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Sin and Purity Discourse: The Construction of Sexuality in Christian College Codes of Student Conduct

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THE CONSTRUCTION OF SEXUALITY IN CHRISTIAN COLLEGE CODES OF STUDENT CONDUCT

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A Research Paper
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
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INTRODUCTION

Interest in the sexuality of college students in American society over the past fifteen years has predominately centered around studying the “hookup”, previously referred to as casual sex. While the term is notoriously vague (Bogle, 2004, 2008; Bruce & Stewart, 2010; Currier, 2013; Glenn & Marquardt, 2001; Kimmel, 2008; Paul, McManus, & Hayes, 2000; Stepp, 2007; Wade, 2017), a hookup is broadly understood as a sexual encounter between two people outside of a long-term, committed, or romantic relationship. The students surveyed in various studies on hookups have defined hookups as sexual encounters including anything from kissing to intercourse, usually beginning at college parties (Bogle, 2007; England, Shafer, & Fogarty, 2007; Holman & Sillars, 2012; Wade, 2017). Studies of hookup culture on college campus are relatively recent, with the first around 2001 (Glenn & Marquardt, 2001), but really expanding in response to Kathleen Bogle’s book *Hooking Up: Sex, Dating, and Relationships on Campus* (2008). Hookups are of interest for researchers not only because they depart significantly from the dating model of previous generations, but according to Currier, “without exception, these researchers have found that hookups are ubiquitous and normative among college students” (2013, p. 707).

While the majority of the studies seem to indicate that hookups are overwhelmingly the dominant form that college students’ sexual activity takes, others have pointed out that most studies of hookup culture rely on samples of mostly White and heterosexually identified students (Allison & Risman, 2013; Bogle, 2008; Epstein, Calzo, Smiler, & Ward, 2009; Lewis, Atkins, Blayney, Dent, & Kaysen, 2013; Olmstead, Roberson, Pasley, & Fincham, 2015; Owen, Fincham, & Moore, 2011; Paul & Hayes, 2002; Vrangalova, 2015; Wentland & Reissing, 2014). This has led to multiple researchers calling for more intersectional studies of hookup culture, which examine what impact race, class, gender, religion, and sexual orientation have on students’ perception of and participation in hookup culture (Heldman & Wade, 2010; Pham,

2017; Spell, 2017; Williams & Harper, 2014).

Wade (2017) identifies evangelical and Mormon college campuses as the only exceptions to the otherwise uniform dominance of hookup culture on college campuses. Similarly, Freitas (2013) observes that while hookup culture is dominant at secular and Catholic colleges, it is not present on evangelical Christian campuses. Instead, evangelicals have what Freitas calls a “purity culture” which emphasized heterosexuality and the importance of waiting for marriage to have sex (2013). My intention in conducting this study is to begin to fill this gap by exploring how particular religious educational institutions construct discourse of sexuality that is diametrically opposite to hookup culture.

In order to form a basic picture of the unique space that students on Christian college campuses occupy, I analyze the student codes of conduct for seventy-five of those institutions using content analysis. While there is some variety between schools and by religious identification, the form and content of their regulations concerning sex and sexuality consistently reveal themes employed by particular schools which deviate notably from hookup culture. The findings of a content analysis are not necessarily expected to perfectly correlate to actual practices, and this study does not attempt to describe how students on these particular college campuses are actually behaving. Instead, this study seeks to better describe how the campus atmospheres or culture cultivated by these particular institutions’ discourses on sex and sexuality are distinct from the narratives of hookup culture. In other words, how are Christian higher-education institutions attempting to shape their school’s campus culture around sex by instituting specific regulations based on religious interpretations of sex and how does this compare and contrast to hookup culture?

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LITERATURE

An expected aspect of the college experience for many students is the participation in the party scene, typified by crowded social gatherings where copious amount of alcohol and loud dance music set the stage for casual hookups (Armstrong & Hamilton, 2013; Sperber, 2001; Wade, 2017). Because most college campuses restrict alcohol on campus, the social scene (i.e., party scene) is moved off campus and often controlled by Greek fraternities whose resources make them ideal hosts (Martin, 2016). This affords the members of fraternities control over who is allowed to participate. The result is that fraternities tend to admit women based on their physical appearance at rates that maintain a favorable gender balance for men, and men not from the fraternity are only permitted to enter if they bring enough attractive women along (Armstrong & Hamilton, 2013; Sweeney, 2014). The goal is to create the most conducive environment for those heterosexual men to find someone to “hookup” with.

Researchers have shown that these types of hookup scenes are normative (Bogle, 2008; Bruce & Stewart, 2010; England, Shafer, & Fogarty, 2008; Kimmel, 2008; Ramage, 2007; Reid, Elliott, & Webber, 2011; Stepp, 2007) and require women to focus on the sexual desires of men over their own if they want to participate (Armstrong, England, & Fogarty, 2012; Armstrong, Hamilton, & England, 2010; Backstrom, Armstrong, & Puentes, 2012; Eshbaugh & Gute, 2008; Hamilton & Armstrong, 2009). The result is that the hookup scene, although it may grant its participants more sexual agency (Armstrong et al., 2012; Armstrong et al., 2010; Bruce & Stewart, 2010), ultimately reinforces the current gender order of hegemonic masculinity, and emphasized femininity, by “perpetuating a sexual double standard in which men receive more sexual and social benefits from hooking up than women do” (Bogle, 2004, 2007, 2008; Currier, 2013, p. 709; Eshbaugh & Gute, 2008; Fielder & Carey, 2010; Glenn & Marquardt, 2001; Kimmel, 2008; McGinn, 2004; Ramage, 2007; Stepp, 2007).

Furthermore, because the hookup scene regulates students’ access to the main arena

for sexual encounters, the correct social and cultural capital is required to participate (Pham, 2017). The correct social and cultural capital, so to speak, adheres to white, hegemonic masculinity, which privileges maleness, straightness, and whiteness (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). Consequently, studies have shown that the hookup scene tends to disadvantage or exclude minorities based on social class (Allison & Risman, 2014; Hamilton & Armstrong, 2009; Wilkins & Dalessandro, 2013), and race (Ahrold & Meston, 2010; A. A. Eaton, Rose, Interligi, Fernandez, & McHugh, 2016; Owen, Rhoades, Stanley, & Fincham, 2010; Spell, 2017). Similarly, hookup culture has been shown to be heteronormative (Evans & Broido, 2002; Hamilton, 2007; Stone & Gorga, 2014). For outsiders and minorities, not only are they excluded from participating in the cultural activities but the omnipresence of hookup culture as dominant system of social and sexual organization on campus can enhance the experiences of otherness or marginalization.

As noted in the introduction, the portrayal of hookup culture replacing dating as the new normal on college campuses (England et al., 2007; Stepp, 2007) has been questioned by those who point out that the data many studies rely on for their conclusions only represent a narrow portion of colleges and their populations (Pham, 2017). That is, many of the studies emphasizing the prevalence of hookup culture on college campuses look at specific types of schools that do not accurately represent the diversity of colleges, student populations, or their sexual cultures on campus. The sample of schools looked at for some well-known studies overrepresent private universities with elite academic standards and thriving Greek systems, which some have argued is precisely where hookup culture is found (Regnerus & Uecker, 2011). While there has been an increase in studies exploring potential differences between students' experiences (Armstrong & Hamilton, 2013; Paul & Hayes, 2002), differences between different types of schools (e.g., religious school, HBCUs, small liberal arts schools, women's universities, international universities, etc.) remains understudied. Looking at a greater breadth of schools and more diverse populations of students are important for understanding exactly

where the boundaries and influence of hookup culture extend and what its consequences are.

Even if college students do not participate in hookup culture, they are aware of it as the dominant sexual script and not participating in it can have negative consequences, including feelings of isolation, anxiety, and depression (Wade, 2017). However, while multiple studies show that a large majority of students report participating in at least one hookup (Armstrong et al., 2012; Kahn et al., 2000; Paul et al., 2000), other studies show that students greatly exaggerate the frequency of the regular hookups (Holman & Sillars, 2012; Lambert, Kahn, & Apple, 2003). This suggests that the apparent prevalence of hookups on college campuses, may be in part due to "pluralistic ignorance", which is the students' perception of the dominant values and behaviors of their peers as being contrary to their own (Pham, 2017). Students who are interested in committed relationships can end up participating in hookups because they believe it could eventually lead to the kind of romantic relationship they want in their future (Armstrong et al., 2012; Bogle, 2008; Epstein et al., 2009; Garcia & Reiber, 2008; Hamilton & Armstrong, 2009).

Lisa Wade (2017) argues that it is the disconnect between the expectations of hookup culture (as opposed to the hookup itself) and a student's experience that is responsible for the anxiety, disappointment, and sexual violence that students suffer. Wade clearly describes hookup culture as just that, a culture. Dispelling the myth of a casual sex epidemic she explains that "almost a third of students will graduate without hooking up a single time […therefore, the] cause of student's unhappiness, then, can't be the hookup. But it *is* about hooking up. It's about hookup *culture*" (2017, p. 18). Public secular schools, like those where hookup culture is most prevalent, do not regulate sex other than when the law is violated (e.g., sexual violence, Title IX, etc.). As such, the culture of sex on campus that confines, and influences students' sexual behaviors is not institutional to the school.

Wade (2017) also documents that the recipe for a thriving hookup culture on a campus requires some off-campus party location (often a Greek fraternity) with vast quantities of alcohol

where students can gather and engage in sexual dancing. According to Wade, it is during the dancing when the hookup is initiated and what follows could involve any number of sexual activities. The final and maybe most important aspect, for Wade, is that following the hookup both parties create physical and emotional distance from one another to demonstrate that the hookup was meaningless.

Some institutions, however, seem to position themselves in opposition to hookup culture by banning or highly regulating all or some of the elements required for a proper hookup. Specifically, schools that do not allow Greek systems (i.e., fraternities and sororities), ban alcohol consumption and possession regardless of age, ban or highly regulate dancing, and define sex as inherently meaningful and as only permissible in limited circumstances. Most importantly, they regulate sexual behavior between students above and beyond any legal concerns (e.g., sexual assault). These differences would seem to preclude or severely limit the possibility of a hookup scene, both the behaviors and accompanying culture, on their campuses. Critically evaluating how sex is regulated by the institutions is a first step to understanding how the campus environments created through Christian schools' institutional discourses are similar or different to the scripts of hookup culture.

In making sense of the influence and importance that sexual narratives, like hookup culture or Christian schools' regulations on sex, have on college students and their actual behavior, this study relies on social scripting theory. As the name suggests, social scripting theory observes that people follow internal scripts, similar to theater actors, when interpreting meaning in behavior, emotion, and reaction. Drawing on symbolic interactionism, discourse theory and feminism, Gagnon and Simon (1973) applied the idea of social scripts to human sexuality following their observation that people often exhibit specific patterned actions when engaging in sexual behaviors. Social scripts inform individual's understanding of what the norm is and provide a framework for how to behave, feel, and think in a particular situation. Regarding sexuality, scripts "specify the appropriate objects, aims, and desirable qualities of sexual

interaction. They also provide individual actors with instruction as to the appropriate times, places, sequences, and so forth with regard to sexual activity" (Wiederman, 2005, p. 496). In other words, sexual scripts indicate what are appropriate sexual desires and what are the acceptable behaviors one can use for fulfilling them; what sex you should be having and how you should go about it. While hookup culture is clearly one such sexual script, this paper presents the idea that Christian colleges and universities also transmit their own separate script to students, which is significantly different from hookup culture and could inform sexual behavior.

Sexual scripts can be transmitted by individuals by observing their behavior, through mass medias depiction of sexuality, or by more formal institutional regulations, but require more than just an individuals' awareness of them in order to be highly influential. According to Regnerus and Uecker (2011), sexual scripts, and their associated behaviors, operate best when supported by *plausibility structures*. First theorized by Berger (1967), a plausibility structure is some collective of people who adhere to and reproduce a specific set of norms, defining appropriate behavior, and values. Importantly, because plausibility structures provide both social support and social control, when functioning well, they legitimize values and norms of localized social scripts that may contradict those of larger or even societal social scripts. Regnerus and Uecker (2011) theorize that the religious plausibility structures' (e.g., churches or religious universities) social support and social control around sex help explain the number of them who reach young adults as virgins, bucking wider societal trends.

Students attending religious Christian higher-education institutions likely do self-select into these schools in part due to their existing beliefs about sex. I argue in this paper, however, that the social script informing their sexual behavior is not only transmitted through the school's regulations around sex, but the plausibility structure created on the school's campus is required for the social control around sex to remain pervasive and persistent. Additionally, my understanding of how Christian colleges and universities create social scripts, establish norms,

and exert social control relies heavily on Foucault's conceptualization of discourse, the meaning and regulation of modern sexuality (1972, 1990). Discourse, as conceptualized by Foucault, is more than just how meaning is created or how an individual thinks. It is the confluence of social practices, power relations, and forms of subjectivity combined with the means of knowledge construction. Discourses, therefore, "constitute the 'nature' of the body, unconscious and conscious mind and emotional life of the subjects they seek to govern" (Weedon, 1989, p. 108). Social and sexual script theory, plausibility structures, and Foucault's notion of discourse form the conceptual framework that I used throughout this study.

The organizational discourses on sexuality of Christian higher-education institutions can take very different forms from those in hookup culture or in society more broadly. Looking at how these institutional discourses are constructed by analyzing the way they define and regulate sex and sexuality in materials they have made publicly available is one entry point which helps to clarify the nature of the environment the students attending these institutions are operating within. A school's beliefs about sex as well as any regulations they have around sexual behavior are most readily available in documents including institutional policies regarding student behavior. In the majority of cases this information can be found in student handbooks, student codes of conduct, or documentation of a school's policies accessible on their website. Throughout the paper I refer to "code of conduct" or "code of student conduct" to indicate any official statement by the school stipulating their policies, rules, or regulations around student behavior and any accompanying rationales.

The aim of the present study is to determine if religious Christian colleges and universities, through their discourses on sexuality forwarded in their student codes of conduct, present students with sexual scripts and plausibility structures that are significantly different from hookup culture. In addition to investigating *if* such a difference exists, this paper also seeks to explore the specific ways that these school differentiate or counter hookup culture's script around sex. That is, what do religious Christian school actually regulate and how do they justify

the regulations found in their codes of conduct?

HEADING 3

METHODS

Sample

The sample was created by identifying possible candidates for inclusion using the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), which annually collects institutional level data from postsecondary institutions in the U.S. and is a branch of National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). The NCES is a non-partisan center inside the Institute of Education Sciences within the U.S. Department of Education. Collection and analysis of data related to education in the US is the main responsibility of the NCES as a federal entity. The data from the 2018-2019 school year was used, which included a number of pertinent variables (e.g., institution size, religious affiliation, official website address, enrollment, tuition, racial and gender composition). IPEDS requires participation from all Title IV schools (i.e., schools who process U.S. federal student aid). The data were initially refined from the complete data set of institutional characteristics by removing all schools with no religious affiliation, religious affiliations other than Christian (e.g., Jewish, Muslim), and Christian affiliations that are not Protestant (i.e., Orthodox, Catholic). This is following Wade's, and others', observation about which schools may fall outside of hookup culture (i.e., evangelical and Mormon). The resulting sample was 621 schools.

The difficulty with trying to determine religious affiliation of Christian institutions is that the denominations they self-report on the IPEDS survey (e.g., United Methodist, Baptist, etc.) do not consistently align with the major colloquial distinctions (e.g., mainline, evangelical) theologically. Since theological tenants may inform Christian schools' treatment of sex, the sample was categorized according to Lehman and Sherkat's (2018) religious identification typology into Liberal Protestant (1), Episcopalian (2), Moderate Protestant (3), Lutheran (4), Baptist (5), Sectarian Protestant (6), Nondenominational (7), and Mormon (8). They empirically cluster Protestant identifications based on their theological exclusivity and universalism, which,

they argue, is far more conducive to comparative analysis of religious identifications. The exclusivity and universalism continuum measures what degree a sect follows a theology in which only adherents of that sect will avoid divine punishment after death or are eligible for divine rewards in this life or another. Lehman and Sherkat (2018, p. 11) Lehman and Sherkat found that “Protestant denominations are distinctive along the exclusivist-universalist continuum” with more liberal protestants (i.e., Liberal Protestant and Episcopalian) adopting a more universalist theology, moderate Protestants (i.e., Lutheran, Moderate Protestant, and Nondenominational) being in the middle, and more sectarian Protestants (i.e., Sectarian Protestant, Baptist) being the most exclusive.

For each of the religious identification categories a number of representative schools were selected for inclusion in the final sample. Larger schools, in terms of number of enrolled students, were selected as the most appropriately representative of mainstream Christian schools for this study, because they have a largest social reach in terms of visibility and contact with students. The data were arranged by institution size and ten schools (or as many as available if there were less than 10) from the largest size categories on the IPEDS surveys were selected for inclusion. Additionally, some schools were added to supplement a category if the particular school is well-known or connected to a recognizable public figure (e.g., Oral Roberts) as this was also reasoned to be an indicator of how representative of the mainstream within a given religious identification category they are.

The codes of conduct or explanations of rules and policies for each school were obtained from each school’s respective website, either as a student handbook or a statement of institutional policies and produces. Any school for whom a code of conduct could not be obtained (some choose to keep them private by requiring an institutional login) was removed and replaced by the next school down on the list from the same religious identification category. During the analysis, additional colleges were added to categories were the themes were less consistently evident within the category until I determined that saturation for that category had

been reached. The final sample of school included in the analysis was seventy-five. Table 1 contains basic institutional demographic information about the schools.

Analytic Strategy

One accessible resource consistently available across institutions is their respective codes of student conduct in which they articulate the rules, responsibilities, and rights that are assigned to the students by the institution. Student codes of conduct are a tangible example of how discourse on sexuality is produced as it concretely shows how sexuality is defined and regulated by schools to constrain students' behaviors and beliefs about sex. For Foucault, 'discourse' is not a particular set linguistic features, but rather the institutionalized systems of knowledge which exist in and are reproduced by disciplinary practices and which exert their influence through the link of knowledge to power (1990). Codes of conduct are one way that discourse on sexuality can be identified and analyzed.

Additionally, analyzing codes of student conduct was selected as the most efficient method for this study because many Christian institutions have very little information readily available that indicates their organizational stance concerning sex and sexuality other than their codes of conduct. Furthermore, the similar format between schools made analyzing codes of conduct for various institutions much simpler and more straightforward as direct comparisons and contrasts can easily be drawn.[1]

Content analysis was selected as most appropriate method of analysis for this study for a number of reasons. First of all, content analysis is useful for studies that require the analysis of large amounts of text (Neuman, 2007). The texts containing schools' policies about sex ranged in length from only a few pages, in the case of some websites, to several

[1] While all the schools do have language in their student codes of conduct related to their rules and procedures for sexual assault incidents, when this language was compared to public schools it was determined to be essentially equivalent. Since this study is focused on how Christian schools contrast with the public, secular schools where hookup culture is the dominant sexual script, their language on sexual assault was not included in the analysis. Additionally, it should be noted that all of the schools studied were Title IX compliant.

Table 1

Institution Demographics

Institution Name	Enrollment	Cost	Pell	Women	White
Liberal Protestant					
Bethel University	4829	15018	49%	56%	54%
Eckerd College	2037	34461	19%	66%	76%
Covenant College	1030	23053	25%	53%	86%
Trinity University	2395	29335	17%	53%	56%
Piedmont College	1281	18625	47%	66%	67%
Elmhurst College	2875	23042	38%	61%	62%
Millikin University	1950	21348	37%	57%	69%
Monmouth College	1033	17812	40%	51%	62%
Earlham College	1060	22601	27%	55%	50%
Hanover College	1089	21548	30%	54%	76%
Buena Vista University	1804	20580	49%	64%	78%
Episcopalian					
Clarkson College	695	23626	21%	85%	75%
Geneva College	1417	20303	38%	50%	81%
Sewanee-The University of the South	1702	34564	17%	53%	81%
Erskine College	575	35268	36%	49%	57%
Voorhees College[1]	475	17905	88%	59%	1%
Moderate Protestant					
American University	8123	33034	17%	62%	54%
Emory University	6937	26804	18%	60%	41%
Columbia College	12754	22306	46%	57%	56%
Southern Methodist University	6452	38562	12%	50%	65%
Duke University	6696	19785	14%	50%	44%
Chapman University	7020	41463	19%	60%	53%
University of Indianapolis	4488	20976	35%	64%	65%
Birmingham Southern College	1283	26863	22%	52%	79%
Huntingdon College	1102	20893	44%	52%	64%
Miles College[1]	1650	15246	86%	49%	2%
Lutheran					
Concordia University-Portland	1380	20462	37%	71%	62%
Concordia University-Wisconsin	3709	24803	35%	66%	74%
California Lutheran University	2963	29387	30%	57%	45%
Concordia University-Irvine	1853	28588	28%	62%	51%
Augustana College	2647	24110	24%	58%	72%
Valparaiso University	3224	23916	29%	55%	71%
Grand View University	1788	17946	39%	56%	67%
Luther College	2053	24688	19%	55%	81%
Wartburg College	1527	22599	24%	53%	76%
Concordia University-Ann Arbor	904	25088	33%	53%	77%
Baptist					
Baylor University	14316	35158	19%	59%	63%
Bethel University	2901	27085	26%	62%	76%
California Baptist University	7414	24170	46%	63%	39%
Campbellsville University	3704	17843	26%	59%	78%
Mississippi College	3242	17520	30%	62%	71%
Missouri Baptist University	4508	20863	19%	61%	59%
Campbell University	4384	22458	36%	52%	58%
Dallas Baptist University	3161	26731	29%	59%	59%

Table 1 (continued)

Institution Name	Enrollment	Cost	Pell	Women	White
University of Mobile	1443	19779	43%	64%	56%
Ouachita Baptist University	1545	18679	29%	55%	82%
Belmont University	6497	36694	17%	65%	80%
Sectarian Protestant					
Liberty University	45754	27432	45%	58%	50%
Indiana Wesleyan University-National & Global	6575	21492	45%	70%	65%
Harding University	4184	19580	25%	55%	82%
Olivet Nazarene University	3371	20741	32%	59%	77%
Eastern Mennonite University	1098	25330	31%	63%	69%
Pepperdine University	3604	40941	17%	59%	51%
Southeastern University	6240	24259	36%	56%	59%
Ashland University	4813	20231	35%	48%	75%
Lee University	4860	17558	32%	62%	77%
Abilene Christian University	3666	27584	27%	58%	64%
Faulkner University	2672	21334	49%	60%	48%
Oakwood University[1]	1650	25938	50%	58%	1%
Nondenominational					
Bob Jones University	2606	13664	38%	55%	73%
Azusa Pacific University	5671	29152	33%	66%	39%
Biola University	4048	32729	32%	64%	46%
Colorado Christian University	6537	25031	36%	66%	65%
Wheaton College	2391	28162	20%	54%	74%
Gordon College	1591	28773	24%	63%	68%
Calvin College	3746	25851	21%	54%	70%
Houghton College	1030	24938	40%	62%	73%
Hillsdale College[2]	1512	21918	0%	49%	-
Oral Roberts University	3381	22044	41%	59%	42%
Palm Beach Atlantic University	3003	24557	29%	63%	64%
Moody Bible Institute	2714	19232	37%	46%	58%
Trinity Christian College	1107	23368	37%	67%	65%
Taylor University	2110	25382	18%	56%	83%
University of Northwestern-St Paul	3328	24286	20%	61%	83%
Mormon					
Brigham Young University-Idaho	51881	7555	25%	58%	51%

[1] Voorhees College, Miles College, and Oakwood University reported predominantly “Black or African American” student populations (96%, 96%, and 83% respectively).

[2] Hillsdale College reported 100% “Race/ethnicity unknown”.

hundred pages for student handbooks or catalogs. Content analysis, therefore, made analyzing seventy-five codes of conduct of varying lengths possible. Additionally, because sex is perceived as dangerous and disproportionately meaningful (Rubin, 1984), content analysis being essentially completely unobtrusive (Berg, 2004; Webb, Campbell, Schwartz, & Sechrest, 1999) allows sex to be studied with minimal risk of disturbing potential research participants.

The codes of conduct for each of the seventy-five schools were carefully read through

for any instance where the institution mentions sexual behavior, sexuality, or any other topic related to sex. Some schools did not include any language regarding sex above and beyond legal standards around sexual misconduct (e.g., assault, coercion. etc.,). Schools that did have rules about sex generally either expressed them by either explicitly stating their policies and beliefs about sex, providing brief statements that only generally talk about sex and sexual behaviors, or some mix of both. In order to identify and code themes it was necessary to understand what the schools directly communicate and what they might mean.

When performing content analysis, Babbie (2013) explains that coding should focus both on manifest content (i.e., concretely evident concepts) and latent content (i.e., underlying meaning). Similarly, Hall (1980) tells us that encoded into a given text are meanings which communicate, and a specific reading allows us to identify what the intended meaning suggested by the text may be. As such, any example (e.g., phrase, paragraph etc.,) where a school mentions sex was analyzed for both manifest and latent content to determine if the school was communicating its belief about the meaning of sex or regulating sexuality or sexual behavior for its students.

Particularly within the context of Christian college campuses, most of the intended readers of the codes of conduct will be aware of the preferred reading of the text and therefore will read their encoded meanings as they were intended (White & Gillett, 1994). With these concepts as a starting point, content analysis enabled me to analyze the codes of conduct, identify the discursive themes employed across schools in their construction of sex and sexuality, and explicate the encoded meanings behind them.

As the content of student code of conduct for Christian colleges and Universities has not been well studied, this study was primarily exploratory. Therefore, the analysis and coding of identified manifest and latent content was inductive. Themes emerged when content coded from multiple schools were found to have a coalesced meaning. Initially, four themes were identified, but as the sample grew one theme was split into two separate themes due to distinct differences

exhibited by a number of schools. The result was the emergence of themes two, the context marriage, and three, heteronormativity.

Lehman and Sherkat's (2018) categorization of Christian denominations as either more universalist or more exclusionary may have some significance for how schools define and regulate sex. That is, it might be that those more theologically exclusionary schools would more highly regulate sex and sexuality while schools on the more universalist end tend to resemble public secular schools in that they do not regulate sex (see Table 2). It should be noted, however, that Christian colleges are not monolithic in how they regulate and create discourse around sex. Some schools demonstrate all five of the themes I identify as comprising sin and purity discourse very apparently, other schools only present a few, and still others present none of the themes.

HEADING 4

THEMES: DEFINING SEX, SEXUALITY, AND TRANSGRESSION

Analysis of the codes of student conduct for the seventy-five Christian colleges and universities included in the sample revealed that the presence of official language regulating the sex and sexuality of students was present in more than half of the schools. Content analysis was used to code the various ways that Christian schools regulated sexuality into five inductively identified themes that are present to different degrees for schools who do have rules concerning student sex and sexuality. While there do appear to be some loose patterns (e.g., schools on the more exclusionist end of the religious identification spectrum more often contain the themes identified in this study), there are no apparent rules dictating which themes must go together and any number the themes can be found in nearly any possible combination. Tables 3 provides a detailed account of which themes were identified as present in the codes of conduct for which schools organized by religious identification.

In total this study identified five themes in Christian college's codes of conduct regarding how they regulate and define sex differently from hookup culture. Often times their regulations focus on defining and regulating what they consider to be transgressive sexual expression. Additionally, these regulations often include an explanation or justification of the school's policies.

As previously noted, my main interest in this study is to determine if on some Christian college campuses an alternative to the more socially dominant narrative of hookup culture exists. As such, schools that do not appear to have any language in their codes of conduct that differs from public or secular schools regarding sex (i.e., school for whom none of the identified themes were present) do not appear in the following sections explaining the identified themes and giving examples. That is, the following examples and analysis of themes comes only from those forty-two schools which were identified as having at least one theme around the regulation of sex present in their code of conduct or institutional policies.

Table 2

Presence of Themes by Religious Category

Religious Category (n)	Themes Present	Theme 1	Theme 2	Theme 3	Theme 4	Theme 5
Liberal Protestant (11)	**1** (9.1%)	**1** (9.1%)	**1** (9.1%)	**1** (9.1%)	**1** (9.1%)	**1** (9.1%)
Episcopalian (5)	**1** (20%)	**1** (20%)	**1** (20%)	**1** (20%)	**1** (20%)	**1** (20%)
Moderate Protestant (10)	**1** (10%)	**0** (0%)	**0** (0%)	**0** (0%)	**0** (0%)	**1** (10%)
Lutheran (10)	**4** (40%)	**44** (40%)	**44** (40%)	**1** (10%)	**0** (0%)	**3** (30%)
Baptist (11)	**11** (100%)	**9** (81.8%)	**11** (100%)	**8** (72.7%)	**2** (18.2%)	**3** (27.3%)
Sectarian Protestant (12)	**10** (83.3%)	**10** (83.3%)	**9** (75%)	**9** (75%)	**7** (58.3%)	**5** (41.7%)
Nondenominational (15)	**14** (93.3%)	**13** (86.7%)	**14** (93.3%)	**13** (86.7%)	**7** (46.7%)	**7** (46.7%)
Mormon (1)	**1** (100%)	**1** (100%)	**1** (100%)	**1** (100%)	**0** (0%)	**0** (0%)
Total	43	39	41	34	18	21

Note: Percentages are out of the category size.

To illustrate the inductively identified themes of how schools define of sexual transgression, I draw on examples from the texts and I discuss how each one contributes to a particular discourse of sexuality that students of certain Christian institutions are steeped in during their formative college years, what I call sin and purity discourse.

Theme 1: Sex as Meaningful

Whereas hookup culture tasks participants to actively establish that there are no broader implications for sexual encounters and therefore verify that hookups are ultimately meaningless (Wade, 2017), the institutional discourses on sexuality constructed on some Christian college campuses represent the almost complete opposite stance. Sex is not only presented as meaningful due to its earthly consequences (e.g., Belmont University states in their code of conduct “we appreciate the potentially negative effects consensual sexual behavior can have on the mental and physical health”), but it is portrayed by most as having divine or spiritual significance (Belmont University, 2019).

A Gift from God

Very often this divine meaning was indicated by describing sex as a gift from God. In the Bethel Covenant for Life Together they plainly state that they “view sexuality as one of God’s

good gifts" (2019). Wheaton's student handbook expands on this idea, saying that "Wheaton College believes that sexual intimacy was created as a gift by God to be an expression of love between a woman and a man in the context of a life-long marriage commitment" (2020). These schools afford deep meaning to sex as something that is inherently good and given to people from God as something to be enjoyed. Some schools explain that this view of sex, for them, is based on their understanding of the Bible. Palm Beach Atlantic University explains that "sexuality is a gift from God, who declared it 'good' (Genesis 1:27-28). Palm Beach Atlantic University affirms the biblical understanding of sexuality" (2019). The authority of the Bible is used to prove and emphasize that sex should be understood by students as meaningful.

The portrayal of sex as a gift given to people from God allows schools to communicate not only that the divine import of sex, but also serves as the justification for limiting what contexts sex is transgressive in and which ones it is not. Because sex is a gift from God, and not fundamentally human in origin, then acknowledging the intention of the "giver" of the gift is required to enjoy it properly and appropriately honor the gift itself. Concordia University-Portland's code of conduct captures this sentiment, stating that it is their "conviction that the sexual relationship is best understood as an expression of oneness in marriage and that to understand it or to express it otherwise would diminish the high regard that we have for this gift from God" (2019). Ouachita Baptist University describes any behavior they consider an immoral sexual act as "misuses of God's gift" (2019). Therefore, even though the gift was good by nature, using it wrong can undermine that goodness.

Calvin's handbook states that, "students are expected to embrace biblical sexual purity and to avoid activities which have the potential to distort the good gift of human sexuality" (2019b). In other words, the gift can be corrupted if enjoyed in the wrong way. Olivet's handbook clarifies that even though "human sexuality is intrinsically good" the meaning of sexual encounters is not their enjoyment, rather "expressions of sexual intimacy and/or sexual activity that become ends unto themselves or arise from self-centeredness distort the gift of sexuality"

(2019). Therefore, the gift can be a positive and good thing if its meaningfulness as something larger and more important than the individual's pleasure is respected but becomes a negative thing if that meaning is disregarded and the act is performed for its own sake, outside of the appropriate context.

Sexual Stewardship

The idea that sex is meaningful because it was a gift from God is reinforced by some schools who talk about sex in terms of stewardship. For them, as recipients of the gift of sex, we are responsible for safeguarding sex from distortion. This is similar to and often builds on the conception of sex as a gift in that sex is perceived as not belonging to humans. Instead people are caretakers who are obligated to honor the spiritual significance of sex. Faulkner University explains that as "followers of Jesus Christ, we are committed to being good stewards of the gifts the Creator has provided, including this gift of our sexuality" (2019).

The idea of stewardship also implies that this obligation extends out to regulating how others use, or misuse, the gift of sex. For example, Abilene Christian University argues that in "Scripture and in the life of Jesus, we see a commitment to honor God with our bodies through relational and sexual stewardship as well as pastoral love and compassion for those who do not live according to those beliefs" (2019). In this instance "pastoral love" is directed at people who fail to honor the significance of sex, presumably because they have mismanaged the gift of sex. The idea of stewardship, therefore, conveys that the gift of sex is meaningful and needs to be properly managed.

Purity

Another way the divine meaning of sex is articulated by schools is through the idea of purity. Although it is not always the case, often the use of purity in connection to sex is in conjunction with the description of sex as a gift. Geneva College states in their code of conduct that all "members of the student body are expected to respect the gift of sexuality that God has given and to make wise decisions regarding sexual purity" (2019). In other words, properly

Table 3

Themes by Individual Schools

Institution Name	Theme 1	Theme 2	Theme 3	Theme 4	Theme 5
Liberal Protestant	0	0	0	0	0
Bethel University	0	0	0	0	0
Eckerd College	0	0	0	0	0
Covenant College	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**
Trinity University	0	0	0	0	0
Piedmont College	0	0	0	0	0
Elmhurst College	0	0	0	0	0
Millikin University	0	0	0	0	0
Monmouth College	0	0	0	0	0
Earlham College	0	0	0	0	0
Hanover College	0	0	0	0	0
Buena Vista University	0	0	0	0	0
Episcopalian					
Clarkson College	0	0	0	0	0
Geneva College	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**
Sewanee-The University of the South	0	0	0	0	0
Erskine College	0	0	0	0	0
Voorhees College	0	0	0	0	0
Moderate Protestant					
American University	0	0	0	0	0
Emory University	0	0	0	0	0
Columbia College	0	0	0	0	0
Southern Methodist University	0	0	0	0	0
Duke University	0	0	0	0	0
Chapman University	0	0	0	0	0
University of Indianapolis	0	0	0	0	0
Birmingham Southern College	0	0	0	0	0
Huntingdon College	0	0	0	0	0
Miles College	0	0	0	0	**1**
Lutheran					
Concordia University-Portland	**1**	**1**	0	0	**1**
Concordia University-Wisconsin	**1**	**1**	0	0	**1**
California Lutheran University	0	0	0	0	0
Concordia University-Irvine	**1**	**1**	**1**	**0**	**1**
Augustana College	0	0	0	0	0
Valparaiso University	0	0	0	0	0
Grand View University	0	0	0	0	0
Luther College	0	0	0	0	0
Wartburg College	0	0	0	0	0
Concordia University-Ann Arbor	**1**	**1**	0	0	0
Baptist					
Baylor University	**1**	**1**	**1**	0	0
Bethel University	**1**	**1**	**1**	0	0
California Baptist University	**1**	**1**	**1**	0	0
Campbellsville University	0	**1**	0	0	0
Mississippi College	**1**	**1**	**1**	0	**1**
Missouri Baptist University	**1**	**1**	**1**	0	0
Campbell University	0	**1**	0	0	0
Dallas Baptist University	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**	0
University of Mobile	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**
Ouachita Baptist University	**1**	**1**	**1**	0	**1**
Belmont University	**1**	**1**	0	0	0

Table 3 (continued)

Institution Name	Theme 1	Theme 2	Theme 3	Theme 4	Theme 5
Sectarian Protestant					
Liberty University	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**	0
Indiana Wesleyan University	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**
Harding University	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**	0
Olivet Nazarene University	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**	0
Eastern Mennonite University	0	0	0	0	0
Pepperdine University	**1**	**1**	**1**	0	0
Southeastern University	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**
Ashland University	0	0	0	0	0
Lee University	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**
Abilene Christian University	**1**	**1**	**1**	0	**1**
Faulkner University	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**
Oakwood University	**1**	0	0	0	0
Nondenominational					
Bob Jones University	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**
Azusa Pacific University	**1**	**1**	**1**	0	0
Biola University	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**
Colorado Christian University	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**
Wheaton College	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**
Gordon College	**1**	**1**	**1**	0	0
Calvin College	**1**	**1**	0	0	**1**
Houghton College	0	**1**	**1**	0	0
Hillsdale College	0	0	0	0	0
Oral Roberts University	**1**	**1**	**1**	0	0
Palm Beach Atlantic University	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**
Moody Bible Institute	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**
Trinity Christian College	**1**	**1**	**1**	0	0
Taylor University	**1**	**1**	**1**	0	0
University of Northwestern-St Paul	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**	0
Mormon					
Brigham Young University-Idaho	**1**	**1**	**1**	0	0

acknowledging sex as a gift from God involves pursing sexual purity. Purity, therefore, comes down to the argument that because sex is meaningful, doing it right respects its divine origin, while doing it does not and distorts its goodness.

Purity usually involves conforming to specific sexual behaviors and relationship types. Baylor University, for example, “affirms the biblical understanding of sexuality as a gift from God. Christian churches across the ages and around the world have affirmed purity in singleness and fidelity in marriage between a man and a woman as the biblical norm” (2019). Similarly, in their code of conduct, Bob Jones University argues that “One of the primary ways we pursue holiness is through moral purity. In calling us to purity, God forbids viewing sexuality as a means of exploiting others (1 Thess. 4:1–8). This means honoring God’s design for sex, celebrating and practicing it only within the marriage relationship between one man and one

woman for a lifetime" (2019). Here purity is maintained by adherence to only certain sexual behaviors, including avoiding sexual exploitation and only having sex within a heterosexual monogamous marriage. A number of schools also make it clear that purity is not just about the body. As Bethel University says, "We recognize that sexual purity involves right motives as well as right behaviors" (2019). Therefore, the emphasis on purity can emphasize that the meaning of sex must not only be respected by *what* a student does, but *why* they do it.

Latent Meanings

In contrast to the schools directly talk about sex a "gift from God", students' responsibilities as "stewards" of sexuality, or the importance of sexual "purity", some schools use more coded language to allude to the meaningfulness of sex. Brigham Young University's (BYU) honor code lists one of the most important aspects of faith in their eyes as living "a chaste and virtuous life" (2019). Schools use the words like "chaste", "virtuous", and "modesty" to communicate in a latent manner that sex has meaning and that certain behaviors properly respect that meaning. Without explicitly talking about sexual conduct or even using the word "sex", schools like BYU and others are effective at communicating that sex and sexual behavior are meaningful and that there are institutional expectations that students respect sex and its religious significance.

Summary: The Meaning of Sex

In their codes of conduct, many of the Christian schools in this study contrast their beliefs about sex with those of hookup culture by impressing on their students that as an religiously based institution, they believe that sex is highly meaningful and stressing that their policies reflect that belief. Accordingly, for such institutions, one of the sources of sexual transgression is meaninglessness and selfishness. That is, because it is a gift directly from God (a responsibility for stewards, a threat to purity, etc.), sex is meant to be meaningful in a spiritual sense, and sexual acts disregarding that greater meaning are transgressive because they undermine that spiritual significance. The assumption that sex is meaningful, particularly in a

spiritual sense, is the assumption that the following themes tend to build on. While not all schools had explicit or even coded language expressing their belief about the meaning of sex, I would argue that this meaning can almost always be inferred if they do show evidence other themes (i.e., the confines of marriage, heteronormativity, biological essential gender expression, and detailed descriptions of what behavior is illicit). Each of these themes reflects enormous concern with defining and regulating sex and sexuality (beyond legal protections), which is only a priority if the institution believes that sex does have meaning.

Theme 2: The Confines of Marriage and Theme 3: Heteronormativity

Initially theme two, limiting permissible sexual behavior to the confines of marriage, and theme three, heteronormativity, were coded into a single category, because in a majority of cases schools present both themes in a single policy. Put simply, schools stipulate that the only permitted sex in is marriage, and the only permitted marriage is heterosexual. Regularly schools combine the two into a single sentence or statement, making them somewhat challenging to disentangle. For example, Moody Bible Institute states that they believe:

> God's creation design and intent for marriage as expressed in Genesis 2 is therefore exclusively between one man and one woman. Marriage alludes to the love of Christ for His Bride, the Church. Within this monogamous context, intended to be lifelong, sexual intimacy is a glorious blessing from God" (2019).

Here they reiterate the idea that sex is from God, communicating its meaningfulness, and simultaneously providing the guidelines for how to properly respect that meaning and avoid distorting the intention of sex.

Because of how intertwined themes two and three are, I decided for the sake of clarity to write about them together. In the first part I talk about the few exceptional schools who emphasize the importance of marriage but do not explicitly define marriage as exclusively heterosexual. In the second section I analyze the schools for whom both themes were present and often entangled. The remaining sections delve into the specifics for how this theme is

articulated across schools. There were, however, no schools that were heteronormative but did not define marriage as the only acceptable context for sex. That is, if theme three was present, theme two was always present as well.

Marriage Alone

There was a small number of schools, five in total, in the sample who clearly articulated their institutional policies limiting acceptable sexual behaviors to within the context of marriage but who did not explicitly define marriage as strictly heterosexual. In their code of conduct Concordia University-Portland states that “commitment to the authority of Scripture leads us to believe that a sexual relationship is to be understood and experienced within the context of that mutually acknowledged commitment to lifelong union known as marriage” (2019). Here they are still communicating the meaningfulness of sex and connecting to their view on marriage. Other schools, however, state their view simply and in the form of a rule. For example, Campbellsville University stipulates that for them, inappropriate sexual behavior is defined as “any form of consensual sexual behavior or conduct outside the bonds of marriage” (2019). Each of these explanations of their institutional views are sex within marriage tended to be short, composed of only a few lines generally.

There are three possible explanations for these schools’ decision to abstain from defining marriage as necessarily heterosexual. The first is that these schools do hold a more progressive or secular view of marriage that does permit homosexual relationships. If this was the case, you might expect to see clear language detailing their support of same-sex relationships, but this was not the case. The second possibility is that these particular schools do have a heteronormative view on marriage and assume that specifying that is unnecessary for their intended audience who are most likely already privy to that expectation through denominational exposure in other setting (e.g., church services). The third possibility is that the schools are undecided, and the omission of language around same-sex relationships is strategic to not alienate potential future students. The analysis on purely the codes of conduct

that is the basis of this study is not able to determine what the motivations behind this decision are, but it is notable since these five schools appear to clearly be the minority. Even so, these schools are clearly regulating what context is acceptable and unacceptable for sex and impressing that view on their student body.

Heteronormative Definition of Marriage

More common were those schools who define the only appropriate context for sex as marriage and the only acceptable understanding of marriage as heterosexual. Schools often supported this belief with a spiritual rationale, like Trinity Christian College who specify that "human sexual activity as part of the creational order is to be expressed between a man and a woman and finds its culmination in intercourse between husband and wife" (2019). Here the use of the word "creational order" refers to belief that God created the world and people to function in a certain way, and, according to Trinity, one example of this is that marriage is intended to only be heterosexual. The use of rules and language within codes of conduct to construct a heteronormative discourse around marriage, and therefore sex, was very common for schools presenting any of the identified themes. Baylor University epitomizes an adherence to heteronormativity by arguing "Christian churches across the ages and around the world have affirmed purity in singleness and fidelity in marriage between a man and a woman as the biblical norm. Temptations to deviate from this norm include both heterosexual sex outside of marriage and homosexual behavior" (2019). Baylor is not only appealing to the authority of Christian tradition, which is covered in more detail in a following section, but also arguing that heterosexual marriages are the norm.

A number of schools, including Baylor, go so far as to include direct language about their beliefs regarding same-sex marriages and sexual relationships. These schools very explicitly state not only what they believe, but also specify what they oppose. Houghton College, for example, asserts that they "believe that Scripture clearly prohibits certain acts, including […] engaging in sexual relations outside the bonds of marriage (including premarital sex, adultery

and homosexual behavior)" (2019). Houghton specifying that they consider "homosexual behavior" as "sexual relations outside the bonds of marriage" categorically precludes the possibility, for them, of a same-sex marriage as acceptable. A number of schools express the unacceptability of "same-sex" and "homosexual" behavior, especially as it relates to marriage. For such schools, it is equally important to explain what they are against, as it is to clarify what they support.

How to say it without saying it ("Man and Woman", Procreation)

More often than arguing directly against something, however, schools take the approach of clarifying what they *do* support and then depend on the audience to interpret additional implications. It is possible that this approach is not accidental. That is, it may be the case that striking a more positive tone in a code of conduct presents a more welcoming and inviting face to potential students. This is, however, speculative and capturing the motives behind how codes of conduct are formulated is certainly beyond of scope of this present study.

Irrespective of their motivation for doing so, schools manage to more subtly convey their beliefs about marriage in a number of ways. The most common way is to define marriage as between "a man and a woman". University of Northwestern – St Paul, for example, defines "marriage as being a covenant between one man and one woman. [They] believe in honoring the holy sexual union within the context of that covenant" (2019). Abilene Christian University echoes this assertion, saying they "believe Scripture teaches that God intends for sexual relations to be reserved for marriage between a man and a woman" (2019). Missouri Baptist University expresses the same idea in greater detail: "The University affirms and celebrates that God has designed sexual relationships to be expressed solely within the marriage relationship between a man and a woman. The Bible condemns all sexual relationships outside of the covenant of marriage" (2019).

Another approach schools use is to connect marriage to what they argue is its sacred function, procreation and maintenance of a stable family. Ouachita Baptist University

exemplifies this strategy in stating “the Ouachita community recognizes that human sexuality is a gift from God for procreation of human life and for the expression of one’s love through marriage” (2019). Utilizing this type of language allows the school to express their views on marriage and sex (i.e., heteronormativity) without using specific language to that effect. An example that combines both the “procreation” and “man and woman” tactic is Azusa Pacific University when they contend that “the sexual union within the marriage covenant between a man and a woman has been designed by God to bring them together as "one flesh," creating a solid foundation on which to build a family” (2019). Schools’ use of “man and woman” as well as procreation/family in their conceptualization of marriage is able to reproduce heteronormativity, without explicitly condemning or even naming identities or behaviors.

Monogamy and Lifelong Commitment

In addition to heteronormativity, schools also frequently limited their definition of a suitable marriage to a monogamous and lifelong commitment. This normative discourse of marriage as necessarily a monogamous relationship has been conceptualized as mononormative (Schippers, 2016). In their code of conduct Indiana Wesleyan University-National & Global express their belief that “God's plan for human sexuality is that it is to be expressed only in a monogamous lifelong relationship between one man and one woman within the framework of marriage” (2019). This is an example of a school overtly contextualizing acceptable sex as solely within marriage, and then going on to narrowly define marriage as heterosexual and monogamous.

As with heteronormativity, a school’s mononormative stance on marriage does not always require them to use the word “monogamy”. More often schools convey this idea by defining what type of relationship they believe that marriage entails. This is the one area of regulation around sex where schools showed the most variation in the language used. For Wheaton College (2020), “sexual intimacy was created as a gift by God to be an expression of love between a woman and a man in the *context of a life-long marriage commitment* [emphasis

mine]". Pepperdine University (2019), on the other hand, explains they believe as Christians "they are called to a life of chastity when unmarried and a life of fidelity within marriage". Other schools describe marriage as "covenanted love" (Colorado Christian University, 2019), a commitment to a "lifelong union" (Concordia University-Irvine, 2019), a "faithful commitment" (Palm Beach Atlantic University, 2019), and a "covenant commitment for a lifetime" (California Baptist University, 2019). Similarly, Campbellsville University (2019) states sex is only permitted within the "bonds of marriage", and Baylor University (2019) affirms "purity in singleness and fidelity in marriage between a man and a woman as the biblical norm". According to Belmont University's code of conduct "students are expected to not engage in consensual extramarital sexual behavior" (2019). The most consistent and explicit definition of transgression across the schools who have rules regulating sex is their construction of sexuality as only being permissible in a marriage that is exclusively heterosexual and monogamous.

The Authority of Tradition

> One interesting variation of this theme came from Olivet Nazarene University:
>
> It is the conviction of the Church of the Nazarene and Olivet Nazarene University that homosexual behavior falls outside the biblical and historical Christian teachings regarding human sexuality and that the only biblical norm for marriage is the union of one man and one woman (2019).

In a similar vein Azusa Pacific University states that as an:

> Evangelical community of disciples and scholars who embrace the historic orthodox Christian understanding of Holy Scripture, Azusa Pacific University holds that sexuality is a gift from God. Therefore, we seek to cultivate a community in which sexuality is embraced as God-given and good, and where biblical standards of sexual behavior are upheld (2019).

Interestingly, these constructions, and similar ones, bring in a new supporting logic that was not deployed previously (biblical or theological arguments): that of the Christian tradition.

Here the authority of tradition is being used by Christian schools specifically when constructing their discourse around heterosexuality and monogamy. This is significant. On one hand these schools see their position on both as almost self-evident and want to clearly articulate that in their codes of conduct. On the other hand, the Bible speaks very rarely and, arguably, ambiguously about homosexuality.

Additionally, the Old Testament contains many examples of Godly people actively practicing some form polyamory, even if it is very distinct from how polyamory is conceptualized in a modern context (Schippers, 2016). Therefore, in order to support the construction of a heteronormative and mononormative discourse of sexuality these schools draw on the Christian tradition of defining normal sex relationships as limited to taking place only within the context of a heterosexual monogamy. In other words, because the Bible may not provide the foundation needed for this aspect of their discourse on sexuality, they instead argue that how sexuality was constructed in the recent past (heteronormatively and mononormatively), provides a substantive reason to continuing defining transgression as anything other than that.

Transgressive: A Love-Hate Relationship

Many of the schools do elaborate on the particulars of this theme, particularly their view of homosexuality as a behavior as separate from the feelings behind it. This notion has been popularized in the phrase “love the sinner, hate the sin”, and although it doesn’t appear verbatim in the Bible, its constituent parts do (Giselbach, 2013). For example, while Calvin College does not include any language in their handbook about homosexuality (this may be an instance of a strategic omission), searching their website for clarification about their policy does reveal a distancing between the person and the act:

> We believe that homosexual orientation is not a sin, and we strive to love our gay, lesbian, and bisexual students as ourselves, as God expects of us. We also affirm that physical sexual intimacy has its proper place in the context of heterosexual marriage (2019a).

This semantic move, replicated by several of the other schools, permits them at once to define what transgression is in their discourse of sexuality while simultaneously representing their position as based in love.

Recognizing that their restrictive constructions of sex, sexuality, and marriage may marginalize students whose identities do not align with institutional expectations, Biola University states: “We also recognize that [our] view of marriage raises unique questions and challenges for those who experience same-sex attraction or identify as LGBTQ” (2019). Covenant University both recognizes the narrowness of their regulations around sex and constructions of marriage and sexuality, and reaffirms their stance, declaring that:

> All students, regardless of their sexual desires, sexual attractions, or sexual identity should be treated with dignity, grace, and holy love as image bearers even as they are encouraged towards a biblically faithful lifestyle which includes a call to the difficult, but God-honoring pursuit of celibacy for those not in a monogamous marriage between one man and one woman (2019).

Schools often reconcile the tension between their regulations of student behaviors and identity, and their commitment to the welfare of their students with a paternalistic “this is for your own good” sentiment. The contention, which permeates schools’ discourses on sexuality, is that the definitions of transgression employed by the school to regulate sex and sexuality are for the benefit of the student and that submitting to them is ultimately in the student’s best interest.

Homosexual Lifestyle (Beyond Behavior)

Ward (2015) argues that heterosexuality is necessarily not about sexual behavior, but about commitment to a way of life or a culture. For Ward, heterosexuality may better be defined by “investment in heterosexuality” than partner selection. Some of the schools reinforce this argument in the way they describe their stance on homosexuality. The Honor Code for BYU, for example, states that “homosexual behavior includes not only sexual relations between members of the same sex, but all forms of physical intimacy that give expression to homosexual feelings”

(2019). While they do not attempt to extend their control to their student's thoughts and feelings, even asserting that "one's stated same-gender attraction is not an Honor Code issue", this rule is clearly aimed at constructing a discourse in which heterosexuality is not only the singular acceptable type of sexual behavior, but one in which the cultural environment on campus is restricted to reproducing heteronormativity.

Faulkner is more straightforward, saying:

> "any form of intimate or romantic public display of affection among homosexual couples, including, for example, kissing, holding hands, hugging for extended periods of time, and verbal cues or expressions given by either indicating the existence of a romantic relationship (as determined in the sole discretion of the Dean of Students or his/her designee). (2019).

University of Mobile (2019) explains that in accordance with their religious convictions, any "sex outside of a heterosexual marriage; promotion, advocacy or on-going practice of a gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender lifestyle; same-sex dating behaviors; or public advocacy of sex outside of marriage" is classified as sexual misconduct by the institution. For schools with this type of statement in their code of conduct, any hint of deviation from the institutionally established norms about sex and marriage is unacceptable and warrants discourse regulating it. As institutions they are invested in heterosexuality, monogamy, and marriage as normative on their campuses.

In summation, examining the codes of conduct demonstrates how the discourses on sexuality constructed by schools in this study regularly define transgression as anything other than the divinely, biologically, or traditionally established norm of heterosexual monogamy. That is, at an institutional level, the schools reproduce heteronormative and mononormative discourse around marriage and sex. While there are a few exceptions (i.e., where marriage is stipulated as the only appropriate context for sex, but the definition of marriage is not overtly heteronormative), these expectations further reinforce the consistency across certain Christian

(i.e., those regulating sex and sexuality) to narrowly construct a discourse limiting acceptable sex expression solely within a monogamous and heterosexual marriage.

Theme 4: Gender Expression and Sex

As part of how they construct discourse defining sexual transgression, a number of schools create regulations based on a belief that sex, sexuality, and gender are inherently connected, which informs their normative understandings of gender expression and gender identity. While from a sociological perspective sexuality, gender, gender identity, and gender expression are understood as not mutually dependent (Butler, 1999), schools who produce discourse aimed at regulating sex tend to not acknowledge, or possibly understand, their distinctiveness. Therefore, for schools regulating sex, when their codes of conduct do address gender identity and expression, its implications on sexuality and sex are consistently present.

Gender Identity and Sexual Behavior

As with all the themes, the regulation of gender identity and expression in schools' codes of conduct was very regularly intertwined with how they construct sex as meaningful, dictate the role of marriage, and impose a norm heterosexuality. For example, in their code of conduct, Colorado Christian University argues that "God created human beings to show forth God's image as male and female in relationship (Gen 1:26-28), and the biblical ideal is the expression of sexuality within a heterosexual, lifelong, monogamous union (Mk 10:4-12)" (2019). In saying this, they directly connect their belief that the sex binary (i.e., male and female) with sanctioned, and therefore transgressive, sexual behavior. Liberty implies something similar and extends their belief in the importance of gender identity to all personal relationships and perceptions of relationships, including sexual relationships. They state:

> Sexual relations outside of a biblically ordained marriage between a natural-born man and a natural-born woman are not permissible at Liberty University. In personal relationships, students are encouraged to know and abide by common-sense guidelines to avoid the appearance of impropriety (Liberty University, 2019).

According to Dallas Baptist University, they promote a “biblical sexual ethic that promotes consenting intimate sexual expression only within a marriage between one biological man and one biological woman” (2019). The language specifying “biological” man and woman connotes a binary view gender which is part of their sexual ethic, so to speak.

Bob Jones University is very explicit on how these beliefs translate into policy regulating certain expressions of gender identity that deviate from the norm established by the school. For Bob Jones University, “consistent with our commitment to God's design for gender identity, the public advocacy for or act of altering one's biological sex through medical transition or transgender expression is prohibited. Any same-sex dating, or advocacy for such is also prohibited” (2019). While these statements do have implications for how they define licit sexual acts, heteronormativity, and marriage, importantly, they also directly connect the institutional narratives of gender/sex (most schools do not conceptually distinguish between the two) to permissible sexuality and sexual behavior.

Misunderstanding Gender Identity

An important corollary is how schools construct gender and sex, and the extent of their understanding around gender identity. As mentioned previously, schools with policies regulating sex as well as gender identity habitually demonstrate a simplistic and even insulting (i.e., dehumanizing) conceptual comprehension of gender identity. The University of Mobile, for example, prohibits “advocacy or on-going practice of a gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender lifestyle” (2019). The portrayal as a lifestyle communicates the universities belief that these all boil down to a lifestyle and are not a concrete or legitimate aspect of identity. Very dismissively, Lee University flatly asserts “cross-dressing is not acceptable on the Lee University campus” (2019). It is safe to assume, based on the greater context of their code of conduct and regulations in similar schools, that they are not limiting this policy to drag, cosplay, or undercover spies traveling incognito. Rather, Lee University’s reductionist view of gender identities which do not conform to the male-female binary is aimed at regulating all types of

gender expression and the presence of gender identities they would understand as transgressive.

Interestingly, one school, Wheaton, acknowledges the distinction between sex, gender, and gender expression, asserting that:

> As an institution, we recognize there are persons whose experience of their gender (gender identity, gender expression, or gender behavior) is at variance with the physical reality of their biological birth sex. Some experience distress at this reality, while others do not or instead embrace this experience (2020).

While this is not the norm among Christian schools, Wheaton does present a more sociological understanding of gender identity. They ultimately go on, however, to affirm:

> God's original and ongoing intent and action was the creation of humanity manifest as two distinct sexes, male and female" which leads to the conclusion that "while respecting considerable variance in gender identity, expression, and behavior, we must nevertheless regard persistent or exaggerated manifestations of gender atypical behavior that are grounded in an enduring rejection of the divine gift of one's biological sex at birth as incongruent with Christian maturity and the proper embrace of the gift of one's biological sex (2020).

Biology and Genetics, Natural or Divine

Similar to their construction of the sex as meaningful, schools utilize a number of rationales to justify their stance on gender identity as not only correct but as important. Common rationales include biology/genetics (particularly at birth), divine design by God, and biblical principles. While the appeals to different rationales may be distinct, regularly schools combine and even conflate more than one rationale within a single argument, which makes their actual beliefs more difficult to discern. The included examples convey the breadth of rationales.

A few schools rely primarily on an appeal to "science". That is, they state their institutional policies around gender identity in biological or genetic terms. Palm Beach argues

that sex is “explicitly intended for the marital relationship between a biological male and biological female” (2019). Thus, they attach sex and biology make an argument with specific normative implications about gender identity. Similarly, Southeastern University restricts sex to between “one genetic male and one genetic female within the covenant of marriage” (2019). They insinuate that genetics are the basis for a normative understanding of gender as a binary, which, for them, also reinforces their views of marriage. Throughout their code of conduct, Colorado Christian University consistently appeals to the idea of biological sex as the basis for their policies restricting gender identity. At one point, however, they do specify what they mean: “biological sex (given to them by God at birth)” (Colorado Christian University, 2019). Even though their rationale uses the scientific sounding lingo “biological sex”, the foundation of their conceptualization is primarily spiritual.

The blending of science and spiritual rationales into an apparently unified justification was very common for the schools studied. Schools often draw on the idea of gender and biological sex as being designed by God and intended as a good thing for people. Olivet claims “sexual differentiation and gender identification are constituted by the act of creation” (2019). Faulkner University (2019) does some linguistic work to bridge these ideas together, stating:

> We believe God's intention is that human beings live their lives (in terms of both sexual orientation and gender identity) in accordance with the male or female biological sex characteristics they possessed at birth. (Gen 1-2). We believe that sexual orientation and/or gender identity in contradiction to one's biological sex may sometimes be affected inexplicably through a complicated process involving the brain, genetics and relationships.

Their argument posits a belief that the divine design of humans is manifested in the normalized biological sex binary, and that any variation in gender identity is a result of some type of “inexplicable” distortion. Faulkner University employs a combined spiritual and “scientific” argument to not only define what they institutional affirm as the norm for gender identity, but

also what they condemn as transgressive. An interesting variation of this argument can be seen on Covenant College's code of conduct, where they reason that:

> Although gender involves culturally and historically derived rules and roles, biological sex is not a cultural construct, nor a matter of self-identification, but a divine gift assigned by the Creator at conception. This physiological ordering of creation is to be honored and reflected in sexual intimacy (2019).

In order to preemptively counter a social construction conceptualization of gender identity, they acknowledge the possibility of social influences in shaping gender identity and expression, but ultimately rely on the combined authority of biology and divine intention to support their policy restricting diverse gender expression.

Even though the conflation of the scientific and spiritual was a common strategy, there were a number of schools who relied more exclusively on just religious rationales. In their code of conduct, Harding University states: "Harding University holds to the biblical principle that God instituted marriage as a relationship between one man and one woman and that gender identity is given by God and revealed in one's birth sex" (2019). They contend that gender identity is a divine revelation, which needs to be acknowledged and honored through heterosexual marriage. Geneva University goes further by arguing that:

> In our fallen world, a person might have uncertainty about the self-perceived relationship between their physical sex and their gender; we nevertheless maintain that people are born into the body of the sex ordained for them and given to them by God. A Christian's body belongs to God (2019).

As with sex and sexuality, gender identity is conceptualized as a gift from God and, as with sex, the gift of biological sex does not come without any conditions.

Terms and Conditions

Regardless of the rational employed, for some of the colleges and universities studied, the fact that biological sex is a binary ordained by God means that their construction of gender

expression and identity also follows a strict binary logic. Southeastern University exemplifies this obligation when they state:

> We believe that God's intention for human sexuality is between one genetic male and one genetic female within the covenant of marriage (Genesis 2:18, 21–24; Hebrews 13:4). In addition, Southeastern University supports the dignity of individual persons affirming their biological sex — understanding that any attempts to change one's God-given sexuality through elective sex-reassignment or transvestite, transgender or nonbinary "genderqueer" acts or conduct is at odds with our biblical standards, denominational affiliation and subsequently our code of conduct (2019).

This example not only demonstrates how entangled the themes presented in this study often appear in codes of conduct, but also clearly shows how the obligation supposedly stemming from the divine gift of "biological sex" is translated into institutional discourse regulating gender identities and expressions considered transgressive by the school. Schools reason that, since biological sex is a gift or even a mandate given by God, outward expressions of gender must conform to traditional understandings of masculinity and femininity.

While not all have specific language regarding transgender or gender non-conforming students, for most it is enough to construct definitions of appropriate gender expression that align with traditional hegemonic masculinity (Connel, 1987). This includes how student's look and dress as well as their behavior (e.g., Lee University's prohibition of "cross-dressing"). Olivet Nazarene University provides one of the most complete statements on gender, which implicitly specified gender appropriated behavior and summarized the shared theme on gender:

> We believe that gender is established at birth by one's body and genes and not through personal preference or choice. Identifying as the opposite gender from what was established by birth falls outside our theological understandings of creation and human sexuality. Thus, the University would not allow, for example, a female student by birth to present herself as a male, to use the men's restroom, locker rooms or living

accommodations, or to participate in male athletic programs or other gender-specific activities (2019).

Theme 5: Illicit Acts

In addition to many of the generalities used by schools to construct their definitions of sexual transgression, many also include specifics about which sexual acts or sexual scenarios are prohibited. Even though there is significant overlap between them, since the particularities for each school were so textually rich, I decided that including portions from several schools would be the most illuminating way to approach this. In fact, this variation between schools' language in this area is interesting in and of itself, since for each of the previous themes there was higher degree of parity in the language used. While this theme is not present for the majority of schools, that data from the schools for whom it is present provides worthwhile insights. This section begins by looking at simple versus complex definitions of sex or lists of prohibited behaviors. Then it examines how schools reinforce institutional control by protecting their right to define transgression in any instance according to their discretion. Finally, it looks at how the university reinforces their institutional stances towards behavior they view as sexually transgressive by associating them directly with behaviors that are widely even outside of Christianity seen as immoral and may be illegal.

Simple and Complex Definitions of Sex

Some schools do not, at least in their codes of conduct, go into a great amount of detail defining what "counts" as sex and what specific behaviors they regulate. For instance, Palm Beach University states that for them, "sexual activity includes, but is not limited to, genital area contact and other touching that could lead to sexual fulfillment" (2019). Similarly, Concordia University-Irvine specifies that "consensual sexual intimacy involving genital contact, outside of marriage is prohibited" (2019). Several schools are even more vague, limiting descriptions to language like "inappropriate sexual behavior" (Miles College, 2018), "sharing one's self sexually" (Concordia University-Wisconsin, 2019), or "sexual intercourse and other forms of

intensely interpersonal sexual activity" (Bethel University, 2019). Due to the lack of detail, it is impossible to say for certain why schools that consider sex to be spiritually meaningful would not clarify what behaviors they are concerned with regulating. Comparable to the ambiguity in other themes, there is a possibility that omission has a function for particular schools.

BYU asserts that "sexual misconduct; obscene or indecent conduct or expressions; disorderly or disruptive conduct; participation in gambling activities; involvement with pornographic, erotic, indecent, or offensive material; and any other conduct or action inconsistent with the principles of The Church of Jesus Christ of latter-day Saints and the Honor Code is not permitted" (2019). BYU is depending on a shared understanding of a larger underlying standard, that of the LSD in general, as the basis for how it defines transgression in its specific discourse of sexuality. This is most likely an especially effective approach for BYU, since, as established previously, as many as 98.7% of BYU's students are members LDS (Brigham Young University, 2014). This most clearly demonstrates a theme which may be operating behind the scenes for the other institutions as well: the sexual discourse dominating their college career is a continuation or extension of a religious sexual discourse constructed throughout their childhood by their places of worship, private religious schools, and/or religious households. Schools may not feel compelled to strictly define sex and explicitly name every prohibited behavior if they believe the students already share the institution's religious beliefs. Alternatively, it is possible that for these schools phrases like "sexuality activity" either 1) are seen as a simply a catchall which gives the institutions the freedom to enforce their rules when they see fit or 2) rely on a normalized hegemonic masculine understanding of sex as the "insertion of a penis into a vagina" and therefore assume no further clarification is required.

Some schools, on the other hand, provide detailed and widely encompassing policies on sexuality. Wheaton College (2020), for example, concludes:

> Therefore, all students, regardless of age, residency, or status, are expected to abstain from cohabitation with the opposite sex, premarital sexual intimacy (specifically, the

> stimulation of the breasts or genitals), any and all extramarital sexual behavior, any and all same-sex sexual behavior (including dating relationships), viewing pornography, and any and all sexual violence. Sexual behavior can include physical expressions of, written descriptions about, and/or visual images suggesting sexual intimacy.

Indiana Wesleyan University (2019) states that their institutional definition of sex "may include, but is not limited to, sexual intercourse, groping, and touching of sexually related body parts such as the breast, buttocks, or genital areas". Additionally, Colorado Christian University (2019) argues that inappropriate sexual behavior may include:

> Any consensual sexual behavior that occurs outside of the covenant of marriage. This includes sexual intercourse, cohabitation, public displays of affection, intimate contact, behavior that exhibits a same-sex romantic relationship, pornography, and actions (for example spending the night with someone of the opposite sex) that may lead to situations of temptation, regret, and immoral conduct.

Out of the entire sample of seventy-five schools Faulkner University (2019) has the most the comprehensive and detailed list in their code of conduct. Over several pages they list their precise definitions related to sex and sexuality, followed by a full account of prohibited or regulated sexual behaviors.

Most other schools do not provide a specific definition of what exactly counts as "sex" per se, whereas some, like (e.g., Wheaton including "the stimulation of the breasts or genitals") provide strictly composed definitions. The schools with looser definitions of sex often depend on phrases like "sexuality activity", which could either be seen as a simply a catchall which gives the institutions the freedom to enforce their rules when they see fit or it may rely on the hegemonic masculine understanding of sex as the insertion of a penis into a vagina. The schools with strict definitions demonstrate their commitment to being perfectly clear about what, for them, constitutes transgressive sex and sexuality.

Discretion of the Institution to Define "Transgressive"

Regardless of how detailed a definition their definitions of sex or how specific their lists of transgressive sexual behaviors are, many schools secure their right to continually define and redefine what acts they consider to be illicit. That is, to avoid being legalistically bound to the official publications, schools maintain their right to deem behavior as transgressive on a case by case basis. For example, even after explaining what sexual behaviors they regulate, Harding University includes the following clarification: “Discretion: Staying overnight in a motel, hotel, residence or any such arrangement with a member of the opposite sex will result in suspension, although explicit sexual immorality may not have been observed” (2019). They extend their discretion to qualify student behavior as sexually transgressive on appearance alone, irrespective of the evidence, or lack thereof. Similarly, Indiana Wesleyan University-National & Global stipulates that not just transgressive sexual behavior, or even “the appearance of, sexual activity in relationships outside of marriage is unacceptable and prohibited” (2019). For them, the intention or engagement in the behavior and the appearance either are judged equally and are, therefore, prohibited. After listing some specific prohibited behaviors, they go on to state regulated behavior:

> May also include instances when students are found together in compromising or questionable situations/positions with someone of the opposite sex or someone they are in a romantic/physical relationship with; such situations/positions could include instances when doors are closed, when lights are off, and/or students are not fully clothed (2019).

It appears that for schools like Indiana Wesleyan University, strict control over student sexually extends to any possible situation that could feasibly be conducive to sexual activity. Students’ intention to engage in or completion of sexually transgressive behaviors are only part of what the schools may deem within the realm of their authority over student sexuality.

Additionally, the Olivet Nazarene University student handbook only states that “the University prohibits sexual activity outside of heterosexual marriage, the use and/or distribution of pornography, and/ or the promotion of a sexual ethic contrary to the beliefs of the Church of

the Nazarene" (2019). Even though here they do not provide a detailed list of specific acts or behaviors, they do reinforce a narrative by defining transgressive as any "sexual ethic" outside of their belief system. This ambiguity may appear to construct a looser discourse, but the assumption of Olivet appears to be that reader will understand what this rule entails. It also affords them the flexibility to prohibit or permit any action on a case by case basis. By not limiting the scope of their code with too many specifics, they are able to construct a discourse (which includes sexuality) that can be as broad or narrow as the situation at hand calls for.

Conflation of Transgressive Sex with Other Immoral Behaviors

In explaining their beliefs about human sexuality, Bob Jones University argues that:

> The Bible specifically names as sinful and prohibits any form of sexual activity between persons of the same sex (Rom. 1:26–27; 1 Cor. 6:9–10; 1 Tim. 1:10), *polygamy* (Matt. 19:4–6; 1 Cor. 7:11), *incest* (Lev. 18:6–18; 1 Cor. 5:1), *bestiality* (Exod. 22:19; Lev. 18:23; 20:15–16; Deut. 27:21; Gal. 5:19; Eph. 5:3; Col. 3:5), adultery (Exod. 20:14; Mark 10:19; Luke 18:20; James 2:11) and fornication of any sort including pornography [emphasis added] (2019).

The inclusion of bestiality and incest alongside homosexuality and fornication as examples of sexual immorality infers they does not see any gradation in the seriousness of behaviors they deem as sexually transgressive. While it seems highly likely that the other schools studied would readily condemn incest and bestiality if asked, Bob Jones seemingly equates them with sexual behaviors that might be considered normal in other contexts (e.g., hookup culture). In the same vein, Southeastern University contends that "in Scripture, several sexual behaviors are expressly forbidden, which include but are not limited to fornication, adultery, incest, unnatural sexual intercourse and homosexual acts" (2019). Given the status of incest and bestiality in society (Rubin, 1984), it seems less likely that they included them because of actual concerns about students engaging in those behaviors and more likely that they are there to make a statement about how they view the other behaviors on the list.

Going one step further, University of Mobile states in their code of student conduct, that for them:

> Sexual misconduct includes, but is not limited to, the promotion, advocacy, practice, or acts of sexual abuse; sexual assault (see student care section of this handbook for more information); sexual harassment; incest; adultery; rape; fornication; the possession of pornographic material; sex outside of a heterosexual marriage; promotion, advocacy or on-going practice of a gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender lifestyle; same-sex dating behaviors; or public advocacy of sex outside of marriage (2019).

University of Mobile includes violent and illegal behaviors directly prior to sex outside of marriage, same-sex relationships, and transgender “lifestyle”. By directly associating these very different behaviors, they are equivocating their harm and immorality. That is, according to their reasoning, rape and same-sex dating relationships are wrong for essentially the same reasons and produce similar levels of harm. These schools reinforce how transgression is defined in their discourse on sexuality by including behaviors that are much more widely understood as transgressive or downright wrong throughout society in the same list as behaviors normalized in other contexts.

On the other hand, some schools refrain from equivocations with violent and illegal actions, instead associating what they consider as transgressive sexual behavior with other condemnable things. For example, Lee University includes the following statement in their code of conduct:

> Scripture condemns such attitudes as greed, jealousy, pride, lust, needless anger, an unforgiving spirit, harmful discrimination, and prejudice. Furthermore, certain behaviors are expressly prohibited by scripture. These include theft, lying, cheating, plagiarism, gossip, slander, profanity, vulgarity, adultery, same-sex sexual behavior, premarital or extramarital sex, sexual promiscuity, pornography, drunkenness, gluttony, immodesty, and occult practices (2019).

Similarly, in Bethel's Covenant for Life Together they posit that in service of living a Biblical lifestyle:

> The Bible also identifies character qualities and actions that should not be present in the lives of believers. For example: destructive anger, malice, rage, sexual immorality, impurity, adultery, evil desires, greed, idolatry, slander, profanity, lying, homosexual behavior, drunkenness, thievery, and dishonesty" (2019).

What makes these lists interesting is that they include emotions and attitudes that are thought to be underneath or causing the transgressive behaviors. These schools are asserting, therefore, that transgressive behavior stems from transgressive feelings or "character qualities".

Summary: Who decides?

Looking at which behaviors the schools in this study include or exclude when defining transgression, the manner and context in which those definitions are formulated, as well as considering the intended recipients are all useful in understanding how Christian schools construct their discourses on sexuality. While the specific sexual behaviors and the level of specificity with which they are addressed may vary to some degree, many schools clearly demonstrate the need to have control over the dominant understanding of what qualifies as sexual transgression, or rather, what the narrow definition of sexual normality is.

HEADING 5

CONCLUSION

In my analysis of the codes of conduct published by seventy-five Christian colleges and universities I identify how they specifically construct a definition of transgression regarding sex and sexuality, what I call sin and purity discourse. My content analysis of the texts for all included schools revealed five themes in the ways that particular institutions construct a definition of sexual transgression that contrasts starkly with hookup culture: (1) defining meaningless sex as transgressive sex, (2) restricting permissible contexts for sexual activity to monogamous marriage, (3) limiting acceptable sexual preference to heterosexual, (4) confining the possible suitable forms of gender expression to cisgender by establishing an inherent connection between sexuality and gender identity, and (5) tightly defining what or when sex is licit or illicit (i.e., what sexual acts are permitted in specific contexts or what "counts" as sex).

Specifically, in the first section I showed that these institutions very explicitly define good, acceptable, and normal sex as sex that is meaningful, therefore sex that is selfish or meaningless is transgressive. The second section revealed how the context of acceptable or good sex (i.e., that fully acknowledges the meaningfulness of sex) is strictly limited to within the confines of marriage, which is understood to be monogamous and a life-long commitment. In next section I demonstrated how the educational institutions I studied carefully constructed heteronormative discourses on sexuality by carefully defining marriage as a spiritual institution only between a man and a woman. In the following section I argued that, following the essential construction of gender, the schools I studied had strict limits on what they considered proper or improper outward gender expression that are based on a restricted understanding of masculinity and femininity. In the final section, which looked at how transgression is defined, I argued that what the schools deem illicit behavior even among straight and gender norm conforming students limits them to specific sexual acts in certain social contexts.

While hookup culture currently provides the dominant script for sex and sexuality for the

majority of college students in the U.S., the campuses of Christian schools may be the exception to this rule. A content analysis seventy-five Christian higher education institutions revealed that these schools' administrations are deeply invested in establishing discourses around sexuality which define sexual transgression as anything other than meaningful, heteronormative, and mononormative sex within the confines of a life-long marriage. Additionally, they construct transgressive behaviors or expressions that do not align with hegemonic masculine, or gender expressions that do not conform to biological sex assigned at birth. They all also protect their authority to define any particular behavior as transgressive if they see fit.

I argue that students attending these schools are, therefore, constructing their sexualities in a liminal space, pulled between the larger, more distant narrative of hookup culture and the restrictive, more immediate plausibility structure on campus and the associated sexual script I call "sin and purity discourse". Christian colleges and universities may, in fact, exist on a spectrum, with the more liberal schools, according to Lehman and Sherkat's (2018) religious identification typology, being indistinguishable from secular and Catholic institutions, but with the more conservative drawing a very sharp contrast to hookup culture. Even so, I posit that the schools who *do* exemplify the sin and purity themes are creating discourses intended to produce campus cultures that are distinct from and even oppose hookup culture. I further argue that while the discursive features of hookup culture and Christian college campus culture organized by sin and purity discourses are on the surface very different, that they reproduce many of the same normative structures.

This is especially important because if students do fully internalize the school's sin and purity discourse on sexuality, there is a real possibility that this internalization will remain after their educational experience at that school is over. When they go out into the world, their understanding of sexuality may continue to be informed by the school's discourse. Despite the fact that presumably many of these students self-selected into these schools because they

reflected the student's existing beliefs about sex, the campus environment and school regulations constituted a plausibility structure which reproduced and maintained a particular sexual script through their college experiences. As adults these students may choose to reproduce this understanding of sexuality in their future romantic relationship, at the places of employment, and in their families. The discourses on sexuality constructed on these Christian college campuses, while they may not be reproduced by every single student once they have graduated, there is a good chance than many do to some degree. Social scripting theory supports the idea that the meanings assigned to certain actions and scenarios often produce certain behaviors, which may be integrated into their ongoing sexual identity. It is imperative that the unique discourses of sexuality constructed on Christian campuses be researched more extensively and thoroughly.

While this study does begin to contribute to a more complete picture of the unique experiences of students developing their sexual identities on Christian campuses, there are several limitations that should be considered. First of all, this study limited its scope to only analyzing the codes of student conduct as the basis for its understanding of the intentions of the administrations. While I am confident in the results presented, a more full and well-rounded representation of the administration's perspective and intentions could incorporate interviews or direct statements from administrators. By far the more glaring weakness of this study is that it in no way accounts for the actual behaviors, beliefs, or feelings of the students who are attending the concerned schools. As such, this study is not able to make any claims about what the actual products of the studied discourses are. There is almost certainly a fair amount of discrepancy between the lived experience of the students and the precise mandates outline by the schools. College students have, after all, been known to break rules. The most important direction that future research could (and should, I argue) take, therefore, would be to directly study the students on the campuses of Christian schools. Having insight into how they make sense of their own sexual lives and what behaviors that produces, given their liminal location between

hookup culture and sin and purity discourse, would be incredibly valuable and certainly novel. Even though such students do numerically represent a minority, their beliefs and the resulting behaviors nevertheless contribute to sexuality in society at large and should be more fully understood.

Based on the results of this study, it is apparent that the increased sexual agency enjoyed by the participants in hookup culture is discouraged and regulated by the administrations of Christian schools. Despite the difference in logistically *how* sexuality is constructed, there are some striking similarities between hookup culture and sin and purity discourses. Both actually successfully reproduce hegemonic masculinity, heteronormativity, and mononormativity. More generally, both reproduce the charmed circle of sexuality as described by Rubin (1984), in which sexual behaviors and expressions that more closely align to the dominant ideal of normal sex (i.e., heterosexual, cisgender, pro-marriage) are more highly valued and privileged. Perhaps it is more appropriate to say, rather, that the charmed circle of sexuality may be a resilient and deeply rooted phenomena that manages to successfully reproduce itself in discourses that in many ways are polar opposites.

Future research should additionally focus on sexual resource availability in these campuses (e.g., psychological or medical services that are not connected to the school's enforcement policies) and on the sexual lives of students after they have graduated (i.e., have their views on sexuality changed?). Currently the topics investigated for this paper are severely understudied and the results produce here have only exposed more unanswered questions. I argue that research being done on hookup culture should expand to encompass this important and, as of yet, not well understood arena of college age sex and sexuality. Without such research, a significant proportion of college age students will continue to remain outside of the scope of current understanding, even if they, like the 2019 commencement speaker at BYU, increasingly assert themselves as sexual beings and "children of God" who deserve recognition (D. Eaton, 2019; Levin, 2019).

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