

Hanging Out, Hooking-up and Falling in Love on College Campuses: A Continuing Behavioral Trend?

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This paper uses relatively new data collected in 2007 to examine the social and contextual correlates of hooking up for freshmen and senior college students. Through this paper, we assess how the relationships between demographic/social factors and college hooking up are mediated by previous hookup behavior and college contextual factors. This paper highlights the continuity in hookup and relationship behavior as youth transition from a high school to a college environment and transition through years of college.

Data used in this paper were collected in November of 2007. Arcidiacano, Morgan and Shanahan obtained two random samples of 1000 students enrolled at Duke for the fall of 2007. The first sample was for freshmen; the second for seniors. There were approximately 1,500 students in each class. The overall response rate was 75% for both seniors and freshmen. Note that the random selection of respondents and the high response rates make it likely that this sample is representative of Duke students in the senior and freshmen classes (in the fall of 2007). We suspect, but cannot prove, that the sample is typical of students at elite universities in this year. Only additional surveys can determine if the sample is more broadly representative (of college students in general, for instance).

Our predictions of the odds of hooking up are based on multinomial logistic regression models. We estimate the odds of: (1) hooking up vs. not hooking up; and (2) hooking up vs. being in a romantic relationship. We believe that students who are currently in a romantic relationship will be ‘off the market’ for hooking up and will be qualitatively different from those students who are not in a romantic relationship *and* not hooking up. Thus, we wanted to compare students who hookup with those who are either not hooking up or in a romantic relationship.

We first present a cross-tabulation of current and previous hook up status for both freshmen and seniors in Table 2. Then, we estimate multivariate models separately for freshmen (Table 3) and seniors (Table 4). Background and demographic indicators included: gender, race, financial aid status, religious participation, and parent’s marital status. Indicators of previous behavior include: previous relationship and previous hook up statuses. Lastly, college contextual factors included: Greek affiliation, athlete status, average drinks per week, self-reported attractiveness and peer influence. In the multivariate models, Model 1 is hookup status in the previous year regressed on a set of demographic and social variables. Model 2 is hookup status in the current year regressed on the same set of background and social variables. Model 3 builds on Model 2 by including hookup behaviors in the previous year as indicators. Lastly, Model 4 builds on Model 3 by including contextual college indicators. We show in Table 2 the strong association between previous and current hookup behaviors, and portray in Tables 3-4 how the association of demographic and social background factors (i.e., race/ethnicity and religiosity) on hooking up is mediated by previous hookup behavior, and to a lesser extent, the social context of college campuses.

Table 2: Percentage of Current and Previous Hooking Up Behavior by School Cohort, 2008.

	Freshmen ¹			Seniors ²		
	Previous			Previous		
	No Hooking Up	Relationship	Hooking Up	No Hooking Up	Relationship	Hooking Up
Current	64.4	69.4	11.6	76.1	75.7	15.3
	24.9	18.2	11.6	15.1	22.2	22.2
	10.7	18.5	70.3	8.8	13.9	62.5
Totals:	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100	100

Table 3: Odds Ratios for Multinomial Regression of Hookup Status on Independent Variables, Freshmen 2007. ¹

	Hooking Up vs. Not Hooking Up				Hooking Up vs. Relationship				
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	
	T-1	T	T	T	T-1	T	T	T	
Demographic/Background Factors:									
Female	0.75	1.2	1.28	1.31	0.9	1.03	1.13	1.14	
Black	0.54†	0.31*	0.32*	0.36*	1.53	0.41†	0.44	0.45	
Asian	0.23***	0.45**	0.71	0.85	0.46**	0.55†	0.74	0.88	
Latino	6.36	1.54	2.2	2.49	0.56	0.98	1.25	1.17	
Other	0.24***	0.65	0.70	0.76	0.71	0.46	0.47	0.53	
Financial Aid	0.83	0.87	0.96	1.13	0.91	0.93	1.04	1.15	
Religious Attendance	0.68***	0.79*	1.01	1.02	0.73**	0.91	1.14	1.15	
Parent Married	0.58*	0.91	0.87	0.93	0.94	0.81	0.76	0.78	
Previous Hookup Status:									
Previous Relationship		2.46***	2.06**	2.09**		0.22***	0.20***	0.20***	
Previous Hook Up		5.56***	4.56***	3.72***		3.95***	3.60***	3.19***	
College Contextual Factors:									
Athlete			1.13	0.76			0.66	0.53†	
Avg Drinks/Week			3.16	2.47***			2.63***	2.25***	
Attractiveness			1.74	1.66**			1.35	1.30	
% of Friends Hooking Up				1.02***				1.02***	
Likelihood Ratio ChiSq	237.07	511.2	874.4	1008.01	237.07	511.2	874.4	1008.01	

† p≤.10, *p≤.05, **p≤.01, ***p≤.001 (two-tailed tests)

Notes: ¹ Reference category is 'hooking up' in all multinomial models.

Table 4: Odds Ratios for Multinomial Regression of Hook Up Status on Independent Variables, Seniors 2007.¹

	Hooking Up vs. Not Hooking Up				Hooking Up vs. Relationship			
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
	T-1	T	T	T	T-1	T	T	T
Demographic/Background Factors:								
<i>Female</i>	0.81	0.76	0.88	0.75	0.71†	1.03	1.17	1.07
<i>Black</i>	0.72	0.63	0.7	0.71	3.04**	1.39	1.83	1.92
<i>Asian</i>	0.21***	0.37**	0.55	0.69	0.51*	0.51*	0.67	0.78
<i>Latino</i>	1.05	0.56	0.58	0.46	1.26	1.30	1.46	1.36
<i>Other</i>	1.07	0.35	0.42	0.45	0.84	0.40	0.44	0.49
<i>Financial Aid</i>	0.78	0.58*	0.68	0.83	0.89	1.22	1.27	1.45
<i>Religious Attendance</i>	0.46***	0.62**	0.69*	0.70*	0.57**	0.74*	0.80	0.81
<i>Parent Married</i>	1.68	0.94	0.95	1.02	1.00	1.16	1.04	1.14
Previous Hookup Status:								
Previous Relationship		7.30***	6.14***	6.23***		0.30***	0.29***	0.30***
Previous Hooking Up		4.58***	3.76***	2.85***		3.15***	2.82***	2.52***
College Contextual Factors:								
<i>Athlete</i>			1.38	0.86			1.27	1.04
<i>Avg Drinks/ Week</i>			2.82***	2.34***			2.14***	1.95***
<i>Attractiveness</i>			2.06***	1.88**			0.97	0.91
<i>% of Friends Hooking Up</i>				1.03***				1.02***
<i>Likelihood Ratio ChiSq</i>	235.5	443.65	810	962.49	235.5	443.65	810	962.49

† p<.10, *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001 (two-tailed tests)

Notes: ¹ Reference category is 'hooking up'; compared with 'not hooking up' and 'being in a relationship'.