

Motivations and Relationship Quality of Friends with Benefits Relationships  
Among Emerging Adults

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by

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### Abstract

This study was conducted to understand more about college-aged students' motivations for Friends with Benefits (FWB) relationships, and the quality of those relationships. These casual relationships are gaining acceptance among college populations, but we understand little about gender differences in engaging in them. An online survey was created and participants were recruited from various groups and classes on campus. From this pool of students, 233 undergraduate students completed the survey. Measures included five motivation categories: sex, wanted FWB, relationship avoidance, friendship, and relationship simplicity (Hughes, Morrison, and Asada, 2005), in addition to six relationship quality aspects: satisfaction, commitment, intimacy, trust, passion, and love (Fletcher, Simpson, and Thomas, 2000). Findings suggested that Cal Poly men and women have similar motivations for engaging in these relationships. However, men reported being more satisfied and feeling more trust in these relationships than women.

As a developmental period, adolescence is characterized by rapidly increasing brain changes, physical body maturation, and more dependence on social experiences with peers. It is also a time when the first romantic relationships can develop. The types of romantic or sexual relationships that occur depend on a variety and combination of social, biological, and cultural factors. One modern example is a Friends With Benefits Relationship (FWB) in which two friends are sexually involved but are not romantically committed to each other as in a traditional, romantic relationship (Hughes, Morrison, & Asada, 2005; Lehmiller, VanderDrift, & Kelly, 2011; Gusarova, Fraser, & Alderson, 2012). This type of relationship can be placed under the umbrella of *casual sex* because it is an example of sexual intimacy with a nonromantic partner (Grello, Welsh, & Harper, 2006). However, it differs from the slang term *hookup* that describes a one time sexual activity with an unfamiliar partner that is uncommitted and unplanned (Garcia, Reiber, Massey, & Merriwether, 2012). In this chapter, the topics of attachment theory, motivation for and involvement in romantic relationships, and the component of sexuality within romantic relationships are established as essential foundational pieces for research on friends with benefits relationships. From there, the case can be made that the various motivations adolescents may have for entering friends with benefits relationships merits more attention and research.

### *Attachment Theory*

Some researchers have posited that the theory of attachment, credited to John Bowlby and Mary Ainsworth, extends far beyond the scope of infant attachments and can be applied to romantic relationships in adolescence and adulthood (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). Until Hazan and Shaver's research in 1987, psychologists had not studied this possible connection between the work of Bowlby, Ainsworth, and romantic relationships. Therefore, in their study, Hazan and

Shaver (1987) proposed that attachment styles are continuous throughout the lifespan and affect relationships with romantic partners as well as primary caregivers. They discuss the *internal working model*, originally proposed by Bowlby, as the way in which a person forms expectations of the people in his or her world. Specifically, this research team hypothesized that a majority of their sample would be securely attached. In addition, they proposed that these attachment styles would lead participants to have different experiences within their relationships and have different internal working models of themselves within the context of a romantic relationship. Those with secure attachments would emphasize trust and friendship, and would think they are likable. Participants with avoidant attachments would have little to no trust or closeness and would deny their need for love. Lastly, those with anxious/ambivalent attachments would find love easily, but never true love, and would be more likely to doubt themselves in relationships when compared to the other two attachment styles. Hazan and Shaver (1987) created a survey that was printed in a newspaper, and asked for responses. With these, they found support for all hypotheses. The securely attached participants (56%) were more likely to describe their romantic relationships in terms of trust and acceptance of their romantic partner, while avoidant participants (25%) emphasized fear and jealousy, and anxious/ambivalent participants (19%) described extreme highs and lows of passion and jealousy. In terms of internal models and the nature of romantic love, securely attached participants believed that real love exists, but participants with avoidant or anxious/ambivalent attachments did not believe in real or true love.

Hazan and Shaver (1987) later repeated this study because of the limitations that resulted from the nature of the newspaper survey. In this second part, 108 undergraduates were surveyed and completed the same questionnaire published in the newspaper study. Once again, the three hypotheses from the initial study were confirmed, giving their research more credibility after

their initial limitations were accounted for. This work concerning the connection between infant attachment styles and attachment later in life laid the groundwork for future studies in the realm of romantic relationships.

### *Motivations for Romantic Relationships*

In addition to the work on attachment theory, it is important to consider the motivations for entering into romantic relationships as essential background information for understanding these relations in adolescence. In his synthesis of research concerning adolescent romantic relationships, Collins (2003) briefly discussed the multitude of viewpoints on the initiation of these relations. From his research, he first reported that cultural influences account for some of the differences in initiating dating, but also explained that the physical and hormonal changes in puberty may also play a role. Lastly, research has proposed that familial or social problems can be yet another factor that contributes to adolescent pursuit of romantic involvement. Collins (2003) postulated that these divergent theories of motivations could lead to different relationship satisfaction outcomes.

In line with Collins's (2003) proposal, prior research conducted by Seligman, Fazio, and Zanna (1980) proposed that different motivations would lead to different outcomes in the way people felt about their romantic partner. Using the attribution theory as a basis for understanding motivation, Seligman et al. (1980) researched the connections between intrinsic and extrinsic motivations and different levels of liking and loving a romantic partner. An intrinsic motivation would be finding personal satisfaction in dating someone attractive (Sigall & Landy, 1973 as cited in Seligman, Fazio, & Zanna, 1980). An extrinsic motivation would be enjoying the popularity or social advancement for dating someone who is attractive (Sigall & Landy, 1973 as cited in Seligman, Fazio, & Zanna, 1980). They hypothesized that people who were more

concerned with the extrinsic rewards of a relationship would be less in liking or in love with their partner. Nineteen undergraduate couples that had been dating less than a year were randomly assigned to one of three groups: intrinsic, extrinsic, or no set. All participants filled out a questionnaire indicating the frequency of certain dating activities. Those in the intrinsic group completed phrases about their partner that contained the phrase “because I” while those in the extrinsic group completed responses that included “in order to”. These phrases were previously correlated in other research as indicative of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations (Salanick, 1974 as cited in Seligman, Fazio, & Zanna, 1980). Lastly, the questionnaire contained items from Rubin’s (1973) Loving and Liking Scale. Results indicated that there were no significant differences in the types of dates the couples participated in but the intrinsic group scored significantly higher in love than the extrinsic group. Scores from the liking scales did not produce a significant result. The results of this study not only support the initial hypotheses but also the notion from the Collins (2003) research that suggests that different motivations lead to different relationships, including those formed in adolescence.

#### *Adolescent Romantic Relationships*

Many studies have conducted research on adolescent romantic relationships and provides a foundation from which to understand more specific types of relationships like Friends With Benefits Relationships. One of the more meaningful romantic relationship topics for the study of FWBs is romantic partner selection. That is, who adolescents are generally attracted to and who they choose to be in a relationship with. In one study, 78 adolescents in the sixth, seventh, and eighth grades completed a questionnaire that assessed partner selection in early adolescence and how these selections may help influence behavior (Simon, Aikins, & Prinstein, 2008). Researchers measured many peer-rated topics including perceived popularity, physical

attractiveness, sadness, aggression, and victimization. In addition, one measure assessed self-reported sadness. Simon et al. (2008) found that adolescents had similar scores of popularity, body appearance, physical attractiveness, and self-rated sadness as their partner before they started their romantic relationship. This suggests that adolescents select romantic partners based on certain similar attributes or based on popularity. In terms of changing adolescent functioning, friends were not the only influence. Simon et al. (2008) suggest that who an adolescent selects as a romantic partner can influence the adolescent's functioning and social standing within his or her peer group.

Another quality of traditional romantic relationships that has become applicable to FWBs is the way in which dating advances or hinders psychological functioning. There are many variables to consider when identifying possible correlates of dating involvement and the psychosocial health of adolescents, including number, duration, and quality of relationships. Zimmer-Gembeck, Sienbenbruner, and Collins (2001) were interested in whether overinvolvement, level, and quality of dating were related to individual and social functioning at ages 12 and 16. *Overinvolvement* was defined as how many dating partners an adolescent had. While *level of dating* indicated the types of opposite sex interaction adolescents experienced, ranging from having friendships with adolescents of the opposite sex to having at least one steady relationship. From their background research on general dating aspects in adolescence and the complexities of self-esteem, Zimmer-Gembeck et al. (2001) hypothesized that adolescents who had many dating relationships would have lower emotional and psychosocial functioning at age 12 that would carry through to age 16. However, they predicted an association between a high level of dating and positive psychosocial functioning and self-esteem. Their sample was comprised of 167 adolescents who were currently a part of a 23-year longitudinal study on

children living in poverty. Participants were interviewed about their dating behaviors, given questionnaires about level and quality of dating, and rated by their teachers on measures such as emotional health, academics, social behavior, and internalizing or externalizing behavior. Results confirmed the hypotheses. Adolescents who were highly involved in dating were more likely to have various psychological functioning problems at age 12, such as low emotional health and externalizing behavior. These negative factors were still present at age 16 and included reduced social competence and internalizing behavior. High dating levels were positively correlated with positive self-perceptions about their social standing, looks, and desirability as a romantic partner. Lastly, high quality relationships appeared to be a safeguard against negative psychosocial functioning. From this study, the claim can be made that appropriate levels of interaction with members of the opposite sex and having high quality, steady relationships can be important for their psychological well being of adolescents.

While Zimmer-Gembeck et al. (2001) measured overall quality of romantic relationships, they did not specifically focus on the individual factors that may make a relationship one of quality or satisfaction. However, research from Levesque (1993) fulfills this research gap. In addition to studying loving relationships and gender differences within the context of romance, Levesque (1993) was interested in how satisfaction research from adult romantic relationships would relate to the formative romantic relationships of adolescence. The 300 adolescents who completed the surveys comprised of satisfaction and dating experiences reported currently being in a romantic relationship. Adolescents reported satisfaction when they were both giving and getting the following experiences from their romantic relationship: togetherness, growth, appreciation, specialness, communication, toleration, passion, emotional support, and



commitment. These comprehensive results indicate that romantic relationships can be fulfilling and satisfying for adolescents, not just adults.

### *Sexuality within a Relationship*

Despite the lack of a measure of sexual experience and satisfaction in Levesque's (1993) study, many researchers have attempted to assess the positive and negative outcomes of the variety of sexual encounters adolescents can experience. Toting the saying that "kissing is good", Welsh, Haugen, Widman, Darling, and Grello (2005) surveyed over 200 adolescents to assess sexual intimacy as an indicator of relationship quality and satisfaction. Participants from the Study of Tennessee Adolescent Romantic Relationships (STARR) completed a questionnaire comprised of items from the Sexual Behavior Questionnaire, Levesque's (1993) Relationship Satisfaction Scale, and Levesque's Relationship Experience on commitment and passion. The researchers reported that 44.7% of their sample participated in sexual intercourse, 59.8% in oral sex, 90.5% experienced intimate touch, and 98.5% kissed within their romantic relationship. Welsh et al. (2005) also reported a positive correlation between level of satisfaction and commitment within a romantic relationship. Specifically, more engagement in kissing was significantly and positively correlated with satisfaction. This correlation was not found for any of the other physically intimate behavior. Similarly, higher kissing frequency was also significantly and positively correlated with commitment. As with the relationship with satisfaction, no other sexual behaviors indicated this same relationship with commitment.

As suggested by Welsh et al. (2005), some instances of sexuality can promote satisfaction and commitment within an adolescent romantic relationship, but these conditions may differ within the context of casual sex relationships. In their study, Grello, Welsh, and Harper (2006) researched casual sex within the context of depressive symptoms. They surveyed 404

undergraduate students to collect data on love styles, sexual behavior, and depressive symptoms. Three fourths of the participants had engaged in sexual intercourse within a relationship, and about half outside a relationship. In addition, more males (52%) than females (36%) reported engaging in casual sex. Of those adolescents who engaged in casual sex, most (52% female and 57% male) believed that the casual sex encounter was only a one-time situation. Very few others expected that casual sex would lead to a romantic relationship with their casual sex partner (18% female and 3% male). In terms of depressive symptoms, results suggested that adolescents who experienced their first sexual intercourse earlier were more likely to have a casual sex relationship later on. Lastly, alcohol consumption and drug use were highly prevalent in the casual sex experiences of this sample, as 65% said that they were using some substance at the time. Research on adolescent sexuality within romantic relationships and casual sex relationships plays a key role in understanding FWBs because of the participants' emphasis on having sexual intimacy within a much less restrictive relationship.

### *Friends with Benefits Relationships*

Although there are general characteristics that define a FWB, there may be different variations depending on factors such as the couple involved, the strength of their friendship, or the amount and type of sexual activity they practice. In their study about variations in FWBs, Mongeau, Knight, Williams, Eden, and Shaw (2013) sought to further define FWBs in distinct categories. Surveys were distributed to 279 undergraduates that asked them to provide a definition for a FWB. The responses yielded seven FWB types- *true friends*, *just sex*, *network opportunism*, *successful transition in*, *unintentional transition in*, *failed transition in*, and *transition out*- that were linked only by the mention of sexual activity. *True friends* are defined by trust and love, which make having sex feel safer. FWB couples that were categorized as *just*

*sex* were more similar to casual sex because they have a low friendship quality and a high emphasis on physical intimacy. *Network opportunism* described adolescents who had a FWB partner with whom to engage in sexual activity as a backup when there was not another partner; friendship was not key to this relationship. The three *transition in* categories all described the varied outcomes for the transition from a FWB to a romantic relationship. Couples in the *successful transition in* and *unintentional transition in* categories ended up in romantic relationships, while those in the *failed transition in* category did not. Lastly, the *transition out* category described couples that had ended their romantic relationship, but continued to have a sexual, FWB, relationship.

In the second part of their study, Mongeau et al. (2013) surveyed 258 adolescents in order to differentiate the seven different categories in terms of nonsexual interaction, friendship strength at the time when sex was initiated, and the romantic relationship history. From their sample, they concluded that nonsexual interaction was higher for *true friends* and those in *unintentional transition in*, and lower for *network opportunism* and those in the *just sex* category. Friendship strength before sexual intercourse was reportedly stronger in the *true friends* and *transition out* categories, and weaker for *unintentional transition in* and *just sex* categories. Lastly, almost 40% of their participants were involved in a romantic relationship with their FWB partner either before or after the FWB. The *true friends*, *network opportunism*, and *just sex* categories were the most frequently reported types of FWBs, suggesting that most FWBs are founded in either trusting friendships, or steady access to sexual activity. Given that these researchers proposed and validated seven different types of FWBs, this raises the question of how these diverse relationships are maintained through varying rules and conditions.

Hughes, Morrison, and Asada (2005) distributed an eleven page survey to 143 university students to research the connection between love attitudes and FWBs as well as how FWB participants manage their relationships in terms of rules and support from their other friends. From the open-ended responses concerning maintenance rules for FWBs, Hughes et al. (2005) found eight different rule categories- *negotiate rules*, *sex*, *communication*, *secrecy*, *permanence*, *emotional*, and *friendship*. The most frequently mentioned types of rules fell under the *emotional*, *communication*, and *sex* categories. Rules were coded as *emotional* if they concerned regulating emotions and not falling in love with the FWB partner. *Communication* was the second most reported topic, and contained rules that outlined how often couples would talk or how honest they could be within the relationship. *Sex* rules dictated how much physical intimacy the couple would have and whether or not the couple could be sexually active with others. These three rule categories provide an important insight to what the important requirements are for a FWB. Similar to the seven relationship types from Mongeau et al. (2013), these rules show that regulation and balance of friendship, intimacy, and sex is important for maintaining a FWB.

*Quality and Satisfaction.* Like more traditional relationships, friends with benefits relationships have been shown to be regulated by a multitude of rules that may partly determine the satisfaction of the romantic couple. In addition, researchers like Gusarova, Fraser, and Alderson (2012) have proposed that the individual's expectations of a relationship may also predict satisfaction. These researchers hypothesized that adolescents who indicated using the FWB as a precursor to dating would be less likely to have a positive experience than someone who indicated the FWB was purely for uncommitted sexual relations. Similarly, participants who experienced unreciprocated feelings from their FWB partner would also be more likely to have a negative experience. However, if adolescents indicated comfort as a reason for entering in a

FWB, then they would be no more likely to have a negative relationship than any other individual. Gusarova et al. (2012) distributed a questionnaire to 146 male and 135 female participants in Canada who all indicated involvement in a FWB. About three fourths of the participants indicated that they had at least a neutral, if not positive, experience with their friends with benefits partner. In terms of wishing for a more committed relationship, it was more common for participants to indicate a negative experience and have no desire to have another FWB. Unreciprocated feelings were also correlated with negative experiences and the lack of desire to enter into another FWB. The comfort hypothesis did not receive any support from the data collected. This research segues well into other studies that consider commitment issues in Friends With Benefits Relationships.

*Commitment.* Given that not all FWBs are monogamous, researchers have looked into the possible differences in how this lack of commitment may affect adolescents and the relationship in general. VanderDrift, Lehmilller, and Kelly (2012) were interested in researching the antecedents and consequences of commitment within the context of FWBs. Acknowledging that FWBs are, by definition, comprised of both friendship and sexual acts, the researchers were interested in whether sex or friendship activities were more common and how that related to relationship satisfaction. They created an Internet based survey and received responses from 181 women and 65 men who were in or had previously been in a FWB. Participants indicated which of the listed activities (7 were friend activities, 6 for sex) they participated in with their FWB partner. In addition, the survey contained measures from the Investment Model Scale that coded for satisfaction with the FWB, alternatives to the current relationship, and investment and how those related to commitment (Rusbult, Martz, & Agnew, 1998, as cited in VanderDrift, Lehmilller, & Kelly, 2012). Results showed that participants engaged in an equal amount of sex

and friendship activities and were mostly exclusive. As hypothesized, investment, satisfaction, and alternatives all predicted commitment in FWBs. High scores in satisfaction and investment were significantly and positively correlated to commitment to the friendship component.

However, alternatives to the FWB were negatively correlated with satisfaction with the friendship. Satisfaction and investment also both predicted commitment to the sexual aspects, but alternatives did not. VanderDrift et al. (2012) theorized “when an individual feels free to have additional concurrent sexual relationships, alternatives do not decrease commitment to one of the relationship partners” because they are not missing out on other possible experiences (p. 7).

#### *Motivations for Friends with Benefits Relationships*

The research reported by Gusarova, Fraser, and Alderson (2012) also indicated a possible motivation for entering a FWB. Without taking into account gender variance, comfort and closeness with a partner were the most frequently listed motivations. The related subject of expectations was also reported, indicating that the women in this sample began the relationship with the hope of avoiding the commitment of a traditional relationship while men were more interested in the relationship as an outlet for sexual release. Lehmler, VanderDrift, and Kelly (2011) reported a similar gender difference. In their study on initiation, maintenance, and future development of a FWB, they found that of the 411 surveyed participants, women were more likely to report nonsexual motives while men were more likely to report sexual motives. This gender difference and how it may relate to satisfaction or commitment in a FWB should be a point of interest for researchers given that men and women wanted a FWB for different reasons.

In addition to researching rules and support for FWBs, Hughes, Morrison, and Asada (2005) also synthesized categories of common motivations for entering a FWB. An open-ended response section of their survey asked participants to explain why they wanted to pursue a FWB.

From these responses, six motivations were synthesized: *relationship avoidance*, *sex*, *relationship simplicity*, *emotional connection*, *wanted FWB*, and *miscellaneous*. Responses coded as *relationship avoidance* if participants indicated that there were other sexual or romantic interests and they did not want to be tied down. *Sexual motivations* have been consistent throughout research on motivations and emphasize the need for sexual intimacy without commitment. *Relationship simplicity* explains the complications associated with romantic relationships and the need for a more simple relationship type to avoid those issues. Some participants indicated that they missed the emotional intimacy with a significant other, which coded for *emotional connection*. Lastly, some explicitly stated interest in a FWB. While Hughes et al. (2005) provided a list of important motivations for FWBs, they did not assess the frequency of these motivations or consider the potential gender differences.

### *Conclusions*

As shown by this body of research, adolescent romantic relationships are complex, varied, and significant. Adolescents pursue dating relationships for a variety of cultural, physiological, intrinsic, and extrinsic motivations that may indicate the amount of satisfaction with a chosen partner. Within the confines of these monogamous relationships, certain sexual behaviors, like kissing, are correlated with positive experiences, while more sexually intimate actions, like sexual intercourse, can be indicative of negative experiences. The body of research on friends with benefits relationships is relatively new but has covered descriptions of these unconventional sexual relationships, the quality and satisfaction of participants, and the motivations for participating in such a relationship. There are many forms of friends with benefits relationships that are unified by sexual acts but separated by different friendship behaviors. Satisfaction within this type of relationship seems to be hindered by hope for a more

committed relationship or feelings that were not reciprocated by a partner. Lastly, many general motivations for friends with benefits relationships have been presented, including need for uncomplicated relationships and outlets to sexual intercourse. However, this final area warrants further research in order to determine the most common motivations for involvement in friends with benefits relationships. Motivational factors may vary by gender and age, and have been found to predict different levels of satisfaction. The absence of thorough research on motivation prevents a full and accurate portrayal of friends with benefits relationships.

### *Hypotheses*

It is hypothesized that those participants who strongly indicate sexual intimacy as a motivation for engaging in a friends with benefits relationship will report higher relationship quality than participants who do not. Conversely, those who were more motivated by friendship would report lower relationship quality. In addition, those participants who indicate hope for their friends with benefits relationship to turn into a romantic relationship would report lower relationship quality than participants who indicated a desire to continue as a friends with benefits couple. Lastly, it is hypothesized that men will indicate more sexual motivations for FWB relationships, while women will indicate more nonsexual motivations. Gender differences with respect to relationship quality will be explored, but no specific hypothesis is suggested.

### Method

The purpose of this study is to investigate how motivations for engaging in friends with benefits (FWB) relationships may relate to the quality of these relationships for emerging adults. In addition, gender differences will be examined. A majority of college-age men and women report having had at least one FWB relationship (Bisson & Levine, 2009). Although, these relationships are reported to be equally prevalent among men and women



(Bison & Levine 2009), we know little about young men and women's reasoning behind engaging in these relationships and how this relates to their satisfaction with these relationships. Research suggests that the individual's expectations of a relationship may predict satisfaction. Specifically, Gusarova, Fraser, and Alderson (2012) found that those adolescents who desire a more committed relationship to stem from a FWB relationship will have a more negative experience in their FWB relationship. There is little research, however, that identifies common motivations for entering a FWB relationship and how such motivations might vary by gender.

### *Participants*

Participants were 233 undergraduate students who were attending a large public university in California's central coast. The male (33%) and female (66.1%) undergraduates were between the ages of 18 and 25 and represented several ethnic identities: White (82.8%), Hispanic (10.9%), Asian (8.8%), Black (1.7%), Native American (1.3%), and multicultural (6.7%). Second year students (26.2%) represented the highest grade-level percentage in the sample. First years (15.9%), third years (22.3%), fourth years (23.2%), and fifth years and above (12%) also participated in this research. Although the majority of the survey required participants to have been in a FWB relationship, the final section did not. This allowed for participants to be in a range of relationship statuses. Participants were most commonly (27.5%) not involved in any romantic, monogamous, or dating relationship at the time of the survey. About a quarter (25.3%) were involved in a noncommittal, sexual relationship, while just over one-tenth (11.6%) reported dating no one in particular. The remaining participants were in various lengths of committed relationships: 0-3 months (3%), 3-6 months (4.7%), 6-12 months (6.4%), and over a year (21%). Of the 233 students involved in the research, 151 of them (64.8%) were involved in a FWB relationship. Analysis was only conducted on that percentage. Participants were informed of the

survey via several club discussion forums and classroom presentations. Involvement in this research was completely voluntary. The generalization of this study is limited since participants were given the option to complete the survey, and all were from one university.

### *Procedure*

An online survey was created in order to gather data on college students' motivations for entering a friends with benefits relationship (FWB) and the relationship quality of these relationships. The survey was created on the host site, Survey Monkey. The link to the survey was typed onto a flyer and was distributed to many groups around campus who were willing to participate. Students in the participating groups were given the following information verbally:

“We are conducting a study on college-age students' motivations for Friends with Benefits relationships. Recent research suggests that casual sexual relationships are gaining acceptance among college populations. But we know very little about men and women's reasoning behind engaging in these relationships. Our study involves completing an anonymous on-line survey. Your participation would be strictly voluntary which means you do not have to answer any question you don't want to answer. You do not have to have an experience with a friends with benefits relationship to complete the survey BUT you do have to be 18 or older.”

Once the verbal directions were given, the flyers containing the survey link were distributed to every student. Since participation was completely voluntary, only students who were interested elected to take the survey. When participants logged onto the survey, they were provided with an informed consent. The informed consent detailed the content and purpose of the survey, gave contact information for the researchers and campus counseling services, and reiterated

confidential participation. Lastly, participants were informed that they must have been 18 years or older to participate in the study. (See Appendix A for copy of consent form)

There is evidence to support the use of online surveying for this research. There have been many concerns about conducting research online, however, many of them are eliminated in this study due to safety features on Survey Monkey. One study found that students did not report more sensitive information on a web-based test than on a paper test, but there were several limiting factors that may have produced these results (Wyrick & Bond, 2011). In their conclusions, Wyrick and Bond (2011) stated that their web survey might not have been as intuitive and easily navigated as the paper survey. However, the format of our survey on Survey Monkey allowed for easy navigation between questions and allowed participants to skip questions or go back and change answers if they chose. In addition, researchers have explained that the biggest problem with web-based surveying is the uncertainty of confidentiality (Kraut, Olson, Banajo, Bruckman, Cohen, & Cooper, 2004). In his survey on confidentiality, Baker (2012) reported that one danger of using web-based surveys is the likelihood of participant information being sent via Internet Protocol (IP) addresses. Survey Monkey allows for the disabling of IP address collection to further ensure that our participants' responses are entirely anonymous, and thereby removing that web-based problem. Lastly, certain research features have been found to specifically enhance the success of a survey when it is web-based as opposed to paper-based. In their meta-analysis on web-based surveys, Shih and Fan (2013) found that certain populations of participants had higher response rates than other populations- making the population of a given survey a high concern for researchers. College-aged students were the top group of responders to the web-based surveys in this study. This finding provided research basis

*Measures*

Demographic information was collected at the beginning of the survey. Participants provided age, gender, ethnicity, year in college, sexual orientation, age of first sexual intercourse, current relationship status, and parents' annual income. (See Appendix B for a copy of the measure)

*FWB Relationship Background.* In Part 2 and Part 3 of the survey, participants were asked to provide background information on the type(s) of FWB relationships they had. These items were created from a synthesis of knowledge from research on these types of relationships, but were not adapted from any study in particular. Items in Part 2 were a mixture of yes or no questions and open-ended responses. Some sample questions include "Have you ever had a FWB relationship?" and "How long did your longest FWB relationship last?". Participants who answered *no* to the item "Have you ever had a FWB relationship?" were directed to skip Parts 3 through 5 of the survey and only complete Part 6. This final section of the measure was not analyzed for the purposes of this research. Part 3 of the study contained items concerning the sexual and commitment aspects of FWB relationships. Some sample items included, "My partner satisfies my physical needs" and "It is important to me that my partner and I are committed to our FWB relationship". These items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale, from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*).

*Motivations.* Part 4 of the survey contained motivation items that were adapted from a study conducted by Hughes, Morrison, and Asada (2005). In their research, Hughes et al. (2005) were interested in understanding the roles of rules, relationship maintenance, and friendship support on relationship satisfaction among emerging adults who engaged in FWB relationships. In their survey, they created an open-ended question that asked participants to list their reason for

being in a FWB relationship. After receiving survey responses, the researchers coded the answers into six general categories: relationship avoidance, sex, relationship simplicity, emotional connection, wanted a FWB relationship, and miscellaneous. In the present study, we developed items based on this research for the following motivational categories: sex, wanted FWB, relationship avoidance, friendship, and relationship simplicity. Some sample items included, “I liked other people and did not want to be tied down”, “I did not want to deal with relationship rules”, and “I wanted a FWB relationship just for the sex”. The items on motivation were rated on a 5-point Likert Scale format, from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*).

*Hopes for the Future.* One item in Part 3 of the survey asked participants to select from a list of options their hope for the future of their current FWB relationship. However, for the purpose of analysis, two items regarding participants’ desired FWB outcomes were included in Part 4 of the survey. Literature has suggested that certain desired relationship outcomes could contribute to relationship satisfaction. Results from the study conducted by Gusarova, Fraser, and Alderson (2012) suggest that it was more common for participants to indicate a negative experience and have no desire to have another FWB relationship if they desired a more romantically committed relationship with their FWB partner. From this, item three, “I hoped our FWB relationship would strengthen our friendship”, and item eleven, “I hoped our FWB relationship would lead to a more committed or monogamous relationship”, were created. As with the other ten motivation items in Part 4, items three and eleven were rated on a 5-point Likert Scale format, from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*).

*Relationship Quality.* Part 5 of the survey tapped participants’ FWB relationship quality. Together, these items made up the Perceived Relationship Quality Component (PRQC) that was used in a study conducted by Fletcher, Simpson, and Thomas (2000). The PRQC was originally a

7-point Likert style survey, which was adapted to a 5-point Likert style for the current survey, ranging from 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*extremely*). Items were categorized into six different quality components: relationship satisfaction, commitment, intimacy, trust, passion, and love. Each category included three items. Some sample items: “How content are you with your relationship?” (satisfaction), “How dedicated are you to your relationship?” (commitment), “How close is your relationship?” (intimacy), “How much can you count on your partner?” (trust), “How lustful is your relationship?” (passion), and “How much do you adore your partner?” (love).

## Results

### *Descriptive Statistics*

General descriptive items in the beginning of the survey provided data regarding the nature of FWB relationships. No statistical analysis was conducted on these scores. Rather, percentages provided by the Survey Monkey host site were assessed and compared.

*Time Friends with Partner Before FWB Relationships.* Participants knew their friends with benefits relationship partner for various amounts of time before engaging in a FWB relationship, ranging from several days to seven years. A majority reported being friends for a few months before beginning their FWB relationships.

*Number of FWB Relationships.* About 42% of participants have engaged in only one FWB relationship, and about 32% have engaged in two FWB relationships. Others engaged in three to five FWB relationships (13%), while very few reported more than five (6.5%).

*Length of FWB Relationship.* The most common response for the length of time spent in participants' longest FWB relationships was about one year (15.8%). Responses ranged from

several weeks to six years. Relationship frequencies peaked between two months (13.1%) and three months (14.5%).

*Aspects of FWB Relationships.* Participants answered four Likert scale items regarding the sexual aspects of their FWB relationships. A majority of participants agreed (39.6%) or strongly agreed (24.5%) that sex in their FWB was very important. Most (57.2%) agreed that their FWB partners satisfied their physical needs. About half agreed that they were easily able to tell their partners what they did and did not like sexually. Almost all participants either agreed (50.7%) or strongly agreed (40.3%) that sex is fun for them and their partner.

Commitment was assessed in one Likert style question. Participants were most likely to be neutral, neither disagreeing nor agreeing (31.9%), that it was important to them and their partners to be committed to their FWB relationships. Almost equal numbers of participants disagreed (29.7%) or agreed (26.8%) that this commitment was important.

Two Likert scale items covered friendship within participants' FWB relationships. About a third of participants neither agreed nor disagreed (30.2%) that their FWB strengthened their friendships with their FWB partners. Participants were almost equally likely to disagree (28.8%) or agree (25.2%) that their FWB relationships strengthened their friendships. In another item, participants were most likely to respond with disagreement (40%) that they did not expect their friendships to change as a result of the FWB relationship.

Lastly, participants were asked about the nature of their FWB relationships. Participants were most likely to agree (31.6%) that FWB relationships were easier than romantic relationships. Over a third agreed (36.8%) that relationship rules are important in their FWBs. Roughly the same amount agreed (36%) that FWB relationships sounded very appealing to them before entering one.

*Gender Differences in Motivation*

Table 1. presents the means and standard deviations for the motivations for FWB relationships by gender. Independent t-tests resulted in gender differences for several motivations, but only one statistically significant gender difference. Males were significantly higher than women in wanting a FWB,  $t(117) = -2.04$ ,  $p < 0.05$ . The gender difference for relationship avoidance can be viewed as more of a trend. Males were more likely than women to report relationship avoidance as a motivation,  $t(117) = -1.92$ ,  $p < 0.06$ . However, this did not yield a low enough p value to be considered a significant gender difference.

Table 1. Means and Standard Deviations for Motivations for FWB by Gender

<b>Motivation</b>	<b>Male</b>			<b>Female</b>		
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD
Sex	36	3.43	0.98	83	3.10	0.95
Want FWB	36	3.86*	0.62	83	3.55	0.80
Relationship Avoidance	36	3.64	0.97	83	3.26	1.00
Relationship Simplicity	36	3.49	0.98	83	3.16	1.07
Friendship	36	2.81	1.01	82	2.62	1.10

\* $p < 0.05$

*Gender Differences in Relationship Quality*

Table 2. presents the means and standard deviations for relationship quality by gender. Independent t-tests resulted in many gender differences in relationship quality characteristics but yielded only two significant differences. Both men and women were satisfied with their FWB relationship, but men were more satisfied than women,  $t(116) = -2.18$ ,  $p < 0.03$ . In addition, both men and women felt they could trust their FWB partner, but men felt more strongly so,



$t(116) = -2.66, p < 0.009$ . While not statistically significant, means for women were higher than those for men in commitment, intimacy, passion, and love.

Table 2. Means and Standard Deviations for Relationship Quality for FWB by Gender

Relationship Quality	Male			Female		
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD
Satisfaction	35	3.53*	0.86	83	3.06	1.16
Commitment	35	2.90	1.17	83	3.01	1.18
Intimacy	35	3.34	0.76	83	3.42	1.02
Trust	35	3.65*	0.90	83	3.08	1.13
Passion	35	3.74	0.90	83	3.85	0.91
Love	35	2.87	1.05	83	2.99	1.21

\* $p < 0.05$

### *Motivations and Relationship Quality*

Table 3. presents the correlations between relationship quality and motivation for FWB relationships by gender. Pearson correlations yielded many significant correlations for both men and women. Commitment correlated significantly with all motivations across the board for women. However, friendship was the only motivation positively correlated to commitment (0.24,  $p < 0.05$ ). Sex was the most negatively correlated motivation with commitment for women (-0.36,  $p < 0.01$ ). Wanting a FWB (-0.22,  $p < 0.05$ ), relationship avoidance (-0.23,  $p < 0.05$ ), and relationship simplicity (-0.23,  $p < 0.05$ ) were similarly negatively correlated with commitment. For men, commitment correlated with many, but not all motivations. Friendship was positively correlated to commitment (0.35,  $p < 0.05$ ) for men. Sex was the most negatively correlated with commitment (-0.48,  $p < 0.01$ ), but relationship simplicity was negatively correlated, as well (-0.36,  $p < 0.05$ ).

Correlations between motivations and relationship quality resulted in some significant gender differences. Sex was significantly negatively correlated with trust for men but not women. Friendship was positively correlated with intimacy for women (0.31,  $p < 0.01$ ). Also, for women only relationship avoidance was positively correlated with relationship satisfaction (0.36,  $p < 0.01$ ). Similarly, relationship simplicity and relationship satisfaction were positively correlated for women (0.32,  $p < 0.05$ ) but negatively correlated for men (-0.13).

Table 3. Correlations between Relationship Quality and Motivation (Female/ Male)

	Sex	Want FWB	Relationship Avoidance	Relationship Simplicity	Friendship
Satisfaction	.05/-.19	.27*/.15	.36**/-.14	.32**/-.13	.03/.29
Commitment	-.36**/-.48**	-.22*/-.28	-.23*/-.15	-.23*/-.36*	.24*/.35*
Intimacy	-.36**/-.18	-.03/.09	-.04/-.05	.01/-.18	.31**/.14
Trust	-.13/-.35*	.07/.05	.13/-.09	.09/-.22	.17/.25
Passion	.03/.13	.00/-.03	.06/.24	.07/.08	-.06/-.16
Love	-.30**/-.28	-.21/-.12	-.19/-.14	-.12/-.18	.34**/.21

\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$

*Hopes for Future of FWB*

One item in the survey asked participants to identify their hopes for the future of their FWB relationships. Of the 106 students who responded, 33 were men, and 73 were women. Most men (48.5%) wanted their FWB relationship to remain the same, about a third wanted to become close friends who do not have sex (30.3%), some hoped to become a romantically committed couple (18.2%), and only one participant wanted to discontinue the friendship and sexual relationship completely (3%). More women reported hope to keep the FWB relationship the same (35.6%), and almost equal numbers hoped to become a romantically committed couple

(31.5%). Some women wanted to become close friends who do not have sex (26%), and very few wanted to discontinue the friendship and sexual relationship altogether (6.8%).

In addition, two items regarding desired future outcomes were addressed later in the survey. Table 4. describes the means and standard deviations for hopes for emotional connection outcomes by gender. Analysis on these means only generated one significant gender difference. Women were more likely than men to hope for their FWB relationships to become a romantically committed couple,  $t(109)= 2.35, p< 0.05$ .

Table 5. presents the correlations between relationship satisfaction and hopes for the future of participants’ FWB relationships. Analysis only yielded one significant correlation for women. Satisfaction was found to be negatively correlated with hope for a romantically committed relationship in the future ( $-0.26, p< 0.05$ ).

Table 4. Means & Standard Deviations for Hopes for Future Outcome by Gender

Hope for Future Relationship	Male			Female		
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD
Strengthen Friendship	37	2.65	0.86	83	2.64	0.98
Romantically Committed	37	2.32	1.11	82	2.93*	1.37

\* $p<.05$

Table 5. Correlations between Relationship Satisfaction & Hopes for the Future (Female/ Male)

	Strengthen Friendship	Romantically Committed
Satisfaction	.07/.13	-.26*/-.08

\* $p<.05$

### Discussion

Review of the literature on friends with benefits relationships among emerging adults made apparent the lack of extensive research on motivations and relationship quality. The purpose of this study was to investigate emerging adults' motivations for engaging in friends with benefits relationships, how those motivations may relate to overall relationship quality, and how these might vary by gender. Several hypotheses were generated from the existing body of research. It was first hypothesized that being motivated by sexual intimacy would be correlated with higher relationship quality than those who did not indicate it as a motivator. Conversely, participants who indicated friendship would be expected to have lower relationship quality than others. Stemming from research concerning hopes for the future of FWB relationships and correlations with relationship satisfaction (Gusarova, Fraser, and Alderson, 2012), it was hypothesized that participants who wanted a more committed relationship with their FWB partner would have lower FWB relationship quality than someone who hoped to just be friends. Lastly, gender differences in motivation were expected with men indicating more sexual motives and women indicating nonsexual motives. Gender differences were assessed in terms of relationship quality but no specific hypothesis was made. While some support for hypotheses was found, overall, results suggest that there are more similarities than differences in college men's and women's experiences in friends with benefits relationships.

The first hypothesis was not well supported by the data. Sex was negatively correlated with many relationship quality factors for both men and women, including commitment, intimacy, trust, and love. This finding partially contradicts research conducted Mongeau et al. (2013) which suggested that the *just sex* and *network opportunism* types of FWB relationship were two of the most frequently reported types of FWB relationships. In addition, it contradicts

research that suggests that satisfaction and investment predicted commitment to sexual aspects (VanderDrift et al., 2012). Given that sexual intimacy is an integral part of FWB relationships, it was hypothesized that sex would be associated with high relationship quality. Instead, the findings suggested that for these emerging adults, when they were motivated by sex, they did not perceive a high level of commitment or intimacy in their FWB relationship. Items in the motivation section of the survey were not from a preexisting measure, possibly contributing to the lack of support for the hypothesis and previous research.

Similar to the first hypothesis, the second was not supported by the data collected in this study. Although commitment was negatively correlated with all motivations for women, the correlation between commitment and friendship was positive. The positive correlation between friendship and commitment supports the research conducted by VanderDrift et al. (2012), which stated that satisfaction and investment were positively correlated with commitment to the friendship. This finding may indicate that there was a certain level closeness and commitment between a woman and her FWB partner before engaging in a FWB relationship. Furthermore, friendship was positively correlated with intimacy and love for women. For men, friendship was positively correlated with commitment only. It seems that being motivated to work on the friendship piece of a FWB relationship may signify more commitment for both men and women. However, friendship seems to be more indicative of higher FWB relationship quality for women because of the strong correlations between friendship and intimacy and trust in addition to commitment.

The third hypothesis was partially supported by data collected in this research. Women who reported desire for a romantically committed relationship were more likely to have lower relationship satisfaction. This negative correlation between relationship satisfaction and wanting

a romantically committed relationship for women indicates that the more women wanted a romantically committed relationship, the lower their satisfaction with their FWB relationships (Gusarova Fraser, and Alderson, 2012). It appears that wanting a more serious, committed relationship to stem from a relationship that inherently lacks commitment leaves women less than satisfied with their FWB relationship.

Only one significant gender difference was found for motivations to engage in an FWB relationship. Men were more likely than women to indicate wanting a FWB as the primary motivation for entering the relationship. This does not support the research conducted by Gusarova et al. (2012) or Lehmiller et al. (2011), both of which suggested that men are motivated more by sexual needs and women by the hope to avoid commitment. In fact, both men and women had the same top motivation for engaging in an FWB, but men wanted it more so than women. As with the first two hypotheses, the discrepancy between this study and previous research may be the motivation items developed specifically for this study. These items may not be correctly tapping certain motivations. Another explanation for this difference may be the more general acceptance of FWB relationships among today's emerging adults. If men and women both accept FWBs as appropriate relationships, then it would explain their desire to engage in one as opposed to using it to avoid other types of commitment or relationships.

Analysis of gender differences in terms of relationship quality yielded very few significant differences. While men and women both indicated trust and satisfaction in their relationships, men indicated higher satisfaction and trust. Although, means indicate that, on average, men and women were somewhat neutral in those aspects of relationship quality. Lastly, while not statistically significant, it is interesting to note that women reported higher

commitment, intimacy, passion, and love scores than men. This may indicate that these characteristics of relationship quality are more important to women than to men.

### *Limitations*

A few limitations of this research should be mentioned. For one, the survey was only distributed to certain groups on campus that may prevent the results from being completely generalizable. Contact was established with groups to whom this research would be most interesting and appreciated. These students may have been more accepting or equal in their thinking about casual relationships, like friends with benefits relationships. In addition, the participant group was comprised of a high majority of women. Along this same vein, the participants were not very ethnically diverse; a high majority of them were White. This underrepresentation of men and ethnic minorities could have affected the outcome of the results. In terms of the study itself, motivation items were adapted from other studies, and created for this research. Given the number of hypotheses and previous research claims that were not supported, it is possible that these motivation items were not the most accurate. Further research should work towards adapting a FWB motivations measure to more accurately assess the reasons for why emerging adults choose to engage in this form of casual relationship.

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## Appendix A Informed Consent Form

### INFORMED CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN a research project on, Motivations, Relationship Quality, and Attitudes Towards Women in Friends with Benefits Relationships among Emerging Adults.

A research project on Friends with Benefits Relationships is being conducted by undergraduate student Olivia Giorgi in the Department of Psychology and Child Development at Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, in collaboration with Professor Jasna Jovanovic (Psychology and Child Development) and Professor Jean Williams (Political Science). "Friends with benefits" (FWB) refers to a form of casual relationship that combines the psychological intimacy of a friendship with the sexual intimacy of a romantic relationship without commitment. The purpose of the study is to more fully understand college-age students' expectations and motivations for engaging in FWB relationships and how these relationships relate to perceived relationship quality and contemporary attitudes about women.

You are being asked to take part in this study by completing an anonymous secure on-line survey. The survey includes several background questions (e.g. your gender, ethnicity) and also more sensitive questions that ask about your experience with FWB relationships. Finally there are several questions that ask about your beliefs/attitudes about women in our society today. All the questions require you to answer items based on a scale provided. You do not have to have experience with a FWB relationship to complete the survey.

Your participation will take approximately 5 to 15 minutes depending on how much information you wish to provide and whether you have engaged in a FWB relationship (Note: If you have never had an FWB relationship you will be instructed to only answer those questions that are not specifically about a personal FWB relationship). **Participation in this project is strictly voluntary.** You may skip any items on the survey you prefer not to answer. You may discontinue at any time without penalty.

The possible risk associated with participation in this study is the sensitive nature of thinking and answering questions about your intimate relationships. Again, it is important to know that you may choose not to answer a question or discontinue your participation all together. If you should experience any emotional distress, please be aware that you may contact Cal Poly's Counseling Services at 756-2511.

Your responses will be provided anonymously to protect your privacy. There will be no identifying information associated with your responses. Confidentiality will be ensured by disabling IP addresses so no identifiers can be linked back to you. The anonymous responses we collect from you and others will be password protected; the password will only be known to the researchers: Olivia Giorgi and Professors Jovanovic and Williams.

This research will help us better understand how college-aged students participate in and understand a recent nontraditional type of intimate relationship. Like many college campuses, issues of sexuality--particularly concerns about consent, relationships, and gender roles--are

much discussed on the Cal Poly campus so the information we gather from participants in this study will help inform this discussion.

If you have questions regarding this study or would like to be informed of the results when the study is completed, please feel free to contact Olivia Giorgi at [ogiorgi@calpoly.edu](mailto:ogiorgi@calpoly.edu) or Professor Jasna Jovanovic at (805) 756-2854. If you have concerns regarding the manner in which the study is conducted, you may contact Dr. Dean Wendt, Interim Dean of Research, at (805) 756-1508, [dwendt@calpoly.edu](mailto:dwendt@calpoly.edu).

**If you are 18 years or older and agree to voluntarily participate in this research project please click the “SUBMIT” button below. Clicking on the SUBMIT button will indicate your consent to participate and you will enter the secure on-line survey.**

**Appendix B: Survey**  
**FWB Relationships: Motivations, Relationship Quality, and Attitudes Towards Women**  
**among Emerging Adults**

**INSTRUCTIONS:** This study is being conducted in order to understand the motivations for friends with benefits relationships among college-aged students, the quality of those relationships, and views and attitudes towards women. This survey is completely voluntary; if you do not want to answer a question, please skip it. Your identity will remain anonymous and your answers will be kept strictly confidential.

**We ask that you answer the questions as honestly as you can and do not share your responses with others.**

**Part 1.**

**Directions:** Please answer each question by checking or circling the response that applies to you. For this section, it is not necessary to be currently involved in a friends with benefits relationship.

1. Please indicate how old you are: \_\_\_\_\_

2. What is your gender?

Male     Female     Other

3. What is your ethnicity (Check all that apply)?:

White     Black     Hispanic     Asian     Native American     Multicultural

Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

4. What is your parents' annual income?

up to \$20,000  
 \$20,001-38,800  
 \$38,801-62,000  
 \$62,001-100,000  
 above \$100,000

5. What year are you in college?

First     Second     Third     Fourth     Fifth+

6. What is your sexual orientation?

Straight     Gay     Lesbian     Bi-Sexual     Other

7. Have you ever had sexual intercourse?  Yes  No
8. If yes, at what age did you first have sexual intercourse? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Check which statement describes your current relationship status:

- None
- Dating but no one in particular (no sexual intercourse)
- Non-Committed sexual relationship
- Committed relationship under 3 months (either sexual or no sexual intercourse)
- Committed relationship 3-6 months (either sexual or no sexual intercourse)
- Committed Relationship 6-12 months (either sexual or no sexual intercourse)
- Committed relationship for 1 year or more (either sexual or no sexual intercourse)

### Part 2.

**Directions: For the following questions please think about a *friends with benefits relationship (FWB)*. A FWB is defined as a casual relationship that combines the intimacy of a friendship with the sexual intimacy of a romantic relationship without commitment.**

1. Have you ever had a FWB relationship?  Yes  No (If you answer NO please skip to Part 6)
2. Are you currently in a FWB relationship?  Yes  No
3. How long did you know your friend before your FWB relationship started? \_\_\_\_\_
4. How many FWB relationships have you been in? \_\_\_\_\_
5. How long did your longest FWB relationship last? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Did you have any other FWB relationships or romantic relationships with others while you were in a FWB relationship?  Yes  No

### Part 3.

**Directions: For the following questions, please consider your most recent FWB relationship. Read each statement carefully and decide to what degree you think it presently describes you and your FWB relationship. Then select one of the five answers that best describes your present agreement or disagreement with the statement.**

- |                      |          |                               |       |                   |
|----------------------|----------|-------------------------------|-------|-------------------|
| 1                    | 2        | 3                             | 4     | 5                 |
| strongly<br>disagree | disagree | neither agree<br>nor disagree | agree | strongly<br>agree |

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Sex in my FWB relationship is very important to me.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. My FWB relationship strengthened our friendship.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. I did not expect our friendship to change as a result of our FWB relationship.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. I find that FWB relationships are easier than romantic relationships.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Relationship “rules” are important in a FWB relationship.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. FWB relationships sounded very appealing to me before I entered one.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. It is important to me that my partner & I are committed to our FWB relationship.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. My partner satisfies my physical needs.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. I find it easy to tell my partner what I like and don’t like sexually.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Sex is fun for my partner and myself.

What do you hope will be the future of your FWB relationship? (check one)

- \_\_\_\_\_ I hope it stays the same.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I hope we become a romantic committed couple.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I hope we become close friends who do not have sex.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I hope we discontinue our sexual relationship and friendship altogether.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other

**Part 4.**

**Directions: For the following questions consider your reasons for entering into your most recent FWB relationship. Read each statement carefully and select one of the five answers that best describes your present agreement or disagreement with the statement.**

1	2	3	4	5
strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. I wanted a FWB relationship just for the sex.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. I was physically attracted to my friend but we did not want to date.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. I hoped our FWB relationship would strengthen our friendship.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. I liked other people and did not want to be tied down.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. I did not want to deal with relationship rules.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. I wanted a FWB relationship because they are easy to maintain.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Having a FWB relationship ensured I could have sex.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. My friend and I were both single so we took advantage of the opportunity.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. I wanted to spend time working on my friendship, not just having sex.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. I wanted a relationship partner without the commitment complications.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. I hoped our FWB relationship would lead to a more committed or monogamous relationship.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. My partner was only willing to have a FWB relationship, rather than a dating relationship.

**Part 5.**

**Directions: For the following questions please consider how you feel about your current/most recent FWB relationship. Please use the following scale to answer each question. For each question please circle one response.**

	1	2	3	4	5
	Not at all	Somewhat	Neutral	Mostly	Extremely
1. How satisfied are you with your relationship?	1	2	3	4	5
2. How committed are you to your relationship?	1	2	3	4	5
3. How intimate is your relationship?	1	2	3	4	5
4. How much do you trust your partner?	1	2	3	4	5
5. How passionate is your relationship?	1	2	3	4	5
6. How much do you love your partner?	1	2	3	4	5
7. How content are you with your relationship?	1	2	3	4	5
8. How dedicated are you to your relationship?	1	2	3	4	5
9. How close is your relationship?	1	2	3	4	5



- 10. How much can you count on your partner?    1            2            3            4            5
- 11. How lustful is your relationship?            1            2            3            4            5
- 12. How much do you adore your partner?        1            2            3            4            5
- 13. How happy are you with your relationship? 1            2            3            4            5
- 14. How devoted are you to your relationship? 1            2            3            4            5
- 15. How connected are you to your partner?    1            2            3            4            5
- 16. How dependable is your partner?            1            2            3            4            5
- 17. How sexually intense is your relationship? 1            2            3            4            5
- 18. How much do you cherish your partner?    1            2            3            4            5

**Part 6.** (Not analyzed for the purposes of this research)

**The following are a series of statements that people might use to describe themselves or their beliefs. Read each statement carefully and decide to what degree you think it presently describes you. Then select one of the five answers that best describes your present agreement or disagreement with the statement. Remember to read each statement carefully and decide to what degree you think it describes you at the present time.**

1	2	3	4	5
strongly disagree	disagree	neither agree nor disagree	agree	strongly agree

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. I don't see much point in questioning the general expectation that men should be masculine and women should be feminine.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. I think that the media shapes our views of male and female sexual behavior in a way that is realistic.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. It is not important to me that women and men have access to birth control.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. I am concerned about widespread acceptance of violence against women in our society.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. To understand what it means to be a man or a woman in our society, one has to consider gender in the context of race, class, and sexual orientation.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Women are never at fault when they are sexually assaulted.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. It is not a big concern for me that men and women have equal opportunities in all respects.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. On some level, my motivation for almost every activity I engage in is my desire for an egalitarian (i.e. equal) world.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. I have a lifelong commitment to working for social, economic, and political equality for women.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. I think media is a powerful way to make changes regarding the role of women in our society.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. I don't think there is one "right" way to be a feminist.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. Being a feminist is one of a number of things that make up my identity.