% ( $n = 528$ ) of the sample was currently enrolled in some type of post-secondary education. Of the remaining 16% who were not currently students, ( $n = 102$ ), 83% had completed a college, university, or graduate degree. Demographic characteristics of the study participants are presented in Table 1.

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Table 1

*Demographic Characteristics of Participants*

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Demographic Characteristics	
Men/Women (%)	39/61
Heterosexual/Non-heterosexual (%)	88/12
Caucasian/Non-Caucasian (%)	82/18
Mean age in years	21.01
Sexual Experience	
Have had sexual intercourse (%)	87/12
Have not had sexual intercourse (%)	
Average age of first sexual intercourse in years	16.78
Mean number of committed sex partners ( <i>Mdn</i> )	2.44 (2.00)
Mean number of casual sex partners ( <i>Mdn</i> )	5.38 (2.00)
Lifetime experience with specific CSRs (%)	
One Night Stand	Men/Women 61/48
Booty Call	49/47
Fuck Buddy	60/56
Friends with Benefits	67/59

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## Materials and Procedure

Participants were recruited for a study examining “casual sexual relationships.” The institution’s research ethics board approved the procedures for the study. Participants who wished to participate in the study completed an online consent form and were then directed to the online survey that took approximately 15 minutes to complete.

Participants completed a brief demographics questionnaire including questions on age at first sexual intercourse (i.e., “How old were you the first time you had sexual intercourse?”; sexual intercourse was defined as penile-vaginal or penile-anal penetration) and number of sexual partners. The latter queried participants regarding number of committed sexual partners (i.e., “How many individuals have you engaged in sexual intercourse with whom YOU DID FEEL that you were in a committed relationship?”) and number of casual sexual partners (i.e., “How many individuals have you engaged in sexual intercourse with whom YOU DID NOT FEEL that you were in a committed relationship?”). Participants were given open-ended response options to provide their answers.

*CSR definitions.* To assess participants’ knowledge of the four CSRs of interest, participants were presented with a definition of each CSR. The CSR definitions were derived from the qualitative data from Wentland and Reissing’s (2011) study, in which participants provided detailed descriptions of the various CSRs. Participants were instructed: “Please place a check beside the name of the relationship that corresponds to the definition provided.” An “I don’t know” response option was also provided. The presentation order of definitions was counterbalanced. See Table 2 for the definitions presented.

Table 2

*Definitions of Casual Sexual Relationships*

Relationship	Definition
One Night Stand	Sex between strangers or people who do not know each other that well, these two usually meet while out in a social setting (e.g., bar, party), sexual activity is not planned ahead of time, one or both are usually under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs, there are no expectations that the two will see each other again (even if they exchange contact information).
Booty Call	Sex between two people who know each other, one person calls or texts the other person with the intention of having sex with that person within the next few hours, often late at night, one person is usually under the influence of alcohol/and or drugs, these two engage in sex with each other occasionally.
Fuck Buddy	Sex between people who know each other, they engage in sexual activity when they hang out with each other, they are usually not under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs, these two engage in sex with each other regularly.
Friend with Benefits	Sex between two people who have an existing friendship, these two may or may not engage in sexual activity when they hang out with each other, they are usually not under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs, these two engage in sex with each other regularly.

**Data-analytic strategy**

In order to assess the level of endorsement of the four different CSR definitions, a statistical technique used to evaluate endorsement or agreement with categorical data was used, two-proportion *z*-tests (Blalock, 1960; Gravetter & Wallnau, 2007). Specifically, proportional differences between groups (i.e., men versus women, sexual intercourse experience versus no sexual intercourse experience, casual sex experience versus no casual sex experience) were examined. Significance testing was performed at the  $\alpha = .001$  level.

**Results**

The majority of participants (i.e., 96%, 93%, 83%, 87%) endorsed the definitions for One Night Stand, Booty Call, Fuck Buddy, and Friends with Benefits, respectively. For the Booty Call, Fuck Buddy, and Friends with Benefits relationships, a significantly larger proportion of

women endorsed the definitions compared to men. See Table 3 for the endorsement percentages of the two proportion  $z$ -test analyses between men and women.

Table 3

*Identification Percentages and Two Proportion  $z$ -tests between Men and Women*

	Men % (N): Women % (N)	$z$	$p$	95% CI	$d$
One Night Stand	94 (224): 97 (374)	2.66	.008	(.01, .09)	.50
Booty Call	87 (204): 96 (362)	4.00	<.001	(.04, .16)	.71
Fuck Buddy	74 (171): 88 (325)	4.16	<.001	(.07, .21)	.53
Friends with Benefits	78 (179): 93 (346)	5.25	<.001	(.10, .23)	.75

**Differentiating Friends with Benefits versus Fuck Buddy**

Gendered patterns of endorsement were examined between Friends with Benefits and Fuck Buddy. See Table 4 for the percentages. Specifically, when presented with the definition for Friends with Benefits, a significantly larger proportion of men chose the definition for Fuck Buddy compared to women ( $z = 3.37, p < .001, 95\% \text{ CI } [.03, .14], d = .48$ ). A similar pattern was seen for the Fuck Buddy definition: when presented with the Fuck Buddy definition, a significantly larger proportion of men chose the definition for Friends with Benefits compared to women ( $z = 3.53, p < .001, 95\% \text{ CI } [.04, .16], d = .46$ ).

Table 4

*Friends with Benefits versus Fuck Buddy Identification Patterns (%)*

Definition presented	Definition chosen			
	Friends with Benefits		Fuck Buddy	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Friends with Benefits	73	89	16	7
Fuck Buddy	21	10	70	84

**Sexual Intercourse Experience**

Endorsement patterns between those with and without sexual intercourse were examined. For the One Night Stand, there was no proportional difference based on sexual intercourse

experience. However, for the Booty Call, Fuck Buddy, and Friends with Benefits relationships, a significantly larger proportion of those with sexual intercourse experience endorsed the definitions. See Table 5 for the endorsement percentages and results of the two proportion *z*-test analyses.

Table 5

*Two Proportion z-tests between Participants with and without Sexual Intercourse Experience for One Night Stand, Booty Call, Fuck Buddy, and Friends with Benefits*

	Previous sexual intercourse experience % ( <i>N</i> ): No previous sexual intercourse experience % ( <i>N</i> )	<i>z</i>	<i>p</i>	95% CI	<i>d</i>
One Night Stand	97 (524): 92 (72)	1.86	.06	(<-.01, .15)	.62
Booty Call	94 (501): 82 (63)	3.30	<.001	(.04, .23)	.72
Fuck Buddy	85 (449): 63 (45)	5.12	<.001	(.14, .37)	.68
Friends with Benefits	89 (471): 74 (52)	4.54	<.001	(.10, .32)	.56

Additional post-hoc analyses were conducted to determine if gender affected definitions endorsements for Booty Call, Fuck Buddy, and Friends with Benefits. For Booty Call and Friends with Benefits, a significantly higher proportion of women with sexual intercourse experience endorsed the definitions compared to men with sexual intercourse experience; this comparison was approaching significance for Fuck Buddy. No other significant differences between gender and sexual intercourse experience were observed. See Table 6 and 7 for the endorsement percentages and results of the two proportion *z*-test analyses.

Table 6

*Endorsement Percentages by Gender and Sexual Intercourse Experience*

	One Night Stand (N)	Booty Call (N)	Fuck Buddy (N)	Friends with Benefits (N)
Men				
Sexual intercourse experience	95 (182)	89 (169)	78 (145)	81 (153)
No sexual intercourse experience	91 (41)	77 (34)	57 (25)	64 (25)
Women				
Sexual intercourse experience	97 (342)	97 (332)	89 (304)	93 (318)
No sexual intercourse experience	94 (31)	88 (29)	74 (20)	87 (27)

Table 7

*Two Proportion z-tests between Participants with and without Sexual**Intercourse Experience for Booty Call, Fuck Buddy, and Friends with Benefits*

	<i>z</i>	<i>p</i>	95% CI	<i>d</i>
Booty Call				
Sex men x Sex women	3.30	.001	(.02, .12)	.74
Sex men x No sex men	2.16	.03	(<.01, .28)	.49
Sex women x No sex women	3.01	.003	(.02, .28)	.90
No sex men x No sex women	.89	.37	(-.12, .26)	.36
Fuck Buddy				
Sex men x Sex women	3.15	.002	(.03, .18)	.45
Sex men x No sex men	2.94	.003	(.06, .38)	.56
Sex women x No sex women	2.21	.03	(<-.01, .35)	.55
No sex men x No sex women	1.47	.14	(-.07, .38)	.47
Friends with Benefits				
Sex men x Sex women	4.19	<.001	(.06, .19)	.63
Sex men x No sex men	2.32	.02	(.01, .35)	.48
Sex women x No sex women	2.26	.02	(<.01, .29)	.47
No sex men x No sex women	1.67	.09	(-.05, .40)	.65

**Casual Sex Experience**

Endorsement patterns between those with and without casual sex experience were also examined. Amongst participants who had engaged in sexual intercourse (87%;  $n = 551$ ), 79% ( $n = 434$ ) reported at least one casual sex partner. There were no proportional difference between those

with and without casual sex experience for the CSRs. See Table 8 for the endorsement percentages and results of the two proportion *z*-test analyses. Similarly, there was no difference between those with previous experience with any one of the CSRs and endorsement of that particular CSR's definition (e.g., there was no proportion difference between those with previous Booty Call experience and those without Booty Call experience).

Table 8

*Two Proportion z-tests between Participants with and without Sexual Intercourse Experience for One Night Stand, Booty Call, Fuck Buddy, and Friends with Benefits*

	Previous casual sex experience % (N): No previous casual sex experience % (N)	<i>z</i>	<i>p</i>	95% CI	<i>d</i>
One Night Stand	97 (414): 96 (107)	.67	.50	(.03, .08)	.76
Booty Call	95 (402): 91 (96)	2.77	.005	(.02, .17)	.47
Fuck Buddy	86 (358): 82 (88)	1.29	.20	(-.03, .15)	.57
Friends with Benefits	89 (372): 87 (96)	.41	.69	(-.05, .10)	-.06

### Discussion

The goal of the present study was to determine whether qualitatively derived definitions for four CSRs could be confirmed with a larger sample and whether gender, sexual intercourse experience, and casual sexual experience would affect levels of endorsement. Overall, definitions for One Night Stand, Booty Call, Fuck Buddy, and Friend with Benefits were strongly endorsed by all participants. Specifically, the results of this study suggest that young adults, especially women, as well as individuals with sexual intercourse experience, strongly endorse consensus definitions of four types of casual sexual interactions, regardless of personal experience with such relationships.

In addition to the main findings of this study, this is the first quantitative comparison to clearly and specifically delineate the Fuck Buddy relationship as a stand-alone relationship, as proposed by Wentland and Reissing (2011) and most similar to Mongeau and colleagues' (2013) 'just sex' sub-type of Friends with Benefits. Mongeau and colleagues concluded that the just sex

subtype Friend with Benefit is a misnomer due to the absence of a “true” or preexisting friendship. In addition, the *raison d’être* of the Fuck Buddy is sexual interaction compared to the combination of both social and sexual interaction of the Friends with Benefits. This subtle difference is recognized by the majority of participants, but particularly by women; men were more likely than women to interchange Friends with Benefits and Fuck Buddy relationships.

Researchers suggest that women place more importance on the friendship aspects of Friends with Benefits, whereas men place more importance on the sexual aspects of these relationships (Bleske & Buss, 2000; Jonason, 2013; McGinty et al., 2007). Therefore, it may be comparatively irrelevant for men whether sex takes place within the context of a pre-existing friendship or the friendship exists *per se* because of access to sex. On the other hand, some women may wish to use Friends with Benefits relationships as a means of “test driving” a relationship and further evaluate long-term partner potential, as Sexual Strategies Theory suggests (Buss & Schmitt, 1993). Contextualizing the adaptive benefits of these relationships can help researchers identify either gender’s motivations for entering into these CSRs.

As expected, a larger proportion of participants with previous sexual intercourse experience versus those without sexual intercourse experience endorsed the definitions. The average age of first intercourse reported in many North American and European studies is 17 years (e.g., Reissing et al., 2012; Tsui & Nicoladis, 2004; Wellings et al., 2001). Participants who have not engaged in this sexual developmental milestone by age 19 may not be engaging in other typical late adolescence relationship experiences (e.g., experimentation with relationship formations or partner types). Thus, individuals without sexual intercourse experience may lack the general knowledge to endorse the various CSR definitions due to decreased relationship experience, in general, and less variety with specific relationships and/or sexual experiences, in particular, resulting in a lack of recognition of the subtle rules conveyed in the definitions.

However, contrary to expectation, previous casual sexual experience did not impact participants' endorsements of the various CSRs. Other researchers have noted that personal experience is not necessary to endorse the rules and practices that guide behaviour in the context of casual sex (e.g., Aubrey & Smith, 2013). For individuals who choose not to personally experiment with CSRs, vicarious learning opportunities may provide the necessary exposure to understand the different "rules" associated with CSRs. These findings can be understood using Bandura's social learning theory (1977), which posits that individuals learn both through their own personal experiences and vicariously through observations in their social environment (e.g., friends, family, colleagues). Many young adults live in a cultural milieu where CSRs are accepted and sometimes encouraged. Young adults share a culture of general life experiences and exposure to information through their environment (e.g., co-ed university residences, recreational social clubs for young adults) and the media (e.g., social and entertainment media). This provides ample opportunity to observe CSRs contributing to the ability to differentiate these modern sexual relationships despite a lack of personal experience.

The results of this study must be interpreted in light of some limitations. This study is subject to the general social desirability concerns of self-report data. Recruitment for this study aimed at expanding the sample beyond the typical university undergraduate population. Recruitment information noted the topic (i.e., a "survey on casual sexual relationships") while stressing that personal CSR experience was not necessary. Nevertheless, it is possible that this study selectively attracted more liberal participants, who as a group may not be representative of the general population of young adults. Participants were very educated and, thus, similar to other samples drawn from university populations, but may not be representative of more diverse groups. Although attempts were made to advertise the survey amongst various populations (e.g., LGBTQ groups), the majority of the sample was heterosexual and Caucasian. Participants in Wentland and

Reissing's (2011) study stated that the CSR definitions are not sexual orientation-specific but further research is warranted, especially with populations for whom conceptualizations of "sexual intercourse" experience is likely broader than penile-vaginal or penile-anal intercourse, as was used in the present study. Furthermore, participants in Wentland and Reissing's (2011) study identified a number of terms to describe additional CSRs (e.g., Boy Toy, Fling, Last Call), hence the four CSRs presented in this study may not represent the full range of possible casual sexual interactions.

The results of this study are a first step towards the recognition of a shared understanding amongst young adults of basic characteristics that differentiate CSRs. Researchers need to keep pace with young adults and adjust research terminology to reflect participants' conceptualizations thereby increasing the validity, generalizability, and utility of research on casual sex. In addition, a more detailed understanding of the rules of engagement, maintenance, and termination aspects of specific CSRs and associated sexual health behaviour have important health policy implications. Front line health care professionals are uniquely placed to provide sexual health information to diverse populations. As such, these professionals need to be both knowledgeable of and sensitive to the nuances between various CSRs in order to help their clients identify which types of CSRs pose the greatest physiological and psychological health risks and benefits. For example, Lehmler and colleagues (2011) reported that Friends with Benefits partners communicate less regarding topics related to sexually transmitted infections compared to romantic partners. While young adults engaging in a One Night Stand may consider it standard to use condoms, young adults building on the trust of a pre-existing friendship (i.e., Friends with Benefits) may fail to recognize the inherent risks of acquiring a new sexual partner. Health care professionals can help patients understand the importance of condom negotiation within CSRs

and the specific risks individuals may face if they are not discussing safer sex practices within the context of various CSRs.

Research with regards to the risks and potential benefits of sexual activity outside a committed relationship is still lacking. Existing research using broad definitions, such as hooking up, and/or other terminology that is not generally accepted by young adults will result in an incomplete picture that may over- or under-estimate the negative or positive aspects of CSRs. Advantages can be gleaned from a more fine-grained analysis. For example, individuals report a variety of reasons for engaging in sex (Meston & Buss, 2007) and these reasons differ based on whether a person is considering sex in a committed and casual relationship (Armstrong & Reissing, in press; Weaver & Herold, 2000). Sexual desire and seeking physical pleasure are pivotal motivations underlying casual sex. In order to gain access to a sexual partner, young adults may mislabel a CSR, unintentionally or purposefully. For example, if some men do not differentiate the Friends with Benefits or Fuck Buddy terms, miscommunicating their intentions to their partners could affect expected behaviour in that relationship. Subsequent negative emotional consequences (i.e., misunderstandings and disappointments regarding expected relationship behaviours) and health concerns (i.e., whether condoms are used) are potentially problematic.

In conclusion, CSRs appear to be ubiquitous in a culture that is increasingly more accepting of sex outside the context of a committed relationship (Aubrey & Smith, 2013; Garcia, Reiber, Massey, & Merriwether, 2012). CSRs, where young adults repeatedly engage in sexual activity, and potentially incorporate aspects traditionally associated with committed relationships (e.g., sharing personal information, spending non-sexual time together), challenge our notion of what constitutes a relationship. As such, referring to these relationships in broad terms (i.e., hooking up) obscures the subtle, yet complex, nuances that distinguish the singular sexual encounter of the One Night Stand, the ongoing but impersonal and utilitarian Booty Call, the more

personal but sexually focused Fuck Buddy, and the most complex and involved Friend with Benefits relationships. Young adults appear to share an understanding of the definitions utilized in the present study highlighting a socio-cultural knowledge base regardless of personal experience and pointing towards the responsibility of using terminology that accurately reflects young adults' conceptualizations of these modern sexual relationships.

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**The identification of initiation, maintenance, and termination scripts of  
four casual sexual relationships**

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### **Abstract**

Casual sexual relationships have received significant public and research attention in recent years. This study examined the particular behaviours involved in the initiation (e.g., how the individuals know each other), maintenance (e.g., how contact is managed), and termination (e.g., how the relationship ends) associated with four relationships: One Night Stands (ONS), Booty Calls (BC), Fuck Buddies (FB), and Friend with Benefits (FWB). Participants (544 women; 341 men) were asked to identify behavioural script items associated with the four casual sex relationships. Previous sexual intercourse experience was not necessary to identify the core script items for the different relationships. Similarly, previous experience with a ONS, BC, or FB was not necessary for participants to be cognizant of the script items. However, previous experience with a FWB improved the specificity of identification of the FWB script. Participants differentiated between FWB and FB relationships suggesting that these relationships may need to be considered separately in the literature. Overall, women exhibited greater precision in identifying the detailed script behaviours. Identifying the specific behavioural scripts associated with these four relationships is timely given the current cultural context and resultant research attention on these modern sexual relationships.

Casual sexual relationships (CSRs) have been reported as increasingly common and popular among young adults (e.g., Bersamin, Paschall, Saltz, & Zamboagna, 2011; Garcia, Reiber, Massey, & Merriwether, 2012) and the corresponding research literature has grown exponentially in the past decade (e.g., Claxton & van Dulmen, 2013; Mongeau, Knight, Williams, Eden, & Shaw, 2013). A number of terms are used to describe the various iterations of casual sexual activity ranging from more broad terms (e.g., hooking up, casual sex) to specific relationships (e.g., Friends with Benefits, Booty Call) making comparisons between studies and generalizations of research findings difficult. However, recent research by Wentland and Reissing (2011; under review) suggests that distinct definitions for some CSRs can be identified. With the exception of Paul and Hayes (2002) who explored components of best and worst hookups and Hughes, Morrison, and Asada (2005) who explored maintenance and love attitudes towards Friends with Benefits, few researchers have focused on scripts associated with particular CSRs. The objective of this study was to identify specific behavioural scripts related to One Night Stands (ONS), Booty Calls (BC), Fuck Buddies (FB), and Friend with Benefits (FWB) to identify the initiation, maintenance, and termination behaviours of these relationships.

Scripting theory suggests that behaviour follows a set script, with each “actor” knowing his/her respective role (e.g., Tomkins, 1987). Cultural scenarios are collectively developed scripts that outline the sequence of events and behaviours for a given social interaction (Simon & Gagnon, 1986). For example, the cultural scenario of the traditional first date outlines the specific roles that men and women play, such as the man asking the woman out and the woman declining his sexual advances at the end of the date (e.g., Rose & Frieze, 1989; 1993). Scripting theory has been used to examine various interpersonal phenomena including: first dates (e.g., Laner & Ventrone, 2000; Morr Serewicz & Gale, 2008; Rose & Frieze, 1993); masculinity (e.g., Dworkin & O’Sullivan, 2005); and gender roles (e.g., Alksnis, Desmarais, & Wood, 1996; Mongeau &

Carey, 1996; Wiederman, 2001); however, little systematic information is available on interactional patterns of specific CSRs.

Scripts are especially important in the formation of new romantic and/or sexual relationships because individuals rely on socially defined roles to guide behaviour (McCormick, 1987). Sexual script theory, first proposed by Gagnon and Simon (1973), posits that sexual behaviour also follows a set script, providing meaning and direction regarding the appropriate time, place, and sequence of sexual behaviour (Simon & Gagnon, 1986). Scripts are too general to be used across all situations and changing social mores; therefore, individuals must adjust the specific script and subsequent behaviours to the specific context. Simon and Gagnon (2003) note that sexual scripting remains a robust theory for observing behaviour in a changing cultural environment. As modern sexual relationships evolve to include a variety of non-committed relationships, it seems pertinent to examine the scripts for such relationships. In fact, descriptions of casual sexual interactions tend to indicate similarities and consistencies suggesting a general understanding regarding how one is expected to behave when engaging in casual sex (e.g., Holman & Sillars, 2012; Littleton, Tabernik, Canales, & Backstrom, 2009; Mewhinney, Herold, & Maticka-Tyndale, 1995; Olmstead, Billen, Conrad, Pasley, & Fincham, 2013) and in one CSR in particular, FWB (e.g., Epstein et al, 2009; Furman & Shaffer, 2011; Mongeau et al., 2013).

Using open-ended methodology, 187 undergraduate participants in Paul and Hayes (2002) study provided behavioural and situational details associated with their “best hookup” and “worst hookup” experience(s). Participants provided remarkably similar descriptions of a typical hookup; however, hookup script scenarios in their study focused mostly on one-time hookups, lacking the complexities associated with an ongoing CSR that could span weeks and/or months. Participants in Hughes and colleagues’ (2005) study provided rules associated with maintaining a more complex FWB, resulting in eight categories of rules: negotiation (e.g., discussion of the ground

rules of the FWB); sex (e.g., using condoms, whether or not the individuals are monogamous); communication (e.g., requirement of honesty, identifying appropriate conversation topics, rules regarding telephone contact); secrecy (e.g., who can know about the sexual activity); permanence (e.g., understanding that the FWB is temporary); emotions (e.g., minimizing feelings of attachment); and friendship (e.g., importance of the friendship aspect of relationship). Emotional, communication, and sex rules were the most commonly reported. In comparison to romantic relationships, Lehmler, VanderDrift, and Kelly (2011) found that FWB partners commonly discussed the tacit rules regarding current condom use with non-FWB partners and extra-dyadic sexual activity. In regards to the BC, Jonason, Li, and Cason (2009) examined differences in behaviours exhibited in the context of ONS, BC, and “serious relationships.” Jonason and colleagues suggest that BC is “more emotional” compared to ONS presumably because the repetitive nature of the BC allows individuals to experiment with more emotional expression (e.g., kissing on the lips) and different sexual activities versus sexual intercourse, which is the typical interaction in a ONS. The descriptions of casual sexual encounters reviewed clearly point towards patterns of interactions; however, a systematic and relationship-specific analysis is timely and can assist in furthering the understanding of casual sex in general and different CSRs in particular.

Wentland and Reissing (under review) identified consensus definitions of four separate CSRs (i.e., ONS, BC, FB, FWB) using a diverse sample of both undergraduate students and community participants ( $N = 635$ ). In their study, participants readily identified CSR definitions based on salient characteristics provided in the definition, such as the likelihood of alcohol consumption and/or drug use, or the level of friendship between the two individuals. Participants without any sexual intercourse experience demonstrated significantly less capacity for identifying the consensus definitions, which may be the result of less pertinent sociosexual experience (e.g., Warner, Giordano, Manning, & Longmore, 2011). Female participants in general were better at

identifying the consensus definitions. Higher potential costs are associated with casual sex for women (e.g., reputation, reproductive risk), therefore, the authors hypothesized that women may attend more to the subtle nuances conveyed in the definitions. No differences were observed between participants with or without casual sexual experience, suggesting that personal experience is not necessary to identify the hallmark components of the various CSRs. The authors suggest that the current cultural context exposes young adults to these modern sexual relationships in a multiplicity of ways (e.g., television, movies, social media) and thus, individual experience with the relationship(s) is not required to identify the different CSR definition(s). Whether cultural exposure is necessary and sufficient for young adults to display tacit knowledge of specific CSR behavioural scripts remains unknown.

The purpose of the present study was to identify the respective behavioural scripts for the CSRs identified in Wentland and Reissing's (under review) study: ONS, BC, FB, and FWB. It was expected that: 1) participants would agree on core script behaviours for each of the four CSRs; 2) these core script behaviours would differ between CSRs; 3) women and participants with previous sexual experience would demonstrate more nuanced script knowledge; and 4) previous casual sexual experience would not improve script knowledge. Finally, it was expected that the analysis of scripts for CSR would further clarify the differentiation between FWB and FB.

## **Method**

### **Participants**

A total of 889 participants completed the survey. Four participants who reported high numbers of casual sex partners (>1000) were considered statistical outliers and were removed from the dataset resulting in 885 participants (544 women, 341 men). Participants were recruited via online postings (e.g., Facebook, Twitter;  $n = 513$ , 58%) and through a large, urban, university's Integrated System for Participation in Research (ISPR;  $n = 372$ , 42%); the latter

received 1% course credit for study participation and were drawn from a variety of introductory university classes. Fluency in English and a minimum age of 18 years were required to participate (71% of the sample was below the age of 30; 93% of the sample was below the age of 40). The sample was highly educated: 62% ( $n = 553$ ) of the sample was currently enrolled in some type of post-secondary education. Of the remaining 38% who were not currently students ( $n = 272$ ), 81% had completed a college, university, or graduate degree. Descriptive characteristics of the study participants are presented in Table 1.

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Table 1

*Demographic Characteristics of Participants*

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Men/Women (%)	39 / 61
Heterosexual/Non-heterosexual (%)	88 / 12
Caucasian/Non-Caucasian (%)	84 / 16
Mean age in years	25.14 (range: 18-70)
Sexual Experience	
Have had sexual intercourse (%)	90 / 10
Have not had sexual intercourse (%)	
Average age of first sexual intercourse in years	16.83
Mean number of committed sex partners ( <i>Mdn</i> )	3.12 (2.00)
Mean number of casual sex partners ( <i>Mdn</i> )	8.99 (3.00)
Lifetime experience with specific CSRs (%)	Men / Women
One Night Stand	57 / 51
Booty Call	48 / 48
Fuck Buddy	57 / 58
Friends with Benefits	63 / 60

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## Measures

*Sexual history.* To assess participants' age at first intercourse, participants who responded that they had engaged in sexual intercourse were then asked "How old were you the first time you had sexual intercourse?" which was defined as penile-vaginal or penile-anal penetration. To assess participants' number of committed sexual partners, participants were asked "How many

individuals have you engaged in sexual intercourse with whom YOU DID FEEL that you were in a committed relationship?” To assess participants’ number of casual sexual partners, participants were asked “How many individuals have you engaged in sexual intercourse with whom YOU DID NOT FEEL that you were in a committed relationship?” Participants’ lifetime experience with the four CSRs was assessed with the following: “Have you ever been involved in any of the following?” and provided with definition of the relationship (See Table 2). Response options included never (coded as no previous experience) and more than 1 year ago, within past year, within past 6 months, within past 3 months, within past 1 month, within past 2 weeks, and within past 7 days (coded as previous experience).

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Table 2

*CSR Definitions Presented*

Relationship	Definition
ONS	Sex between strangers or people who do not know each other that well, these two usually meet while out in a social setting (e.g., bar, party), sexual activity is not planned ahead of time, one or both are usually under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs, there are no expectations that the two will see each other again (even if they exchange contact information).
BC	Sex between two people who know each other, one person calls or texts the other person with the intention of having sex with that person within the next few hours, often late at night, one person is usually under the influence of alcohol/and or drugs, these two engage in sex with each other occasionally.
FB	Sex between people who know each other, they engage in sexual activity when they hang out with each other, they are usually not under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs, these two engage in sex with each other regularly.
FWB	Sex between two people who have an existing friendship, these two may or may not engage in sexual activity when they hang out with each other, they are usually not under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs, these two engage in sex with each other regularly.

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*Behavioural script association.* Wentland and Reissing (2011) identified 11 themes and related subthemes based on a thematic analysis of qualitative data. Using these themes, the paper’s first author and two female research assistants derived specific behavioural script items that corresponded to the various themes. Each coder independently created behavioural items.

Differences regarding the specificity of the items and resulting wording choice were discussed until unanimity was reached, resulting in 65 behavioural script items.

### **Procedure**

Recruitment materials stated that the purpose for the study was to examine “casual sexual relationships.” Neither sexual intercourse experience nor casual sex experience was required. Study procedures were approved by the institution’s research ethics board. Following a link to the study, participants were first provided with an online consent form detailing the purpose of the study and were then directed to the online questionnaire for completion (approximately 20 minutes). Upon exiting the survey, participants were debriefed with additional information about the overall purpose of the study and provided with a list of local and online sexual health resources.

To determine which behavioural scripts were associated with which relationship(s), participants were presented with all script items and given the following instructions: “Please check ANY of the following concepts that you think are part of a One Night Stand, Booty Call, Fuck Buddy/Fuck Friend, or Friend with Benefits.” Thus, it was possible for participants to check more than one relationship per item.

### **Data-analytic strategy**

The following three items were removed from the analysis (i.e., These individuals do not contact each other after they have sex with each other; These individuals usually call each other on the phone to make plans to get together; These individuals usually text each other to make plans to get together) as they were repetitive with other items (i.e., These individuals no longer contact each other after they stop having sex with each other; These individuals mainly call each other on the telephone to make arrangements to see each other; These individuals mainly text each

other to make arrangements to see each other), respectively. This resulted in 62 behavioural script items.

In the “first date” script literature, behavioural items have typically been included in the traditional first date script if more than 25% of participants endorse a particular item (e.g., Alksnis et al., 1996; Rose & Frieze, 1989; 1993). However, given the exploratory nature of the current research, it was judged necessary to use more conservative inclusion criteria for script items. Thus, in order to determine which script items were associated with each particular CSR, the average endorsement for the 62 script items was calculated for each CSR separately. Next, using a common procedure to identify cut-off points (e.g., Janssen, Heymsfield, & Ross, 2002; Pine, Cohen, Cohen, & Brook, 1999; Waldman, Ramirez, House, & Puranam, 2001), standard deviations (SD) were calculated for each CSR and items one SD above the mean were included in the script for each separate CSR. See Table 3 for the endorsement percentages, average endorsement, SD, and cut-off for each CSR.

Table 3

*Endorsement Percentages for all Four CSRs (ONS, BC, FB, FWB), Average Endorsement Percentages, and SD Cut-off Percentages*

	ONS	BC	FB	FWB
The individuals are usually under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs when they engage in sexual activity with each other	87	59	30	13
These individuals are usually NOT under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs when they engage in sexual activity with each other	0	21	62	82
The male usually initiates this sexual relationship	52	62	42	31
The female usually initiates this sexual relationship	21	27	38	48
These individuals meet for the first time at the bar, at a party, or some type of social gathering	92	20	13	4
These individuals know each other somewhat (e.g., someone from your class or work) and see each other out at the bar, at a party, or some type of social gathering	30	41	60	33
These individuals are friends with each other before they engage in any sexual activity	4	15	43	87
These individuals have engaged in sexual activity previous to starting this specific casual sexual relationship	7	39	67	55
These individuals have respect for one another	7	10	27	79
These individuals discuss the beginning of this relationship (e.g., “What is going on between us?”)	4	11	39	78
These individuals discuss the ending of this relationship (e.g., “We can’t have sex with each other anymore.”)	10	29	62	67
These individuals discuss the rules of the relationship with each other (e.g., whether or not friends know about their sexual relationship, whether or not one individual spends the night (i.e., sleeps over) at the other person’s place after they have sex)	5	28	70	80
These individuals discuss whether or not they are sexually involved with other people (e.g., “I wanted to let you know that I am also sleeping with someone else.”)	5	19	61	72
One of the individuals usually contacts the other person (e.g., calls or texts) late at night for sex	5	90	49	20

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One individual usually spends the night (i.e., sleeps over) at the other person's place after they have sex	33	22	47	70
These individuals do not spend the night together after they have sex	48	67	39	18
These individuals leave the bar, party, or some type of social gathering together to go to someone's house to have sex	85	27	38	25
One or both of these individuals may be having sex with someone else (i.e., these individuals are not monogamous)	75	75	74	53
These individuals add each other to Facebook	12	36	67	81
These individuals add each other to MSN	6	34	59	73
These individuals share a lot of personal information with each other (e.g., they talk about school, work, family, friends)	2	6	32	85
These individuals mainly call each other on the telephone to make arrangements to see each other	2	38	51	67
These individuals mainly text each other to make arrangements to see each other	5	73	64	39
These individuals mainly use MSN to make arrangements to see each other	3	42	52	38
These individuals mainly use Facebook to make arrangements to see each other	3	36	50	46
These individuals randomly see each other out at the bar, at a party, or at some type of social gathering	67	35	30	13
These individuals exchange contact information but may not contact each other after they have sex	83	24	7	3
One of the individuals calls the other person on the telephone with a direct reference to engaging in sex (e.g., "I'm horny. Come over.")	3	84	66	28
One of the individuals texts the other person with a direct reference to engaging in sex (e.g., "I'm horny. Come over.")	3	87	64	26
One of the individuals calls the other person on the telephone with a subtle reference to engaging in sex (e.g., "Do you want to come over?")	2	40	66	73
One of the individuals texts the other person with a subtle reference to engaging in sex (e.g., "Do you want to come over?")	3	46	69	67
These individuals make plans ahead of time to hang out with each other (e.g., "Do you want to come over and watch a movie tomorrow night?")	1	7	37	87

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These individuals do not want their friends to know about their ongoing sexual relationship	17	44	62	50
These individuals use the name of this relationship to describe the person to others (e.g., He is my Boy Toy)	13	79	62	28
These individuals might use this sexual relationship to see if they could start a relationship with each other	10	10	42	81
This sexual relationship develops out of a previous sexual relationship with each other	4	35	61	59
These individuals ALWAYS engage in some type of sexual activity when they see each other	24	62	73	11
These individuals sometimes engage in some type of sexual activity, but sometimes they just hang out with each other (e.g., watch a movie)	1	4	24	88
These individuals engage in sexual activity once or twice per month	4	50	53	59
These individuals engage in sexual activity once or twice per week	3	38	73	43
One individual usually has more power in this sexual relationship	24	62	45	27
These individuals almost always engage in sexual intercourse (e.g., penal-vaginal or penal-anal penetration)	59	70	74	22
These individuals engage in some type of sexual activity, but not always sexual intercourse (i.e., penal-vaginal or penal-anal penetration)	24	32	56	72
The sexual activity that these two individuals engage in may not be that good because these individuals are under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs	79	57	26	10
The male usually has an orgasm when these two individuals have sex	69	72	63	52
The female usually has an orgasm when these two individuals have sex	18	31	59	67
The male is less concerned with ensuring the female has an orgasm	73	58	25	9
The female is less concerned with ensuring the male has an orgasm	47	37	21	15
These individuals may stop having sex because one person becomes too attached	13	47	76	73
These individuals may stop having sex because one person starts a relationship with someone else	15	60	78	76

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These individuals may stop having sex because their friends find out	6	41	61	60	
These individuals may stop having sex because they lose interest and stop contacting each other	20	76	71	32	
These individuals no longer contact each other after they stop having sex with each other	83	69	48	6	
These individuals remain friends after they stop having sex with each other	3	6	32	84	
These individuals contact each other (e.g., call, text, email) when they are bored and have nothing else to do	4	47	60	62	
These individuals contact each other (e.g., call, text, email) when they are horny	6	83	78	43	
These individuals contact each other (e.g., call, text, email) when one person's plans do not work out (i.e., a back-up plan)	5	68	70	43	
The female usually gets more attached in this relationship	13	26	47	68	
The male usually gets more attached in this relationship	5	17	32	37	
The female usually has more power in this relationship (e.g., decides when she will see the other person)	13	31	36	43	
The male usually holds more power in this relationship (e.g., decides when he will see the other person)	19	45	38	23	
One individual may regret having sex with this person afterwards	79	47	32	35	
	Average endorsement %	24	43	51	49
	SD	29	23	18	26
	Cut-off %	53	65	69	75

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## Results

Using the SD cut-off, specific scripts were identified for each CSR. See Table 4 for the number of items, average endorsement, range of endorsement, and the specific scripts with the corresponding endorsement percentages for ONS, BC, FB, and FWB.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> To facilitate the subsequent presentation and discussion of results, the behavioural script items have been shortened for brevity. For example, “These individuals leave the bar, party, or some type of social gathering together to go to someone’s house to have sex” was shortened to “Leave together to have sex.”

Table 4

*Script Behaviours, Average Endorsement, Range, and items for ONS, BC, FB, and FWB*

	<b>ONS</b>	<b>BC</b>	<b>FB</b>	<b>FWB</b>
Number of Items	12	12	10	12
Average Endorsement (%)	78	76	74	82
Range (%)	59-92	67-90	70-78	76-88
Items (endorsement %)	Meet somewhere social (92) Under influence alcohol/drugs (87) Leave together to have sex (85) Exchange info but may not contact each other (83) No contact after stop having sex (83) One person might regret having sex (79) Sex may not be good b/c alcohol/drugs (79) May be having sex w/ other people (75) Male less concerned re female orgasm (73) Male usually has orgasm (69) Randomly see each other at bar, party (67) Almost always sexual intercourse (59)	Contact late at night for sex (90) Text w/ direct sex reference "I'm horny" (87) Phone w/ direct sex reference "I'm horny" (84) Contact b/c horny (83) Describe using name "booty call" (79) Stop b/c lose interest (76) May be having sex w/ other people (75) Use text to make arrangements (73) Male usually has orgasm (72) Almost always sexual intercourse (70) Contact person as a back-up (68) Do not spend night together (67)	Contact b/c horny (78) Stop b/c relationship w/ other person (78) Stop b/c too attached (76) May be having sex w/ other people (74) Almost always sexual intercourse (74) Sex 1-2x/week (73) ALWAYS some kind of sex (73) Stop b/c lose interest (71) Contact person as a back-up (70) Discuss rules (70)	Sometimes sex, sometimes hang out (88) Friends before sex (87) Make plans to hang out ahead of time (87) Share personal information (85) Remain friends post-sex (84) Not under influence alcohol/drugs (82) Use as test relationship (81) Add to Facebook (81) Discuss rules (80) Respect one another (79) Discuss the beginning (78) Stop b/c relationship w/ other person (76)

Patterns of endorsement were examined between the scripts identified by various groups (e.g., men versus women, sexual intercourse experience versus no sexual intercourse experience, previous experience with one of the specific CSRs versus no previous experience with one of the specific CSRs) and the baseline script (for each respective CSR).

## **ONS**

Using the one SD above the mean cut-off (i.e., 53%), items  $\geq 54\%$  were included in the ONS script resulting in 12 items ranging in endorsement from 59-92%. The average endorsement for each item was 78%. These 12 items were then used as the baseline ONS items (henceforth referred to as the ONS script). The number of ONS script items endorsed by the various groups ranged from 11 to 15 items. On average, women (e.g., women with sexual intercourse experience, women with previous ONS experience) endorsed more ONS script items ( $M = 12.89$ ,  $SD = .60$ ) compared to men (e.g., men with sexual intercourse experience, men with previous ONS experience;  $M = 11.78$ ,  $SD = .67$ ),  $t(16) = 3.70$ ,  $p < .001$ , 95% CI [-1.75, -0.47],  $d = 1.75$ .

### **Sexual intercourse experience**

Individuals with sexual intercourse experience did not differ in the number of ONS script items endorsed ( $N = 12$ ) compared to individuals without sexual intercourse experience ( $N = 11$ ;  $\chi^2(1, N = 888) = .02$ ,  $p = .89$ ). However, the average endorsement for the ONS script items was higher for those with sexual intercourse experience ( $n = 786$ , 79%) compared to those without sexual intercourse experience ( $n = 92$ , 65%;  $z = 14.63$ ,  $p < .001$ , 95% CI [.50, .70],  $d = .38$ ). Participants with sexual intercourse experience endorsed ONS script items 15.81% higher than individuals without sexual intercourse experience. See Table 5 for a comparison of the items between the two groups.

Table 5

*ONS Script Endorsement Percentages for Participants with and without Sexual Intercourse Experience*

Script Item	Sexual intercourse ( <i>n</i> = 786)	No sexual intercourse ( <i>n</i> = 92)
Meet somewhere social	95	74
Under influence alcohol/drugs	88	77
Leave together to have sex	87	77
Exchange info but may not contact each other	85	67
No contact after stop having sex	85	68
One person might regret having sex	81	59
Sex may not be good b/c alcohol/drugs	81	64
May be having sex w/ other people	77	60
Male less concerned re female orgasm	75	54
Male usually has orgasm	71	54
Randomly see each other at bar, party	67	64
Almost always sexual intercourse	60	

**Casual sexual experience**

Individuals with previous ONS experience did not differ in the number of ONS script items endorsed ( $N = 12$ ) compared to those without ONS experience ( $N = 13$ ;  $\chi^2(1, N = 888) = .02, p = .88$ ). Further, there was no difference in the average endorsement of script items between individuals with ONS experience ( $n = 465, 79\%$ ) and those without ONS experience ( $n = 420, 74\%$ ;  $z = .25, p = .80$ ). See Table 6 for a comparison of the items between the two groups.

Table 6

*ONS Script Endorsement Percentages for Participants with and without ONS Experience*

Script Item	ONS experience ( <i>n</i> = 465)	No ONS experience ( <i>n</i> = 420)
Meet somewhere social	94	90
Under influence alcohol/drugs	88	85
Exchange info but may not contact each other	86	79
No contact after stop having sex	86	80
Leave together to have sex	85	85
One person might regret having sex	82	76
Sex may not be good b/c alcohol/drugs	80	77
May be having sex w/ other people	80	70
Male less concerned w/ female orgasm	75	70
Male usually has orgasm	72	66
Randomly see each other at bar, party	65	69
Almost always sexual intercourse	59	58
Male initiates <sup>a</sup>		55

<sup>a</sup> Item not included in baseline ONS script

**BC**

Using the SD cut-off (i.e., 66%), items  $\geq 67\%$  were included in the BC script resulting in 13 items ranging in endorsement from 67-90%. The average endorsement for each item was 76%. These 13 items were then used as the baseline BC script. The number of BC script items endorsed by the various groups ranged from 4 to 15 items. Overall, women endorsed a similar number of items ( $M = 12.44$ ,  $SD = 2.22$ ) compared to men ( $M = 9.56$ ,  $SD = 3.00$ ),  $t(16) = 2.26$ ,  $p = .05$ , 95% CI [-5.57, -0.19].

**Sexual intercourse experience**

Individuals with sexual intercourse experience did not differ in the number of BC script items endorsed ( $n = 13$ ) compared to those without sexual intercourse experience ( $n = 6$ ;  $\chi^2(1, N = 888) = 3.85$ ,  $p = .07$ ). However, the average endorsement for the BC script items was higher for individuals with sexual intercourse experience ( $n = 786$ , 78%) compared to those without sexual intercourse experience ( $n = 92$ , 71%;  $z = 16.26$ ,  $p < .001$ , 95% CI [.57, .75],  $d = .22$ ). See Table 7

for a comparison of the items between the two groups. Every group endorsed contact late at night for sex as the top item except women without sexual intercourse experience ( $n = 35$ ) who endorsed describe person using name as the top item (86%). Specifically, males without sexual intercourse experience ( $n = 55$ ) endorsed three items: contact late at night for sex (75%), phone with a direct reference to sex (73%), and text with a direct reference to sex (67%).

Table 7

*BC Script Endorsement Percentages for Participants with and without Sexual Intercourse Experience*

Script Item	Sexual intercourse ( $n = 786$ )	No sexual intercourse ( $n = 92$ )
Contact late at night for sex	92	76
Text w/ direct sex reference (“I’m horny”)	89	70
Phone w/ direct sex reference (“I’m horny”)	85	71
Contact one another b/c horny	84	71
Describe using name (“booty call”)	79	73
May be having sex w/ other people	78	
Stop b/c lose interest	78	
Use text to make arrangements	75	
Male usually has orgasm	74	67
Almost always sexual intercourse	72	
No contact after stop having sex <sup>a</sup>	71	
Contact person as a back-up	70	
Do not spend night together	69	

<sup>a</sup> Item not included in baseline BC script

### Casual sexual experience

Individuals with previous BC experience endorsed a similar number of script items ( $n = 11$ ) compared to those without BC experience ( $n = 9$ ;  $\chi^2(1, N = 888) = 1.11, p = .29$ ). Further, there was no difference in the average endorsement of script items between individuals with BC experience ( $n = 424, 79\%$ ) and those without BC experience ( $n = 464, 79\%$ ;  $z = .63, p = .53$ ). See Table 8 for a comparison of the items between the two groups.

Table 8

*BC Script Endorsement Percentages for Participants with and without BC Experience*

Script Item	BC experience ( <i>n</i> = 424)	No BC experience ( <i>n</i> = 464)
Contact late at night for sex	90	91
Text w/ direct sex reference (“I’m horny”)	87	87
Contact one another b/c horny	84	82
Phone w/ direct sex reference (“I’m horny”)	82	85
Describe using name (“booty call”)	81	77
May be having sex w/ other people	78	73
Stop b/c lose interest	77	75
Use text to make arrangements	75	72
Male usually has orgasm	75	70
Contact person as a back-up	73	
Almost always sexual intercourse	71	

**FB**

Using the SD cut-off (i.e., 69%), items  $\geq 70\%$  were included in the FB script. This resulted in 10 items ranging in endorsement from 70-78%. The average endorsement for each item was 74%. These 10 items were then used as the baseline FB script. The number of FB script items endorsed by the various groups ranged from 4 to 20 items. Overall, women endorsed more FB script items ( $M = 11.11$ ,  $SD = 3.44$ ) compared to men ( $M = 7.00$ ,  $SD = 3.50$ ),  $t(16) = 2.51$ ,  $p < .01$ , 95% CI [.64, 7.58],  $d = 1.18$ .

**Sexual intercourse experience**

Individuals with sexual intercourse experience endorsed a similar number of FB script items ( $n = 10$ ) compared to those without sexual intercourse experience ( $n = 4$ ;  $\chi^2(1, N = 888) = 3.06$ ,  $p = .08$ ). However, the average endorsement for the FB script items was higher for those with sexual intercourse experience ( $n = 786$ , 75%) compared to those without sexual intercourse experience ( $n = 92$ , 71%;  $z = 16.48$ ,  $p < .001$ , 95% CI [.57, .76],  $d = .13$ ). See Table 9 for a comparison of the items between the two groups.

Table 9

*FB Script Endorsement Percentages for Participants with and without Sexual Intercourse Experience*

Script Item	Sexual intercourse ( <i>n</i> = 786)	No sexual intercourse ( <i>n</i> = 92)
Stop b/c relationship w/ other person	80	
Contact b/c horny	79	70
May be having sex w/ other people	77	
Stop b/c too attached	77	72
Almost always sexual intercourse	75	
ALWAYS some kind of sex	74	70
Sex 1-2x/week	73	75
Stop b/c lose interest	72	
Discuss rules	72	
Text subtle sex reference “wanna come over?” <sup>a</sup>	71	

<sup>a</sup> Item not included in baseline FB script

**Casual sexual experience**

Individuals with previous FB experience endorsed a similar number of FB script items (*n* = 12) compared to those without FB experience (*n* = 8;  $\chi^2(1, N = 888) = .46, p = .49$ ). Further, there was no difference in the average endorsement of script items between individuals with FB experience (*n* = 505, 74%) and those without FB experience (*n* = 383, 73%;  $z = 1.75, p = .08$ ). See Table 10 for a comparison of the items between the two groups.

Table 10

*FB Script Endorsement Percentages for Participants with and without FB Experience*

Script Item	FB experience ( <i>n</i> = 505)	No FB experience ( <i>n</i> = 383)
Stop b/c relationship w/ other person	82	72
Stop b/c too attached	78	72
Contact b/c horny	77	79
May be having sex w/ other people	76	72
Almost always sexual intercourse	74	74
Sex 1-2x/week	74	72
Discuss rules	73	
Stop b/c lose interest	73	
Text subtle sex reference (“wanna come over?”) <sup>a</sup>	72	
Sex before starting relationship <sup>a</sup>	71	
ALWAYS some kind of sex	71	74
Contact as a back-up	70	70

<sup>a</sup> Item not included in baseline FB script

**FWB**

Using the one SD cut-off (i.e., 75%), items  $\geq 76\%$  were included in the FWB script. This resulted in 12 items ranging in endorsement from 76-88%. The average endorsement for each item was 82%. These 10 items then used as the baseline FWB script from which to compare the other groups. The number of items endorsed by the various groups ranged from 4 to 18 items. Overall, women endorsed more items ( $M = 13.89$ ,  $SD = 4.28$ ) compared to men ( $M = 7.67$ ,  $SD = 4.00$ ),  $t(16) = 3.19$ ,  $p < .001$ , 95% CI [-10.36, -2.08],  $d = 1.50$ .

**Sexual intercourse experience**

Individuals with sexual intercourse experience endorsed a larger number of FWB script items endorsed ( $N = 12$ ) compared to those without sexual intercourse experience ( $N = 2$ ;  $\chi^2(1, N = 888) = 7.52$ ,  $p = .006$ ). Further, the average endorsement for the FWB script items was higher for those with sexual intercourse experience ( $n = 786$ , 84%) compared to those without sexual intercourse experience ( $n = 92$ , 77%;  $z = -17.12$ ,  $p < .001$ , 95% CI [.63, .80],  $d = .25$ ). See Table 11 for a comparison of the items between the two groups.

Table 11

*FWB Script Endorsement Percentages for Participants with and without Sexual Intercourse Experience*

Script Item	Sexual intercourse ( <i>n</i> = 786)	No sexual intercourse ( <i>n</i> = 92)
Sometimes sex, sometimes hangout	90	77
Friends before sex	89	76
Make plans to hang out ahead of time	88	
Share personal information	87	
Remain friends post-sex	86	
Not under influence alcohol/drugs	83	
Add to Facebook	83	
Use as test relationship	83	
Respect one another	82	
Discuss rules	82	
Discuss the beginning	80	
Stop b/c relationship w/ other person	77	

**Casual sexual experience**

Individuals with previous FWB experience did not differ in the number of FWB script items endorsed ( $N = 14$ ) compared to individuals without FWB experience ( $N = 12$ ;  $\chi^2(1, N = 888) = 1.21, p = .27$ ). However, the average endorsement for the FWB script items was higher for individuals with FWB experience ( $n = 539, 84\%$ ) compared to those without FWB experience ( $n = 350, 81\%$ ;  $z = 2.83, p < .001, 95\% \text{ CI } [.02, .13], d = .12$ ). See Table 12 for a comparison of the items between the two groups.

Table 12

*FWB Script Endorsement Percentages for Participants with and without FWB Experience*

Script Item	FWB experience ( <i>n</i> = 539)	No FWB experience ( <i>n</i> = 350)
Sometimes sex, sometimes hang out	90	86
Make plans to hang out ahead of time	90	82
Share personal information	88	79
Friends before sex	87	87
Remain friends post-sex	87	80
Respect one another	84	
Discuss rules	84	
Not under influence alcohol/drugs	83	79
Use as test relationship	83	78
Add to Facebook	83	77
Discuss the beginning	81	
Stop b/c relationship w/ other person	78	
Stop b/c too attached <sup>a</sup>	77	
Spend night together <sup>a</sup>	76	

<sup>a</sup> Item not included in baseline FWB script

**FWB versus FB**

A comparison of the FWB and FB relationships is presented in Table 13. Out of the 12 items for the FWB script and 10 items for the FB script, two script items overlapped: discuss rules and stop because relationship with other person. There was no difference in the proportion for the endorsement for the discuss rules item between FWB (*n* = 707, 80%) and FB (*n* = 622, 70%;  $z = .04, p = .97$ ) or for the stop because of relationship with other person between FWB (*n* = 675, 76%) and FB (*n* = 690, 78%;  $z = .03, p = .98$ ).

Table 13

*Script Items for FWB and FB*

<b>FWB</b>	<b>FB</b>
Sometimes sex, sometimes hang out (88)	Contact b/c horny (78)
Friends before sex (87)	Stop b/c relationship w/ other person (78)
Make plans to hang out ahead of time (87)	Stop b/c too attached (76)
Share personal information (85)	May be having sex w/ other people (74)
Remain friends post-sex (84)	Almost always sexual intercourse (74)
Not under influence alcohol/drugs (82)	Sex 1-2x/week (73)
Use as test relationship (81)	ALWAYS some kind of sex (73)
Add to Facebook (81)	Stop b/c lose interest (71)
Discuss rules (80)	Contact person as a back-up (70)
Respect one another (79)	Discuss rules (70)
Discuss the beginning (78)	
Stop b/c relationship w/ other person (76)	

**Discussion**

The goal of the present study was to identify specific behavioural scripts for One Night Stand (ONS), Booty Call (BC), Fuck Buddy (FB), and Friend with Benefit (FWB) relationships. Participants associated unique script items related to the initiation, maintenance, and termination aspects for each CSR, suggesting that detailed behaviours associated with specific relationships can be identified with a high degree of precision. Women exhibited greater capacity in identifying the detailed script behaviours, in line with Wentland and Reissing's (under review) previous findings that women pay increased attention to subtle relationship cues in order to identify the type of relationship. Contrary to our hypothesis, participants without sexual intercourse experience were able to identify the various scripts. However, those with sexual intercourse experience endorsed the script items at higher levels (i.e., higher endorsement percentages) compared to those without sexual intercourse experience, indicating a more detailed knowledge of the various scripts. With the exception of FWB, participants' knowledge of the specific behavioural scripts did not differ between participants with or without previous experience with the respective CSR(s). Finally, participants differentiated between FWB and FB relationships

suggesting that separate consideration in the research literature may be essential to understanding the nuances between friends adding sexual activity to their relationship versus acquaintances meeting occasionally for sex and resultant social activity. The results of this study indicate that unique behavioural scripts exist for four different CSRs. This adds further evidence to the need for careful delineation of descriptions of CSR in research and education and avoidance of using catch-all or umbrella terms (e.g., hooking up).

Women generally endorsed a higher number of script items compared to men. This gendered pattern of endorsement suggests that women may be more perceptive of the subtle differences between the CSRs and thus, better able to identify the specific behaviours associated with each respective CSR. Specifically, women identified more script items for ONS, FB, and FWB compared to men; this difference was approaching significance for the BC script. Participants from Wentland and Reissing's (2011) qualitative study discussed the genderless code of conduct related the CSR behaviour (i.e., men and women are both expected to follow the respective 'rules'); however, it appears that women may be more knowledgeable of these rules. From an adaptive perspective, determining the type of relationship based on exhibited behaviours may be an important aspect of relationship identification for women due to asymmetrical parental investment (Trivers, 1972). Jonason and colleagues (2009) noted that women might use a BC to test a partner's long-term relationship potential. This is in line with Buss and Schmitt's (1993) Sexual Strategy Theory that posits that women use short-term mating partnerships to assess potential long-term partnerships. Thus, there may be greater incentive for women to attend to subtle cues exhibited in any of the particular CSRs because these cues may provide valuable information for a woman who may be assessing relationship potential with the person.

Previous sexual intercourse and casual sexual experience played complex roles in regard to the identification of various CSR scripts. As expected, overall, casual sexual experience was

not necessary for participants to identify scripts, but contrary to our expectations, even individuals who had not yet experienced first intercourse were able to identify scripts. This suggests that knowledge of scripts for CSRs are so pervasive in society that personal experience may be irrelevant in the acquisition of knowledge about CSRs and their associated behaviours. There was an exception to this: for FWB, those with sexual and previous FWB experience endorsed a larger number of script items and exhibited a higher overall endorsement of the script items, suggesting that personal experience with FWB provides additional knowledge of the complex behaviours required when existing friends introduce sexual activity to their friendship. This finding is in line with Hughes and colleagues' (2005) who reported that some of the rules that participants' associated with FWB differed based on previous experience engaging in a FWB (e.g., not disclosing the relationship to other friends). Although previous FWB experience is not necessary to identify the FWB script, previous experience gives participants increased knowledge of how a FWB works above and beyond the knowledge garnered from general exposure (e.g., social media, movies, television). For example, an inexperienced person may know that one has had a pre-existing friendship with a FWB partner and may engage in activities other than sex. However, one may not know what aspects of the relationship are often overtly discussed (beginning and ending) or that starting a dating relationship with someone else is a reason for termination (assumption of monogamy).

The distinction between the FWB and FB relationships is an important outcome of this research. To date, Stone and McCabe (2011) and Wentland and Reissing (2011; under review) are the only studies to quantitatively distinguish these two CSRs. Building on these studies, the findings from the present study suggest that FWB denotes a specific type of CSR in which there is ongoing sexual activity within the context of a pre-existing friendship versus FB, which denotes a CSR in which there is ongoing sexual activity without pre-existing friendship and unlikely social

interactions once sexual contact has ceased. The role that sexual activity plays within the context of these relationships also shows a clear delineation of the overall purpose of these relationships. For example, comparison of the top endorsed item for each relationship (i.e., FWB: sometimes the individuals have sex, sometimes they hang out; FB: individuals contact each other because they are horny) shows a clear demarcation of the hallmark characteristic associated with each relationship. The emphasis on friendship within FWB (i.e., make plans to hang out ahead of time, friends pre-/post- sex) compared to the emphasis on sexual activity within FB (i.e., ALWAYS engage in some kind of sexual activity when hang out, have sex 1-2x/week) suggests that the notion of friendship (“the buddy” aspect) in FB may simply be a guise. If FB was an iteration of FWB, as Mongeau and colleagues (2013) suggest, one would expect to see greater overlap in the script items between these two CSRs. Only two items are shared, however, which suggests that FWB and FB are distinct CSRs.

FWB is the most emotionally intricate relationship of the four CSRs explored. Unlike the other CSRs, which revolve around access to ‘no strings attached’ sex, FWB represents an ongoing sexual relationship between individuals in the context of a pre-existing, ongoing, and future (ideally) friendship. FWB encapsulates the complexities of maintaining a friendship while engaging in activities more akin to a romantic relationship (e.g., engaging in emotionally and physically intimate behaviours), yet attempting to refrain from emotional and physical attachment beyond the level of a typical friendship. The comparatively higher level of personal disclosure seen as part of the FWB script (i.e., sharing personal information, discussing the beginning of the relationship, adding each other to Facebook) sets FWB apart from the other CSRs. Specifically, the script item indicating that “these individuals have respect for one another” was only associated with FWB (79%) compared to the other CSRs (7%, 10%, 27%, respectively for ONS, BC, and

FB). If FWB and FB were iterations of the same relationship, one would expect the respect item for FB to be endorsed at a higher level.

Using FWB as a test for a future relationship has been addressed by previous researchers (e.g., Lehmiller et al., 2011; Mongeau et al., 2013). In the present study, this item was included in the baseline FWB script; no men ( $n = 341$ ) endorsed this item, whereas women ( $n = 544$ ) endorsed this item at a very high level (85%). This gender difference supports previous findings that suggest that women may use FWB as a gateway to future relationships, whereas men may use FWB as a means to access regular sexual activity (e.g., Bleske & Buss, 2000; McGinty, Knox, & Zusman, 2007). Being aware of the specific script items differentiating FWB from the other CSRs can assist in recognizing the implications of different perspectives on the purpose of FWB (i.e., between men and women and/or within a particular couple) and identify potential sources of conflict. Implications range from emotional distress, feelings of exploitation, loss of friendship and support, and problematic decisions about safer sex.

Recognizing the difference between CSRs that indicate that sexual activity takes place outside commitment and attachment (i.e., FB) versus CSRs where sex is being added to a relationship that is already close and emotionally oriented (i.e., FWB) presents a significant step forward in the casual sex research. It is essential to understand clearly what motivates men and women to risk a friendship for a sexual outlet. The notion of testing a romantic relationship may appear a reasonable strategy, however, not in view of a partner's understanding of increased access to sex. Some CSRs may in fact prove more risky or more beneficial if considered within the context of their specific script and knowledge thereof by the actors involved. The results of this research suggest shared knowledge of scripts regardless of sexual experience, but also suggest some noteworthy differences. Only with attention to the differences in the CSRs will researchers be able to uncover the subtle but important implications of the risk/benefit analyses of casual sex.

## **Limitations and Implications**

Some limitations of the current study need to be noted. Due to the exploratory nature of this research, the behavioural script items were presented in a manner designed to minimize the time required from participants to complete the survey measures (i.e., participants simultaneously indicated whether or not a specific behavioural item was associated with any of the four potential relationships). Thus, items were either classified as part of the script or not part of the script, but do not capture the magnitude with which the items are associated with any particular CSR, which is needed in future research. Furthermore, the script items were a mix between specific behavioural actions (e.g., individuals add each other to Facebook) and general behaviour (e.g., individuals stop b/c someone start a relationship with someone else). Future research could further expand specific behaviours versus general behaviours in an effort to further outline the specific scripts for each CSR.

Researchers have called for the need to conduct additional CSR research to include non-university samples (e.g., Claxton & van Dulmen, 2013). Attempts to recruit community participants and older participants (e.g., postings in singles club newsletters, older adult dance groups) were not successful in the present study (i.e., only 65 participants were over 39 years of age) and may reflect a difference in the terminology used by non-emergent adults and/or methods used to contact this population group (Malta, 2012). Researchers in Australia are exploring various relationship configurations among non-emergent adult populations, such as FWB in rural baby boomers (Kirkman, 2012) and living-apart-together (LAT) couples 60 and older (Malta & Farquharson, 2012). This further indicates the importance of ensuring that the language used to explore these and other CSRs matches the language and terms used by the population of interest under investigation. Additional research with adults aged 30 and older (as well as other specific

population groups, such as lesbian, gay, bisexual) is necessary to identify if and/or how other groups experience CSRs.

Engaging in non-traditional, uncommitted relationships is associated with some caveats. Discussing the rules (e.g., whether or not friends know about the sexual relationship, whether or not they spend the night together) was associated with both the FWB and FB script, but was not present in the BC or ONS script. This may imply that certain scripts for BC and ONS are self-evident, for example that condoms are always used if there is no discussion of sexual monogamy and either partner is allowed to seek out sexual encounters with others. FWB was the only relationship in which discussing the beginning (e.g., what is going on between the two individuals) was identified as a script item. This item further strengthens the notion that FWB is a distinct relationship from FB, but also highlights that a discussion of the complex nature of these relationships is not present for FB, BC, or ONS, which may be problematic. Using a non-FWB CSR as a means of starting a relationship (i.e., attempting to leverage casual sexual activity into a relationship) and not following the accepted script, may result in disappointment and distress. On the other hand, knowingly miscommunicating rules and labels (e.g., purposefully using the labels of FWB and FB interchangeably) can result in exploitation. For the less savvy individual who finds him or herself in a CSR, knowledge of generally accepted definitions and characteristics may help navigate the complex array of available CSRs, increase the understanding of the potential costs/risks, and therefore reduce the potential for harm. Researchers' knowledge of CSRs can be used to inform health practitioners and sex educators to minimize the confusion their clients have regarding the specific behaviours associated with the various CSRs by ensuring the labels match the behaviours within the relationship. Specifically, investigation of the particular rules and limits of communication in the four CSRs will assist health care professionals in improving safer sex interventions.

The popularity of CSRs in contemporary culture requires researchers to stay current in regards to the landscape of emerging sexual relationships. Exploring the unique behaviours associated with specific CSRs further underscores the importance of viewing these relationships as distinct types of sexual relationships that can be distinguished by their initiation, maintenance, and termination behaviours. Given the evolving nature of sexual relationships (e.g., Claxton & van Dulmen, 2013; Garcia et al., 2012; Wentland & Reissing, 2011), researchers need to pay close attention to script items and definitional differences in order to facilitate the systematic investigation of the costs and benefits of these modern sexual relationships.

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## **General Discussion**

The popularity of casual sex relationships in current Western culture has given rise to an expanding body of literature examining these modern sexual relationships. Amongst this expanding literature, however, there exists a paucity of validated definitions of the sexual relationships within which casual sexual activity takes place. This makes comparisons across the current literature difficult. Thus, the purpose of this dissertation research was to qualitatively explore CSRs in order to create definitions (and related behavioural scripts) that could then be quantitatively examined and confirmed with a larger sample. In addition, this research was designed to determine whether specific scripts exist for various CSRs and the degree to which young adults are knowledgeable of these scripts. The findings of this program of research are timely given the frequency with which these relationships are being discussed in the research literature, as well as within the popular culture and social media.

### **Summary of Findings**

In Study 1, focus groups were conducted to explore the detailed, and often complex, behaviours associated with CSRs. The purpose of this qualitative exploration was to first identify the most popular forms of CSRs, as determined by participants, and subsequently create detailed descriptions of the relationships. Participants identified a number of different CSR types ranging from one-time sexual encounters (e.g., ONS, Hit it and Quit It, Dick ‘em and Dump ‘em) to ongoing sexual encounters (e.g., FWB, flings, part-time boyfriend/girlfriend). Participants provided detailed scenarios to illustrate past experiences and elaborate hypothetical scenarios to expand and clarify the code of conduct associated with each relationship. Analysis of the transcripts revealed that four relationships (i.e., ONS, BC, FB, and FWB) were identified by each of the four focus groups and therefore were the focus for Study 2 and 3. Thematic analysis revealed 11 main themes, which predominantly revolved around the initiation, maintenance, and

termination behaviours associated with the relationships. Ensuring participants were involved in the initial conceptualization of these relationship definitions is an essential, but unfortunately uncommon, step in the existing casual sex research.

The next step in this research program was to determine if definitions of these four CSRs could be confirmed using a large sample of participants. Building upon the rich, detailed descriptions provided by participants in Study 1, succinct definitions capturing the most essential elements of the relationships (e.g., how the individuals know one another, the consumption of alcohol and/or drugs, the duration of the sexual activity) were created for Study 2. An online survey format was chosen in order to access a large pool of participants. Despite not indicating an upper age restriction in the recruitment, the majority of the sample was 30 years and younger and thus, fell within into Arnett's (2000) emergent adulthood classification (i.e., 18-29 years), an age restriction that was used for Study 2.

Each of the four definitions was endorsed by over 83% of the sample. The strength with which the definitions were endorsed speaks to the pervasiveness of these relationships in current Western society. Compared to men, women were seemingly 'better' at identifying the various definitions, suggesting that women recognize the subtle nuances conveyed in the short definitions. As hypothesized, individuals without sexual intercourse experience lacked the general sexual experiential knowledge needed to identify the correct definition. Interestingly, those with casual sex experience (i.e., those reporting at least one casual sex partner or previous experience with the CSR of interest) and those without did not differ in their ability to identify the definitions. This is a key finding of the present research as it suggests that previous casual sex experience is not necessary in order to identify different types of CSRs; the general knowledge that sexually active participants possess seemed to provide them with enough general knowledge to identify the

corresponding definition(s). The findings from Study 2 suggest that distinct CSRs can be readily identified and that these relationships can be distinguished based on brief definitions.

The third step of this research program was to identify the detailed script behaviours associated with each of the respective CSRs. Given that participants in Study 1 provided rich descriptions of the typical behaviours associated with the various CSRs and that participants in Study 2 could clearly demarcate the specific definitions of the different CSRs, it was surmised that each CSR would have its own specific script of expected and/or appropriate behaviours. Using the themes identified in Study 1, detailed descriptions of behaviours for each of the theme areas were created in order to identify core script items for each of the four CSRs in Study 3.

In study 3, all participants ( $N=855$ ) were included in the analyses. As expected, specific script behaviours were identified for each CSR and the pattern of endorsement followed the patterns observed in Study 2. Women generally endorsed more items compared to men displaying a higher degree of precision in identifying the various behaviours associated with each CSR. Although individuals without sexual intercourse experience identified the core script items, on average, these individuals endorsed the core items at lower levels compared to those with sexual intercourse experience. Thus, personal experience, while not required to identify the correct script behaviours, provided participants with a more comprehensive knowledge of appropriate behaviours. With the exception of FWB, previous experience with a specific CSR was not required to identify the script behaviours associated with any particular CSR. The findings from Study 3 support the notion that these CSRs are distinct relationships – each with its own respective code of conduct.

**Gender.** An interesting pattern of results emerged in these studies regarding gender differences. In Study 1, participants did not differentiate between appropriate behaviour for men and women; rather, both genders were expected to follow the same code of conduct. For example,

participants reported that regardless of the gender of the ‘bootycaller,’ the intent and content of the message (i.e., text or phone call) is the same. In this way, the code of conduct for these relationships is genderless. In Study 2, a significantly larger proportion of women identified the definitions compared to men for each CSR. This pattern was replicated to a certain degree for Study 3: other than the BC, women identified a larger number of script items for ONS, FB, and FWB. This gendered pattern of definition endorsement and behaviour identification is a significant finding in this dissertation research because it suggests that although the code is genderless, women recognize even the most subtle relationship cues and nuances communicated via the definition(s) and associated behavioural script items.

Because the costs of casual sex have traditionally been higher for women (i.e., reputation concerns, risk of pregnancy and/or violence; Ehrhardt et al., 2002; Sarkar, 2008), women may be more sensitive to even the most subtle differences communicated via the definitions and/or the script behaviours. For example, the FWB definition was presented as “sex between two people who have an existing friendship” versus the FB definition which was presented as “sex between two people who know each other.” When presented with the FWB definition, a significantly larger proportion of men chose the FB definition compared to women. A similar pattern was seen when presented with the FB definition: a significantly larger proportion of men endorsed the FWB definition compared to women. This evidence suggests that women pay attention to the subtle differences to identify the boundaries within which they choose to be sexually active in order to understand the implications of the sexual relationship (e.g., potential relationship development versus sexual outlet). Understanding each CSR’s specific code of conduct facilitates appropriate behaviour and realistic expectations. Although the established code(s) of conduct offer both men and women the opportunity to compare their behaviour against the accepted and

expected behaviour for each/any particular CSR, women may be engaging in these comparative evaluations more than men resulting in women's fine-tuned recognition of definitions and scripts.

**Sexual intercourse experience.** In line with our hypotheses for Study 2 and 3, sexual intercourse experience was a necessary prerequisite for participants to identify the definitions and associated script behaviours for BC, FB, and FWB. ONS appears to be a clear and descriptive term such that sexual intercourse experience is not required to identify the definition nor the script. The average age of participants drawn from the online study was over 21yrs, which is older than the average age of first intercourse (i.e., 17) in North America (e.g., Reissing et al., 2010; Sandfort, Orr, Hirsch, & Santelli, 2008). Engaging in sexual intercourse with at least one sexual partner appears to give participants a basic understanding of sexual scripts in CSRs, as indicated by the larger proportion of individuals with sexual intercourse experience who endorsed the definitions for BC, FWB, and FB (the latter trending towards significance). Not surprisingly, individuals who have not met this sexual milestone by age 21 were less familiar with the subtle nuances that differentiate the CSRs from one another.

For the script behaviours, those with and without sexual intercourse experience endorsed a similar number of items for the ONS, BC, and FB relationships. The average endorsement for the script items for those with sexual intercourse experience was significantly higher compared to those without sexual intercourse experience suggesting a more detailed knowledge of the code of conduct. FWB, on the other hand, was the only relationship in which individuals with previous sexual intercourse experience endorsed both a significantly larger number of items and whose average endorsement was significantly higher compared to those without sexual intercourse experience. Overall, it appears that 'getting into the sexual game' (i.e., engaging in sexual intercourse) provides participants with enough general background experience to recognize the

definitions and generally identify the associated script items for the four CSRs under investigation.

**Casual sex experience.** Contrary to our initial hypotheses in Study 2, casual sex experience was not required to endorse the definitions or the script behaviours for the specific CSRs. This is an important finding because it suggests that these relationships are so pervasive in society that personal experience is not needed to identify the general script of how these relationships work. FWB was the only exception: the average endorsement of script items for individuals with previous FWB experience was higher than those without previous FWB experience. Specific experience with this emotionally complex relationship likely offers additional insight into the specific script items associated with the relationship and ultimately, what is deemed appropriate behaviour. Otherwise, it appears that being somewhat sexually active (i.e., having engaged in sexual intercourse at least once) provides the necessary wherewithal to identify the CSRs.

### **Spectrum of Casual Sex**

Referring to all CSRs as “hookups” clearly does not do justice to the intricacies of engaging in ongoing and potentially complex sexual relationships with the same individual over some time period (ranging from one time to weeks and/or months). As participants could identify the specific definitions of these CSRs (e.g., Wentland & Reissing, under review) and their respective behavioural scripts, we can begin to think of these CSRs as four discrete relationships placed within a larger spectrum of casual sex. This spectrum may range from the archetypical one-time ONS with a stranger to an ongoing FWB - with much iteration of other CSRs in between and/or on either side. Identifying where these four CSRs of interest can be placed within that spectrum was the necessary first step in recognizing these CSRs as their own distinct relationship types – each with their own respective definitions and codes of conduct. This finding alone

increases the complexity of the terminology used in a literature which, to date, has primarily focused on hooking up and FWB. Further, determining where to situate these four CSRs within this nuanced spectrum will enable researchers to use the four relationship types as anchors from which to compare and situate additional variations of CSRs. Establishing definitions and rich descriptions for these four CSRs is the most important contribution of this research program.

**ONS.** ONS is the most casual and least ambiguous CSR identified in the present studies because of its descriptive name. ONS has received specific research attention preceding the more diverse, modern culture of casual sex research (e.g., Cubbins & Tanfer, 2000; Montoya, 2005). It is unknown when or how the term first became associated with a one-time sexual encounter because the term was originally used to describe a one-time performance by traveling theatre and/or musical groups (*One Night Stand*, Merriam Webster Online, n.d.). The ONS represents the most casual relationship as illustrated by the lack of pre-existing relationship between the two individuals who are most often strangers or brief acquaintances. However, as other researchers have noted, determining how common ONSs are is difficult because ONSs can develop into dating relationships after the initial interaction (Paul, Wenzel, & Harvey, 2008). Thus, even though the first interaction was within the definitional parameters of the ONS (i.e., individuals who did not know each other who leave a social gathering to have sexual intercourse with one another with no future expectations), individuals who subsequently date each other are less likely to retrospectively classify their initial sexual activity as a ONS. Regardless of potential relationship development, there is an inherent understanding that the individuals leave the location together, one or both individuals are typically under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs, they engage in some type of sexual activity (most often sexual intercourse) and have no expectation of future interaction. As such, in this study, the ONS most closely maps onto the script of a one-time sexual hookup that does not include additional interaction beyond the initial sexual activity (Paul

et al., 2000). The singular nature of the sexual activity within the ONS sets this CSR apart from the others for which sexual activity is episodic, if not (quasi) regular.

**BC.** Moving beyond a one-time sexual encounter, the BC is the next identified relationship on the proposed spectrum of CSRs. The BC encompasses some of the complexities of repeat sexual encounters with a casual partner. Recently, the BC has appeared in the heterosexual casual sex literature with two separate published studies (e.g., Jonason et al., 2009; Jonason, Li, & Richardson, 2010) situating the BC as more emotional than the ONS, but less emotional than a committed relationship. BCs are arranged late at night, often via text message notification unless one or both individuals are too intoxicated to either compose a legible text message or successfully receive a text message (e.g., a text message notification is not loud enough to wake the callee). In (only) this situation, a telephone call is appropriate. Although intoxication was commonly identified as part of the BC script, it is not always the case: one of the most important components of the BC is that it is not planned ahead of time. A BC may be arranged as an after-thought, either after hopes to meet someone new while out at a bar/party do not materialize or if one of the individuals is bored and/or sexually aroused late at night. In this manner, the BC serves as a back-up or failsafe. Engaging in unplanned sexual activity is the *raison d'être* for the BC. However, if the sexual activity becomes too regular (i.e., too predictable and/or multiple times/week), a BC may morph into a FB.

**FB.** The FB relationship is a unique CSR that incorporates aspects of the BC (e.g., lack of pre-planned sexual activity) and FWB (e.g., participation in non-sexual activities). To date, FB has been subsumed under the auspices of FWB (e.g., Mongeau et al., 2013). However, the notion of friendship differentiates the FWB and FB, mostly due to the emphasis on sexual activity without the existence of a concurrent friendship within FB. For example, the main reason FB spend time together is to engage in sexual activity because either individual is sexually interested,

whereas FWB sometimes spend time together as friends without engaging in sexual activity. The emphasis on sexual activity in FB is further illustrated by the notion that FB always engage in some type of sexual activity (most often sexual intercourse), especially as a back-up when attempts to find a new sexual partner are not successful. Once either individual decides they are no longer interested in engaging in sexual activity, the FB relationship would simply cease to exist and the 'friendship' disappears. Recognizing the FB as its own distinct CSR, separate from FWB, is one of the most important findings of this dissertation research.

**FWB.** FWB represents the most complex CSR of those examined in this dissertation. Not surprisingly, FWB is the most complicated CSR to navigate because of the dual components of sex and friendship that must mutually co-exist in order for a FWB to be 'successful' (i.e., ongoing sexual activity between friends). Researchers suggest that individuals engaging in a FWB engage in an even amount of sexual and non-sexual activity under the auspices of their FWB relationship (Vanderdrift et al., 2012). Unlike the FB, individuals in a FWB have a pre-existing friendship and sexual activity is an added component to that friendship. The initiation of FWB, whereby individuals transition from platonic friends to friends who have sex with each other, requires the most discussion and negotiation of the rules to ensure both individuals are following the same code of conduct. In part, the success of FWB rests on both individuals recognizing that actions that would typically be viewed as relationship escalation behaviour in a traditional relationship (e.g., sharing personal information about one's family or friends; Honeycutt, Cantrill, & Greene, 1989; Knapp, 1984) is simply part of the friendship script of FWB (i.e., not to solidify a romantic relationship). Other behaviours, such as adding each other to Facebook, remaining friends after the sexual activity stops, and respecting one another, also suggest that this relationship is unlike the other CSRs. In our studies, previous FWB experience was especially helpful in order for participants to identify the nuanced behaviour of the FWB script. The emotional complexities of

navigating a sexual relationship with a friend may not be as readily apparent to someone without previous FWB experience.

***FWB versus FB.*** One of the most notable findings of this dissertation is the clear delineation of the FB relationship from its close relative, the FWB. Until very recently, FB has been ignored in the research literature. Researchers have recently started acknowledging the existence of FB, but typically without specific examination of the relationship per se. For example, Garcia and colleagues (2012) state in their review of the ‘hookup culture’: “On the surface, hookups are slightly different from more protracted mutual exchange arrangements for uncommitted sex, like those often referred to with colloquialisms such as ‘friends with benefits’ (FWBs), ‘booty calls,’ or ‘fuck-buddies’ (Jonason, Li, & Richardson, 2011)” (p. 163). More sophisticated exploration of FB is only noted in Stone and McCabe’s (2011) unpublished exploration of the differences between FWB and FB with non-college/university participants and within this dissertation - both suggesting that the FB is its own distinct relationship. The identification of FB as a own separate relationship illustrates the importance for researchers to pay attention to the subtle nuances that exist between these (and other) CSRs and ultimately highlights the need for each relationship to be treated as a unique relationship until additional research suggests otherwise.

### **Limitations**

This thesis research is subject to some limitations that are worth noting. Participation self-selection is a concern for sexuality studies in that individuals who choose to participate may be more sexually liberal compared to non-participants (Strassberg & Lowe, 1995; Wiederman, 1999). Specifically for Study 1, although previous experience with casual sex was not required, individuals without casual sex experience may have felt uncomfortable discussing the topic and, thus, only participants who were very comfortable discussing casual sex in an intimate

atmosphere (i.e., <8 people) may have participated. As a result, our focus group participants may have been more accepting of casual sex (e.g., 81% reported at least one casual sex partner) and thus, may not be reflective of the general public.

For Study 2 and Study 3, we focused simultaneously on all four CSRs and chose methodology that enabled us to do so, rather than focusing on one relationship at a time, as is the current common practice in the literature. Because of this, potential statistical analysis options were limited in Study 3 as the focus was on determining whether or not a particular script item was associated with any particular CSR, not the magnitude with which an item was associated with a particular CSR. Future research might focus on the identified script items using Likert-style responses in order to expand the potential statistical analyses, for example using exploratory and/or confirmatory factor analyses. Further, given that our findings suggest distinct relationships do exist from a definition and script perspective, in subsequent studies, researchers may be able to return to a focus on one specific relationship in greater detail and use more refined statistical analyses as these relationships become more entrenched in the lexicon of the casual sex research literature.

To date, the majority of research on various CSRs has been conducted with North American samples (e.g., Jonason et al., 2009; Lehmiller et al., 2011) and to a lesser degree, other Western samples (e.g., Erlandsson, Jingshede Nordvall, Ohman, & Haggstrom-Nordin, 2013; Kirkman, 2012; Stone & McCabe, 2011). For this dissertation, participants for Study 1 were recruited from the local Ottawa community either via the Integrated System for Participation in Research, posters around campus, or members of the local sex education community. Participants for Study 2 and Study 3 were recruited via the Integrated System for Participation in Research at the University of Ottawa, as well as online posts (e.g., Facebook, Twitter). It is assumed that the majority of participants were from North America. Establishing the terminology that is

predominantly used in North America will enable researchers to compare and contrast how casual sex colloquialism are used in other world regions and to determine if there are specific cultural differences.

### **Implications**

Engaging in casual sex is not a new phenomenon; evolutionary research illustrates the strategic use of short-term mating in different contexts over our ancestral past (e.g., Buss & Schmitt, 1993; Gangestad & Simpson, 2000). Most recently, patterns of casual sex have become the topic of widespread discussion and speculation – both from a societal and an academic perspective. Exploring how the findings from the current dissertation research are situated within the current sociosexual context and ultimately how these findings can shape future sexuality and relationship studies are the final steps to complete this research program. The proximal implications (i.e., culture context of casual sex, problematic language, potential fallout from mislabeling CSRs) and distal implications (i.e., placing the findings from this research program in the context of existing relationship research, society’s view on relationships, risks and benefits of casual sex) of this research program are addressed below.

#### **Proximal implications.**

***Current cultural context.*** Situating the findings from this research program into the existing cultural context of casual sex is a necessary first step. The existence of a ‘hookup culture’ is a topic that has garnered intense attention among the academic community over the past six years. According to researchers, the hookup culture is a widespread acceptance of non-committed relationships among young adults, most notably among college and university students (e.g., Claxton & van Heldmen, 2013; Garcia et al., 2012; Kalish & Kimmel, 2011). The rise of scholarly materials published on CSRs in the past decade is reflective of a shift in society’s interest in these relationships (e.g., Monto & Carey, in press).

The media has also directed a lot of attention to the notion of a hookup culture and how it has (supposedly) come to permeate the lives of young adults. For example, a recent article in *The Atlantic* (Rosin, 2012a) suggests a decline in traditional relationships among college and university students in favour of hooking up, according to Rosin's own book titled *The End of Men* (Rosin, 2012b). A simple Google search of "hookup culture" illustrates the media's lamentation of the "end of courtship." But, researchers are responding with a more rigorous examination of the existing research on relationship configurations to determine the existence of this hookup culture.

The American College Health Association's annual survey examines US first-year college and university students' number of sex partners (American College Health Association, 2013a). Of 123,078 students, 29% reported zero sexual partners in the last year. Using parallel Canadian data, 31% of 34,039 first year students reported zero sexual partners in the last year (American College Health Association, 2013b). Monto and Carey (in press) compared waves of General Social Survey data for young adults (18-25 years;  $N = 1,465$ ) between 1988-1996 and 2004-2012. Contrary to the media's presentation of young adults' sexual lives, respondents from the latter data wave did not report an increase in sexual partners since age 18, more frequent sex, or more sexual partners within the past year. Respondents from the latter wave were, however, less likely to report having a spouse or regular sexual partner and more likely to report that their most recent sex partner during the past year was a casual date/pickup or a friend. The *National Surveys of Sexual Attitudes and Lifestyles* (Natsal) combines data from England, Scotland, and Wales regarding sexual behaviour and attitudes (Mercer et al., 2013). Recent data from Natsal's third wave suggest changes in sexual behaviour between the three data waves (1990-1991, 1999-2000, 2010-2012) including a decrease in vaginal intercourse frequency and an increase in oral and anal sex experience. Contrary to the media attention related to acquiring new (casual sex) partners, the authors report that general patterns of sexual behaviour were relatively stable between the three

waves suggesting that changes are likely reflective of more global changes to sexual partnerships (e.g., later age of first marriage, partners maintaining separate residences). And finally, in a commentary on the hookup culture, Wade (2013) reviewed a number of hooking up studies and suggested that it is only a select group of college/university students (i.e., the “white and wealthy”) who are participating in this hookup culture - with much less frequency than the media purports.

Amidst this hookup culture commentary, the media posits that young adults are actively choosing one of the various CSRs instead of other more traditional relationship options (e.g., a committed long-term relationship). Yet, the research scarcely supports this statement. In their exploration of the emergence of hookup culture, Heldman and Wade (2010) stated: “So, though casual sex has been a part of college life for decades, a new denigration of, disinterest in or absence of monogamous, emotionally meaningful relationships may mark the move from subcultural practice to mainstream culture.” But do we know that undergraduates are actively choosing CSRs in lieu of traditional relationships? A recent study by Garcia and colleagues (2010) posed the following question to 681 undergraduates: “At this stage of your life, would you prefer a traditional romantic relationship or an uncommitted sexual relationship?” Eighty-three percent of women and 63% of men reported they would prefer a traditional romantic relationship over an uncommitted sexual relationship. More research like this is necessary to address the media’s claim that young adults prefer CSRs over traditional committed relationships.

In-depth analyses of the hookup culture, like the studies cited here, suggest that contrary to popular belief, traditional notions of courtship have not died in favour of widespread unfettered access to “no strings attached” sex. In contrast, the traditional dating script remains relatively intact, even with the advent of new technologies that are changing the way partners initiate and manage contact (e.g., Wentland et al., 2011). So why does the commentary on hookup culture

continue to persist if these claims are unfounded? The language that is used within society to describe various relationship configurations has clearly changed. This is evident given that participants in Study 1 provided 17 different terms when asked to provide terms used to describe “casual sex relationships.” Unfortunately, researchers have not kept pace with the evolving language used to describe these dynamic relationship variations. As a result, researchers simply do not possess the terminology and associated knowledge required to ask the necessary next questions such as “How is a Fuck Buddy experienced differently compared to Friends with Benefits?” or “What happens when a Booty Call becomes too frequent?” Instead, researchers have focused almost entirely on “hookups” - a term that participants admit to purposely using because of its inherent vagueness (e.g., Lewis, Atkins, Blayney, Dent, & Kaysen, 2012) - and have inadvertently ignored the complex nuances of other CSRs. As a result, with the exception of the recent surge of research on FWBs, we have a body of literature that provides a superficial presentation of CSRs as one-time sexual encounters. Only recently have other researchers started to acknowledge the possibility that different types of CSRs exist (e.g., Stone & McCabe, 2011) and further examination is necessary (e.g., Claxton & van Heldmen, 2013).

*Measuring casual sex.* This dissertation research program demonstrates the necessity to attend to the diversity of relationships within which casual sexual activity takes place and identify further nuances outlined by the specific codes of conduct associated with each relationship. The notion of using hooking up as the umbrella term to refer to all types of CSRs and/or using CSR labels interchangeably is clearly inadequate. Researchers need to attend to the very colloquialisms that have been dismissed by some (e.g., Jonason, 2013) that parsimoniously and accurately reflect the experiences of young adults and their modern constellations of relationships. Basic information on CSRs (e.g., prevalence rates) cannot currently be gleaned from the existing literature because of significant caveats in the descriptions (or lack thereof) of uncommitted sex.

This research offers a first set of definitions that can be tested and revised if warranted with future study. Likewise, knowing that CSRs reliably differ on the basis of initiation, maintenance, and termination behaviours will allow researchers to focus on more specific aspects and determine the risk/benefit balance of various CSRs.

Furthermore, examining the specific tenants of relationship initiation will result in a higher degree of precision in identifying how common CSRs are – even among participants who do not readily acknowledge and/or admit that their relationship started as a CSR (e.g., Paul et al., 2008). Researchers exploring the various lines of relationship formation need to expand their conceptualizations of relationship initiation to include the introduction of sexual activity and the role that that sexual activity plays. Researchers can incorporate questions such as “What was the nature of your relationship when you first engaged in sexual activity?” in order to identify where sexual activity can be placed along a relationship development timeline. Including the various ways in which sexual activity exists (i.e., either as part of a developing traditional relationship or as sexual activity outside the auspices of a relationship) could result in a significant increase to the prevalence of casual sex reported in the literature. But in order for researchers to improve the measurement of sex outside the context of committed relationships, we must expand our understanding and subsequent measurement of sexual initiation in relationships. Using established definitions of these CSRs will help minimize participants’ (mis)interpretation of these emerging modern relationship types and ensure that the existing research literature is scientifically sound.

***The risks of mislabeling CSRs.*** The language used to describe CSRs has important implications outside the scientific research community. Specifically, the labels used to denote the various CSRs have important health outcomes for individuals who are personally involved with CSRs. In the present studies, FWB was the only CSR in which monogamy is a reasonable expectation – but only when both parties have had an explicit discussion and have agreed to be

monogamous with one another, as per the associated script item identified in Study 3. Otherwise, the general viewpoint is that these CSRs are not monogamous and as such, either partner must accept that the code not only enables either partner to seek out additional sexual partners for other relationships in any form, but that these behaviours are condoned. Therefore, partners engaging in any one of these types of CSRs must recognize the importance of using safer sex strategies at all times, which can be difficult in ongoing sexual relationships.

Condoms are typically reserved for sexual partners who are deemed as untrustworthy and/or 'casual.' For example, in Crosby and colleagues' (2008) study, women reported that condoms signified a lack of trust between partners. Researchers report that condom use typically ends early in the formation of new dating relationships, sometimes as early as 21 days (e.g., Fortenberry, Wanzhu, Hareziak, Katz, & Orr, 2002; Foulkes, Pettigrew, Livingston, & Niccolai, 2009). Diligently using condoms may prove to be difficult for partners in an ongoing CSR that spans weeks or months because there is an illusion that this person is known, and thus, safe and trustworthy. Specifically, the repetitive nature of BC and FB may complicate one's judgment of the casualness of the situation and the partner, making it seem that they are regular (i.e., trusted) sexual partners, for whom condoms are no longer necessary. Improved health education regarding the importance of condom use in ongoing CSRs is vital in order to address some of the fallacies that individuals use (i.e., condoms are only required with new sexual partners).

Improving health education regarding condom use within the context of FWB is especially important. Part of the FWB script is the discussion of the relationship parameters including what is going on between the two individuals and the negotiation of condom use within the FWB. The friendship component seen in the FWB (and not in the other CSRs) results in a more detailed conversation including whether or not the FWB partners are having sex with other individuals and resultant patterns of condom use, both inside and outside the context of the FWB. VanderDrift

and colleagues (2012) recruited 181 women and 65 men currently in a FWB from online advertisements to explore patterns of condom use. Sixty percent of individuals reported that their FWB was exclusive, 23% reported multiple-FWB arrangements, and 14% reported a romantic relationship. FWB partners reported using condoms most of the time, as indicated by a score that was significantly higher than the midpoint on the condom use scale 1 (*never*) to 9 (*every time*). Participants in VanderDrift and colleagues' study reported that they forego condoms when there is a strong friendship component to the FWB. It is unknown, however, if condoms are used with all of one's FWB partners.

Interestingly, participants in Study 1 stated that individuals who have unprotected sex outside of the main FWB partnership must disclose this information because it is a transgression against the FWB script to intentionally misrepresent your sexual behaviour (due to the pre-existing friendship between these individuals). Engaging in unprotected intercourse with others and not disclosing this would be illustrative of a FB because 'real' friends would not withhold this information. Again, the element of a true and meaningful friendship is an important distinguishing quality between FWB and FB, highlighting the need to use precise language when measuring these two relationships. Furthermore, the negotiation of condoms as a FWB behavioural script item is important to note from a gender perspective. For women, engaging in FWB may be a double bind: seek a FWB for friendship and/or emotional reasons (e.g., companionship, protection) as some researchers suggest (e.g., Lehmler et al., 2011; McGinty, Knox, & Zusman, 2007), but incur increased STI risks due to having unprotected sex with a friend (who may or may not be engaging in unprotected intercourse with others). The negotiation of condoms within the parameters of a FWB is clearly complex.

Health professionals who deliver a broad range of counseling services will benefit directly from learning the terminology used to describe casual sex configurations (i.e., definitions and

behavioural scripts). Health professionals can illustrate their up-to-date knowledge by correctly using the current CSR terminology with their clients which may increase the trust a client has in their provider. Increasing trust levels may result in clients disclosing more information about their current sexual activities and potential lack of condom use, even if the client does not deem it ‘unsafe’ due to the type of sexual partner (i.e., a “friend”). More specifically, by using the correct terminology, health professionals can quickly assess their clients’ risk levels by identifying which type of CSRs their clients are engaging in and subsequently tailor specific health services to those risks. A short screening tool could be implemented so that health professionals can quickly assess what type of casual sex partnership is taking place (e.g., Were you friends with this person before engaging in sexual activity? Is the sexual activity ongoing?) and what services are required. Health professionals who know the accurate terminology are uniquely placed to quickly identify the risks their clients are exposed to and help their clients mitigate those risks.

### **Distal implications.**

*Placing current research in the context of existing relationship literature.* The current casual sex literature is fraught with problems that stem from how researchers conceptualize CSRs and subsequently how these relationships are then presented to participants. This is reflective of a larger problem within the sexuality and relationship research because a clear definition of a ‘relationship’ is virtually non-existent. For example, the *Handbook of Relationship Initiation* (Sprecher, Wenzel, & Harvey, 2008) does not provide a definition of relationship even though the edited book is entirely dedicated to exploring the formation of new relationships. This definitional oversight is not uncommon in the relationship literature. Some relationship researchers use a certain amount of time in a relationship (e.g., together longer than x months) to denote being in a relationship (e.g., Mark & Murray, 2012; Montesi et al., 2013) while other researchers allow participants to self-identify what being in a relationship means to them (e.g., Hendrick, Hendrick,

& Adler, 1988; MacNeil & Byers, 2005). Allowing participants to self-identify relationships and associated concepts (e.g., monogamy, cheating, sexual satisfaction) is not good scientific practice because it leaves abstract concepts open to participant interpretation and researchers cannot be assured of the subsequent validity of the results.

The majority of casual sex researchers have focused on hookups, which has debilitated the growth of the literature beyond the most surface exploration of casual sex (i.e., hookups, FWB). Recently, the lead author on one of the seminal casual sex papers (i.e., Paul et al., 2000) stated that hookups are “short-lived and intense sexual exploration apart from emotional connection that rarely builds beyond one or two ‘steamy’ meetings” (Paul et al., 2008, p. 375). This statement, which most closely matches a ONS according to the present dissertation research, fails to capture the emotional complexity of a CSR that may span weeks or months (i.e., BC, FB, FWB) and which may become complicated to navigate over time. It is necessary for researchers to move beyond the failsafe of deeming a hookup as a singular sexual encounter (e.g., ONS) devoid of the complications that are associated with a more long-term relationship, such as the negotiation of condom use or how the individuals communicate. Globally, researchers are at a critical juncture in terms of how “relationships” are defined. The findings from this dissertation challenge researchers to expand their connotations of relationships beyond a dichotomy, which oversimplifies relationships as either “committed” or “casual” and ignores the multitude of rich variation that exists between.

Expanding relationship conceptualizations will have a crucial impact on the relationship literature in general. Mononormativity is described by Farvid and Braun (2013) as the morally superior importance placed on the monogamous dyad above and beyond all other relationship variations. Treating the traditional committed relationship as the gold standard, which everyone should strive to achieve, is a limited view of the variety and richness associated with different

relationship configurations. Broadening relationship conceptions and theories will open the gates to additional research and exploration of relationship configurations that are currently considered “alternative.” The term alternative, although not blatantly negative, has an underlying implication that the monogamous dyad is the standard relationship type and all other configurations are suboptimal (e.g., polyamorous configurations, open relationships). Conley and colleagues (2013) reviewed the social institution of monogamy and suggest that the purported advantages of monogamy (e.g., increased family and child support, lowered STI risk) may not be accurate given infidelity and divorce rates across North America. Rates of non-paternity also challenge the advantages of monogamy (e.g., Bellis, 2005; Neale, Neale, & Sullivan, 2002). Additionally, the attention given to low libido and erectile dysfunction from a research and medical perspective (e.g., Lauman, Paik, & Rosen, 1999) suggests that alternative relationship formations may be beneficial for those who struggle within the confines of long-term, sexually monogamous relationships. Researchers need to be encouraged to embrace non-traditional relationship types into the mainstream relationship research. Exploring the variety of potential relationship options (e.g., mate swapping, polyamory) will help researchers expand how all relationships are initially defined, how they are subsequently researched, and what we can deduce from the resultant literature.

*Sex research versus relationship research.* Six years ago I embarked on the current exploration of CSRs with one specific goal: create sound definitions of CSRs. Like many graduate students, I immersed myself in the body of literature surrounding casual sex, hooking up, relationship initiation, and any specific CSRs that appeared within this body of research. In an effort to disseminate my preliminary results, I have attended a number of sexuality and relationship conferences but I am continuously surprised at the lack of overlap between these two bodies of literature. While attending the *International Academy for Relationship Research*

conference in 2012, I attended dozens of relationship talks, yet there was a dearth of sexuality-specific talks. Furthermore, there was a conspicuous absence of sexuality content within the relationship talks. The situation may improve however, as the *Society for Personality and Social Psychology* will hold the first sexuality pre-conference at their annual conference in February 2014. Recently, Impett, Muise, and Peragine (2014) critiqued how sexuality and relationship research is conducted separately with seemingly few attempts to use one body of literature to inform the other. Researchers are seemingly reticent to acknowledge the role that sexuality plays in relationship initiation, formation, and/or maintenance. Yet, in order to understand how the findings from this dissertation research map back onto the larger body of relationship research, we must reframe how we conceptualize, define, and subsequently measure (all) relationships.

As discussed previously, the literature provides vague and/or abstract definitions of relationships, at best. As a result, we have a limited understanding of how romantic relationships differ from sexual relationships. CSRs are typically considered as a sub-type of relationships that lack the longevity and commitment seen in traditional relationships. If we adopt broader definitions of relationships, we can examine the specific ways in which various relationship configurations (e.g., ongoing CSRs, polyamorous relationships, extra dyadic relationships) parallel traditional relationships and identify how they differ. For example, by taking a top-down approach, we can begin to plot the trajectories of a new relationship incorporating different pathways, such as how partners meet each other, how they get to know each other, what factors are used to determine if this person is a potential short-term (i.e., casual) or long-term (i.e., romantic) partner or not a potential partner at all.

Transcending a ground-level approach provides an opportunity to examine the overall relationship literature on a macro level and ultimately determine how these CSRs are situated within the larger body of relationship literature. We can begin to plot the scripts for various

relationship configurations to determine how the range of relationship options available parallel or differ from one another. A more comprehensive understanding of relationships that highlights the intersection of relationships and sexuality will benefit researchers by drawing on the vast research areas that currently exist separately within these research literatures. This dissertation research set out to identify definitions of CSRs - but by answering this question, a much larger question has emerged: what is a relationship?

***Risks and benefits of casual sex.*** Engaging in casual sex is considered a high-risk behaviour (Downing-Matibag & Geisinger, 2009; Hoyle, Fejfar, & Miller, 2000). However, it is typically engaging in sexual behaviour with a new sexual partner that is deemed as “risky.” Following this logic, of the four relationships examined in this program of research, the ONS represents the most risky CSR because it is typically occurs with someone who is a stranger or a brief acquaintance. For women, there are additional risks, such as getting pregnant or being exposed to sexual and/or physical violence. Notwithstanding interpersonal violence, engaging in an ongoing CSR with a known individual is less risky as the individuals are known to one another at the outset and may include some type of friendship (e.g., FB, FWB). Outside of the physiological risks of casual sex, reputation-guarding may be the primary reason why women refrain from engaging in sex outside the context of a committed romantic relationship (e.g., Regan & Dreyer, 1999; Sakaluk & Milhausen, 2012; Weaver & Herold, 2000).

Interestingly, engaging in sexual activity within the confines of a traditional monogamous relationship can also be risky, but it is considered a culturally accepted risky behaviour. From an evolutionary perspective, a failed partnership can be very costly if no offspring are produced because the time, energy, and resources may have been better directed towards finding an alternate mate with whom to reproduce. For a woman, being pregnant and/or having young children may be a financial burden to undertake as a single mother. Conversely, being in a

partnership with a male may make some women financially dependent on their partners. For partnered men, resources directed to one mate (with whom he may or may not reproduce) may hinder his capacity to use resources to attract alternative and/or additional reproductively viable mates. Finally, a partnered male may be cuckolded into raising offspring that are not biologically related to him.

There are also a number of reproductive costs incurred if the relationship is dissolved. Men and women with offspring from former partnerships may be considered less desirable mates because of responsibilities to their offspring and potentially complicated interactions with former mates. Specifically, the man may be financially responsible for his former mate and/or their offspring. This may limit his ability to use resources to attract new mates, especially in the context of attracting young, reproductively viable women if his financial status is compromised due to child and/or spousal support. For women following a dissolved partnership, the loss of a male partner may have negative financial repercussions. The woman may also be less attractive to future mates if she is beyond her reproductively viable years. In summary, devoting all of one's reproductive energy into one partnership (e.g., all eggs in one basket) is a mating strategy with a reproductively costly failure rate. On the other hand, taking advantage of short-term mating opportunities (i.e., many eggs in multiple baskets) may be a more reproductively viable mating strategy for some.

What about the benefits of casual sex? Looking beyond the lines of evolutionary research (e.g., accessing good genes, ensuring survival of one's genes), the benefits of engaging in casual sex are often under-examined in the literature. Specifically, the older age of first marriage among North American adults (i.e., 28 for women, 31 for men; Copen, Daniels, Vespa, & Mosher, 2012; Statistics Canada, 2011) is evidence of an "extended adolescence" period. Arnett (2000) argues that this developmental period affords young adults with extensive freedom to explore different

aspects of adult life choices, such as post-secondary and/or vocational training, residential configurations (e.g., living with roommates, cohabitation with a romantic partner), and various relationship formations. From a relationship perspective, this extended period of adolescence also provides the opportunity for young adults to experiment with different relationship types, ranging from any type of long-term commitment to one-time sexual encounters (i.e., ONS) with few long-term ramifications (Katfish & Kimmel, 2011). In this manner, a typical 30 year old is likely more sexually and relationship savvy than his/her older cohorts. Specifically, individuals who are exiting the emergent adulthood period have likely garnered many relationship and sexual skills that they can take with them to their future relationships, ranging from good interpersonal communication patterns to how to be a good sexual partner.

### **Future Directions**

A number of important lines of additional research can be identified based on this dissertation research. Most importantly, further research will be needed to confirm the definitions and scripts put forth for these four CSRs in young adults. However, an important next step will be to determine if these definitions and scripts can be confirmed with adults 30 years and older. This will clarify if the cultural pervasiveness of these CSRs extends beyond the emergent adult population (e.g., other older adult populations, divorcees). Next, researchers can use similar methodology (i.e., initial qualitative exploration followed by quantitative confirmation) to identify additional types of CSRs, both in terms of definitions and behavioural scripts. By adopting this stepwise methodology, we can be confident that the terminology used by researchers in the academic literature maps onto participants' own conceptualizations of the very relationship terms under investigation. This step will increase the scientific rigor of future casual sex literature by ensuring all researchers utilize explicitly developed and described terminology.

Once these CSR definitions (and others) are further validated, researchers can begin to explore various facets of the definitions and scripts. Researchers can experimentally manipulate various components of the definitions (e.g., presence of alcohol and/or drugs for ONS; pre-existing friendship for FWB) to determine the most essential elements of CSR definitions. Similarly, researchers could further confirm the behavioural script items by presenting violations to the various codes of conducts. For example, a list of items could be presented as belonging to BC and include a script behaviour such as “These individuals attend family functions together.” These types of validation checks will both confirm the elements currently included in the definitions and scripts and potentially strengthen the scripts if elements can be added or removed.

Furthermore, these manipulation checks can be examined across men and women in order to determine if there are gender differences and if so, identify the patterns of gender differences that exist. As the costs of casual sex are typically higher for women, women have a vested interest in identifying subtle transgressions against the codes of conduct. Additional research may determine if women engage in behaviours to help identify which specific CSR is occurring in an effort to identify associated risks. For example, researchers could ask men and women who are currently engaging in a FWB to identify who initiated the discussion at the beginning of the relationship (e.g., “What’s going on between us?”). These types of research inquiries may help researchers determine if women engage in transgressions against the code (e.g., suggesting a BC stay overnight) in order to assess a partner’s reactive behaviour to ultimately help them identify the type of CSR. If so, these future studies will lend support to our findings that women pay acute attention to nuanced behaviours within the context of various CSRs due to the costs of women engaging in casual sex and perhaps also shed light on motivations of men and women to engage in CSR.

Researchers who want to further explore one of these four relationships can return to the standard practice of studying one relationship in detail now that they have been initially confirmed. By doing this, researchers can manipulate any one of the main components (i.e., presence of alcohol and/or drugs; how the individuals meet; frequency of contact; nature of sexual activity). Further, researchers can confirm the findings of the behavioural script items by asking participants to identify the strength with which the 62 behavioural script items are associated with any one CSR in particular (a process that was not possible in the present study because it would have involved participants answering 248 Likert-style questions). Since we are proposing a new CSR to the casual sex literature, the FB, this particular CSR warrants specific research attention in the future. Additional research is needed to confirm the existence of this CSR as a stand-alone relationship that is separate from FWB.

## **Conclusion**

The purpose of this dissertation research was to identify scientifically sound definitions of CSRs. Starting with an atheoretical approach provided increased utility by allowing the research program to unfold inductively starting with an initial qualitative exploration during which participants identified the most popular types of CSRs. Furthermore, this is the first study to test the definitions of multiple CSRs simultaneously in order to identify the specific ways in which these relationships are similar and different from one another. The scientific rigor of the existing casual sex literature is thus improved and researchers can confidently use the resultant definitions of these four CSRs (and their respective scripts) and create a more sophisticated lexicon of casual sex.

More broadly, the underpinnings of this dissertation research highlight the need for researchers to expand their understanding of how CSRs fit into the spectrum of modern sexual relationship options available today and more generally, how these relationships fit into the

general relationship literature. Although the CSRs under investigation may be culturally most relevant to young adults, the pervasiveness with which these relationships exist in society suggests that we must broaden our research questions to be inclusive to all ages, sexual orientations, and lifestyles. Researchers, relationship and sex alike, must continue to seize opportunities to make our research valid and thus, relevant, as relationships ebb and flow preceding and/or following waves of societal changes. In addition to expanding the ways that researchers structurally present relationships to participants, so should we, as researchers, challenge ourselves to expand the ways we conceptualize various relationship configurations to ensure we give proper and adequate recognition to relationship types that fall outside the traditional monogamous dyad.

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**Appendix A**

Research Ethics Board Approval



**Université d'Ottawa** **University of Ottawa**  
 Service de subventions de recherche et d'éthologie      Research Grants and Ethics Services

## Ethics Approval Notice

### Social Science and Humanities REB

#### Principal Investigator / Supervisor / Co-investigator(s) / Student(s)

<u>First Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>	<u>Role</u>
		Social Sciences / Psychology	Principal Investigator
		Social Sciences / Psychology	Co-investigator

**File Number:** 06-09-09

**Type of Project:** Professor

**Title:** Defining Casual Sex Relationships

<b>Approval Date (mm/dd/yyyy)</b>	<b>Expiry Date (mm/dd/yyyy)</b>	<b>Approval Type</b>
08/04/2009	08/03/2010	Ia

(Ia: Approval, Ib: Approval for initial stage only)

#### Special Conditions / Comments:

N/A



**Université d'Ottawa** **University of Ottawa**  
Service de subventions de recherche et déontologie      Research Grants and Ethics Services

This is to confirm that the University of Ottawa Research Ethics Board identified above, which operates in accordance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement and other applicable laws and regulations in Ontario, has examined and approved the application for ethical approval for the above named research project as of the Ethics Approval Date indicated for the period above and subject to the conditions listed the section above entitled "Special Conditions / Comments".

During the course of the study the protocol may not be modified without prior written approval from the REB except when necessary to remove subjects from immediate endangerment or when the modification(s) pertain to only administrative or logistical components of the study (e.g. change of telephone number). Investigators must also promptly alert the REB of any changes which increase the risk to participant(s), any changes which considerably affect the conduct of the project, all unanticipated and harmful events that occur, and new information that may negatively affect the conduct of the project and safety of the participant(s). Modifications to the project, information/consent documentation, and/or recruitment documentation, should be submitted to this office for approval using the "Modification to research project" form available at:  
[http://www.rges.uottawa.ca/ethics/application\\_dwn.asp](http://www.rges.uottawa.ca/ethics/application_dwn.asp)

Please submit an annual status report to the Protocol Officer 4 weeks before the above-referenced expiry date to either close the file or request a renewal of ethics approval. This document can be found at:  
[http://www.rges.uottawa.ca/ethics/application\\_dwn.asp](http://www.rges.uottawa.ca/ethics/application_dwn.asp)

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Ethics Office at extension 5841 or by e-mail at: [ethics@uOttawa.ca](mailto:ethics@uOttawa.ca).

**Signature:**

Social Sciences and Humanities REB



**Université d'Ottawa** **University of Ottawa**  
 Bureau d'éthique et d'intégrité de la recherche Office of Research Ethics and Integrity

## Ethics Approval Notice

### Social Science and Humanities REB

#### Principal Investigator / Supervisor / Co-investigator(s) / Student(s)

<u>First Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>	<u>Role</u>
		Social Sciences / Psychology	Principal Investigator
		Social Sciences / Psychology	Co-investigator

**File Number:** 06-10-24

**Type of Project:** Professor

**Title:** Validating Definitions of Casual Sex Relationships

<b>Approval Date (mm/dd/yyyy)</b>	<b>Expiry Date (mm/dd/yyyy)</b>	<b>Approval Type</b>
08/10/2010	08/09/2011	Ia

**(Ia: Approval, Ib: Approval for initial stage only)**

#### Special Conditions / Comments:

N/A



**Université d'Ottawa** **University of Ottawa**  
Bureau d'éthique et d'intégrité de la recherche Office of Research Ethics and Integrity


This is to confirm that the University of Ottawa Research Ethics Board identified above, which operates in accordance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement and other applicable laws and regulations in Ontario, has examined and approved the application for ethical approval for the above named research project as of the Ethics Approval Date indicated for the period above and subject to the conditions listed the section above entitled "Special Conditions / Comments".

During the course of the study the protocol may not be modified without prior written approval from the REB except when necessary to remove subjects from immediate endangerment or when the modification(s) pertain to only administrative or logistical components of the study (e.g. change of telephone number). Investigators must also promptly alert the REB of any changes which increase the risk to participant(s), any changes which considerably affect the conduct of the project, all unanticipated and harmful events that occur, and new information that may negatively affect the conduct of the project and safety of the participant(s). Modifications to the project, information/consent documentation, and/or recruitment documentation, should be submitted to this office for approval using the "Modification to research project" form available at:  
[http://www.rges.uottawa.ca/ethics/application\\_dwn.asp](http://www.rges.uottawa.ca/ethics/application_dwn.asp)

Please submit an annual status report to the Protocol Officer 4 weeks before the above-referenced expiry date to either close the file or request a renewal of ethics approval. This document can be found at:  
[http://www.rges.uottawa.ca/ethics/application\\_dwn.asp](http://www.rges.uottawa.ca/ethics/application_dwn.asp)

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Ethics Office at extension 5841 or by e-mail at: [ethics@uOttawa.ca](mailto:ethics@uOttawa.ca).

**Signature:**

  
Présidente du CÉR en Sciences sociales et humanités

**Appendix B**

Notices of Study

Study 1 Recruitment poster

# **Friends with Benefits? Booty Call? One-Night Stand?**

We want to know how people use  
these labels

Come participate in a 60 minute group  
discussion

No experience necessary

You must be between 18-24 years old and English  
must be your first language

Email \_\_\_\_\_@uottawa.ca to find out  
how to participate

This project is being conducted by the  
University of Ottawa's Human Sexuality Research Laboratory  
This study has been approved by the University of Ottawa's  
Research Ethics Board

## Study 1 Information letter – non-expert

### **Validating Definitions of Casual Sex Relationships**

My name is Jocelyn Wentland and I am a PhD student in the School of Psychology at the University of Ottawa and a member of the Human Sexuality Research Laboratory.

Our research lab is conducting research on how different types of casual sex relationships are defined. To date, there has been very little research on the terms used to describe these different relationships. Unfortunately, many researchers use the term casual sex as a blanket term for all types of casual sex relationships.

The purpose of this study is to create specific definitions of these different types of casual sex relationships. For example, what is the difference between a 'friends with benefits' relationship and a 'booty call?'

You do not have to have experience with any of these casual sex relationships in order to participate. However, in order to participate:

**You must be at least 18 years old and no older than 24 years old**  
**English must be your first language**

If you choose to participate, you will take part in 1 focus group discussion that will take approximately 60 to 90 minutes. Because this is a group discussion with other people, you cannot remain anonymous because you will be working as a group to create definitions.

You may choose to participate in a focus group with both men and women or a focus group with only your gender (men only/women only). The focus groups will be tape-recorded, but we will never reveal your name in any of our research.

You will also be asked to complete a brief, anonymous, and confidential background information sheet. The information gathered will be presented in combined group format to describe all participants of the focus groups (there are 3 other focus groups aimed at young adults). The background information will not be connected with the focus group results.

If you have any questions or would like more detail regarding this study, please email \_\_\_\_\_@uottawa.ca or leave a message at the Human Sexuality Research Laboratory at the University of Ottawa at 613-562-5800 ext. \_\_\_\_\_.

If this is something you would be interested in participating in, please email \_\_\_\_\_@uottawa.ca to set up a time when you are available for at least 90 minutes to participate in the focus group.

Thank you,

Jocelyn Wentland, MSc  
PhD Student  
School of Psychology  
University of Ottawa

## Study 1 Information letter – expert

### **Validating Definitions of Casual Sex Relationships**

My name is Jocelyn Wentland and I am a PhD student in the School of Psychology at the University of Ottawa and a member of the Human Sexuality Research Laboratory.

Our research lab is conducting research on how different types of casual sex relationships are defined. To date, there has been very little research on the terms used to describe these different relationships. Unfortunately, many researchers use the term casual sex as a blanket term for all types of casual sex relationships.

The purpose of this study is to create specific definitions of these different types of casual sex relationships. For example, what is the difference between a ‘friends with benefits’ relationship and a ‘booty call?’

We would like to have expert opinions on this topic. Given the experience and background of your work, we would like to invite you to participate in this study.

You do not have to have experience with any of these casual sex relationships in order to participate. However, in order to participate, **you must speak English as a first language.**

If you choose to participate, you will take part in 1 focus group discussion that will take approximately 60 to 90 minutes. Because this is a group discussion, you will NOT remain anonymous.

This focus group will take place with other experts in the field and may include men and women. The focus groups will be tape-recorded, but we will never reveal your name or the name of your organization in any of our research.

You will also be asked to complete a brief, anonymous, and confidential background information sheet. The information gathered will be presented in combined group format to describe all participants of the focus groups (there are 3 other focus groups aimed at young adults). The background information will not be connected with the focus group results.

If you have any questions, would like more detail regarding this study, or if you would like to participate, please contact the study coordinator at \_\_\_\_@uottawa.ca or leave a message at the Human Sexuality Research Laboratory at the University of Ottawa at 613-562-5800 ext. 2220.

Thank you,

Jocelyn Wentland, MSc  
PhD Student  
School of Psychology  
University of Ottawa

Study 1 Debriefing sheet

### **Defining Casual Sex Relationships**

## **Thank You!**

Your participation in our study is greatly appreciated. The purpose of this study is create specific definitions of casual sex relationships

If you have any questions or would like any further information about this research, please contact:

\_\_\_\_\_  
School of Psychology  
University of Ottawa  
613 562 5800 ext \_\_\_\_\_

or

Jocelyn Wentland  
School of Psychology  
University of Ottawa  
613 562 5800 ext \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_@uottawa.ca

**Please see the attached sheet for a list of referral individuals and organizations if you need to talk to someone**

## Information and Resource Sheet

Human Sexuality Laboratory  
University of Ottawa



## Feuille d'informations et de ressources

Laboratoire de sexualité humaine  
Université d'Ottawa

→ To talk to someone immediately,  
you can call the **Ottawa Distress  
Centre** phone-line: **613-238-3311**  
→ *Pour parler à quelqu'un  
immédiatement, vous pouvez rejoindre  
Téléaide Outaouais: 613-741-6433*  
→ **Therapists in the Ottawa-  
Gatineau region treating sexual  
difficulties:**  
→ *Les thérapeutes dans la région d'Ottawa*

The director of the Human Sexuality  
Laboratory at the University of Ottawa /  
*La directrice du laboratoire de sexualité  
humaine à l'université d'Ottawa:*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Tel.: 613-562-5800, ext \_\_\_\_

Email:

[www.socialsciences.uottawa.ca/hslab-labosh/index.asp](http://www.socialsciences.uottawa.ca/hslab-labosh/index.asp)

### **Gilmour Psychological Services**

437 Gilmour St.  
Ottawa, ON K2P 0R5  
Tel.: 613-230-4709

### **Centre for Psychological Services** University of Ottawa

Vanier Hall, 6th Floor, 11 Marie Curie  
Ottawa, ON K1N 6N5  
Tel.: 613-562-5289

(Note: Doctoral students provide service under the  
supervision of faculty members. A sliding fee scale is  
in place. *Les étudiants doctoraux en formation  
fournissent les services sous la direction des membres  
de la faculté. Les frais peuvent être modifiés en  
fonction des moyens financiers de chacun*)

### **The Limerence Centre - For Sexual and Relationship Therapy**

190 Bronson Ave  
Ottawa, ON K1R 6H4  
Tel.: 613-231-5708  
Internet: [www.limerencecentre.com](http://www.limerencecentre.com)

### **Clinic of consulting psychologists**

Services provided by male & female psychologists in  
English, French, & Chinese / *Les services seront  
donner par des hommes ou femmes en Français,  
Anglais, et Chinois*  
2442 St. Joseph Boul., Suite 104  
Orleans, ON K1C 1G1  
Tel.: 613-834-8452

Ottawa Couple and Family Institute  
1869 Carling Avenue, Suite 201  
Ottawa, ON K2H 1E6  
Tel.: 613-722-5122 x303

## Study 2 Information letter students



uOttawa

L'Université canadienne  
Canada's university

### **Validating Definitions of Casual Sex Relationships**

My name is Jocelyn Wentland and I am a PhD student in the School of Psychology at the University of Ottawa and a member of the Human Sexuality Research Laboratory.

Our research lab is conducting research on how different types of casual sex relationships are defined. To date, there has been very little research on the terms used to describe these different relationships. Unfortunately, many researchers use the term casual sex as a blanket term for all types of casual sex relationships.

The purpose of this study is to reach agreement on various definitions of these different types of casual sex relationships. For example, how is a 'friends with benefits' relationship defined compared to a 'booty call' relationship?

Sexual activity is best carried out in a safe manner and this study also seeks to investigate the current knowledge of individuals concerning sexually transmitted infections and means to prevent these.

If you are completing this questionnaire for credit via the Integrated System of Participation in Research, you will be asked to submit your 5 digit participant code in order to receive credit. This code is not linked to your name and the researchers do not have access to your name. You will receive 1 point for your participation in this online study.

**This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the University of Ottawa Research Ethics Board. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, please contact:**

**Protocol Officer for Ethics in Research**

Telephone: 613 562 5800 ext. \_\_\_\_

University of Ottawa  
Tabaret Hall - 550 Cumberland  
Ottawa, ON K1N 6N5

If you choose to participate in this study, you will complete an online questionnaire indicating your attitude about and rate your agreement on various definitions of casual sex relationships, and your knowledge of safe sex activities.

You do not have to have experience with any of these casual sex relationships in order to participate. However, in order to participate:

**You must be at least 18 years old**

If you choose to participate, you will take part in 1 online questionnaire. The completion of the questionnaire will take you approximately 20 minutes to complete.

The answers you provide on the questionnaire will remain both ANONYMOUS and CONFIDENTIAL.

If you have any questions or would like more detail regarding this study before deciding to participate, please email \_\_\_\_@uottawa.ca or leave a message at the Human Sexuality Research Laboratory at the University of Ottawa at 613-562-5800 ext. \_\_\_\_.

If you would like to participate, please click “Next” and you will be taken to the online consent form.

(NEXT)

Thank you.

## Study 2 Information letter community



uOttawa

L'Université canadienne  
Canada's university

### **Validating Definitions of Casual Sex Relationships**

My name is Jocelyn Wentland and I am a PhD student in the School of Psychology at the University of Ottawa and a member of the Human Sexuality Research Laboratory.

Our research lab is conducting research on how different types of casual sex relationships are defined. To date, there has been very little research on the terms used to describe these different relationships. Unfortunately, many researchers use the term casual sex as a blanket term for all types of casual sex relationships.

The purpose of this study is to reach agreement on various definitions of these different types of casual sex relationships. For example, how is a 'friends with benefits' relationship defined compared to a 'booty call' relationship?

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**This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the University of Ottawa Research Ethics Board. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, please contact:**

**Protocol Officer for Ethics in Research**

Telephone: 613 562 5800 ext. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
University of Ottawa  
Tabaret Hall - 550 Cumberland  
Ottawa, ON K1N 6N5

If you choose to participate in this study, you will complete an online questionnaire indicating your attitude about and rate your agreement on various definitions of casual sex relationships, and your knowledge of safe sex activities. You do not have to have experience with any of these casual sex relationships in order to participate. However, in order to participate:

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If you choose to participate, you will take part in 1 online questionnaire. The completion of the questionnaire will take you approximately 20 minutes to complete.

The answers you provide on the questionnaire will remain both ANONYMOUS and CONFIDENTIAL.

If you have any questions or would like more detail regarding this study before deciding to participate, please email \_\_\_\_@uottawa.ca or leave a message at the Human Sexuality Research Laboratory at the University of Ottawa at 613-562-5800 ext. \_\_\_\_.

If you would like to participate, please click "Next" and you will be taken to the online consent form.

(NEXT)

Thank you.

Study 2 Community online recruitment

## **What is a Booty Call?**

## **Is it different than a Friend with Benefits?**

**We are researchers from the University of Ottawa who are trying to learn about current definitions of various casual sex relationships.**

**Help us to answer these questions by following the link below to participate in a 15-minute survey.**

**-Link here-**

## Study 2 Community email recruitment script

Hi there,

We are researchers from the University of Ottawa studying casual sex relationships. We are interested in how people define various types of casual sex relationships.

We would like to invite you to take part in a brief online survey to help us learn about definitions of casual sex relationships. The survey takes about 15 minutes to complete and is anonymous.

Please follow the link below for more information. Also please forward this email to other people on your contact list who might be interested in participating.

-Link here-

Thank you,  
Jocelyn

Jocelyn Wentland  
School of Psychology  
University of Ottawa  
613 562 5800 ext \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_@uottawa.ca

Study 2 Online survey exit page

## Thank you for your interest in our study

If you have any questions or would like any further information about this research, please contact:

\_\_\_\_\_  
 School of Psychology  
 University of Ottawa  
 613 562 5800 ext \_\_\_\_\_

or

Jocelyn Wentland  
 School of Psychology  
 University of Ottawa  
 613 562 5800 ext \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_@uottawa.ca

### Below is a list of referral individuals and organizations if you need to talk to someone

→ To talk to someone immediately, you can call the **Ottawa Distress Centre** phone-line: **613-238-3311**

→ *Pour parler à quelqu'un immédiatement, vous pouvez rejoindre **Téléaide Outaouais: 613-741-6433***

→ **Therapists in the Ottawa-Gatineau region treating sexual difficulties:**

→ Les thérapeutes dans la région d'Ottawa-Gatineau traitant les difficultés sexuelles :

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Tel.: 613-562-5800, ext \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_@uottawa.ca

Internet: [www.socialsciences.uottawa.ca/hslab-labosh/index.asp](http://www.socialsciences.uottawa.ca/hslab-labosh/index.asp)

**Gilmour Psychological Services**

437 Gilmour St.  
Ottawa, ON K2P 0R5  
Tel.: 613-230-4709

**Centre for Psychological Services** University of Ottawa

Vanier Hall, 6th Floor, 11 Marie Curie  
Ottawa, ON K1N 6N5  
Tel.: 613-562-5289

(Note: Doctoral students provide service under the supervision of faculty members. A sliding fee scale is in place. *Les étudiants doctoraux en formation fournissent les services sous la direction des membres de la faculté. Les frais peuvent être modifiés en fonction des moyens financiers de chacun*)

**The Limerence Centre - For Sexual and Relationship Therapy**

190 Bronson Ave  
Ottawa, ON K1R 6H4  
Tel.: 613-231-5708  
Internet: [www.limerencecentre.com](http://www.limerencecentre.com)

**Clinic of consulting psychologists**

Services provided by male & female psychologists in English, French, & Chinese / *Les services seront donner par des hommes ou femmes en Français, Anglais, et Chinois*  
2442 St. Joseph Boul., Suite 104  
Orleans, ON K1C 1G1  
Tel.: 613-834-8452

## **Appendix C**

Consent forms

Study 1  
**Definitions of Casual Sex Relationships**

**Consent Form**

You are being asked to participate in a research study conducted by the Human Sexuality Research Laboratory. This project is being conducted by \_\_\_\_\_ (Associate Professor, University of Ottawa) and Jocelyn Wentland (PhD student, University of Ottawa).

**If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact:**

Dr. \_\_\_\_\_ (\_\_\_\_@uottawa.ca), 613 562 5800 ext \_\_\_\_  
Jocelyn Wentland (\_\_\_\_@uottawa.ca), 613 562 5800 ext \_\_\_\_\_

The current study is designed to investigate how people define different types of casual sex relationships. As a participant, you are being asked to participate in 1 focus group discussion. The focus group may range from 60-90 minutes.

Before the focus group discussions begin, you will be asked to provide some personal information, such as how old you are and how many sexual intercourse partners you have had. This information will **NOT** be connected with your comments in the focus group discussion and you will remain anonymous.

The purpose of collecting this information is to determine the background demographics of our focus group participants.

If you feel uncomfortable with any of the questions either in the background questionnaire or in the focus group, you may refuse to answer or discontinue participation AT ANY TIME.

If you need to leave before the focus group finishes, you may wait to talk to the focus group facilitator after the meeting or contact them after the meeting. You may also contact Dr \_\_\_\_\_, who is a licensed psychologist, whom you can speak to at no charge.

Regardless if you complete the focus group, you will be given a list of individuals and organizations that you may contact should any negative feelings arise.

If you choose to participate, all of the information you share in the background questionnaire will remain anonymous.

Your data from the focus group will not remain anonymous because this is a group discussion with other individuals. However, all of your information from the focus group

will be kept confidential. No identifying information will be connected to the comments or responses you make during the focus group or from the background questionnaire.

Upon completion of the focus group, you will be assigned a participant number, such as Participant 1. This is the only information that will be used to identify who you are within the focus group discussions.

We will NEVER use your name to identify your responses. We may want to quote comments from the focus group discussions. Again, we will only use your participant number, we will not use your name or any other information that could potentially identify you.

All data will be kept in a locked filing cabinet and only members of the research team will have access. The focus groups will be audio recorded and deleted after they are transcribed. If you wish to view the transcript from your particular focus group, you can contact Jocelyn Wentland.

The potential benefits of this research include creating specific definitions of the various types of casual sex relationships that individuals engage in. There are a variety of terms used, but little to no research on the differences between the terms that young adults use to describe these sexual relationships. The findings will offer insights into this unstudied area of sexuality.

You can choose whether to take part in this study or not. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw at any time without consequence of any kind. You may exercise the option of removing your data from the study. You may also refuse to answer any questions that you are not comfortable answering and still remain in the study.

**You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research study. This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the University of Ottawa Research Ethics Board. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, please contact:**

**Protocol Officer for Ethics in Research**

Telephone: 613 562 5800 ext. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
University of Ottawa  
Tabaret Hall - 550 Cumberland  
Ottawa, ON K1N 6N5

**I have read the information provided for the study “Defining Casual Sex Relationships” as described herein. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction and I agree to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Participant (please print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Focus Group

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Facilitator (please print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Facilitator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Focus Group

**\*PLEASE SIGN BOTH COPIES AND KEEP ONE COPY FOR YOUR RECORDS**



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## Study 2 Validating Definitions of Casual Sex Relationships

### Consent Form

You are being asked to participate in a research study conducted by the Human Sexuality Research Laboratory. This project is being conducted by Dr. \_\_\_\_\_ (Associate Professor, University of Ottawa) and Jocelyn Wentland (PhD student, University of Ottawa).

**If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact:**

Dr. \_\_\_\_\_ (\_\_\_\_@uottawa.ca), 613 562 5800 ext \_\_\_\_  
Jocelyn Wentland (\_\_\_\_@uottawa.ca), 613 562 5800 ext \_\_\_\_

The current study is designed to investigate the different definitions of casual sex relationships and knowledge about safety of engaging in casual sex activities. As a participant, you are being asked to participate in 1 online survey that will take approximately 20 minutes. The questionnaire is ANONYMOUS and CONFIDENTIAL.

As part of the survey, you will be asked to provide some personal information, such as how old you are and how many sexual intercourse partners you have had. The purpose of collecting this information is to determine the background demographics of our participants.

Completing the questionnaire may introduce self-reflection for you which may be ultimately positive, but may initially be upsetting or disruptive. Whether or not you complete the survey, you will be given a list of resources in the Ottawa area if you wish to speak with someone. You may also contact the study's principal investigator, Dr. \_\_\_\_\_, who is a licensed psychologist, with whom they can speak with at no charge.

No identifying information will be connected to your responses. If you feel uncomfortable with any of the questions, you may refuse to answer or discontinue participation by closing your browser window AT ANY TIME.

If you are completing this questionnaire for credit via the Integrated System of Participation in Research, you will be asked to submit your 5 digit participant code in order to receive credit. This code is not linked to your name and the researchers do not

have access to your name. You will receive 1 point for your participation in this online study.

At the end of the survey, you will be provided with a list of organizations in the Ottawa area that you may contact if you wish to speak with someone. In addition, Dr. \_\_\_\_\_ is a clinical psychologist specializing in the assessment and treatment of sexual problems. If you wish to discuss your reaction to participating in the online survey or need any additional information or referral, you can contact her.

All data will be kept in a locked filing cabinet and only members of the research team will have access to the files. Data will be kept for 10 years until all publications have been finalized.

The potential benefits of this research include creating specific definitions of the various types of casual sex relationships that individuals engage in and to evaluate their level of knowledge regarding safe sex activities. There are a variety of terms used, but little to no research on the differences between the terms that young adults use to describe these sexual relationships. The findings will offer insights into this unstudied area of sexuality.

**You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research study. This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the University of Ottawa Research Ethics Board. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, please contact:**

**Protocol Officer for Ethics in Research**

Telephone: 613 562 5800 ext. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
University of Ottawa  
Tabaret Hall - 550 Cumberland  
Ottawa, ON K1N 6N5

**I have read the information provided for the study “Validating Definitions of Casual Sex Relationships” as described herein. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction and I agree to participate in this study.**

**I agree to participate in the study “AGREE” (link will take participant to the study)**

**I do not agree to participate in the study “I DO NOT AGREE” (link will take participant to thank you page, see next page)**

**PLEASE PRINT A COPY OF THIS LETTER FOR YOU TO KEEP IN YOUR PERSONAL FILES.**



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## Study 2 Validating Definitions of Casual Sex Relationships

### Consent Form

You are being asked to participate in a research study conducted by the Human Sexuality Research Laboratory. This project is being conducted by Dr. \_\_\_\_\_ (Associate Professor, University of Ottawa) and Jocelyn Wentland (PhD student, University of Ottawa).

**If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact:**

Dr. \_\_\_\_\_ (\_\_\_\_@uottawa.ca), 613 562 5800 ext \_\_\_\_\_  
Jocelyn Wentland (\_\_\_\_@uottawa.ca), 613 562 5800 ext \_\_\_\_\_

The current study is designed to investigate the different definitions of casual sex relationships and knowledge about safety of engaging in casual sex activities. As a participant, you are being asked to participate in 1 online survey that will take approximately 20 minutes. The questionnaire is ANONYMOUS and CONFIDENTIAL.

As part of the survey, you will be asked to provide some personal information, such as how old you are and how many sexual intercourse partners you have had. The purpose of collecting this information is to determine the background demographics of our participants.

Completing the questionnaire may introduce self-reflection for you which may be ultimately positive, but may initially be upsetting or disruptive. Whether or not you complete the survey, you will be given a list of resources in the Ottawa area if you wish to speak with someone. You may also contact the study's principal investigator, Dr. \_\_\_\_\_, who is a licensed psychologist, with whom they can speak with at no charge.

No identifying information will be connected to your responses. If you feel uncomfortable with any of the questions, you may refuse to answer or discontinue participation by closing your browser window AT ANY TIME.

At the end of the survey, you will be provided with a list of organizations in the Ottawa area that you may contact if you wish to speak with someone. In addition, Dr. \_\_\_\_\_ is a clinical psychologist specializing in the assessment and treatment of sexual problems. If

you wish to discuss your reaction to participating in the online survey or need any additional information or referral, you can contact her.

All data will be kept in a locked filing cabinet and only members of the research team will have access to the files. Data will be kept for 10 years until all publications have been finalized.

The potential benefits of this research include creating specific definitions of the various types of casual sex relationships that individuals engage in and to evaluate their level of knowledge regarding safe sex activities. There are a variety of terms used, but little to no research on the differences between the terms that young adults use to describe these sexual relationships. The findings will offer insights into this unstudied area of sexuality.

**You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research study. This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the University of Ottawa Research Ethics Board. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, please contact:**

**Protocol Officer for Ethics in Research**

Telephone: 613 562 5800 ext. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
University of Ottawa  
Tabaret Hall - 550 Cumberland  
Ottawa, ON K1N 6N5

**I have read the information provided for the study “Validating Definitions of Casual Sex Relationships” as described herein. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction and I agree to participate in this study.**

**I am at least 18 years of age and agree to participate in the study “AGREE” (link will take participant to the study)**

**I do not agree to participate in the study “I DO NOT AGREE” (link will take participant to thank you page, see next page)**

**PLEASE PRINT A COPY OF THIS LETTER FOR YOU TO KEEP IN YOUR PERSONAL FILES.**

## **Appendix D**

Study measures

## Study 1 Background Questionnaire

We are asking you to provide some background information so we have an idea of who participated in our focus groups. Please find a space in the room where you can complete this questionnaire in private. This information is **anonymous** – please do not write your name on this form.

This information is **confidential** – your answers will not be linked to the comments you make in the focus group discussion.

Age \_\_\_\_\_

Gender (circle one)    Female    Male    Transsexual

**How would you describe your cultural background?** (for example Canadian, European, Middle Eastern, Caribbean)

\_\_\_\_\_

**Is religion important to you?**

\_\_\_ Yes

\_\_\_ No

**If yes, which religion do you practice?**

\_\_\_ Catholic

\_\_\_ Jewish

\_\_\_ Protestant

\_\_\_ Muslim

\_\_\_ Hindu

\_\_\_ Other (please specify)

\_\_\_\_\_

**How often do you attend religious activities?**

\_\_\_ Once a week

\_\_\_ Once a month

\_\_\_ Once a year

\_\_\_ Never

**What is your current relationship status?**

\_\_\_ Not dating or seeing anyone

\_\_\_ Casually dating or seeing MORE THAN

ONE person

\_\_\_ Casually dating or seeing ONE person only

\_\_\_ Steady relationship with ONE partner only

\_\_\_ Living with partner (e.g., common-law)

\_\_\_ Engaged or married and living with partner

**Have you had sexual intercourse?**

\_\_\_ No (If you answered no, you have finished the questionnaire. Please put your questionnaire in the envelope, seal the envelope, and place it in the box. Thank you.)

\_\_\_ Yes

**How old were you when you first had sexual intercourse?** \_\_\_\_\_

**How many individuals have you engaged in sexual intercourse with whom YOU DID FEEL that you were in a committed relationship?** \_\_\_\_\_

**How many individuals have you engaged in sexual intercourse with whom YOU DID NOT FEEL that you were in a committed relationship?** \_\_\_\_\_

(If you answered zero, you have finished the questionnaire. Please put your questionnaire in the envelope, seal the envelope, and place it in the box. Thank you.)

**Who was your most recent casual sex partner?** (For example, a friend, an acquaintance, someone you did not know well. Please add as much detail as you would like.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**After completing this form, please put your questionnaire in the envelope, seal the envelope, and place it in the box.**

## Thank you

## Study 1 Interview Guide

### **Casual Sex – Focus Group Interview Guide**

There are a number of different types of labels used to describe different casual sex relationships. The purpose of our discussion today is to come up with more specific definitions of different types of casual sex relationships.

What are some of the terms used to describe casual sexual relationships?

(Compile list.)

Let's discuss how you would define each of the terms.

Any other terms that have come to mind? How would you define those terms?

## Study 2 Survey instrument

# 1. Definitions of Casual Sex Relationships

The following questions ask you to identify specific casual sex relationships. You will also be asked about your experience with these various types of relationships.

Please answer as honestly as possible.

## 1. Please place a check beside the name of the relationship that corresponds to the definition provided.

	One Night Stand	Booty Call	Fuck Buddy/Fuck Friend	Friend with Benefit	I don't know
Sex between strangers or people who do not know each other that well, these two usually meet while out in a social setting (e.g., bar, party), sexual activity is not planned ahead of time, one or both are usually under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs, there are no expectations that the two will see each other again (even if they exchange contact information)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sex between two people who know each other, one person calls or texts the other person with the intention of having sex with that person within the next few hours, often late at night, one person is usually under the influence of alcohol/and or drugs, these two engage in sex with each other occasionally	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sex between people who know each other, they engage in sexual activity when they hang out with each other, they are usually not under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs, these two engage in sex with each other regularly	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sex between two people who have an existing friendship, these two may or may not engage in sexual activity when they hang out with each other, they are usually not under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs, these two engage in sex with each other regularly	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



### 3. Definitions of Casual Sex Relationships

The next set of questions ask about your past sexual experiences, as well as your attitude towards casual sexual behaviour.

**1. Please respond honestly to all of the following questions. Your responses will be treated confidentially and anonymously.**

**For these questions, "sex" refers to penal-vaginal or penal-anal penetration.**

	0	1	2	3	4	5-6	7-9	10-19	20 or more
With how many different partners have you had sex within the past 12 months?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
With how many partners have you had sex on one and only one occasion?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
With how many different partners have you had sexual intercourse without having an interest in a long-term committed relationship with this person?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**2. Please indicate your agreement with each of the following statements.**

	1 Totally Disagree	2	3	4	5 Totally Agree
Sex without love is OK.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I can imagine myself being comfortable and enjoying "casual" sex with different partners.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I do not want to have sex with a person until I am sure that we will have a long-term, serious relationship	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## 4. Definitions of Casual Sex Relationships

Please answer the following questions using the scale provided.

"Sex" refers to penal-vaginal or penal-anal penetration.

### 1. How often do you have fantasies about having sex with someone you are NOT in a committed romantic relationship with?

- Never
- Very seldom
- About once every two or three months
- About once a month
- About once every two weeks
- About once a week
- Several times per week
- Nearly every day
- At least once a day

### 2. How often do you experience sexual arousal when you are in contact with someone you are NOT in a committed relationship with?

- Never
- Very seldom
- About once every two or three months
- About once a month
- About once every two weeks
- About once a week
- Several times per week
- Nearly every day
- At least once a day

**3. In everyday life, how often do you have spontaneous fantasies about having sex with someone you have just met?**

- Never
- Very seldom
- About once every two or three months
- About once a month
- About once every two weeks
- About once a week
- Several times per week
- Nearly every day
- At least once a day

## 5. Safer Sex Knowledge

The following questions ask about your knowledge of STIs and safer sex practices.

These multiple-choice questions are about HIV, STIs, contraception, and safer sex practices. Please note that the term Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) replaces the term Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs,) however the two terms encompass the same realm of illnesses.

Please respond by checking the answer you believe to be correct.

Try to answer each question. If you are not sure, give us your best guess.

### 1. Which statement is TRUE?

- All STI's can be cured.
- All STI's can be treated but none of them can be cured.
- Some STI's can be cured while others are lifelong with treatment for symptoms.

### 2. Which is the correct way to put on a condom?

- Remove condom from package, unroll to examine for tears and then slide onto penis.
- Remove condom from package, pinch tip of condom to remove air, place condom on head of penis and unroll to base of shaft.
- Remove condom from package, place condom on head of penis, unroll to base of shaft and then pull side away from penis to allow air to escape.

### 3. Which method of birth control is most effective?

- Condoms
- Spermicides
- Hormonal methods (the pill, depo-provera, the patch)

### 4. Which of the following behaviours cannot transmit HIV?

- Sharing a drink
- Sharing a needle
- Sharing a deep kiss (i.e. french kiss)

## 6. Safer Sex Knowledge

Please respond by checking the answer you believe to be correct.

Try to answer each question. If you are not sure, give us your best guess.

### 1. Which statement is FALSE?

- All STI's are easily detectable due to their symptoms
- Some individuals will have an STI but have no symptoms
- Certain STI's, such as herpes and HPV, can have more noticeable signs than others, such as chlamydia or gonorrhea

### 2. How does the pill prevent pregnancy?

- Keeps cervical mucus very thin
- Prevents ovulation
- Tricks body into thinking it is already pregnant (no implantation)

### 3. How soon after contact with an infected person can a blood test detect HIV?

- 1-2 weeks
- 1-2 months
- 3-6 months

### 4. Which behaviour is associated with a very low risk of STI transmission?

- Kissing
- Anal Sex
- Oral Sex

## 7. Safer Sex Knowledge

Please respond by checking the answer you believe to be correct.

Try to answer each question. If you are not sure, give us your best guess.

### 1. Which method of contraception can be attained without consulting a physician at least once?

- Contraceptive Film/Cream
- Pill
- Diaphragm

### 2. How is HIV transmitted?

- Through skin to skin contact
- Through the exchange of bodily fluids
- Both a) and b)

### 3. For the emergency contraceptive pill to be effective, it must be taken within which time period after intercourse?

- Within 36 hours
- Within 72 hours
- Within 92 hours

### 4. Which statement is FALSE?

- You can have HIV and not be sick from AIDS
- You can have HIV and not have any visible signs of the virus
- If you have HIV you will have visible signs of the virus

## 8. Safer Sex Knowledge

Please respond by checking the answer you believe to be correct.

Try to answer each question. If you are not sure, give us your best guess.

### 1. Which factor does NOT affect the effectiveness of the pill?

- Taking it at the same time everyday
- Taking it with antibacterial medications
- Taking it with food

### 2. Which statement is FALSE?

- HIV is treatable with anti-retroviral medication
- The side effects of anti-retroviral medications are treatable
- HIV can be cured with anti-retroviral medication

### 3. Other than abstinence (not engaging in sexual activity), what is the only other way a sexually active individual can lower their chances of contracting HIV?

- Practice withdrawal
- Use a condom
- Use a diaphragm with spermicide

### 4. Which statement is TRUE?

- Only gay and African people are affected by HIV
- Only people who have multiple sex partners are affected by HIV
- All people are affected by HIV

### 5. What STI's does your doctor automatically test for at an annual physical?

- Chlamydia
- Herpes
- Gonorrhea
- None

## 9. Motivations for Having Casual Sex

The following question asks about motivations for having casual sex.

### 1. Please select the reasons the top five (5) reasons to engage in casual sex.

- I was turned on by the person's physical appearance
- I wanted to achieve an orgasm
- I wanted the excitement and/or adventure
- The opportunity presented itself
- I wanted to experience physical pleasure
- The person was really desired by others
- The person really desired me
- I wanted to release anxiety/stress
- I was attracted to this person's personality
- It just happened
- I wanted to impress or brag to my friends and other people
- I was drunk
- I was bored
- I wanted to see if there was any relationship potential with this person
- It's considered taboo or forbidden by society
- I wanted to feel good about myself
- I wanted to get over a previous partner/relationship
- I wanted to ensure it was a committed relationship
- It was part of the relationship routine
- Other (please specify)

## 10. Definitions of Casual Sex Relationships

The following questions ask about the specific concepts that are related to the various casual sex relationships.

### 1. Please check ANY of the following concepts that you think are part of a One Night Stand, Booty Call, Fuck Buddy/Fuck Friend, or Friend with Benefits

	One Night Stand	Booty Call	Fuck Buddy/Fuck Friend	Friend with Benefits
The individuals are usually under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs when they engage in sexual activity with each other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
These individuals are usually NOT under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs when they engage in sexual activity with each other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The male usually initiates this sexual relationship	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The female usually initiates this sexual relationship	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
These individuals meet for the first time at the bar, at a party, or some type of social gathering	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
These individuals know each other somewhat (e.g., someone from your class or work) and see each other out at the bar, at a party, or some type of social gathering	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
These individuals are friends with each other before they engage in any sexual activity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
These individuals have engaged in sexual activity previous to starting this specific casual sexual relationship	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## 11. Casual Sex Definitions

The following questions ask about the specific concepts that are related to the various casual sex relationships.

### 1. Please check ANY of the following concepts that you think are part of a One Night Stand, Booty Call, Fuck Buddy/Fuck Friend, or Friend with Benefits

	One Night Stand	Booty Call	Fuck Buddy/Fuck Friend	Friend with Benefits
These individuals have respect for one another	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## 12. Casual Sex Definitions

The following questions ask about the specific concepts that are related to the various casual sex relationships.

### 1. Please choose ALL of following concepts that you would use to define a One Night Stand, Booty Call, Fuck Buddy/Fuck Friend, and Friend with Benefits

	One Night Stand	Booty Call	Fuck Buddy/Fuck Friend	Friend with Benefits
These individuals discuss the beginning of this relationship (e.g., "What is going on between us?")	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
These individuals discuss the ending of this relationship (e.g., "We can't have sex with each other anymore.")	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
These individuals discuss the rules of the relationship with each other (e.g., whether or not friends know about their sexual relationship, whether or not one individual spends the night (i.e., sleeps over) at the other person's place after they have sex)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
These individuals discuss whether or not they are sexually involved with other people (e.g., "I wanted to let you know that I am also sleeping with someone else.")	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## 13. Casual Sex Definitions

The following questions ask about the specific concepts that are related to the various casual sex relationships.

### 1. Please check ANY of the following concepts that you think are part of a One Night Stand, Booty Call, Fuck Buddy/Fuck Friend, or Friend with Benefits

	One Night Stand	Booty Call	Fuck Buddy/Fuck Friend	Friend with Benefits
One of the individuals usually contacts the other person (e.g., calls or texts) late at night for sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
These individuals usually call each other on the phone to make plans to get together	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
These individuals usually text each other to make plans to get together	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
One individual usually spends the night (i.e., sleeps over) at the other person's place after they have sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
These individuals do not spend the night together after they have sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
These individuals leave the bar, at a party, or some type of social gathering together to go to someone's place to have sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
One or both of these individuals may be having sex with someone else (i.e., these individuals are not monogamous)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## 14. Casual Sex Definitions

The following questions ask about the specific concepts that are related to the various casual sex relationships.

### 1. Please check ANY of the following concepts that you think are part of a One Night Stand, Booty Call, Fuck Buddy/Fuck Friend, or Friend with Benefits

	One Night Stand	Booty Call	Fuck Buddy/Fuck Friend	Friend with Benefits
These individuals add each other to Facebook	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
These individuals add each other to MSN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
These individuals share a lot of personal information with each other (e.g., they talk about school, work, family, friends)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
These individuals mainly call each other on the telephone to make arrangements to see each other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
These individuals mainly text each other to make arrangements to see each other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
These individuals mainly use MSN to make arrangements to see each other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
These individuals mainly use Facebook to make arrangements to see each other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
These individuals randomly see each other out at the bar, at a party, or at some type of social gathering	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
These individuals exchange contact information but may not contact each other after they have sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
One of the individuals calls the other person on the telephone with a direct reference to engaging in sex (e.g., "I'm horny. Come over.")	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
One of the individuals texts the other person with a direct reference to engaging in sex (e.g., "I'm horny. Come over.")	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
One of the individuals calls the other person on the telephone with a subtle reference to engaging in sex (e.g., "Do you want to come over?")	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
One of the individuals texts the other person with a subtle reference to engaging in sex (e.g., "Do you want to come over?")	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
These individuals make plans ahead of time to hang out with each other (e.g., "Do you want to come over and watch a movie tomorrow night?")	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## 15. Casual Sex Definitions

The following questions ask about the specific concepts that are related to the various casual sex relationships.

### 1. Please check ANY of the following concepts that you think are part of a One Night Stand, Booty Call, Fuck Buddy/Fuck Friend, or Friend with Benefits

	One Night Stand	Booty Call	Fuck Buddy/Fuck Friend	Friend with Benefits
These individuals do not want their friends to know about their ongoing sexual relationship	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
These individuals use the name of this relationship to describe the person to others (e.g., He is my Boy Toy)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
These individuals might use this sexual relationship to see if they could start a relationship with each other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
This sexual relationship develops out of a previous sexual relationship with each other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
These individuals ALWAYS engage in some type of sexual activity when they see each other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
These individuals sometimes engage in some type of sexual activity, but sometimes they just hang out with each other (e.g., watch a movie)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
These individuals engage in sexual activity once or twice per month	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
These individuals engage in sexual activity once or twice per week	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
One individual usually has more power in this sexual relationship	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## 16. Casual Sex Definitions

The following questions ask about the specific concepts that are related to the various casual sex relationships.

### 1. Please check ANY of the following concepts that you think are part of a One Night Stand, Booty Call, Fuck Buddy/Fuck Friend, or Friend with Benefits

	One Night Stand	Booty Call	Fuck Buddy/Fuck Friend	Friend with Benefits
These individuals almost always engage in sexual intercourse (e.g., penal-vaginal or penal-anal penetration)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
These individuals engage in some type of sexual activity, but not always sexual intercourse (i.e., penal-vaginal or penal-anal penetration)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The sexual activity that these two individuals engage in may not be that good because these individuals are under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The male usually has an orgasm when these two individuals have sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The female usually has an orgasm when these two individuals have sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The male is less concerned with ensuring the female has an orgasm	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The female is less concerned with ensuring the male has an orgasm	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## 17. Casual Sex Definitions

The following questions ask about the specific concepts that are related to the various casual sex relationships.

### 1. Please check ANY of the following concepts that you think are part of a One Night Stand, Booty Call, Fuck Buddy/Fuck Friend, or Friend with Benefits

	One Night Stand	Booty Call	Fuck Buddy/Fuck Friend	Friend with Benefits
These individuals may stop having sex because one person becomes too attached	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
These individuals may stop having sex because one person starts a relationship with someone else	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
These individuals may stop having sex because their friends find out	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
These individuals may stop having sex because they lose interest and stop contacting each other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
These individuals do not contact each other after they have sex with each other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
These individuals no longer contact each other after they stop having sex with each other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
These individuals remain friends after they stop having sex with each other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## 18. Casual Sex Definitions

The following questions ask about the specific concepts that are related to the various casual sex relationships.

### 1. Please check ANY of the following concepts that you think are part of a One Night Stand, Booty Call, Fuck Buddy/Fuck Friend, or Friend with Benefits

	One Night Stand	Booty Call	Fuck Buddy/Fuck Friend	Friend with Benefits
These individuals contact each other (e.g., call, text, email) when they are bored and have nothing else to do	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
These individuals contact (e.g., call, text, email) each other when they are horny	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
These individuals contact (e.g., call, text, email) each other when one person's plans do not work out (i.e., a back-up plan)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The female usually gets more attached in this relationship	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The male usually gets more attached in this relationship	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The female usually has more power in this relationship (e.g., decides when she will see the other person)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The male usually holds more power in this relationship (e.g., decides when he will see the other person)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
One individual may regret having sex with this person afterwards	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## 19. Demographics

Finally, we are interested in learning some basic information about you. Please answer each question as honestly as possible.

### 1. Please enter your age in years

### 2. What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Transsexual

### 3. How would you best describe your sexual orientation?

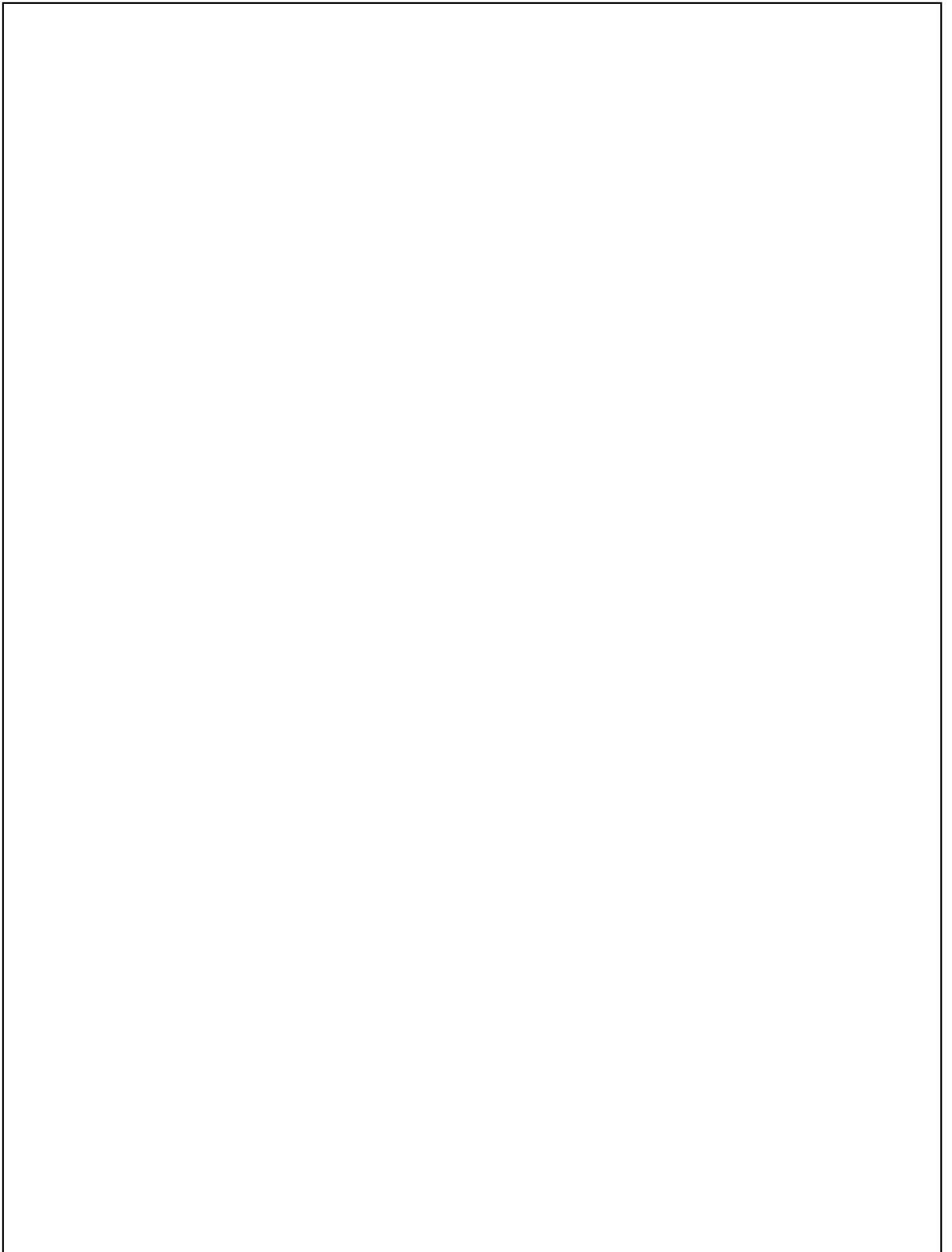
- Heterosexual
- Gay/Lesbian
- Bisexual
- Queer
- Undecided
- Other (please specify)

### 4. How would you define your background? Check ALL that apply.

- White, Caucasian
- Black, African Canadian, African American
- Middle Eastern, Arabic
- South Asian (i.e., India, Pakistan)
- East Asian (i.e., China, Japan)
- Southeast Asian (i.e., Thailand, Philippines, Malaysia)
- Hispanic
- Native
- Other (please specify)

### 5. Is religion important to you?

- Yes
- No



## 20. Religion

The following questions ask about your religious involvement.

### 1. Which religion do you practice?

- Catholic
- Jewish
- Protestant
- Muslim
- Hindu
- Other (please specify)

### 2. How often do you participate in religious activities?

- Once a week
- Once a month
- Once a year
- Never

## 21. Demographics

Please continue.

### 1. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- Some high school
- High school
- Some post secondary
- Completed college or technical school
- Completed bachelor's degree
- Completed graduate degree
- Other (please specify)

### 2. What is your current relationship status?

- Not dating or seeing anyone
- Casually dating or seeing MORE THAN ONE person
- Casually dating or seeing ONE person only
- Serious relationship with ONE partner only
- Living with partner (e.g., common-law)
- Engaged or married and living with partner
- Other (please specify)

### 3. If you are currently in a relationship with one person, how many months have you been together? Enter number of months in the space provided.

**4. If you are currently a student, what is your current year of study?**

- I am not a student
- First year
- Second year
- Third year
- Fourth year
- Fifth year
- Graduate student
- Other (please specify)

**5. How did you find out about this survey?**

- Psychology Participant Pool
- Online posting (e.g., Facebook)
- A friend shared the link with me
- Other (please specify)

## 22. Psychology Participant Pool Credit

In order to receive credit for participation, you need to enter your 5 digit Psychology participant code.

**1. Please enter your 5 digit Psychology Participant ID code into the box below.**

## 23. Demographics

For the following questions, "sexual intercourse" refers to penile-vaginal or penile-anal penetration.

### 1. Have you had sexual intercourse?

Yes

No

## 24. Sexual Experience

The following questions refer to your sexual experience. Remember, "sexual intercourse" refers to penal-vaginal or penal-anal penetration.

Please answer openly and honestly.

### 1. How old were you the first time you had sexual intercourse?

### 2. How many individuals have you engaged in sexual intercourse with whom YOU DID FEEL that you were in a committed relationship?

### 3. How many individuals have you engaged in sexual intercourse with whom YOU DID NOT FEEL that you were in a committed relationship?

### 4. Please describe your most RECENT sex partner:

- Serious/committed sex partner (e.g., one partner in a sexually monogamous relationship)
- Casual committed partner (e.g., regular sex partner but NOT in sexually monogamous relationship)
- A good friend you have sex with but you are NOT 'dating' (e.g., you hang out with this person and/or talk to them on the phone, but you don't always have sex when you hang out)
- A friend you have sex with but you are NOT 'dating' (e.g., you usually have sex with this person when you hang out)
- Acquaintance or casual friend you have sex with, but are not in a relationship with ( e.g., you ONLY contact this person if you want to have sex)
- Uncommitted sex partner you had sex with only once
- Other (please specify)

## 25. Final Comments

We are interested in any additional comments that you have about casual sex relationships.

**1. Please use the space below to share any comments you may have about casual sex or this survey.**

A large, empty text input area for providing final comments. It is a rectangular box with a light gray background and a thin black border. On the right side, there is a vertical scrollbar with a small gray arrow pointing up at the top and a small gray arrow pointing down at the bottom.