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The “Hook-Up” Culture on Catholic Campuses: A Review of the Literature

by Anne Hendershott, Ph.D. and Nicholas Dunn

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Executive Summary

There is a growing body of data that points to a degraded student “hook-up” culture on many college campuses—including Catholic college campuses—marked by casual sexual activity. This paper provides a systematic review of the social science literature that has been published in the last twenty years on the dating and mating behavior of college students and assesses what many of these researchers have identified as the very real damage done by the embrace of a hook-up culture.

The findings are organized into four sections based on specific issues related to sexuality on campus. The first section defines the hook-up culture and identifies the extent of the problem of casual sexual behavior on college campuses. The second section considers the psychological, spiritual and physical costs of such behavior. The third section considers the role of alcohol in encouraging and expanding the hook-up culture. The fourth section investigates the impact of campus polices and especially those who are hired to implement them. The paper concludes with a look at students who are taking the lead in promoting chastity and fidelity, and the authors make suggestions for additional research.

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About The Center

The Center for the Advancement of Catholic Higher Education (CACHE), a division of the nonprofit Cardinal Newman Society, advises and assists academic and religious leaders in efforts to strengthen the Catholic identity and academic quality of Catholic colleges and universities.

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The “Hook-Up” Culture on Catholic Campuses: A Review of the Literature

The dynamics surrounding intimate relationships among Catholic college students is of special concern to Catholic families and educators, because these relationships often and eventually lead to marriage. The Catholic Church teaches that marriage is instituted and ordained by God as the union of one man with one woman, and that sexual behavior is reserved for marriage. This review of social science literature considers whether the student culture on Catholic college and university campuses reinforces these teachings and facilitates the pathway from healthy intimate relationships to marriage.

Throughout history, our society has provided ways to encourage “pair bonding” through providing opportunity situations. Historically, colleges and universities—especially Catholic colleges and universities—believed that they needed to play an active role in helping their students find happiness and meaningful relationships with those of the opposite sex during their years on campus. Providing what sociologists call “opportunity situations” used to play an important role in the student life on most college campuses, because at one time the adults leading these schools recognized how important it is that young people meet each other, fall in love, and form families.

Until the 1980s, most colleges and universities—secular as well as sectarian—believed it was their duty to offer opportunity situations including dances, clubs and other recreational activities, designed to help their students create and maintain healthy and satisfying intimate relationships. Even single-sex Catholic colleges used to arrange school-sponsored and supervised dances (often called “mixers”) with neighboring schools to facilitate the opportunity for those at the all-male school to meet those from the all-female school. College administrators used to believe that they needed to take care of their students—both academically and socially. But, as most Catholic colleges moved from single-sex to co-educational in the 1970s and 80s, the perceived need for such “mixers” disappeared.

Today, it appears that many student life administrators have moved from a pro-active role in helping to facilitate healthy pair bonding to a reactive role in helping to pick up the pieces and repairing the very real damages when a degraded campus culture of casual sex emerges. The conventional wisdom is that students are best left to their own devices in meeting and mating. This paper finds significant consequences for both the individual and the institution.

A damage assessment

During the past decade, there has been a growing body of literature examining the dating attitudes, values and behavior of contemporary college students. An emerging number of scholars are conducting research which examines how young people meet, mate and decide to marry. There is a growing body of data that points to a degraded student culture on many college campuses—including Catholic college campuses (Bogle, 2008; Freitas, 2008; Burdette, Ellison, Hill and Glenn, 2009). This paper provides a systematic review of the research literature identifying the culture and examining the very real damage that has been done by abandoning the *in loco parentis* role that colleges and universities used to play in

terms of encouraging healthy social relationships. The purpose of our paper is to provide a systematic summary of the social science literature that has been published in the last twenty years on the dating and mating behavior of college students—and assessing what many of these researchers have identified as the very real damage that has been done by the embrace of this culture.

We have organized these findings into four sections based on specific issues related to sexuality on campus. The first section is the most comprehensive, because it defines the hook-up culture and identifies the extent of the problem of casual sexual behavior on college campuses—both Catholic and non-Catholic. While most studies of the hook-up culture on campus do not differentiate by religious affiliation, we provide a comprehensive look at the ones that investigate the differences in sexual behavior by students attending a Catholic college and those who do not.

Following this, the second section considers the “costs” that such a culture has incurred in terms of the psychological, spiritual and physical damages associated with such behavior. Sexually transmitted diseases, unintended pregnancies and abortions—as well as a long list of psychological costs including poor self-esteem, depression and sadness—have been correlated with the emergence of the hook-up culture on campus. There is also anecdotal evidence that students who engage in the culture of casual sex that permeates many Catholic campuses find themselves moving away from a commitment to formerly held religious beliefs and practices. In addition to a decline in Church attendance by those who are participating in the hook-up culture, there is anecdotal evidence of a reduction in religious feelings and perceived closeness to God.

In the third portion of this report, we consider the role of alcohol in encouraging and expanding the hook-up culture. Nearly all of the researchers who are studying the hook-up campus culture have found that alcohol is implicated as a correlate—if not necessarily as a causal factor—in the hook-up culture. Because of this, we devote a substantial portion of our literature review to the data describing the expansion of the use of alcohol by college students through permissive policies of on-campus drinking in the dorms and at social functions, and the role alcohol plays in the hook-up culture—especially on Catholic campuses.

The fourth section of our report investigates the impact of campus polices and especially those who are hired to implement them. While more research in this area is needed, there is evidence that student life personnel are not a strong deterrent to a campus hook-up culture—and neither are co-ed residence halls.

We conclude by looking closely at the counter-culture that is emerging on many Catholic and secular campuses as students are taking the lead in promoting chastity and fidelity. We also offer suggestions for additional research.

Defining the Hook-Up Culture on College Campuses

In 2001, the *Times Higher Education Supplement* (Marcus, 2001) published the results of a survey of 1,000 American university women which indicated that “dating is dead.” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (Mulhauser, 2001) followed up with an analysis of the data on dating and found that few female college seniors surveyed were asked out on dates during their college years. This confirms dozens of other anecdotal studies.

Almost two-thirds of the participants in the Marcus study said that they were unhappy with the emptiness of their social lives. Most respondents complained that the culture on their campuses consisted of either having sex without necessarily progressing to a relationship, or forming a long-standing and intense bond with a man without any anticipation of a future life with that man. Most of the female respondents to this survey were disappointed with their campus culture.

Still, we have to avoid the temptation to look at the college dating behavior of previous generations through rose-colored glasses. The idealized notion of the traditional date in which the male invites the female out to dinner or to a movie, picks her up and pays for the date is one that we often refer to when we lament the loss of traditional dating behavior. But those who lived and dated during those times know that even then the traditional dating scene was less than ideal. In some instances, females were left out of dating entirely because they were viewed as less physically attractive than other female students. For some male students, the anxiety involved in inviting a female student on a date was overwhelming. For these students, college became a lonely time of weekends spent watching others involved in the social scene on campus.

Researchers have found that anxiety characterized the traditional dating culture for many female and male students. This was especially true in the “college mixer” setting. In a now-classic article entitled “Fear and Loathing at the College Mixer” (Schwartz and Lever, 1976), we learn that at the traditional college mixer, “physical appearance is about the only criterion being used to evaluate people.” This produces a situation filled with tension—especially for female college students. When one is repeatedly rejected through the course of an evening, the experience can be shattering to one’s self image. Study authors conclude that “students reported feelings of ugliness, fatness, clumsiness and so forth during and after the mixer situation.” Even for males, the mixer is not always an optimal experience: “My first impression of a mixer in my freshman year reminded me of cattle auctions I’d seen, where huge crowds of inspectors and buyers and such would climb the entryways and this group of very frightened creatures would charge through the middle” (Schwartz and Lever, 1976).

While traditional dating behavior was more formal and well defined, today’s male and female social interactions are much more casual and inclusive. Contemporary student life is more spontaneous. Unlike in the past when the male student would telephone the female student several days in advance to ask her on a date to a specific place at a specific time, today’s students use text messaging to get in touch and meet right away.

In fact, some researchers believe that instant messaging, Facebook and texting play an important role in creating a culture that contributes to casual sexual relationships—what has become known on campus as a “hook-up culture” (Bogle, 2008). But the reality is that college campuses—including Catholic college campuses—have been moving toward a hook-up culture for more than thirty years. In the late 1970s, it began to become common for college students to shift from traditional dating to group partying. Even in these early days, it was not uncommon for men and women to pair off at the end of a night of partying in order for a sexual encounter to occur. Traditional dating was disappearing by 1980.

Larry Lance (2007) provides an excellent overview of the changes in college students’ attitudes about sex, marriage and the family from 1940 to 2000. This study reveals dramatic changes in students’ willingness to make moral judgments about the sexual behaviors of

other college students—reflecting the growing cultural relativism in the greater society. When this type of casual sexual behavior was “defined down,” the rate of such behaviors began to rise because it then became the “new normal.”

Whatever the origins, the reality is that hooking up has become the dominant script for forming sexual and romantic relationships on Catholic and secular campuses. And, although the term hooking up is ambiguous in meaning, students generally use the phrase to refer to a physical encounter between two people who are largely unfamiliar with one another or otherwise briefly acquainted (Burdette, Ellison, Hill and Glenn, 2009; Glenn and Marquardt, 2001; Paul, McManus and Hayes, 2000). Most importantly, hook-ups carry no anticipation of a future relationship (Bogle, 2008; England, Shafer, and Fogarty, 2007).

Studies of the extent of the hook-up culture on campus can be divided into categories by the methods used in collecting data. Some of the richest data is derived from qualitative studies like those done by Kathleen Bogle and Donna Freitas. Although Freitas supplemented her interviews with survey data, most of the qualitative studies draw from in-depth interviews with a small, non-representative sample of students. This source of qualitative data provide us with a deeper understanding of the meaning of the hook-up, but the anecdotal nature of the studies make generalization difficult. To address this, we have found a growing number of large-scale quantitative studies using representative samples of the hook-up campus culture by sociologists like Norval Glenn, Elizabeth Marquardt, Amy Burdette, Christopher Ellison, and Terrence Hill (2009). These new quantitative studies help increase reliability and add credibility to the qualitative work.

Does religion make a difference?

Studying the relationship between religion and casual sexual behavior is more complex than one might think. While there are several studies which attempt to measure the effects of religiosity on engaging in casual sexual behavior, most do not differentiate between students who simply state that they have an affiliation with a certain religious denomination, and those who actively participate in religious activity through Church attendance or bible study and adhere to Church teachings on social and moral issues.

The best studies are those which take a multi-dimensional look at religiosity. This approach was identified more than fifty years ago by Glock (1962). These dimensions include experiential (feeling or emotional), ritualistic (participating in religious activities or attendance), ideological (beliefs), intellectual (knowledge), and consequential (effects in the secular world).

In addition to Catholicism, nearly all world religions encourage adherents to conform to their teachings on sexual behavior. Religious teachings on sexuality must be presented clearly to the faithful by the faithful. If those who are engaged in teaching about the religion are not fully committed to the truth of what they are teaching, those receiving that instruction will likely not find it to be true either. Only to the degree that moral teaching is expressed by the attitudes and actions of Catholics themselves can it make a difference in the lives of those Catholics. If students actually want to challenge the secular culture, students and their campus leaders have to have a firm knowledge of, and commitment to Catholic teachings on social and moral behaviors.

For this reason, the studies which simply look at religious denomination as a predictor of hooking-up behavior cannot be viewed as sufficient. A multi-dimensional view of reli-

giosity which includes beliefs, knowledge, participation and emotion of college students is certainly the better way to look at the effects of religion on this type of sexual behavior.

An excellent example of a multi-dimensional approach to studying the relationship between religion and sexuality is the study by Penhollow, Young and Denny (2005), which demonstrated that for both female and male college students, those who reported infrequent worship attendance and weak religious feelings were more likely to report participating in non-marital sexual behaviors. Although the study did not specifically study “hooking-up behavior,” they found that the strength of religious conviction and participation in religious activities are more important than religious denomination or affiliation in predicting whether or not an individual engages in non-marital sex.

Follow-up studies by Penhollow, Young and Bailey (2005, 2007) looked specifically at the relationship between hooking-up behavior and two measures of religiosity: church attendance and religious feeling. Findings revealed that for both females and males, church attendance was negatively related to some forms of hooking-up behaviors (the more frequent the church attendance, the less frequent the hooking-up behavior), but religious feeling was only significant in reducing hooking-up behavior for males. For females, the emotional attachment to religion had little impact on their decision to participate in hooking-up behaviors.

One important consideration offered by Penhollow, Young and Denny (2005) is that in doing research on the correlates of participating in the hook-up culture, it is possible that just as religiosity has an effect on hooking-up behavior, the converse may be true; it is just as likely that “sexual experiences influence religiosity” (Penhollow et al, 2005:81).

For evidence of the likelihood that engaging in casual sexual experiences affects the commitment to participating in one’s religious behavior, it is helpful to recall classic research published in the *Journal of Marriage and the Family* by Thornton and Camburn (1989). This study indicated that those individuals who engage in premarital sex actually “become” less religiously involved. It is possible that those students who engage in short term acts of sexual behavior (the hook-up) also decrease religious involvement. This should come as no surprise to most faithful Catholics who have been taught about the ways in which immoral behavior can lead to additional forms of immorality and eventually a turning away from God and the sacraments.

Looking specifically at those who identify themselves as “Catholic,” Elizabeth Stoddard (1996) surveyed 235 never-married heterosexual college students enrolled at a west coast independent university and found significant differences in the sexual behavior of students of differing religious orientation. Stoddard’s study differed from the others because she looked closely at “religious orientation” (categorized as intrinsic, indiscriminately pro-religious and non-religious). Intrinsic students were those who indicated clearly that they “belonged” to a specific denomination. She found that most intrinsic students were significantly less likely to participate in premarital sexual intercourse—except for Roman Catholics. For the Catholic students in the Stoddard study, affiliation with the Catholic Church made no difference in reducing the rate of engaging in premarital sexual behavior.

Yet, when church attendance is factored into the equation of religiosity and sexual behavior, we most often find that church attendance has a significant effect on decreasing the likelihood of engaging in hooking-up behavior. Susan Harris Eaves (2007) found that reli-

gious affiliation and church attendance had a negative effect on first intercourse, number of sexual intercourse partners, number of oral sex partners and number of one-night stands.

This study joins a growing list of studies that indicate that it is “attendance,” and not belief or affiliation, that has the dampening effect on the decision to engage in casual sex. Most studies find a negative relationship between religiosity and sexual activity—the higher the religiosity, the lower the sexual activity. For example, in her dissertation, Peggy Sue Sadeghin (1989) surveyed 483 college undergraduates and found that the more religious students were much less likely to engage in sexual behavior. In contrast, Jacynth Fennell (2000) looked at the relationship between religious beliefs and found “non-significant differences between those who had sex and those who did not.” This indicates that religious beliefs, in and of themselves, had no effect on the decision to participate in premarital sex.

A major quantitative study which employs a multidimensional measure of religion to explore the relationship between religion and hooking-up behavior was recently published in the *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* by Burdette, Ellison, Hill, and Glenn (2009). For this survey, a national sample of 1,000 college women participated in a telephone interview designed to examine the dating and courtship attitudes and values of contemporary college women.

To measure “hooking-up behavior,” respondents were asked: “Now, some people say that a hook-up is when a girl and a guy get together for a physical encounter and do not necessarily expect anything further. Since you have been at school have you experienced a hook-up?” Approximately 38 percent of the respondents indicated that they had engaged in a “hook-up.”

To measure religious denomination, the Burdette team used six groupings including: Catholic, conservative Protestant, mainline Protestant, other Christian, other religious faith, and non-affiliated. In addition to these religious affiliation variables, respondents were also asked about the frequency of church attendance, and were queried about their subjective religiousness (“How religious do you consider yourself to be?”) Beyond these individual religion variables, the researchers classified colleges and universities each respondent attended according to their institutional affiliation. In order to be classified, the school had to display a religious mission statement and advertise religion in their promotional materials; the school also had to sponsor religious activities and /or employ religiously affiliated faculty and staff. It was not enough that the school have a historic affiliation with a certain faith. Rather, the school had to have “an active and apparent religious presence on campus.”

The Burdette study is important to Catholic educators because of these religious affiliation variables, but critics have noted the study’s limitations. Of the 1,000 college women surveyed, only 31 percent were Catholic and only six percent attended Catholic colleges. In sum, only 39 Catholic women attending Catholic colleges were interviewed, though there are tens of thousands of Catholic women attending college in the United States. Only 16 Catholic colleges were represented. Thus, while the study’s findings are important, it is clear that further research is needed in this area.

In the data it had available, the Burdette team found important religious differentials in hooking-up behavior. While holding a conservative Protestant affiliation reduced the odds of hooking up, holding a Catholic affiliation increased the odds of hooking up. Indeed,

students who identified themselves as Catholics displayed roughly a 72 percent increase in the odds of hooking up compared to those women with no religious affiliation.

Yet, for all respondents—including Catholics and Protestants—religious involvement reduced the odds of hooking up at college, and this pattern was driven by religious service attendance rather than religious affiliation or subjective religiousness. The authors suggest that “co-religionist networks may be particularly important during the college years, when individuals have increased dating and sexual opportunities, yet little or no supervision. Further, religious service attendance may be a greater predictor of religious commitment once an individual has left home, given that church attendance is not always voluntary for adolescents.”

The authors surmise that “being Catholic,” in and of itself, yields few protective effects from engaging in casual sexual behavior, and, in fact, that Catholic women are actually more likely than their unaffiliated counterparts to have hooked up. Still, only 24 percent of Catholic women who attended church on a weekly basis reported having hooked up compared to 38 percent of their nonreligious counterparts. In contrast, 50 percent of Catholic women who reported infrequent church attendance and low levels of subjective religiousness hooked up at college compared to 38 percent of those with no religious affiliation.

Immoral communities

Kathleen Bogle, author of *Hooking Up: Sex, Dating and Relationships on Campus* (2008), found “no differences” between the hooking-up behavior of students at a large state university and the same behavior on a Roman Catholic campus. She found that while some of the students she interviewed believed that there were more anonymous hook-up encounters at the state university due to the larger size of the student population, most of the Catholic college students she interviewed did not believe that the religious affiliation of their university affected hooking up in any way. In fact, “most of them believed the religious connection did not make any difference.”

But the study by Burdette, Ellison, Hill and Glenn (2007) points to a more serious problem on Catholic campuses. The survey indicated that “women attending colleges and universities affiliated with the Catholic Church are almost four times as likely to have participated in hooking up compared with women at secular schools.” Attending a conservative Protestant college was not associated with having engaged in hooking-up behavior. Although the small sample of Catholic college students suggests the need for further verification, the results are troubling.

Unlike students on evangelical or conservative Protestant campuses, students on Catholic campuses do not constitute what the authors identify as a “moral community.” When Catholic students enter college, it appears that they do not enter with the same level of religious commitment or knowledge of their faith as their Protestant counterparts. The Catholic women in the study report significantly lower levels of subjective religiousness than both conservative and mainline Protestant respondents. Thus, on Catholic campuses, with large numbers of Catholic students, the authors conclude that “it may be that university investments in religious instruction and education are too little too late for some students.”

Without a foundation of religious socialization during childhood and early adolescence, religious messages may be poorly received. As a result, while the Catholic universities may contain a majority of students affiliated with the Catholic Church, the authors of the study

conclude that these young adults may not “ratify religious principles in the social environment,” a critical component of what these authors identify as the moral communities thesis. For instance, in an entry titled *Sex and the Catholic Campus* posted on www.bustedhalo.com, Fordham student Julia Tier reflects on how the Catholic faith is just “not relevant” for those living on a Catholic campus.

In their 2005 book *Soul Searching*, Christian Smith and Melinda Denton argue that current Catholic college students no longer arrive on campus with the kind of religious socialization that used to take place within Catholic elementary and high schools. They write that today’s “Catholic schools have grown into college prep academies with competitive admissions standards and hefty tuition rates, serving the more privileged of their communities, whether Catholic or not, and more dedicated by demand of parents to getting their students admitted to prestigious colleges than to teaching them about the Trinity, sin, the Virgin Mary, the atonement and faithful Christian living.” Many Catholic students seem to arrive on Catholic college campuses with little idea about what the Church teaches about sexual morality. Smith and Denton maintain that “most Catholic teenagers now pass through a Church system that has not fully come to terms with its own institutional deficit and structural vacuum with regard to providing substantial distinctive Catholic socialization, education and pastoral ministry for its teenagers.”

This poor socialization for Catholic teenagers is often continued when they arrive on Catholic campuses and may be confronted with theology professors who are committed to providing a critical perspective of the Catholic faith rather than instruction on what the faith teaches. Students on these Catholic campuses may learn to critique their religion before they even learn what the Catholic Church actually teaches.

For this reason, some researchers like Burdette, Ellison, Hill and Glenn (2007:546) point out that “Catholic universities in particular may face an uphill battle in attempting to create moral communities.” They cite research by Regnerus (2003) which demonstrates that for a sustainable moral community to emerge, there must not only be a critical mass of adherents, there must also be an actively religious majority that reinforces specific religious principles in the general social environment. As a result, religion becomes a group property, rather than just a matter of individual preference.

Church-attending Protestants tend to enter college with higher levels of religious commitment than their Catholic counterparts and are less likely to reduce their commitment during young adulthood. In her study of the hook-up culture, Donna Freitas, the author of *Sex and the Soul: Juggling Sexuality, Spirituality, Romance, and Religion on America’s College Campuses*, found that the one type of college that stood out from the trend toward “hooking up” was the evangelical Christian college.

To understand the hook-up culture, Freitas collected responses from students at seven colleges and universities—a mix of public, private, evangelical and Catholic institutions. She found that for students at evangelical colleges, unlike students at Catholic colleges, religion is the center of everything, from campus life to student identity. She writes, “At all the other campuses it is really hard for students to see sex and religion in relation to each other.” Freitas found that at the evangelical colleges, there was not a hook-up culture that pressured students. Rather, it was a “purity” culture that encouraged chastity and marriage, a culture of shared morality that exists on the evangelical college campus.

While this may be true for evangelical colleges, this still does not explain why female

Catholic college students enrolled on Catholic campuses are more likely to hook up—even more likely than those on secular campuses. Some researchers suggest that a hook-up culture can emerge when females outnumber males on campus (Rhoads, Webber and Van-Vleet, 2010). Many Catholic campuses have far greater numbers of female students than males, and some researchers suggest that women are competing for men on these campuses. The anthropologist Elizabeth Cashdan found that where there are more men than women, women usually set the ground rules; where there are more women than men, men get to set the ground rules. At most Catholic colleges, more than 50 percent of the undergraduates are women and they may feel pressured to compete sexually for men. But the reality remains that similar gender disparities exist on evangelical Christian campuses where females outnumber males by significant percentages.

In an attempt to explain the differences in the rate of hooking-up behavior for Catholic college students, Burdette, Ellison, Hill and Glenn (2007:547) suggest that selection effects may be operating. By this they mean that some parents may encourage their daughters to attend Catholic colleges because “they perceive their child’s dating behavior to be problematic. Parents who view their daughters as bad girls may send them to religious schools in hopes of constraining dating behaviors.” This could help explain the variation in females engaging in “hooking up” on Catholic campuses. But further analysis by these researchers did not support possible selection effects. They did not find that female Catholic college students differed dramatically from those entering secular colleges, so the researchers dismissed selection factors as the answer to the differences in rates of hooking up.

Instead, Burdette, Ellison, Hill and Glenn (2007) suggest that the more likely reason that women at Catholic colleges and universities are more likely to hook up compared to their counterparts at secular schools can be attributed to the fact that in comparison with other colleges—including secular colleges—the policies surrounding alcohol and dorm visitation are more permissive at Catholic colleges than elsewhere. Also, compared to secular colleges, Catholic schools bring together men and women who have much in common not only religiously but socially as well. And unlike their Protestant counterparts, many Catholic students arrive on campus never having learned much about Church or Scriptural teachings on sexual morality.

These contributing factors at Catholic colleges have led Burdette, Ellison, Hill and Glenn (2007:546) to conclude: “Quite unintentionally, the combination of these three factors may create an environment that is conducive to casual physical encounters.” Additional research on the culture that has emerged on Catholic campuses, published by Donna Freitas in *Sex and the Soul*, supports many of their conclusions.

Freitas’ book reveals that there is a culture of “openness” about the sexual behavior of other students: “One young woman told me that at her Catholic school, by the end of the second month in her first-year residence hall, students had developed a kind of catalog about who was experienced at what and who was not experienced at all... Several young women told me that once they lost their virginity, they felt as though they might as well continue. After all, once you’ve done it, what’s the point of stopping?”

Freitas found that for a minority of students virginity was important and writes that when she was interviewing female students on one Catholic campus, students were about to enter into a lottery for on-campus apartments and residence hall rooms for the following year. A group of five women, all of whom were virgins, stood out among everyone else.

They called themselves “Virgins ‘R Us.”

Although virginity was not the norm on many of the campuses she studied, Freitas did not find that there was a stigma associated with virginity: “The woman telling me the story is not a virgin herself, but she is quick to argue that virginity is a perfectly legitimate choice for some people.” Another student on a Catholic campus told Freitas, “I have a friend in the hall who has been with her boyfriend for three years and she wants to wait for marriage, and I think that is an amazing decision. I think people really respect people that make that decision.” Still, Freitas adds that this same student also talks about virginity not as a personal choice, but as a sign of feeling unwanted and of lacking in self-esteem. When a campus develops a “hook-up culture” those who are not part of that culture can easily feel like outsiders. This points to the real costs of the hook-up culture on both the institution and the individual.

Costs of a Hook-Up Campus Culture

There are individual costs and institutional costs that accrue when a hook-up culture emerges on a Catholic campus. All students are affected because such a culture can permeate the entire campus.

To understand this culture it is helpful to review some of the interviews Freitas conducted with Catholic college students. These interviews reveal a culture of “theme parties” that have become a “campus tradition” on many campuses—including some Catholic campuses. These are parties or events where students dress up according to a particular set of stereotypes including: “pimps and ho’s,” “CEOs and office ho’s,” and “golf pros and tennis ho’s.” Freitas writes: “By their very design, most theme parties are about sex and power, with guys in the dominant position—the CEO and the sports pros—and girls acting the part of the sexually submissive, sexually suggestive, sexually available, and sexually willing ho’s at their beck and call.” While such activity surely does not involve most students, it can have an effect on the entire campus—even beyond those who are attending the parties.

A study published by Armstrong, Hamilton and Sweeney (2006), described a “party dorm” as having a “hedonistic culture.” They came to this conclusion after holding sixteen group interviews and forty-two individual interviews with residents of what became known as a “party dorm” (because of the drinking and sexual behavior) and found that sexual assault was a “predictable outcome” of such a culture.

Such a culture can negatively affect relationships and friendships between students. There are several studies which describe the phenomenon known as “friends with benefits” on college campuses—including Catholic college campuses—or relationships that fit neither the traditional definition of a friendship nor a romantic relationship. The phenomenon of “friends with benefits” and the movement to casual sex most likely begins long before students enter college.

Drawing upon a sample of 125 students, Melissa Bisson (2004) found that 60 percent of the students polled have had this type of relationship. Although some respondents indicate that “sex can complicate a friendship by bringing forth desires for commitment,” Bisson believes that these relationships can be desirable because they incorporate trust and

comfort while avoiding romantic commitment.

In contrast, Feldman, Cauffman, Jensen and Arnett (2000) found that “friends with benefits” can lead to feelings of betrayal: “Because loyalty and trust are viewed as key requirements for relationships with friends as well as with romantic partners, acts of betrayal which violate the trust on which these relationships are based are viewed as serious transgressions.”

When looking at the costs for the individual student, it is helpful to look closely at the large-scale quantitative studies. Nearly all of these studies suggest that women are at substantially more risk than men for feeling upset about the experience of engaging in casual sex. Glenn and Marquardt (2001) found that many women felt hurt after hooking up and confused about their future relations with the men with whom they hooked up with. Bisson and Levine found that it may be the combination of mismatched expectations and the lack of communication about the meaning of the encounter that leads to negative outcomes for some students. Research by Paul and Hayes (2002) found that for some of these relationships, it could be that the situations were unwanted or forced. When women feel pressured to engage in a casual sexual relationship, or if there is alcohol involved, there are more likely to be negative outcomes. One research team (Grello, 2006) found that students’ feelings of regret after hooking up were related to more depressive symptoms.

These differential outcomes for female students is not surprising to evolutionary anthropologists like John Townsend whose research has led him to believe that many women go through an experimental stage when they try casual sex. Townsend also points out that women almost always end up rejecting it. For women, sexual intercourse produces feelings of “vulnerability” and of being used when they cannot get the desired emotional investment from their partners. In Townsend’s studies, that occurs even among the most sexually liberated women. Despite their freethinking attitudes, their emotions make it impossible for them to enjoy casual sex (cited by Rhoads, Webber and VanVleet, 2010).

Several studies have documented the possible negative outcomes for both women and men involved in the hook-up culture. A survey of 832 college students’ hooking-up experiences by Owen, Rhoades, Stanley and Fincham (2007) points to the problem inherent in attempting to determine psychological outcomes of hooking-up behavior. It is the problem of directionality—or trying to determine whether students who had low psychological well-being were more likely to engage in an activity that did not benefit their mental health, or if it was the encounter which contributed to lower psychological well-being. For example, it is likely that students who have a negative experience with hooking up may feel that they were not treated fairly by their partner after their encounter. Or, it may be that one partner, but not the other partner, did not see the encounter as consensual.

Owen, et al. (2007) also report that negative emotional reactions were tied to less general acceptance of hooking up itself. It may be that holding negative attitudes about hooking up and then doing so anyway creates dissonance that causes a negative emotional reaction; or it could be that having a negative experience results in less accepting attitudes about hooking up. This makes it difficult to make confident assertions that it is the hooking-up behavior that causes the negative emotional reactions.

Beyond psychological outcomes for individuals engaging in hooking-up behavior, it is important to look at the physical costs for individuals who engage in hooking-up behavior.

There is a great deal of research on the individual outcomes of engaging in risky sexual behavior in terms of unplanned pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases. There is also the perception that those who engage in this risky sexual behavior—especially women who engage in this behavior—are somehow “damaged” by their choice to do this. A major study of the sexual behavior of 71,860 college students by the American College Health Association revealed that a growing number of female college students are reporting having acquired sexually transmitted infections, diseases, or complications including the human papillomavirus, genital herpes, chlamydia, pelvic inflammatory disease, HIV and gonorrhea.

Kathleen Bogle’s study points to the negative impact of this lifestyle for female students. She writes that women are far more likely than men to get a bad reputation for how they conduct themselves in the hookup culture. Women can get a bad reputation for many different things including how often they hook up, who they hook up with, how far they go sexually during a hook-up, and how they dress when they go out at night where hooking up may happen. Bogle points out that men who are very active in the hook-up culture may be called “players,” while women are still viewed as “sluts” if they are perceived as having hooked up too often or with the wrong people.

This continued “double standard” is reflected in a memorable interview of a male college student published in *Sex and the Soul* by Donna Freitas. The student told Freitas about what he identified as “the dirty girls” on his campus, who are perceived by others (and himself) as having hooked up too much. This young man mentioned that after a while, no one wanted to hook up with these girls because they feared contracting a sexually transmitted disease. The data compiled by the American College Health Association reveals that this is a valid fear.

It is clear that there remain gender differences in perceptions of those who are engaged in the hook-up culture. Freitas and Bogle both introduce the concept of the “walk of shame,” which refers to a female college student walking home the next morning after a hook-up encounter, wearing the same outfit she was wearing the evening prior. Given that students dress differently for “going out” than during the daytime for class, it is obvious to all when a student is doing the walk of shame. The fact that they even use the word “shame” is revealing. If all students accept hooking up as a way of campus life, and believe that everyone is doing it, then using the word shame cannot be understood. But students continue to be ambivalent about hooking up itself—and some are shameful.

Beyond the individual physical and psychological costs, there is evidence that the culture that has emerged on many Catholic campuses now carries spiritual costs. While we cannot attribute these spiritual costs directly to the hook-up culture, we can suggest that the degraded student culture can be related. A recent study done by researchers at Georgetown University (2010) tracking changes in the behavior and attitudes of college students during their years on Catholic campuses reveals that 31 percent of Catholic students enrolled in Catholic colleges and universities report that they have “moved away” from the pro-life teachings of the Catholic Church during their college years. Comparing Catholic students enrolled at Catholic institutions with Catholic students enrolled in private and public colleges and universities reveal that those enrolled in Catholic schools were less likely to move toward Catholic Church teachings on abortion than those enrolled in non-Catholic institutions. While 16 percent of Catholics enrolled in Catholic schools claim to have moved to a pro-life position, 17 percent of Catholic students enrolled in public col-

leges and 18 percent of Catholic students enrolled in private non-sectarian colleges moved in the pro-life direction.

In addition to increased support for abortion, the Georgetown study revealed that 39 percent of Catholic students enrolled on Catholic campuses claim that they have moved further away from their Church's definition of marriage as a union of one woman and one man. On this issue, more Catholic students on Catholic campuses moved toward supporting gay marriage than those enrolled in private religious (non-Catholic) colleges, and showed just slightly less increased support for gay marriage than those enrolled in public colleges and private non-sectarian colleges.

Beyond Catholic college student support for gay marriage and abortion, the Georgetown data indicate that these students decrease their participation rates in religious activities such as Mass attendance and prayer. While we cannot claim that the hook-up culture contributes to a change in Church attendance and support for abortion and gay marriage, we can propose the likelihood that once a Catholic campus adopts a culture that is counter to Church teachings on sexual morality, support for all Church teachings declines.

Alcohol as a Correlate of Hook-Up Behavior

One of the leading organizations addressing the effects of substance abuse is the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA) at Columbia University. Led by Joseph A. Califano, Jr., the former U.S. Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, CASA convened a commission in the early 1990s to look into the substance abuse situation at America's colleges and universities. The commission issued two reports—*The Smoke-Free Campus* (1993) and *Rethinking Rites of Passage* (1994)—and was chaired by Reverend Edward Malloy, C.S.C., now President Emeritus of the University of Notre Dame, who also serves on the board of CASA. In 2002, CASA reconvened the commission and tasked it with determining what, if any, progress had been made. The commission produced a report titled *Wasting the Best and the Brightest: Substance Abuse at America's Colleges and Universities*, which reveals, among other things, a significant public health crisis on campuses throughout the country.

Califano summarized the report's findings: "The college culture of alcohol and other drug abuse is linked to poor student academic performance, depression, anxiety, risky sex, rape, suicide and accidental death, property damage, vandalism, fights and a host of medical problems." Teenage pregnancy, sexual assault and prostitution are also mentioned as results of substance abuse. For Catholics, this is not just a "public health" crisis, but also a moral and a spiritual crisis. Califano makes an important point: at Catholic colleges and universities, there is both an "added incentive" and a "special obligation" to confront the problems of substance abuse and casual sex. "Students...are made in God's image, with an inherent human dignity that should not be debased by excessive use of alcohol" (CASA, 2007)."

Sadly, the CASA study reveals that there is no reason to believe that Catholic institutions fare any better than other colleges and universities around the country. In 2005, New York City's Fordham University ranked first in self-reported campus alcohol violations, with 905 incidents—four times as many as the second-ranked New York University. At the College of the Holy Cross, a series of incidents arose out of the combination of alcohol and

sex: in 1996, a female student who was drinking heavily reported having been raped; in 1998, a car accident killed a drunk student; in 2000, a drunk student was killed by a train; and in 2002, a fight between two drunk students resulted in a death.

In 2010, 44 Notre Dame students were arrested for under-age drinking at an off-campus party. South Bend police responded to a call about a fight near a roadway and discovered the Notre Dame student party. Nate Montana, the son of former Notre Dame standout Joe Montana was among 11 Notre Dame athletes arrested among the 44 students on misdemeanor charges of underage drinking at a party.

CASA recommends a set of policies to colleges and universities in an effort both to prevent and reduce alcohol abuse on campus. First, policies should be clear, as should the consequences of violating them be. CASA advocates a ban on alcohol in dorms, in most common areas, at on-campus parties, and at sporting events. Both the faculty and staff, as well as students and their parents, should be educated on the problems of substance abuse. At Georgetown University, for instance, all freshmen are required to be educated about alcohol abuse. Further, the college should be diligent in monitoring the rates of consumption and target students who are at risk, providing them with the opportunity for treatment.

It is important to look at what factors influence students' decisions to drink. Most notably, it is living arrangements. Drinking varies depending on where a student lives. The Task Force encourages parents to inquire about campus alcohol policies when their high school student is trying to choose the right college. The parent should ask how the college enforces underage drinking prevention and what procedures are used to notify parents about consumption and abuse. Drinking rates tend to be the highest in fraternity and sorority housing, so the parent should see if alcohol-free dorms are available. Additionally, the number of alcohol-related injuries and deaths at the campus is an important statistic to find out. (For recent data describing the consequences of the emergence of a culture of alcohol and drugs on campus, see Appendix A.)

Dangerous liaisons

So what is the connection between the use of drugs and alcohol and student sexual behavior? Another CASA study, *Dangerous Liaisons: Substance Abuse and Sexual Behavior* (1999), revealed that teens who drink or use drugs are "much more likely to have sex, initiate it at younger ages...and have multiple partners." These students are more likely to contract sexually-transmitted diseases (STDs) or AIDS and experience unplanned pregnancies. The 1999 report analyzed data collected from interviews with over 34,000 teenagers and 100 experts in relevant fields.

The study also revealed that while 63 percent of teens who use alcohol and 70 percent of teens who are frequent drinkers have had sex, only 26 percent of those who have never drunk have had sex. Further, the survey found that 23 percent of sexually active teens and young adults in America (about 5.6 million 15- to 24-year-olds) report having unprotected sex because they were drinking or using drugs at the time. Of these, 29 percent say that, due to alcohol and drug use, they did "more sexually than they had planned." Fifty percent said that people their age mix alcohol or drugs and sex "a lot," and 37 percent want more information about "how alcohol or drugs might affect decision about having sex."

In an attempt to discover whether alcohol consumption by college students leads to sexual behavior that would not have otherwise occurred, Meilman (1993) discovered that

of 439 randomly selected undergraduate students, 35 percent had participated in “alcohol-induced” sexual activity. For the half of these students who had intercourse, many admitted to having unprotected sex at least one time while under the influence of alcohol. In another study at the University of Virginia, the College of William and Mary and Dartmouth College, almost 40 percent of college students reported having engaged in sexual behavior “as a direct result” of consuming alcohol (Meilman et al., 1993).

Desiderato and Crawford (1995) point out that risky sex—unprotected sex and deception from partners—has led to an alarmingly high rate of STDs among young adults. In their study, 47 percent of participants did not use a condom, 19 percent had STDs at the time, and one-third of those with STDs admitted that they did not inform their partner of their infection. Many studies have noted the negative relationship between consuming alcohol and condom use (Leigh and Morrison, 1991; Donovan and McEwan, 1995). Many students—58 percent of males and 48 percent of females—consumed alcohol immediately before their first sexual experience (Clapper & Lipsitt, 1991).

In short, says Califano, “For parents and religious leaders who believe that sexual abstinence before marriage is a moral imperative, this report signals the particular importance of persuading teens not to drink alcohol or use illegal drugs.” The urgency and duty can be extended to college administrators, especially those at Catholic colleges and universities.

So help me God: The role of religion

A CASA white paper titled “So Help Me God: Substance Abuse, Religion and Spirituality” examines the link between religion and the prevention and treatment of substance abuse. The 2001 report observes a strong connection between one’s religious practices and a lower risk of abusing drugs and alcohol. As part of the study, CASA surveyed administrators at seminaries and schools of theology, inquiring about their perceptions of the scope of the problem of substance abuse. CASA’s research indicates that God, religion and spirituality are important factors in preventing and treating substance abuse, and that weekly church attendance significantly reduces the risk of drinking and drug use.

The data collected from teenagers is revealing. Teens who do not consider themselves religious are almost three times as likely to binge drink as teens who consider religion to be important. Teens who do not attend religious services weekly are twice as likely to drink than teens who do attend weekly religious services.

On the college campus, CASA discovered that students with no religious affiliation reported higher levels of drinking than those who identified as either Catholic or Protestant. But while religious activity lowers the risk of drinking among college students, the heaviest drinkers among college students are men, whites and Roman Catholics to whom religion is not important.

It is evident that when students have strong religious convictions and participate in religious activities, they consume less alcohol and therefore are less likely to engage in casual sex.

Most religions prohibit or restrict the use of substances, but there is a variation in strictness. Judaism and Christianity draw the concept of moderation from, among other passages of Scripture, this verse from Proverbs: “Do not join those who drink too much wine or gorge themselves on meat” (23:20). Historically, the Catholic Church has not required

abstinence from its members, but teaches that believers must use self-control. Both Judaism and Christianity admonish drunkenness as sinful; St. Paul tells the Corinthians not to conduct themselves in “reveling and drunkenness” (1 Corinthians 5:11).

When CASA asked Catholic college presidents if they saw substance abuse as a problem on their campus, 73.9 percent saw it as a very important problem, and 26.1 percent saw it as somewhat important.

Student Personnel and Residence Life Policies

Many student affairs officers on Catholic campuses say the most important issues they face are issues of sexual behavior and identity (Bickel, 2001). In her dissertation study, Catherine Bickel explored how four residence life leaders from two Midwestern Catholic colleges worked with students who had sexual concerns (over issues like promiscuity and homosexuality) that were in conflict with Catholic teachings. The author identified nine important findings which indicated that residence hall directors received little, if any training about how to operate in an environment identified as Catholic. Because of this lack of training, residence hall directors made a variety of assumptions about students, colleagues, the institution’s expectations and Catholic teachings. Bickel claimed that “students lead the way on issues in conflict with Catholic doctrine” rather than student affairs professionals or leaders. She also found that there was a concern on the part of some residence life leaders of the “conservative reaction of students and parents” to issues surrounding sexual behavior, identity and orientation. While Bickel is clearly sympathetic to the need for a non-judgmental attitude for residential life staff, her study points to this area as one that needs further research.

It is clear that on many Catholic campuses, residence life leaders appear to have little idea about Catholic teachings on sexuality. This uncertainty about Catholic teachings on sexual morality may actually encourage a hook-up culture by creating a non-judgmental culture that conveys tacit approval for sexual behaviors counter to Church teachings.

Bickel’s research is given support from a study by Sandra Estanek (1996) published in *Current Issues in Catholic Higher Education* which revealed that many of the most difficult issues relating to the Catholic identity of Catholic colleges and universities are confronted not by teachers in the classroom, but by student affairs administrators responding to students, especially to sexual behavior and sexual identity problems.

In her book, *Hooking Up: Sex, Dating and Relationships on Campus*, Kathleen Bogle points out that the contemporary college campus (both Catholic and secular) is conducive to hooking up: there is a relatively homogeneous population living in close proximity to each other with no strictly enforced rules monitoring their behavior. This fosters a sense of safety or comfort—students share the mantra that college is a time to party.

Christopher Kaczor, Loyola Marymount University philosophy professor and author of *How to Stay Catholic in College*, writes in *First Things*, “The answer is single-sex student residences. Research indicates that students in single-sex residences are significantly less likely to engage in binge drinking and the hookup culture than students living in co-ed student residences” (Kaczor, 2011). He cites several studies supporting his claim (Harford et al., 2002; Wechsler et al., 2000; Willoughby and Carroll, 2009).

In particular, studies analyzing data from the Harvard School of Public Health College Alcohol Study (CAS) have found that “students living in coed dormitories, when compared with students in single-gender dorms, incurred more problem consequences related to drinking... The reported differences in problem consequences extend previous studies of underage alcohol use in the CAS, which found that college students residing in coed dormitories and fraternity/sorority house, when compared with students residing in single-gender dormitories, were more likely to report heavy episodic drinking” (Harford et al., 2002). Nearly twice as many students in coed dorms (39.1 percent) reported binge drinking in the last two weeks than students in single-sex halls (20.6 percent) (Wechsler et al., 2000).

That prevalence of “risk-taking,” say Willoughby and Carroll (2009), is as common with casual sex as it is with drinking. Despite using different survey data from Harvard’s College Alcohol Study, they similarly found that students in co-ed halls were more than twice as likely to engage in binge-drinking or drink alcohol at least once a week. But students in co-ed dorms were also more likely to view pornography and have “permissive attitudes toward sexual activity.” They were more than twice as likely (12.6 percent) to have three or more sexual partners in the last twelve months than students in single-sex residences (4.9 percent).

An important question asked by researchers about such data is whether “students who enjoy risky behavior choose co-ed residences because they seek a more permissive atmosphere. So, the differences between co-ed and single sex residences reflect the kinds of people who choose them, rather than being caused by some difference between single-sex and co-ed residences” (Kaczor, 2011). But Harford, et al. (2002) found similar background characteristics for students choosing co-ed and single-sex dorms, and so reported only “limited evidence for self-selection.” Willoughby and Carroll (2009) controlled for students’ religion and other variables but found that the residential differences remained significant. They concluded that selection “does not play a large role” in the association between risky behavior and residence type.

On a growing number of secular campuses, there is movement toward offering students the opportunity to share co-ed bedrooms—perhaps an indication of things to come on certain Catholic campuses, where student life policies often follow secular trends in American higher education. According to an article in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (Borrego, 2001), Swarthmore introduced co-ed housing in part to provide a residential alternative for gay students. For some, finding a same-sex roommate comfortable with their sexuality was difficult. Gay students had begun complaining to the college’s housing committee that mandatory same-gender housing was “heterosexist.” The approval of “gender-neutral” housing at nearby George Washington University in 2010 had students at Georgetown University excited. They requested a similar policy at the Jesuit Catholic university, and the vice president for student affairs said that he was open to discussing it with the student government (Maglio, 2010).

In a May 2000 article in the *National Review*, John Biaggio, then the President of Tufts University, refused to implement co-ed rooms explaining that, “While we realize many of our students are sexually active, we don’t see it as our role to encourage it. I am not saying we are prudish. We are not acting *in loco parentis*. But we are dealing with life-threatening venereal diseases here.” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (2009) reported that Tufts banned “any sex act in a dorm room while one’s roommate is present” and further stipulated that “any sexual activity in the room should not interfere with a roommate’s privacy, study

habits or sleep.” The office said that the policy stemmed from a significant number of complaints by students uncomfortable with what their roommates were doing in the room. The *Tufts Daily* newspaper (Kan, 2009) reported that “the sex policy is intended as a tool to facilitate conversation and compromise between roommates rather than simply proscribe behavior.” Distancing herself from any perceptions of a judgmental attitudes and the *in loco parentis* role, one residence hall administrator said that “we want to make perfectly clear that we do not want to hinder someone from engaging in any personal or private activity.”

Research indicates that students tend to overestimate the hook-up culture on their campuses. A study published in the *Journal of American College Health* revealed that although 49.1 percent of students (71,860 students at 107 institutions of higher education) reported having engaged in sexual intercourse during their college years, students tend to think that twice as many students are sexually active than actually are. This perception that “everyone” is engaged in the hook-up culture can contribute to expanding the hook-up culture, because it provides tacit permission to those who are considering participation in the practice. Students begin to view the behavior as a “normal” part of college life.

For a culture to emerge on Catholic campuses that values chastity and respect for Church teachings on sexual morality, there must a true collaboration between students and student life administrators. But the literature indicates that on some campuses the student life administrators, many of whom came of age in the freewheeling 1970s, lag behind the more conservative students in creating such a culture.

Creating a Campus Culture That Values Chastity

Discouraged by the hook-up culture on their campuses, there appears to be a student counter-culture emerging. Student initiated and led, this counterculture is intended to reclaim sexual integrity on campuses. The Elizabeth Anscombe Society at Providence College, for example, claims to “equip students with the knowledge and social science data that will help them navigate their personal romantic relationships in a happy and healthy way.” Viviana Garcia, founder and former co-president of the Providence College Anscombe Society, writes that “in the spirit of writer Flannery O’Connor, who held that we have to push as hard as the age that pushes against you, these students are holding fast to their conviction that sexual intimacy can only bring happiness within the committed relationship of marriage” (Garcia, 2009).

The first Elizabeth Anscombe Society was started at Princeton University in 2005. Named for the famed Cambridge philosophy professor and intellectual defender of traditional sexual ethics, the mission of the organization is to “foster an atmosphere where sex is dignified, respectful and beautiful; where human relationships are affirming and supportive; where motherhood is not put at odds with feminism; and where no one is objectified, instrumentalized or demeaned.”

Similar groups are emerging on Catholic campuses. In 2004, students at the University of Notre Dame launched the Edith Stein Project. Drawing from the Apostolic letter of Pope John Paul II titled “On the Dignity and Vocation of Women,” Notre Dame students—both men and women—have held conferences each year to discuss issues of gender, sexuality and human dignity. The coordinators of the Edith Stein Project write that they wish to “examine the degrading attitudes toward our own dignity that are often taken for granted

and to question their root causes... we offer that their common cause is a general misunderstanding of the true nature and dignity of the human person.”

The 6th Annual Edith Stein Project Conference in February 2011 was titled “Irreplaceable You: Vocation, Identity, and the Pursuit of Happiness.” The conference drew from Pope John Paul II’s Apostolic proclamation that “Every Life is a Vocation.” Conference organizers write, “Each one of us is called to perform an irreplaceable role in the Body of Christ that only we can perform, simply by the virtue of being ourselves in our own distinctive situation.” They promise that the conference will “draw on the richness of Catholic teaching on authentic personhood and sexuality, including presentations on masculinity and femininity, marriage, lay vocation, the priesthood and religious life, the family, homosexuality, Pope John Paul II’s theology of the body and student life.”

At Boston College, there is a group of male students whose mission is to “seek to create a brotherhood of Christian men dedicated to leading virtuous lives.” The Sons of St. Patrick gather each week in a campus dormitory to discuss philosophy, literature and God. Fr. Paul McNellis, S.J., a professor in the Philosophy Department who helped with the group’s creation, said that about four years ago some of his former students asked if he would be the moderator for the group. In an interview for the campus newspaper, Fr. McNellis said: “They wanted a group that got together regularly in fellowship to discuss important topics. However the topics gradually became more religious as the Sons realized that the strongest bond between them was their shared faith.”

In an interview published in *The Heights*, Fr. McNellis said the students wanted to live a Christian life without compromise, especially in the way they treated women, and thus to help each other become good men and future good husbands and fathers (Gu, 2010). In a follow-up interview in *The Heights*, Fr. McNellis directly addressed the problems inherent in the hook-up culture: “When men get involved in the hook-up culture, they regress. It infantilizes them. They develop habits of thinking about themselves and women which are antithetical to being a good husband a good father” (Morrison, 2010).

Fr. McNellis said his motivation to address the male response to the hook-up culture stemmed from his observations of student life: “the thing that struck me as a difference from when I was in college was how little women now expect of men” (Morrison, 2010). What he sees as “women’s dwindling faith in male behavior” may have been caused by the rise in the divorce rate, the spike in births out of wedlock, and the collapse of the dating culture. The Sons of St. Patrick are attempting to reverse this culture. To do that, Fr. McNellis points out that students need to “shed their ties with the hook-up culture in order to start developing the values that are necessary to being a faithful spouse or responsible father.” He believes that the resurgence of the dating culture can cure the hook-up culture. He believes that many students want the dating culture to come back, pointing to the “yearly student scramble to obtain tickets to the formal Middlemarch Dance” as evidence of student desire for an alternative to the current hook-up culture.

Such small groups of students, of course, cannot change the culture alone. From the moment they step on campus for freshman orientation, college students are steeped in the radicalism-turned-orthodoxy that is the hook-up culture. Students need support from the administration and the faculty to counter that culture. They need to help create alternative campus environments that counter the cultural pressure that has “normalized” sexual deviance. Students need an alternative to the culture of sexual permissiveness that cur-

rently shapes students' expectations. They need help creating moral communities in which Church teachings on sexual morality are understood and cherished.

Recommendations for Further Study

While we have seen that the published literature offers some idea of sexuality on college campuses—and Catholic campuses in particular—Catholic educators would benefit greatly by allowing and even encouraging more extensive research on student behaviors and the impact of college policies, programs and campus life on sexual attitudes and activity.

We suggest specific areas that warrant further research:

Causes and consequences of the hook-up culture for males

Much of the research on hooking up on college campuses focuses on female students. It is assumed that women are often victims of the hook-up culture. But anecdotal evidence exists that males also suffer consequences from the student culture on many campuses.

Measurable consequences of the hook-up culture

What is the incidence of STDs, pregnancy and abortion on Catholic campuses, and how does it compare to other colleges? Is there evidence of psychological consequences from student sexual activity? How does sexual activity impact academic performance?

Differences between Protestant and Catholic college campuses and their students

It is clear that the culture on evangelical campuses is dramatically different from that on Catholic campuses. What can Catholic campus administrators learn from them? Why do students behave differently at evangelical institutions? Why do Catholic students behave differently from evangelical students?

Alcohol and drug abuse on Catholic campuses

CASA has provided some very good research on substance abuse on college campuses, showing a link to increased sexual activity. Additional research looking particularly at substance abuse on Catholic campuses and among Catholic students, and exploring further the link to sexual activity would be helpful to Catholic college leaders. Do policies and programs that have been effective in reducing alcohol and drug abuse correlate with declines in student sexual activity?

Co-ed dormitory housing

Whereas single-sex student housing was the norm at Catholic colleges a few decades ago, most have transitioned to co-ed halls, with men and women often separated by wing or floor. As a consequence, the opportunities for sexual activity in campus housing have clearly increased. Some Catholic colleges, like the University of Notre Dame and those with a strong Catholic identity, continue to offer single-sex housing. A year into his tenure as the president of the Catholic University of America, John Garvey announced that the university would return to single-sex housing. Writing in the *Wall Street Journal*, Garvey observes the destructive nature of binge drinking and the hook-up culture, as well as the role of the university in instilling virtue. There is a great need for additional research on

whether the co-ed dormitory living contributes to the emergence of a hook-up campus culture, as anecdotal evidence suggests. What are the measurable benefits and costs of co-ed residence halls?

Appendix A

As far back as 1999, a majority of college presidents identified alcohol abuse as one of the most serious problems facing students on campus. In April 2002, a Federal Task Force of the National Advisory Council on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism issued a report titled *A Call to Action: Changing the Culture of Drinking at U.S. Colleges*. The Task Force—composed of college presidents, researchers and students—spent three years extensively analyzing the literature on the use of alcohol on college campuses. In a section called “What Parents Need to Know About College Drinking,” the reader is presented with a litany of disturbing statistics:

Death: 1,400 college students die each year from alcohol-related unintentional injuries, including motor vehicle crashes.

Injury: 500,000 college students are unintentionally injured under the influence of alcohol.

Assault: More than 600,000 college students are assaulted by another student who has been drinking.

Sexual Abuse: More than 70,000 college students are victims of alcohol-related sexual assault or date rape.

Unsafe Sex: 400,000 college students have sex without taking precautions against STDs, and more than 100,000 college students report having been too intoxicated to know if they consented to having sex.

Academic Problems: About 25 percent of college students report academic consequences of their drinking including missing class, falling behind, doing poorly on exams or papers, and receiving lower grades overall.

Health Problems/Suicide Attempts: More than 150,000 college students develop an alcohol-related health problem, and between 1.2 and 1.5 percent of college students indicate that they tried to commit suicide within the past year due to drinking or drug use.

Drunk Driving: In 2001, 2.1 million college students reported driving under the influence of alcohol.

Vandalism: About 11 percent of college students report that they have damaged property while under the influence of alcohol.

Property Damage: More than 25 percent of administrators from schools with low drinking levels and more than 50 percent from schools with high drinking levels say their campuses have a “moderate” or “major” problem with alcohol-related property damage.

Police Involvement: About 5 percent of college students are involved with the police or campus security as a result of their drinking. About 110,000 students are arrested for alcohol-related violations, such as public drunkenness or driving under the influence.

Alcohol Abuse and Dependence: 31 percent of college students met criteria

for a diagnosis of alcohol abuse and 6 percent for alcohol dependence in the past 12 months.

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