

Dating App Use and Mental Health. A Collaborative Review

IN DEVELOPMENT

An ongoing open-source literature review posted and curated by [Jonathan Haidt](#) and [Zach Rausch](#) (NYU-Stern).

This Google doc is a part of a larger series of documents exploring the mental health and wellbeing of adolescents in the U.S., and how are these changes related, if at all, to the mass migration of social life onto digital platforms since the early 2000's?

Because of the ubiquity and power of confirmation biases and motivated reasoning, we particularly welcome input from critics who can find evidence that dating apps are NOT harmful to adolescent mental health. Please add your comments to the text, or by highlighting text and then clicking the “add comment” button that appears in the right-hand margin. Add your name if you want us to credit you as a source. Links to empirical research or high quality journalism would be most appreciated. Feel free to add general comments as well.

We thank those researchers who put in the time to read this document and raise additional points and **counterpoints**, including...

Notes:

- The review contains comments added by other researchers: ...
- See our companion reviews:
 - [What is happening to boys? A collaborative review](#)
 - [Is there an increase in adolescent mood disorders, self-harm, and suicide since 2010 in the USA and UK? A review](#)
 - [Porn Use and Adolescent Health: A Collaborative Review](#)
 - [Dating App Use and Mental Health: A Collaborative Review](#)
 - [Video Game Use and Adolescent Health: A Collaborative Review](#)
 - [Digital Gambling and Adolescent Health: A Collaborative Review](#)
- See also [additional Google docs](#) laying out evidence for trends in mental health and social media use in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and other countries.
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QUESTION 1: WHAT TEENS AND YOUNG ADULTS ARE USING DATING APPS (AND HOW MUCH)?

1.1 [Iqbal \(2022\)](#). Tinder Revenue and Usage Stats. *Business of Apps*.

Tinder gender demographics

Tinder has a gender imbalance, with 75% of users identifying as male. In some countries, such as India, the male to female disparity is even larger, while in Europe it is closer to 50/50.

Tinder gender demographics 2021 (%)

Age	Percentage of users
Female	24
Male	75

Tinder age demographics

Tinder is primarily used by people aged under 25 years old, although it has become more popular with older age groups in the past few years.

Tinder age demographics 2021 (%)

Age	Percentage of users
18-24	35
25-34	25
35-44	20
45-54	8
55+	10

Tinder user penetration

Tinder has the highest user penetration out of the four apps listed here in the 18-24 and 25-34 age bracket, but is slightly behind Match.com and eHarmony on users over the age of 35.

Tinder user penetration vs other dating apps (%)

App	Overall	18-24	25-34	35+
Tinder	17	52	31	6
Bumble	15	34	28	6
Match.com	15	19	16	14
eHarmony	10	12	12	9

1.2 [Vogels \(2020\)](#). 10 facts about Americans and online dating. *Pew Research Center*.

RELEVANT FINDINGS:

- Three-in-ten U.S. adults say they have ever used a dating site or app, but this varies significantly by age and sexual orientation (See figure 1 below). While

48% of 18- to 29-year-olds say they have ever used a dating site or app, the share is 38% among those ages 30 to 49 and even lower for those 50 and older (16%). At the same time, personal experiences with online dating greatly differ by sexual orientation. **Lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB) adults are roughly twice as likely as those who are straight to say they ever used a dating platform (55% vs. 28%).**

- A small share of Americans say they have been in a committed relationship with or married someone they met through a dating site or app. **About one-in-ten U.S. adults say this (12%), though these shares are higher among LGB adults, as well as those ages 18 to 49.**

1.3 [Anzani, Di Sarno, & Prunas \(2018\)](#). Using smartphone apps to find sexual partners: A review of the literature. *Sexologies*.

ABSTRACT: In recent years, online dating has become increasingly popular and widespread worldwide, changing the way people approach potential new sexual or romantic partners. The current paper aims to offer an overview of recent research on mobile dating apps as a way to find sexual partners, focusing in particular on geosocial-networking mobile applications. The sociodemographic profile of app users as it emerges from studies will be outlined, as well as app-use patterns, the variables involved in creating a profile for dating apps, and the outcomes of app use in terms of sexual encounters. **The average app user profile is that of a white man having sex with men (MSM), between 25 and 35 years of age, with high education and income, who has a large number of sexual encounters and often engages in risky behavior (e.g., unprotected anal intercourse, drug or alcohol use during sex).** Studies in the field suffer from several limitations, including a lack of research data on the psychological characteristics of app users, as well as the paucity of studies on the positive sexual and relational outcomes of app use; finally, few studies explored app use in the LGBTQIA population as a whole, in addition to heterosexuals.

1.4 [Badoo—How Long are British Millennials Spending on Dating Apps? \(2018\)](#). Badoo.

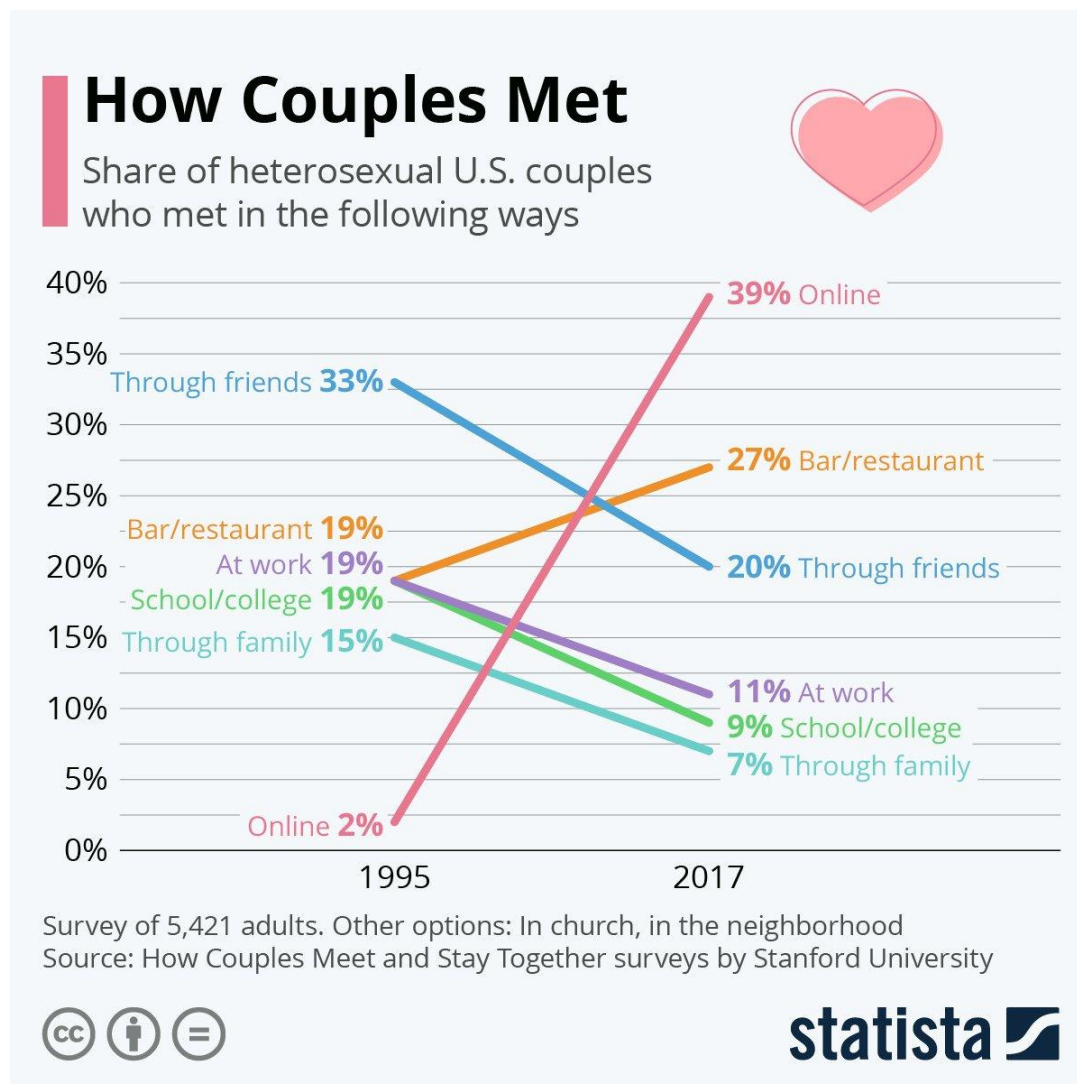
EXCERPT: [Badoo decided to survey 2000 of their 370 million users between the ages of 18-30.] To break it down men and women are spending just under 90 minutes a day looking for love, with women logging on a staggering 10 times a day and men falling behind slightly at 9 times each day,

Stats are as follows:

Women spend 79 minutes a day on the app, 7.6 minutes each session
Men spend 85 minutes a day on the app, 9.7 minutes each session
Women logging onto the app 10 times a day and Men logging on 9 times a day

On average Badoo users spend 10 hours a week on the app

1.5 [Buchholz \(2020\)](#). How Couples Met. *Statista*.



[Other studies? What have we missed?]

QUESTION 2: IS THERE AN ASSOCIATION BETWEEN DATING APP USE AND MENTAL HEALTH OUTCOMES?

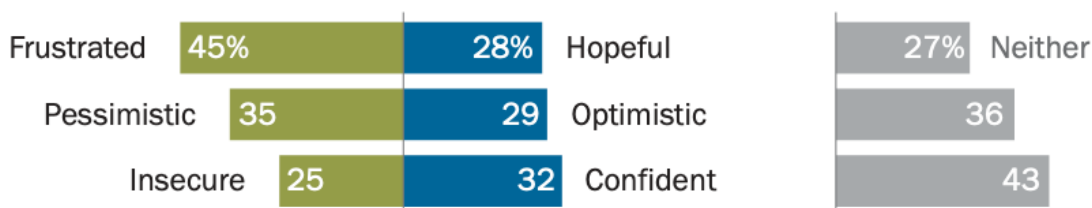
2.1 STUDIES INDICATING A NEGATIVE ASSOCIATION

2.1.1 [45% of current or recent users of dating sites or apps say using these platforms made them feel frustrated \(2020\).](#) *Pew Research Center.*

FIGURE:

45% of current or recent users of dating sites or apps say using these platforms made them feel frustrated

Among those who have used a dating site or app in the past year, % who say it made them feel more ...



Note: Online dating users refers to respondents who say they have ever used an online dating site or app. Those who did not give an answer are not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Oct. 16-28, 2019.

"The Virtues and Downsides of Online Dating"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

2.1.2 [Tinder: Swiping self esteem? \(2016\).](#) *American Psychological Association.*

EXCERPT: In the study, 1,044 women and 273 men (mostly undergraduate students) were asked to complete questionnaires that asked about their use of Tinder as well as about their body image, sociocultural factors, perceived objectification and psychological well-being.

“Tinder users reported having lower levels of satisfaction with their faces and bodies and having lower levels of self-worth than the men and women who did not use Tinder,” said Jessica Strübel, PhD, of the University of North Texas, who presented the research that she co-authored with Trent Petrie, PhD, also of the University of North Texas.

Approximately 10 percent reported using Tinder. Both male and female users reported less satisfaction with their bodies and looks, compared to non-users, said Strübel, but only male Tinder users reported lower levels of self-esteem.

“We found that being actively involved with Tinder, regardless of the user’s gender, was associated with body dissatisfaction, body shame, body monitoring, internalization of societal expectations of beauty, comparing oneself physically to others, and reliance on media for information on appearance and attractiveness,” said Strübel.

...It is important to note that while users tended to have lower self-esteem, this doesn’t necessarily mean that the app is causing it, warned Strübel and Petrie. It could be just as likely that people with lower self-esteem are drawn more to these types of apps.

2.1.3 [Lenton-Brym, Santiago, Fredborg, & Antony \(2021\)](#). Associations between social anxiety, depression, and use of mobile dating applications. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking*.

ABSTRACT: This study explores associations between symptoms of social anxiety (SA) and depression with participants' extent of dating app use, self-reported motivations for dating app use, and likelihood of initiating interaction with dating app matches.

Three-hundred seventy-four participants completed an online battery of surveys that examined psychopathology and dating app use. **SA and depression symptoms were positively associated with participants' extent of dating app use, and symptoms of psychopathology and gender interacted to predict various dating app use motivations. Symptoms of SA and depression predicted lower likelihood of initiating contact with a dating app match among men but not women.** This study provides an initial step toward understanding the relationship between SA, depression, and use of dating apps.

- 2.1.4 [Coduto, Lee-Won, & Baek \(2020\)](#). Swiping for trouble: Problematic dating application use among psychosocially distraught individuals and the paths to negative outcomes. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*.

ABSTRACT: More and more individuals hunt for information on and reach out to potential romantic partners through mobile dating applications available on their smartphones. Although these emerging technologies offer social benefits, certain individuals become overly dependent on such applications and suffer from negative outcomes. Relatively little research in online dating to date has investigated what predicts problematic use of such social technologies. Building upon the cognitive-behavioral model of problematic Internet use and the social skill model, we examined the relationship between social anxiety, the problematic use of dating applications, and the possible moderating role of loneliness with an online survey (N = 269) conducted with a college student sample. The data did not provide support for serial mediation predicted by the social skills model (social anxiety influencing negative outcomes serially through preference for online social interaction (POSI) and compulsive use) but provided support for moderated serial mediation. **Specifically, the serial mediation predicted by the social skills model was significant only among those high in loneliness, with the positive association between POSI and compulsive use being significant among those high in loneliness.** Theoretical and practical implications of these findings are discussed.

- 2.1.5 [Tran, Suharlim, Mattie, Davison, Agénor, & Austin \(2019\)](#). Dating app use and unhealthy weight control behaviors among a sample of U.S. adults: A cross-sectional study. *Journal of Eating Disorders*.

ABSTRACT: BACKGROUND: Online dating has become increasingly popular over the years. Few research studies have examined the association between dating apps and disordered eating. In this study, we evaluated the association between dating app use and unhealthy weight control behaviors (UWCBs) among a sample of U.S. adults.

METHODS: Our sample includes 1769 adults who completed an online survey assessing dating app use and UWCBs in the past year. Survey assessed participants' self-reported frequency of using dating apps within the past 30 days and engagement in six UWCBs with the purpose of lowering weight or changing their body shape within the past 12 months. UWCBs included vomiting, laxative use, fasting, diet pill use, muscle building supplement use, and use of anabolic steroids.

RESULTS: Results of multivariate logistic regression models suggest dating app users had substantially elevated odds of UWCBs compared with non-users (odds ratios [OR] range = 2.7—16.2). These findings were supported by results of additional gender-stratified multivariate logistic regression analyses among women and men.

CONCLUSIONS: This study's findings contribute to the limited literature exploring the association between dating app use and adverse health outcomes, particularly UWCBs. While additional longitudinal and representative research is needed, public health professionals ought to explore dating app use as a potential risk factor for UWCBs.

2.1.6 [Strubel, & Petrie \(2017\)](#). Love me Tinder: Body image and psychosocial functioning among men and women. *Body Image*.

ABSTRACT: Based on objectification theory, we examined the main effects of Tinder use, and its interaction with gender, in relation to men's and women's body image concerns, internalization processes, and self-esteem. Tinder users (men = 31; women = 69) and non-users (men = 203; women = 844) anonymously completed measures via an online survey. Through a series of ANCOVAs, with BMI and age as covariates, **Tinder users, regardless of gender, reported significantly lower levels of satisfaction with face and body and higher levels of internalization, appearance comparisons, and body shame and surveillance than non-users. For self-esteem, male Tinder users scored significantly lower than either male or female non-users.** Our results suggest that Tinder represents a contemporary medium for appearance pressures and its use is associated with a variety of negative perceptions about body and self and with increases in individuals' likelihood to internalize appearance ideals and make comparisons to others.

2.1.7 [Timmermans, Hermans, & Oprea \(2021\)](#). Gone with the wind: Exploring mobile daters' ghosting experiences. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*.

ABSTRACT: This study explores 328 mobile daters' (63% females; 86% heterosexuals) experiences with ghosting, using both open- and close-ended questions. First, we used thematic analysis to explore mobile dating app users' motivations to ghost, the reported consequences of experiencing ghosting and reported strategies to cope with having been ghosted. Next, quantitative analyses were carried out to predict the likelihood of ghosting other users and which factors contribute to experiencing ghosting as more painful. **As both our qualitative and quantitative analyses suggest, experiencing ghosting on a dating app can be quite painful and has an impact on users' self-esteem and mental well-being. However, our findings on ghosters' motives**

also stress a nuanced perspective on ghosting behavior, given that it is not necessarily done with harmful or conscious intent. As such, our findings also hold practical implications given that insights into mechanisms to cope with ghosting can help dating app users to rationalize their ghosting experience and thus limit its impact.

[Other studies? What have we missed?]

2.2 STUDIES INDICATING A POSITIVE ASSOCIATION

[None found so far]

[Other studies? What have we missed?]

2.3 STUDIES INDICATING MIXED EVIDENCE

2.3.1 [Holtzhausen, Fitzgerald, Thakur, Ashley, Rolfe, & Pit \(2020\)](#). Swipe-based dating applications use and its association with mental health outcomes: A cross-sectional study. *BMC Psychology*.

ABSTRACT: BACKGROUND: Swipe-Based Dating Applications (SBDAs) function similarly to other social media and online dating platforms but have the unique feature of “swiping” the screen to either like or dislike another user’s profile. There is a lack of research into the relationship between SBDAs and mental health outcomes.

The aim of this study was to study whether adult SBDA users report higher levels of psychological distress, anxiety, depression, and lower self-esteem, compared to people who do not use SBDAs.

METHODS: A cross-sectional online survey was completed by 437 participants. Mental health (MH) outcomes included the Kessler Psychological Distress Scale, Generalised Anxiety Disorder-2 scale, Patient Health Questionnaire-2, and Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale. Logistic regressions were used to estimate odds ratios of having a MH condition. A repeated measures analysis of variance was used with an apriori model which considered all four mental health scores together in a single analysis. The apriori model included user status, age and gender.

RESULTS: Thirty percent were current SBDA users. The majority of users and past users had met people face-to-face, with 26.1%(60/230) having met > 5 people, and only 22.6%(52/230) having never arranged a meeting. Almost 40%(39.1%; 90/230) had previously entered into a serious relationship with someone they had met on a SBDA.

More participants reported a positive impact on self-esteem as a result of SBDA use (40.4%; 93/230), than a negative impact (28.7%;66/230).

Being a SBDA user was significantly associated with having psychological distress (OR = 2.51,95%CI (1.32–4.77)), p = 0.001, and depression (OR = 1.91,95%CI (1.04–3.52), p = 0.037) in the multivariable logistic regression models, adjusting for age, gender and sexual orientation. When the four MH scores were analysed together there was a significant difference (p = 0.037) between being a user or non-user, with SDBA users having significantly higher mean scores for distress (p = 0.001), anxiety (p = 0.015) and depression (p = 0.005). Increased frequency of use and longer duration of use were both associated with greater psychological distress and depression (p < 0.05).

CONCLUSION: SBDA use is common and users report higher levels of depression, anxiety and distress compared to those who do not use the applications. Further studies are needed to determine causality and investigate specific patterns of SBDA use that are detrimental to mental health.

2.3.2 [Buyukeren, Makarin, & Xiong \(2022\)](#). *The Impact of Dating Apps on Young Adults: Evidence From Tinder.*

ABSTRACT: Online dating applications have revolutionized the dating market in the past decade, but their exact effects remain unclear. We analyze the impact of the early diffusion of a viral dating app - Tinder - on college student dating behavior, relationships, and health. For identification, we rely on the ample qualitative evidence that Tinder's early promotion strategy focused primarily on Greek organizations on college campuses. Consistent with this evidence, we find that Tinder was more likely to be mentioned in college newspapers of universities with fraternities and sororities. Using a comprehensive survey with more than 1.3 million college student responses around the year of Tinder's rollout, we estimate a difference-in-differences equation comparing student outcomes before and after Tinder's rollout and across individuals and universities with varying Greek organization membership. **We find that the rollout of Tinder led to a sharp and lasting increase in reported dating and sexual activity. At the same time, it led to an increase in reported unplanned pregnancies, STDs, and sexual assault. We observe no change in the number of reported relationship problems and, if anything, fraternity and sorority members experienced a relative decline in reported mental health issues. In terms of the distributional consequences, we find that the increase in sexual activity was mainly concentrated in Greek students and students who experienced a high baseline level of sexual activity.**

[Other studies? What have we missed?]

* * * * *

QUESTION 3: DOES DATING APP USE AT TIME 1 PREDICT ANYTHING ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH OUTCOMES AT TIME 2?

3.1 STUDIES INDICATING A NEGATIVE EFFECT AT T2

[none found yet]

3.1.1 [Other studies? What have we missed?]

3.2 STUDIES INDICATING A POSITIVE EFFECT AT T2

[none found yet]

[Other studies? What have we missed?]

3.3 STUDIES INDICATING MIXED EVIDENCE

[none found yet]

3.2.1

[Other studies? What have we missed?]

3.4 UNCLASSIFIED

3.4.1

[Other studies? What have we missed?]

* * * * *

QUESTION 4: WHAT DO TEENS AND YOUNG ADULTS SAY ABOUT DATING APPS?

4.1: STUDIES SHOWING THAT YOUNG ADULTS BLAME DATING APPS FOR WORSENING MENTAL HEALTH / ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS

4.1.1

[Other studies? What have we missed?]

4.2: STUDIES SHOWING THAT YOUNG ADULTS CREDIT DATING APPS WITH IMPROVING MENTAL HEALTH / ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS

[Other studies? What have we missed?]

4.3: STUDIES SHOWING MIXED EVIDENCE

4.3.1

[Other studies? What have we missed?]

* * * * *

QUESTION 5: HOW DO DATING APPS EFFECT ROMANTIC AND SEXUAL BELIEFS/ATTITUDES/BEHAVIORS?

5.1 STUDIES INDICATING AN EFFECT

5.1.1 [D'Angelo, & Toma \(2017\)](#). There Are Plenty of Fish in the Sea: The Effects of Choice Overload and Reversibility on Online Daters' Satisfaction With Selected Partners. *Media Psychology*.

ABSTRACT: Online dating is often lauded for improving the dating experience by giving singles large pools of potential partners from whom to choose. This experiment investigates how the number of choices online daters are given, and whether these choices are reversible, affects romantic outcomes. **Drawing on the choice overload and decision reversibility theoretical frameworks, we show that, a week after making their selection, online daters who chose from a large set of potential partners (i.e., 24) were less satisfied with their choice than those who selected from a small set (i.e., 6), and were more likely to change their selection.** While choice reversibility did not affect daters' satisfaction, **those who selected from a large pool and had the ability to reverse their choice were the least satisfied with their selected partner after one week.** The results advance understanding of how media features related to choice affect interpersonal evaluations.

7.1.2 [Wu, & Chiou \(2009\)](#). More Options Lead to More Searching and Worse Choices in Finding Partners for Romantic Relationships Online: An Experimental Study. *CyberPsychology & Behavior*.

ABSTRACT: It is not surprising that the Internet has become a means by which people expand their social networks and form close relationships. Almost every online-dating Web site provides members with search tools. However, do users truly benefit from more complete searches of a large pool of possibilities? The present study, based on the cognitive perspective, examined whether more search options triggered excessive

searching, leading to worse choices and poorer selectivity. We argue that more search options lead to less selective processing by reducing users' cognitive resources, distracting them with irrelevant information, and reducing their ability to screen out inferior options. A total of 128 Taiwanese late adolescents and adults with experience in online romantic relationships participated in an experimental study. After entering the characteristics they found desirable in a partner in such a relationship, participants were randomly assigned to receive one of three levels of available profiles. The dependent measures consisted of the number of profiles searched, the average preference difference for all profiles viewed, the preference difference for the chosen profile, and the degree of selectivity. These measures were used to determine whether more attention was devoted to better alternatives and less attention to worse alternatives. The data supported the predictions. Implications and directions for further research are discussed.

5.1.3 [Buyukeren, Makarin, & Xiong \(2022\)](#). The Impact of Dating Apps on Young Adults: Evidence From Tinder (SSRN Scholarly Paper No. 4240140).

ABSTRACT: Online dating applications have revolutionized the dating market in the past decade, but their exact effects remain unclear. We analyze the impact of the early diffusion of a viral dating app - Tinder - on college student dating behavior, relationships, and health. For identification, we rely on the ample qualitative evidence that Tinder's early promotion strategy focused primarily on Greek organizations on college campuses. **Consistent with this evidence, we find that Tinder was more likely to be mentioned in college newspapers of universities with fraternities and sororities.** Using a comprehensive survey with more than 1.3 million college student responses around the year of Tinder's rollout, we estimate a difference-in-differences equation comparing student outcomes before and after Tinder's rollout and across individuals and universities with varying Greek organization membership. **We find that the rollout of Tinder led to a sharp and lasting increase in reported dating and sexual activity. At the same time, it led to an increase in reported unplanned pregnancies, STDs, and sexual assault. We observe no change in the number of reported relationship problems and, if anything, fraternity and sorority members experienced a relative decline in reported mental health issues.** In terms of the distributional consequences, we find that the increase in **sexual activity was mainly concentrated in Greek students and students who experienced a high baseline level of sexual activity.**

NOTE: [Relevant Twitter thread on this study](#)

5.2 STUDIES INDICATING LITTLE OR NO EFFECT

5.2.1 [Hobbs, Owen, & Gerber \(2017\)](#). Liquid love? Dating apps, sex, relationships and the digital transformation of intimacy. *Journal of Sociology*.

ABSTRACT: In Liquid Love Zygmunt Bauman argued that the solidity and security once provided by life-long partnerships has been 'liquefied' by rampant individualisation and technological change. He believes internet dating is symptomatic of social and technological change that transforms modern courtship into a type of commodified game. This article explores the experiences of users of digital dating and hook-up applications (or 'apps') in order to assess the extent to which a digital transformation of intimacy might be under way. It examines the different affordances provided by dating apps, and whether users feel the technology has influenced their sexual practices and views on long-term relationships, monogamy and other romantic ideals. This study shows that dating apps are intermediaries through which individuals engage in strategic performances in pursuit of love, sex and intimacy. **Ultimately, this article contends that some accounts of dating apps and modern romantic practices are too pessimistic, and downplay the positives of 'networked intimacy'.**

EXCERPT: The exploratory findings offered by this study suggest that users of dating apps view them as welcome intermediaries in the search for companionship, love, sex and intimacy. Unlike the argument advanced by Bauman, **dating apps and internet dating more broadly are not 'liquefying' ideals like romantic love, monogamy or a commitment to longerterm relationship.** Indeed, the data **suggest that a majority of individuals continue to value and seek these social phenomena, and are merely using the technology as a means to pursue meaningful partnerships.** This study's participants felt they have more romantic and relationship possibilities than previous generations, and that the technologies give them greater agency with regard to pursuing and meeting potential lovers and companions. The concept of 'networked individualism' (Rainie and Wellman, 2012) is readily applicable to studies of app-enabled dating/hook-up practices as individuals become responsible for, and exercise control over, their life-chances within a broadened social network environment. For those living in urban areas, their smartphones are allowing them access to an extensive network of romantic possibilities. Only with time will we see whether this seductive network of romantic possibility has a gradual cultural influence on people's desire to commit to long-term monogamous relationships – an area for future longitudinal research.

5.1.2 [Castro, & Barrada \(2020\)](#). Dating Apps and Their Sociodemographic and Psychosocial Correlates: A Systematic Review. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*.

ABSTRACT: The emergence and popularization of dating apps have changed the way people meet and interact with potential romantic and sexual partners. In parallel with the increased use of these applications, a remarkable scientific literature has developed. However, due to the recency of the phenomenon, some gaps in the existing research can be expected. Therefore, the objective of this study was to conduct a systematic review of the empirical research of the psychosocial content published in the last five years (2016–2020) on dating apps. A search was conducted in different databases, and we identified 502 articles in our initial search. After screening titles and abstracts and examining articles in detail, 70 studies were included in the review. The most relevant data (author/s and year, sample size and characteristics, methodology) and their findings were extracted from each study and grouped into four blocks: user dating apps characteristics, usage characteristics, motives for use, and benefits and risks of use. The limitations of the literature consulted are discussed, as well as the practical implications of the results obtained, highlighting the relevance of dating apps, which have become a tool widely used by millions of people around the world.

EXCERPT:

There is a stereotype that dating apps are used only, or above all, to look for casual sex [44]. In fact, these applications have been accused of generating a hookup culture, associated with superficiality and sexual frivolity [2]. However, this is not the case. In the last five years, a large body of literature has been generated on the reasons why people use dating apps, especially Tinder, and the conclusion is unanimous: apps serve multiple purposes, among which casual sex is only one [1,4,44]. It has been found that up to 70% of the app users participating in a study [18] indicated that their goal when using it was not sex-seeking.

An evolution of research interest can be traced regarding the reasons that guide people to use dating apps [55]. The first classification of reasons for using Tinder was published by Ranzini and Lutz [59], who adapted a previous scale, designed for Grindr, composed of six motives: hooking up/sex (finding sexual partners), friendship (building a social network), relationship (finding a romantic partner), traveling (having dates in different places), self-validation (self-improvement), and entertainment (satisfying social curiosity). They found that the reason given by most users was those of entertainment, followed by those of self-validation and traveling, with the search for sex occupying fourth place in importance. However, the adaptation of this scale did not have adequate psychometric properties and it has not been reused.

Subsequently, Sumter et al. [68] generated a new classification of reasons to use Tinder, later refined by Sumter and Vandenbosch [3]. They proposed six reasons for use, both relational (love, casual sex), intrapersonal (ease of communication, self-worth validation), and entertainment (the thrill of excitement, trendiness). The motivation most indicated by the participants was that of love, and the authors concluded that Tinder is used: (1) to find love and/or sex; (2) because it is easy to communicate; (3) to feel better about oneself; and (4) because it's fun and exciting.

[Other studies? What have we missed?]

* * * * *

QUESTION 6: HOW DO DATING APPS IMPACT EXISTING ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS?

Includes people in both short-term and long-term relationships. Includes those who started relationships through apps and those who did not.

6.1 STUDIES INDICATING A NEGATIVE EFFECT

Does the presence of dating apps lead to more cheating? Do dating app relationships last?

6.1.1

[Other studies? What have we missed?]

6.2 STUDIES INDICATING A POSITIVE EFFECT

Are dating apps successful?

[Other studies? What have we missed?]

6.3 STUDIES INDICATING MIXED EFFECT

- 6.3.1** [Alexopoulos, Timmermans, & McNallie \(2020\)](#). Swiping more, committing less: Unraveling the links among dating app use, dating app success, and intention to commit infidelity. *Computers in Human Behavior*.

ABSTRACT: The present study was conducted to explore the cognitive processes linking people's perceptions of their mobile dating app experience and their intention to commit infidelity. Three hundred and ninety-five participants were recruited through a U.S. based university (44.6%) and MTurk (55.4%). **Our results indicate that people's perceived success on a dating app was positively associated with their intention to commit infidelity through self-perceived desirability, and negatively associated with their intention to commit infidelity through perceived amount of available partners.** These findings are discussed in light of theories of relational investment.

6.3.2 [Vogels & Anderson \(2020\)](#). Dating and relationships in the digital age. *Pew Research Center*.

ABSTRACT: Among partnered adults in the U.S. – that is, those who are married, cohabiting or in a committed relationship, roughly **half (51%) say their partner is often or sometimes distracted by their cellphone while they are trying to have a conversation with them, and four-in-ten say they are at least sometimes bothered by the amount of time their partner spends on their mobile device.**

Partnered adults under the age of 50 are particularly likely to express the feeling that their partner is distracted by their phone, with those ages 30 to 49 most likely to report this. Fully 62% of 30- to 49-year-olds and **52% of 18-to 29-year-olds who are in a romantic relationship say their partner is at least sometimes distracted by their phone when they're trying to talk them.** Still, this issue is not confined to younger age groups: 41% of partnered Americans ages 50 and older say they have encountered this in their relationship at least sometimes.

For many adults, social media plays a role in the way they navigate and share information about their romantic relationships. Roughly eight-in-ten social media users (81%) report that they at least sometimes see others posting about their relationships, including 46% who say this happens often, but few say that seeing these posts affects how they feel about their own love life.

Moreover, social media has become a place where some users discuss relationships and investigate old ones. Roughly half of social media users (53%) say they have used these platforms to check up on someone they used to date or be in a relationship with, while 28% say they have used social media to share or discuss things about their relationship or dating life. For adult users under the age of 30, those shares who have used social media to checked-up on a former partner (70%) or posted about their own love life (48%) are even higher.

[Other studies? What have we missed?]

* * * * *

QUESTION 7: WHO IS SUCCESSFUL? WHO IS NOT?

7.1.1 [Timmermans & Courtois \(2018\)](#). From swiping to casual sex and/or committed relationships: Exploring the experiences of Tinder users. *The Information Society*.

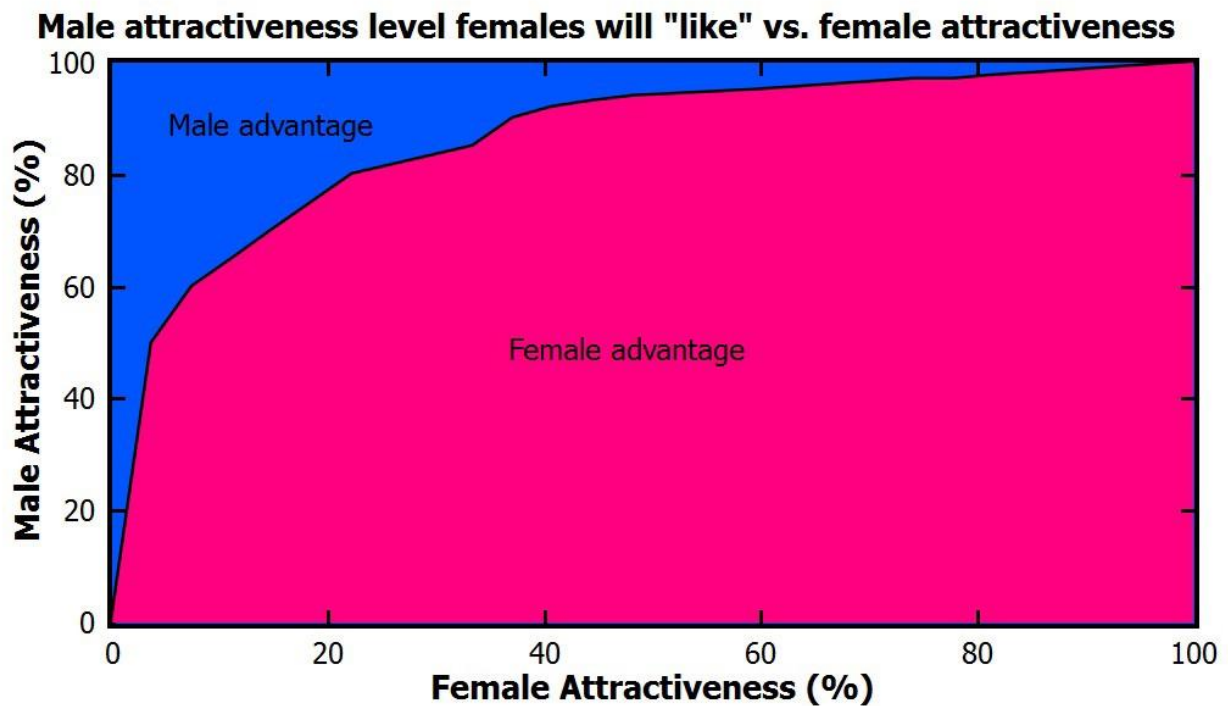
ABSTRACT: To better understand if and how the mechanics of the process Tinder imposes on its users (i.e., swiping, matching, and starting conversations) influences the resulting sexual or romantic interactions, we collected data from 1038 Belgian Tinder users. **Our findings show that a user's swiping quantity does not guarantee a higher number of Tinder matches, women have generally more matches than men and men usually have to start a conversation on Tinder. Moreover, while conversations were positively associated with reported offline Tinder encounters, less than half of our sample reported having had an offline meeting with another Tinder user. Whereas more than one third of these offline encounters led to casual sex, more than a quarter resulted in the formation of a committed relationship. Such findings indicate that Tinder is not “just a hookup app”, as often assumed in public discourse.** We argue it is plausible that sexual encounters will eventually lead to committed relationships in a society where initiation of relationship formation with dating has been replaced by hooking up.

7.1.2 Rudder (2009). [Race and religion](#). *OkCupid Blog*.

7.1.3 [Tinder Experiments II](#): Guys, unless you are really hot you are probably better off not wasting your time on Tinder — a quantitative socio-economic study. *Medium*. ([Tinder experiment 1](#))

ABSTRACT: This study was conducted to quantify the Tinder socio-economic prospects for males based on the percentage of females that will “like” them. Female Tinder usage data was collected and statistically analyzed to determine the inequality in the Tinder economy. **It was determined that the bottom 80% of men (in terms of attractiveness) are competing for the bottom 22% of women and the top 78% of women are competing for the top 20% of men.** The Gini coefficient for the Tinder economy based on “like” percentages was calculated to be 0.58. This means that the Tinder economy has more inequality than 95.1% of all the world’s national economies. **In addition, it was determined that a man of average attractiveness would be “liked” by approximately 0.87% (1 in 115) of women on Tinder.** Also, a formula was derived to estimate a man’s attractiveness level based on the percentage of “likes” he receives on Tinder.

EXCERPT: As I stated previously the average female “likes” 12% of men on Tinder. This doesn't mean though that most males will get “liked” back by 12% of all the women they “like” on Tinder. This would only be the case if “likes” were equally distributed. In reality, the bottom 80% of men are fighting over the bottom 22% of women and the top 78% of women are fighting over the top 20% of men. We can see this trend in Figure 1. The area in blue represents the situations where women are more likely to “like” the men. **The area in pink represents the situations where men are more likely to “like” women. The curve doesn’t go down linearly, but instead drops quickly after the top 20% of men.** Comparing the blue area and the pink area we can see that for a random female/male Tinder interaction the male is likely to “like” the female 6.2 times more often than the female “likes” the male.



7.1.4 [Tuckfield \(2019\)](#). Attraction Inequality and the Dating Economy. *Quillette*.

EXCERPT: A data scientist representing the popular dating app “Hinge” reported on the Gini coefficients he had found in his company’s abundant data, treating “likes” as the equivalent of income. He reported that heterosexual females faced a Gini coefficient of 0.324, while heterosexual males faced a much higher Gini coefficient of 0.542. So neither sex has complete equality: in both cases, there are some “wealthy” people with access to more romantic experiences and some “poor” who have access to few or none. But while the situation for women is something like an economy with some poor, some middle class, and some millionaires, the situation for men is closer to a world with a small number of super-billionaires surrounded by huge masses who possess almost nothing. According to the Hinge analyst:

On a list of 149 countries’ Gini indices provided by the CIA World Factbook, this would place the female dating economy as 75th most unequal (average—think Western Europe) and the male dating economy as the 8th most unequal (kleptocracy, apartheid, perpetual civil war—think South Africa).

[Quartz reported on this finding](#), and also cited [another article about an experiment with Tinder](#) that claimed that that **“the bottom 80% of men (in terms of attractiveness) are competing for the bottom 22% of women and the top 78% of women are competing for the top 20% of men.”** These studies examined “likes” and “swipes” on Hinge and Tinder, respectively, which are required if there is to be any contact (via messages) between prospective matches.

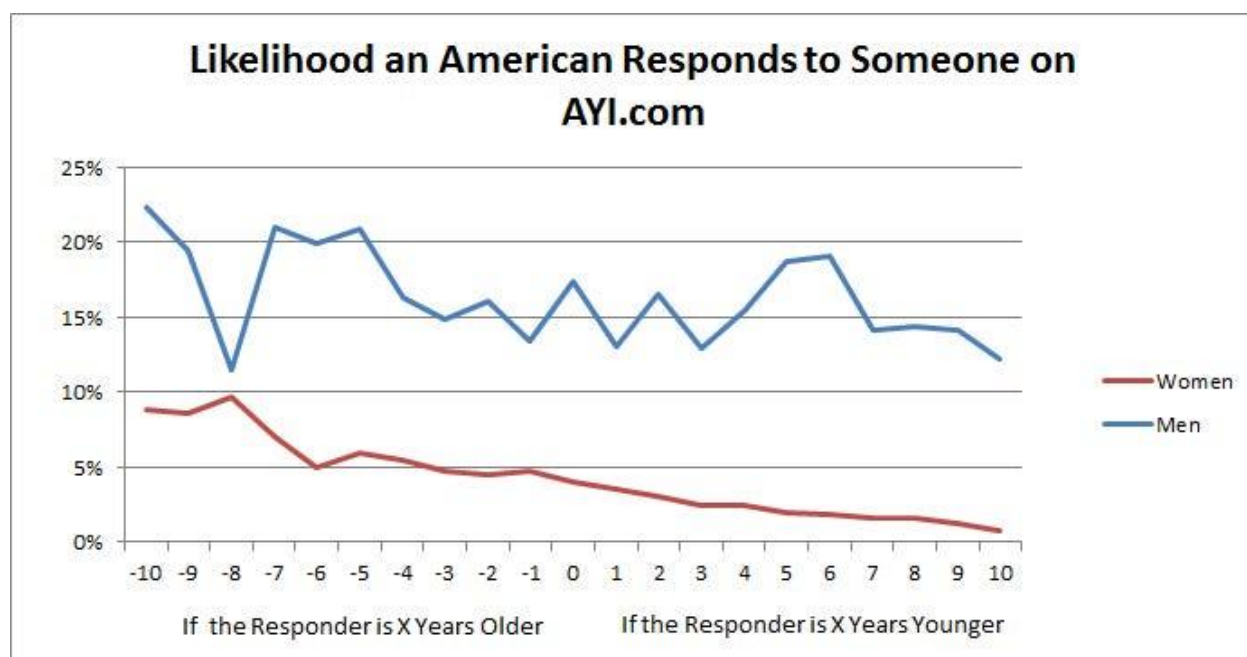
Another study, [reported in Business Insider](#), found a pattern in messaging on dating apps that is consistent with these findings. Yet another study, [run by OkCupid on their huge datasets](#), **found that women rate 80 percent of men as “worse-looking than medium,” and that this 80 percent “below-average” block received replies to messages only about 30 percent of the time or less.** By contrast, men rate women as worse-looking than medium only about 50 percent of the time, and this 50 percent below-average block received message replies closer to 40 percent of the time or higher.

If these findings are to be believed, the great majority of women are only willing to communicate romantically with a small minority of men while most men are willing to communicate romantically with most women. The degree of inequality in “likes” and “matches” credibly measures the degree of inequality in attractiveness, and necessarily implies at least that degree of inequality in romantic experiences. It seems hard to avoid a basic conclusion: **that the majority of women find the majority of men unattractive and not worth engaging with romantically, while the reverse is not true.** Stated in another way, it seems that men collectively create a “dating economy” for women with relatively low inequality, while women collectively create a “dating economy” for men with very high inequality.

7.1.5 [Hickey \(2013\)](#). Here’s how many messages men have to send to a woman on a dating site to be sure of getting a response. *Insider*.

EXCERPT: Yesterday, [we posted a chart](#) that Josh Fischer at Snap Interactive sent us based on analytics from their dating website Are You Interested. It shows the likelihood that a someone on AYI.com responds to a message from a member of the opposite sex given their age difference. To the left, -10 means the sender was 10 years younger, on the right, the sender was 10 years older, with zero indicating that the sender and the recipient are the same age.

[Here are the two plots](#) for men responding to messages from women (blue) and women responding to messages from men (red).



Josh Fischer / SNAP Interactive

So, we can see that women are much more selective than men when it comes to responding to messages.

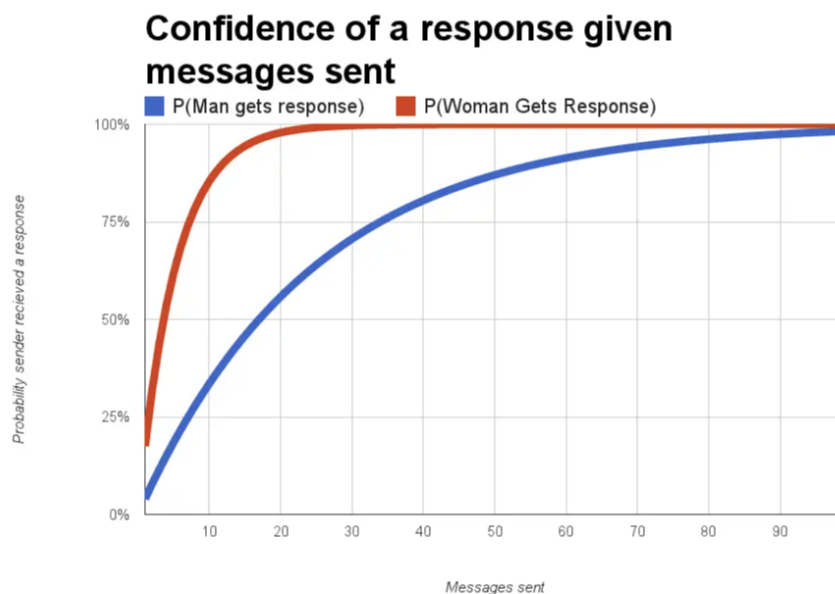
Let's find out how many messages the average man will have to send to a woman his own age in order to guarantee various levels of response, and vice versa.

We can't guarantee a response, per se, but we can say how confident we are that these average bachelors and bachelorettes will receive at least one response given the number of messages they send.

We know, from the chart above, that a woman who sends a message to a man her own age has a 17.5% likelihood of receiving a response to that message.

We know that a man who sends a message to a woman his own age has a 4% likelihood of receiving a response to that message.

Extrapolating from there, here's how confident men and women can be that they will receive a response given the number of messages they send en masse:



An average man who sends 18 messages to women his own age can be 50% certain he'll receive at least one response. For women, they need to send only 5 messages to be 50% certain they'll get a response.

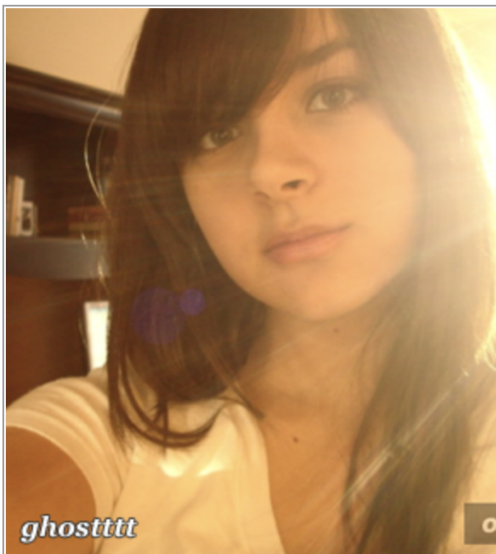
Looking at higher confidence levels, if a woman wants to be 90% certain she'll receive a response from a man her own age, she'll have to send 13 messages. A man will have to send 58 messages.

7.1.6 [Your Looks and Your Inbox \(2009\)](#). *OkCupid*.

EXCERPT: This week we will be confronting a fact that, by definition, haunts the average online dater: no matter how much time you spend polishing your profile, honing your IM banter, and perfecting your message introductions, it's your picture that matters most.

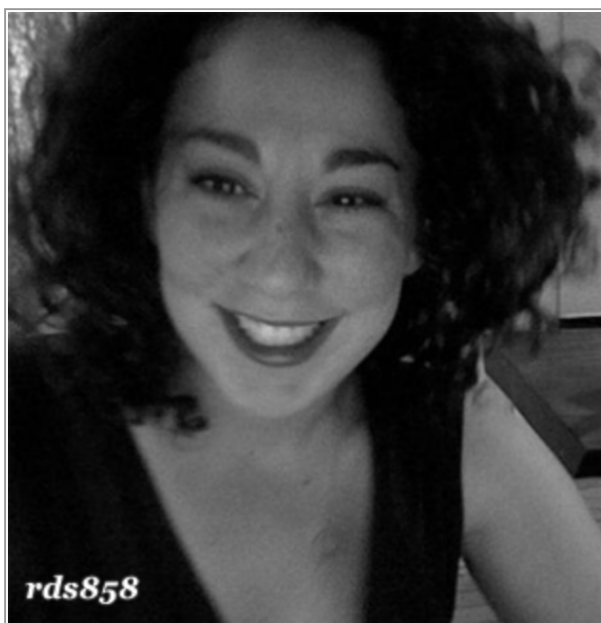
We're going to look at how your photos affect both the messages you get and how successful your own outgoing messages are. We all know that beautiful people are more successful daters, but let's quantify by exactly how much.

To illustrate the exact spectrum of looks we're talking about here, and to put some human faces on our discussion, I want to introduce a few photos of real OkCupid users. Here are two women near the top of our range.



[[show men instead](#)]

And here are two rated in the middle.

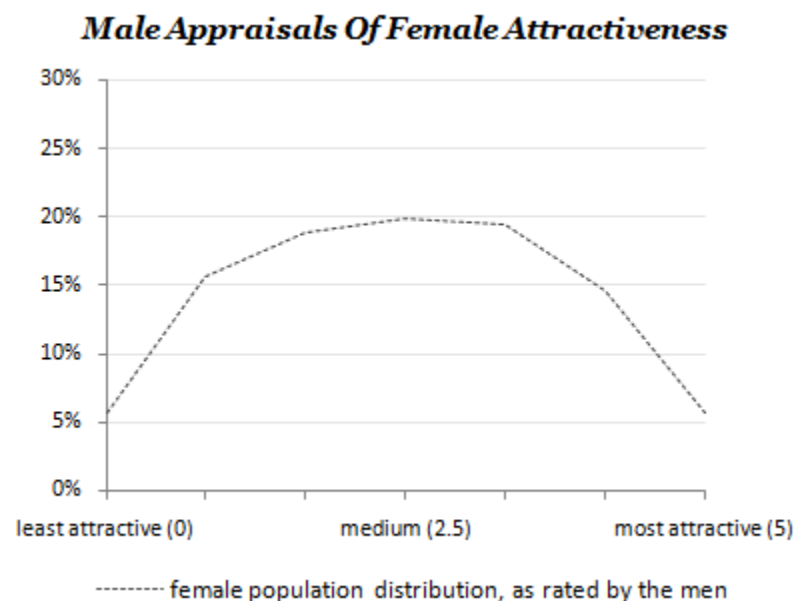


As for photos at the bottom of the curve, it didn't feel right to write to someone and say "can I use you to illustrate the concept of ugliness on my blog?" so you'll just have to extrapolate.

The above featured users have graciously agreed to let me post their pictures, so please don't make them regret it. Funnily enough, I had to write about a dozen beautiful female users before anyone would even get back to me. Life imitates blog!

Anyhow, I know attractiveness is far from a universal concept, but maybe keep these folks in mind as we go through the data.

We'll start with a simple line chart. The information I'll present in this post is not normalized because, as we'll see, it's interesting how men and women evaluate looks differently.

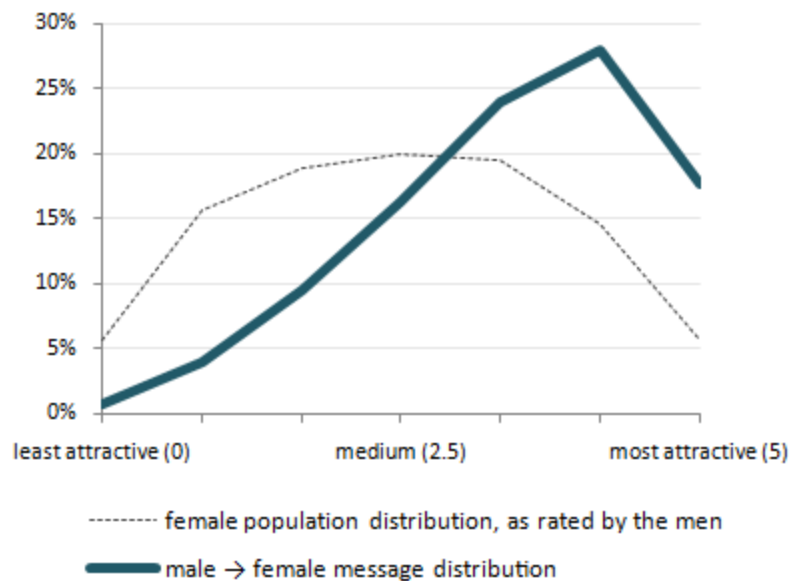


Our chart shows how men have rated women, on a scale from 0 to 5. The curve is symmetric and surprisingly charitable: a woman is as likely to be considered extremely ugly as extremely beautiful, and the majority of women have been rated about "medium." The chart looks normalized, even though it's just the unfiltered opinions of our male users.

Given the popular wisdom that Hollywood, the Internet, and Photoshop have created unrealistic expectations of how a woman should look, I found the fairness and, well, realism, of this gray arc kind of heartening.

Now let's superimpose the distribution of actual messages guys have sent:

Male Messaging & Female Attractiveness

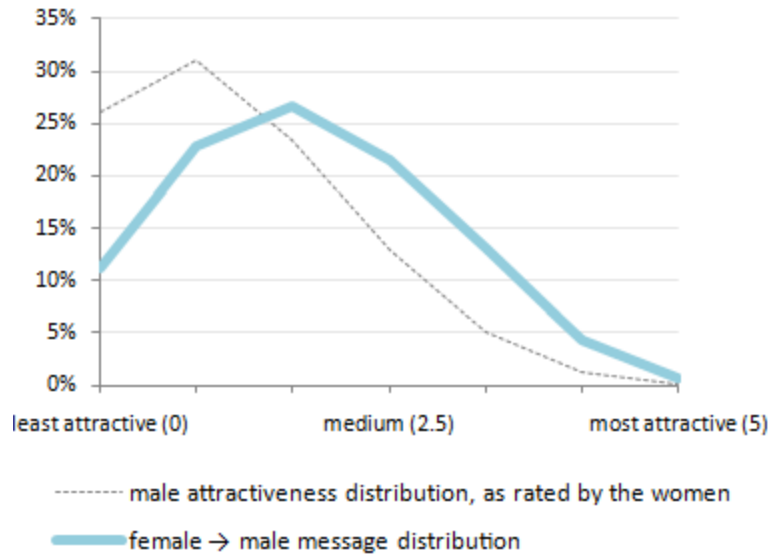


When it comes down to actually choosing targets, men choose the modelesque. Someone like roomtodance above gets nearly 5 times as many messages as a typical woman and 28 times as many messages as a woman at the low end of our curve. Site-wide, two-thirds of male messages go to the best-looking third of women.

So basically, guys are fighting each other 2-for-1 for the absolute best-rated females, while plenty of potentially charming, even cute, girls go unwritten. The medical term for this is male pattern madness.

The female equivalent of the above chart shows a different bias:

Female Messaging & Male Attractiveness



As you can see from the gray line, women rate an incredible 80% of guys as worse-looking than medium. Very harsh. On the other hand, when it comes to actual messaging, women shift their expectations only just slightly ahead of the curve, which is a healthier pattern than guys' pursuing the all-but-unattainable.

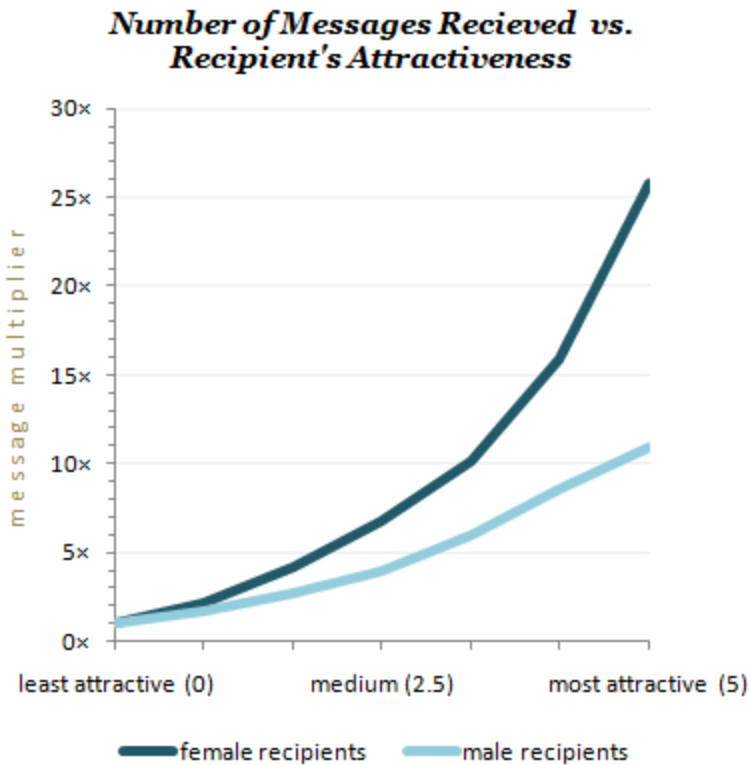
But with the basic ratings so out-of-whack, the two curves together suggest some strange possibilities for the female thought process, the most salient of which is that the average-looking woman has convinced herself that the vast majority of males aren't good enough for her, but she then goes right out and messages them anyway.

Just to illustrate that women are operating on a very different scale, here are just a few of the many, many guys we have here in the office think are totally decent-looking, but that women have rated, in their occult way, as significantly less attractive than so-called "medium":



Females of OkCupid, we site founders say to you: ouch! Paradoxically, it seems it's women, not men, who have unrealistic standards for the "average" member of the opposite sex.

Finally, I just want to combine the two charts to emphasize how much fuller the inboxes of good-looking people get. I have scaled this graph to show multiples of messages sent to the lowest-rated people. For instance, the most attractive guys get $11\times$ the messages the lowest-rated do. The medium-rated get about $4\times$.



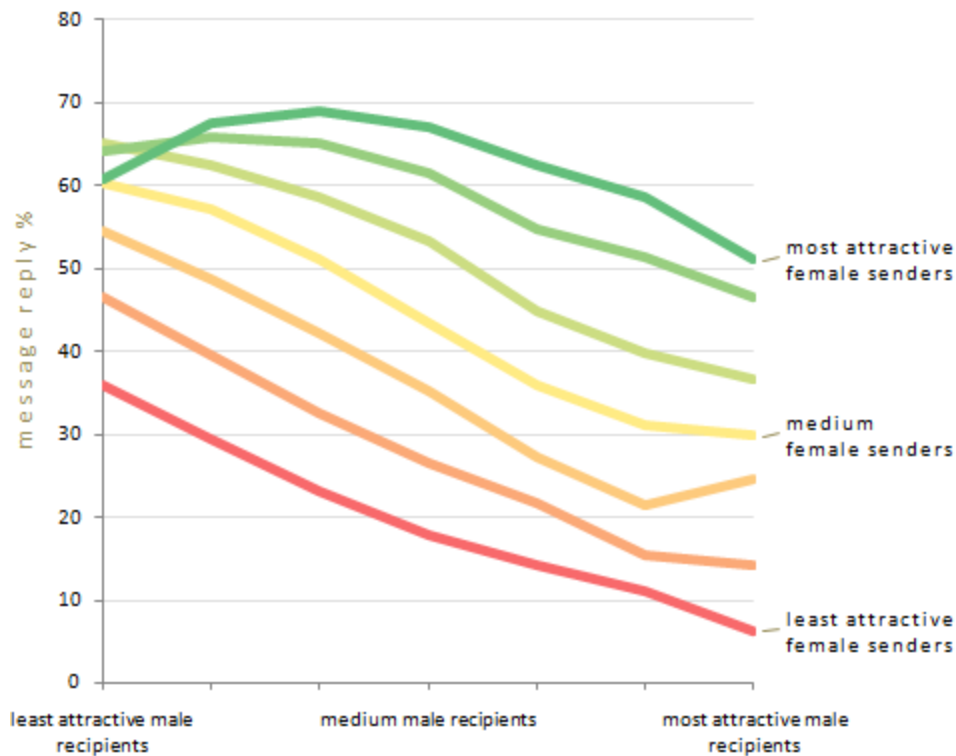
This graph also dramatically illustrates just how much more important a woman's looks are than a guy's.

Now let's take a look at how senders' and recipients' attractivenesses affect reply rates, not just the number of messages sent.

As you'd expect, more attractive people get more replies. And since they themselves get so many more messages than everyone else, they write back much less frequently. Here's the graph for female senders, plotted in evenly-spaced "attractiveness groups."

Message Success By Attractiveness

Female Senders



7.1.7 [Buyukeren, Makarin, & Xiong \(2022\)](#). The Impact of Dating Apps on Young Adults: Evidence From Tinder (SSRN Scholarly Paper No. 4240140).

ABSTRACT: Online dating applications have revolutionized the dating market in the past decade, but their exact effects remain unclear. We analyze the impact of the early diffusion of a viral dating app - Tinder - on college student dating behavior, relationships, and health. For identification, we rely on the ample qualitative evidence that Tinder's early promotion strategy focused primarily on Greek organizations on college campuses. **Consistent with this evidence, we find that Tinder was more likely to be mentioned in college newspapers of universities with fraternities and sororities.** Using a comprehensive survey with more than 1.3 million college student responses around the year of Tinder's rollout, we estimate a difference-in-differences equation comparing student outcomes before and after Tinder's rollout and across individuals and universities with varying Greek organization membership. **We find that the rollout of Tinder led to a sharp and lasting increase in reported dating and sexual activity. At the same time, it led to an increase in reported unplanned pregnancies, STDs, and sexual assault. We observe no change in the number of**

reported relationship problems and, if anything, fraternity and sorority members experienced a relative decline in reported mental health issues. In terms of the distributional consequences, we find that the increase in **sexual activity was mainly concentrated in Greek students and students who experienced a high baseline level of sexual activity.**

NOTE: [Relevant Twitter thread on this study](#)

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8. MAJOR REPORTS, REVIEW ARTICLES. AND DATABASES

8.1.1 [Vogels \(2020\)](#). 10 facts about Americans and online dating. *Pew Research Center*.

KEY FINDINGS:

- Three-in-ten U.S. adults say they have ever used a dating site or app, but this varies significantly by age and sexual orientation (See figure 1 below). While **48% of 18- to 29-year-olds say they have ever used a dating site or app**, the share is 38% among those ages 30 to 49 and even lower for those 50 and older (16%). At the same time, personal experiences with online dating greatly differ by sexual orientation. **Lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB) adults are roughly twice as likely as those who are straight to say they ever used a dating platform (55% vs. 28%).**
- A small share of Americans say they have been in a committed relationship with or married someone they met through a dating site or app. **About one-in-ten U.S. adults say this (12%), though these shares are higher among LGB adults, as well as those ages 18 to 49.**
- Roughly six-in-ten online daters (57%) say they have had an overall positive experience with these platforms, including 14% who describe their experience as very positive and 43% who say it was somewhat positive. Fewer users – though still about four-in-ten – describe their online dating experience as at least somewhat negative, including 9% who describe it as very negative.
- People’s assessments of their online dating experiences vary widely by socioeconomic factors. Around six-in-ten online daters with a bachelor’s or advanced degree (63%) say their experience has been very or somewhat

positive, compared with 47% among those who have a high school diploma or less. **The ratings online daters give their overall experience do not vary statistically by gender or race and ethnicity.**

- While online daters generally say their overall experience was positive, they also point out some of the downsides of online dating. By a wide margin, **Americans who have used a dating site or app in the past year say their recent experience left them feeling more frustrated (45%) than hopeful (28%). Other sentiments are more evenly balanced between positive and negative feelings. Some 35% of current or recent users say that in the past year online dating has made them feel more pessimistic, while 29% say these platforms left them feeling more optimistic. Similarly, 32% say online dating sites or apps made them feel more confident, whereas 25% say it left them feeling more insecure.**
- Majorities of online daters say it was at least somewhat easy to find potentially compatible partners. Many online daters say they could find people on these platforms who they were physically attracted to, shared their hobbies and interests, seemed like someone they would want to meet in person or were looking for the same kind of relationship as them. At the same time, there are some gender differences in how hard or easy users say it was to find compatible partners.
- For example, **women who have ever used a dating site or app are more likely than men to say they have found it very or somewhat difficult to find people they were physical attracted to (36% vs. 21%) or who like someone they would want to meet in person (39% vs. 32%). By contrast, male users are more inclined than female users to say it was at least somewhat difficult to find people who shared their hobbies and interests (41% vs. 30%).**
- Women are more likely than men to categorize certain information as essential to see in other users' profiles. Among online daters, **72% of women say it was very important to them that the profiles they looked at included the type of relationship the person was looking for, compared with about half of men (53%). Women who have online dated are also more likely than men to say it was very important to them that the profiles they looked through included a person's religious beliefs (32% vs. 18%), occupation (27% vs. 8%) or height (22% vs. 8%).**
- Other gender differences – such as the importance of users including their hobbies and interests, their racial or ethnic background or their political affiliation – are more modest.
- There are stark gender differences in the amount of attention online daters say they received on these sites or apps. Overall, online daters are more likely to say

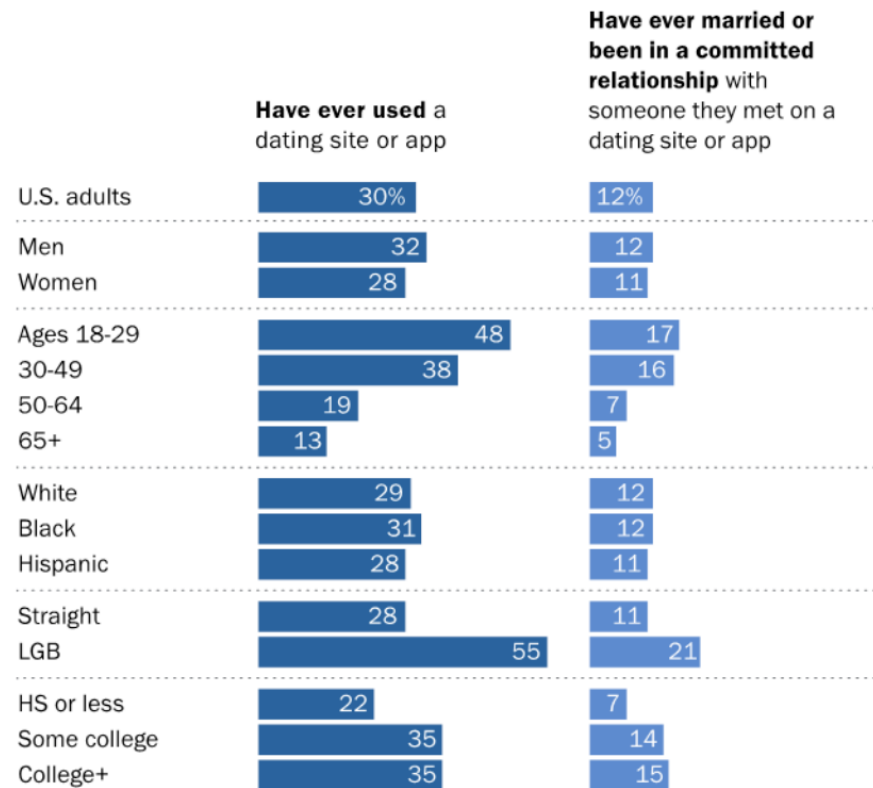
they did not receive enough messages than to say they received too many, but users' experiences vary by gender.

- **Roughly six-in-ten men who have online dated in the past five years (57%) say they feel as if they did not get enough messages, while just 24% of women say the same.** Meanwhile, women who have online dated in this time period are five times as likely as men to think they were sent too many messages (30% vs. 6%).
- Americans have varying views about the safety of online dating. **Roughly half of Americans overall (53%) say dating sites and apps are a very or somewhat safe way to meet people, while 46% believe they are not too or not at all safe.**
- Public perceptions about the safety of online dating vary substantially by personal experience. A majority of Americans who have ever used a dating site or app (71%) see online dating as a very or somewhat safe way to meet someone, compared with 47% of those who have never used these platforms.
- **Among the public as a whole, women are far more likely than men to say dating sites and apps are not a safe way to meet people (53% vs. 39%). Views on this question also vary substantially by age, educational attainment and race and ethnicity.**

FIGURES:

Online dating and finding a partner through these platforms are more common among adults who are younger, lesbian, gay or bisexual

% of U.S. adults who say they ...



Note: Whites and blacks include only non-Hispanics. Hispanics are of any race. LGB indicates those who identify as lesbian, gay or bisexual. Those who did not give an answer are not shown.

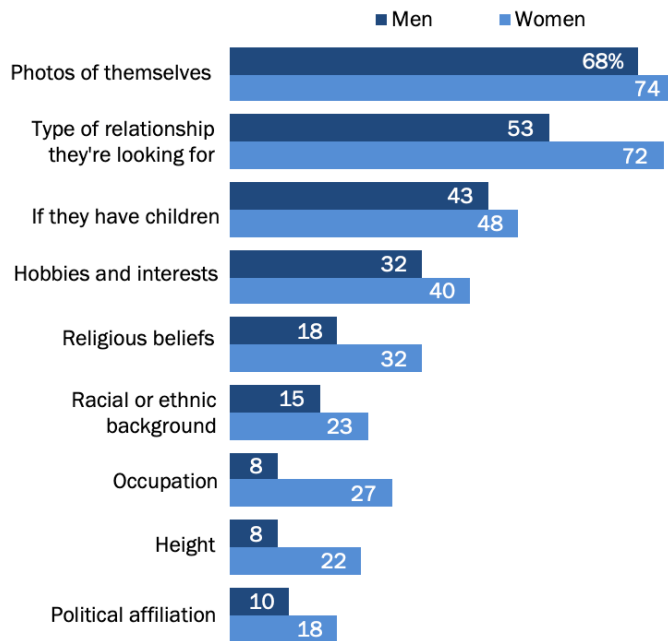
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Oct. 16-28, 2019.

"The Virtues and Downsides of Online Dating"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Among online daters, women more likely than men to say it is very important that profiles include the type of relationship the person wants, religious beliefs, job

*% of online dating users, by gender, who say that it was **very important** that the profiles they looked at included the following*



Note: Online dating users refers to respondents who say they have ever used an online dating site or app. Those who did not give an answer or gave other responses are not shown.

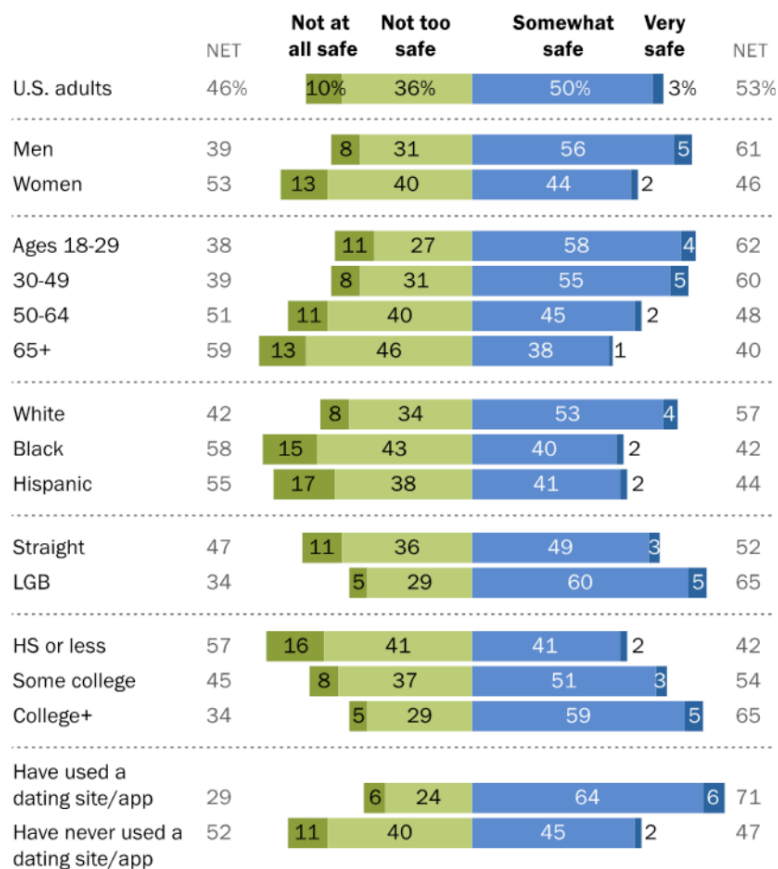
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Oct. 16-28, 2019.

"The Virtues and Downsides of Online Dating"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Americans' views on whether dating platforms are a safe way to meet people vary by age, gender and whether they've used dating sites or apps

% of U.S. adults who say dating sites and apps are a ___ way to meet people



Note: Whites and blacks include only non-Hispanics. Hispanics are of any race. LGB indicates those who identify as lesbian, gay or bisexual. Figures may not add to subtotals due to rounding. Those who did not give an answer are not shown.

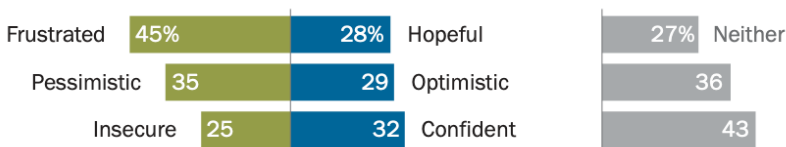
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Oct. 16-28, 2019.

"The Virtues and Downsides of Online Dating"

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45% of current or recent users of dating sites or apps say using these platforms made them feel frustrated

Among those who have used a dating site or app in the past year, % who say it made them feel more ...



Note: Online dating users refers to respondents who say they have ever used an online dating site or app. Those who did not give an answer are not shown.

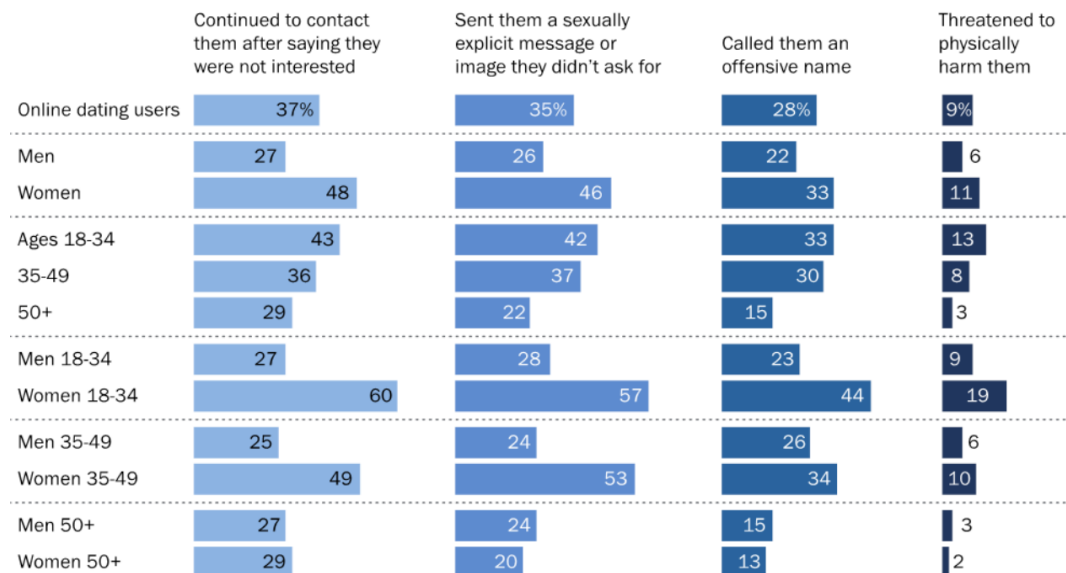
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Oct. 16-28, 2019.

"The Virtues and Downsides of Online Dating"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Younger women who have used dating sites or apps are especially likely to report having negative interactions with others on these platforms

% of online dating users in each group who say someone ___ on a dating site or app



Note: Online dating users refers to respondents who say they have ever used an online dating site or app. Those who did not give an answer are not shown.

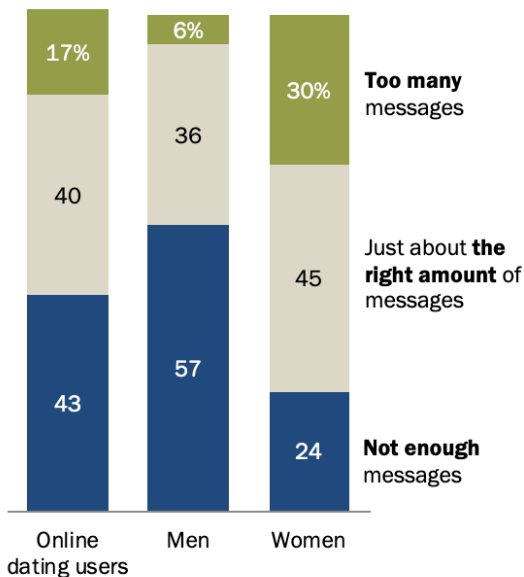
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Oct. 16-28, 2019.

"The Virtues and Downsides of Online Dating"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Men who have online dated in the past five years are more likely than women to say they didn't get enough messages

Among those who have used online dating sites or apps in the past five years, % who say they received ...



Note: Those who did not give an answer are not shown.
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Oct. 16-28, 2019.
"The Virtues and Downsides of Online Dating"

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8.1.2 [Castro & Barrada \(2020\)](#). Dating Apps and Their Sociodemographic and Psychosocial Correlates: A Systematic Review. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*.

ABSTRACT: The emergence and popularization of dating apps have changed the way people meet and interact with potential romantic and sexual partners. In parallel with the increased use of these applications, a remarkable scientific literature has developed. However, due to the recency of the phenomenon, some gaps in the existing research can be expected. Therefore, the objective of this study was to conduct a systematic review of the empirical research of the psychosocial content published in the last five years (2016–2020) on dating apps. A search was conducted in different databases, and we identified 502 articles in our initial search. After screening titles and abstracts and examining articles in detail, 70 studies were included in the review. The most relevant

data (author/s and year, sample size and characteristics, methodology) and their findings were extracted from each study and grouped into four blocks: user dating apps characteristics, usage characteristics, motives for use, and benefits and risks of use. The limitations of the literature consulted are discussed, as well as the practical implications of the results obtained, highlighting the relevance of dating apps, which have become a tool widely used by millions of people around the world.

EXCERPT: Many studies indicate that dating apps have **opened a new horizon in how to meet potential partners, allowing access to many, which may be even more positive for certain individuals and groups who have been silenced or marginalized, such as some men from sexual minorities. It has also been emphasized that these applications are a non-intimidating way to start connecting, they are flexible and free, and require less time and effort than other traditional means of communication.**

On the other hand, the advantages of apps based on the technology they use and the possibilities they pose to users have been highlighted. Ranzini and Lutz underlined four aspects. First is the **portability** of smartphones and tablets, which allows the use of apps in any location, both private and public. Second is **availability**, as their operation increases the spontaneity and frequency of use of the apps, and this, in turn, allows a quick face-to-face encounter, turning online interactions into offline relationships. Thirdly is **locatability**, as dating apps allow matches, messages, and encounters with other users who are geographically close. Finally is **multimediality**, the relevance of the visual, closely related to physical appearance, which results in two channels of communication (photos and messages) and the possibility of linking the profile with that of other social networks, such as Facebook and Instagram.

There is also considerable literature focused on the potential risks associated with using these applications. The topics covered in the studies can be grouped into four blocks, having in common the negative consequences that these apps can generate in users' **mental, relational, and sexual health**. The first block focuses on the configuration and use of the applications themselves. **Their emergence and popularization have been so rapid that apps pose risks associated with security, intimacy, and privacy.** This can lead to more **insecure contacts, especially among women, and fears related to the ease of localization and the inclusion of personal data in apps.** Some authors highlight the paradox that many users suffer: **they have more chances of contact than ever before, but at the same time this makes them more vulnerable.** This block can also include studies on the problematic use of apps, which can affect the daily lives of users, and research that focuses on the possible negative psychological effects of their use, as a link has been shown between using **dating apps and loneliness,**

dissatisfaction with life, and feeling excluded from the world. The second block of studies on the risks associated with dating apps refers to discrimination and aggression. Some authors, such as Conner and Lauckner et al., **have argued that technology, instead of reducing certain abusive cultural practices associated with deception, discrimination, or abuse (e.g., about body types, weight, age, rural environments, racism, HIV stigma), has accentuated them, and this can affect users' mental health.** Moreover, certain antisocial behaviors in apps, such as trolling, have been studied, and a relationship has been found between being a user of these applications and suffering some episode of sexual victimization, both in childhood and adulthood. The following block refers to the risks of dating app use regarding diet and body image. These applications, focusing on appearance and physical attractiveness, can promote excessive concerns about body image, as well as various negative consequences associated with it **(e.g., unhealthy weight management behaviors, low satisfaction and high shame about the body, more comparisons with appearance)**. These risks have been more closely associated with men than with women, perhaps because of the standards of physical attractiveness prevalent among men of sexual minorities, which have been the most studied collective. The last block of studies on the risks of dating app use focuses on their relationship with risky sexual behaviors. This is probably the most studied topic in different populations (e.g., sexual minority men, heterosexual people). The use of these applications can contribute to a greater performance of risky sexual behaviors, which results in a higher prevalence of sexually transmitted illnesses (STIs). However, the results of the studies analyzed are inconclusive.

8.1.3 [Ciocca... & Jannini \(2020\)](#). Sexological Aspects Related to Tinder Use: A Comprehensive Review of the Literature. *Sexual Medicine Reviews*.

ABSTRACT: INTRODUCTION: Tinder is the most popular and used meeting application for dating. However, its impact on sexual behavior and sexual health has not yet been thoroughly investigated.

OBJECTIVES: To review the current empirical knowledge on the sexual health and sexual behavior effects related to Tinder use.

METHODS: A literature review was conducted based on empirical studies published in the last 5 years. A computerized search was performed to identify all relevant studies in PubMed and Google Scholar. The following search terms were used: "Tinder" AND "Sexuality" OR "Tinder" AND "Sexual Behavior" OR "Tinder" AND "Sexual Dysfunctions" OR "Tinder" AND "Sexual Health." 34 articles fully satisfied the established criteria.

RESULTS: **We found sociosexuality, that is, sexual activities outside a committed relationship, to be the main predictor for casual sex in the Tinder users. The sexual aims appeared gender-influenced: men used Tinder mostly for casual sex compared with women.** With respect to other dating apps, it has been also found that

the Tinder use is less related to the risk of sexually transmitted infections. However, **specific personality traits related to dark personality (ie, the association of Machiavellianism, narcissism, and psychopathy) were more frequently reported among male Tinder users.**

CONCLUSION: Existing literature concerning Tinder use shows the advantages and disadvantages of this dating technology. Casual sex might be a risk for sexual health, but Tinder users have also been committed to romantic relationships. Moreover, some pathological aspects of personality characterize some Tinder users. From an evolutionary perspective, sociosexuality partially explains the reasons of the Tinder user's interest for casual sex. Finally, this review highlights the need of further studies on Tinder as a new, pivotal virtual place to promote sex education and sexual health.

[Other studies? What have we missed?]

* * * * *

9. CONCLUSION

[To come]

Some thoughts at the moment:

10. APPENDICES

10.1 TIMELINE OF PLATFORM CHANGES

Abbreviations: AFF, Adult Friend Finder; CMB, Coffee Meets Bagel; FB, Facebook; IG, Instagram; TK, TikTok.

The list of dating sites/apps in this timeline is not exhaustive. it only covers the most used and influential.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timeline_of_online_dating_services

Year	Platform and Change
1993	MATCH.COM: Launches
1996	AFF: Adult Friend Finder launches
2000	EHARMONY: Launches
2004	OKCUPID: Launches
Unclear	REDDIT: R4R. "Reddit for Redditors." These subreddits are comprised of personal ads for dating, hooking up, or just finding a friend.
2006	SEEKING: Launches. "The luxury dating site for successful and attractive singles."
2009	APPLE: Iphone launches. Enables app based dating. Dating app algorithms transform and become more sophisticated. Early dating apps relied on users to search for potential matches. Recent dating apps have introduced sophisticated matching algorithms that use a combination of factors, including personal preferences and behavioral data, to suggest potential matches. GRINDR: Launches. Was the first gay dating app and the first app to use geolocation technology.
2011	MATCH: Acquires OkCupid SECRET AGENT CUPID: Desktop service founded allowing users to connect to Facebook and list which of their friends they had crushes on.
2012	TINDER: Launches. Popularizes "swipe-based" dating. Online dating explodes with popularity. CMB: Coffee meets babel launches.
2013	HINGE: Secret agent cupid turns into Hinge, which publicly launches
2014	BUMBLE: Founded. First app that requires women to initiate conversations with matches. HAPPN: Launches. First app to use location-based tech to show potentially matches they have crossed-paths with in real life. Specialized dating apps emerge (some existed earlier): apps based on Kink (e.g., Kinkd (2017)), Prison Dating Apps, Singles with Food Allergies (2014), Farmers Only (2005), Threesomes (Feeld (2014)),

	Metal Dating (for metal heads (2006), 420 Singles (for cannibas lovers (2011)), BlackPeopleMeet (dating for Black singles (2002)).
2015	YUBU: Launches. Known as “Tinder for Teens.”
~2017	IG and TK: People begin using Instagram and TikTok for dating. SPARK: Affinitas GmbH (owns EliteSingles and eDarling) merges with Soark Networks (own Christian Mingle, Jdate, SilverSingles) to create Soark Networks SE.
2019	FB: Facebook Dating launches SPARK: Acquires Zoosk. Becomes North America’s second-largest dating company in revenues.
2021	
2022	

10.2 MINORS USING DATING APPS

10.2.1 YUBU

10.2.1.1 [Dillet \(2022\)](#). Yubo is about to verify the age of all its users using facial age estimation. *TechCrunch*.

EXCERPT: The startup originally started verifying the age of its users **back in May**. With such a young audience, moderation and safety are extremely important to mitigates risks of child abuse.

Yubo is an app for young people. If you’re 50, you shouldn’t be able to sign up. Similarly, Yubo only accepts users who are 13 or older. Minors using the app are also separated from adult users.

In particular, some young kids pretend that they are 13 to gain access to social platforms like Yubo. But the issue is that many teenagers simply don’t have any identity document. Yubo can’t just ask for a photo of their users’ IDs.

That's why the startup is using [Yoti's](#) age estimation technology. When a user is required to verify their age, Yoti uses the phone camera to take a photo and a short video of the user's face.

...Age verification is a major move for Yubo. As the company doesn't rely on ads to generate revenue, it doesn't need to have as many users as possible. Yubo relies on subscriptions and in-app purchases to unlock additional features. And building a safe community could foster engagement, which could increase revenue.

10.2.1.2 [Tucker \(2019\)](#). Paris-based Yubo, the live video platform for Gen Z, snaps up €11 million to expand globally. *EU-Startups*.

EXCERPT: Designed for young people between 13 and 25, Yubo lets users create live video discussion spaces where both streamers and viewers interact through a live chat. Relying on cutting-edge technology and tools specifically designed to protect the app users, Yubo provides a secure discussion platform built to widen their circle of friends. The social network favours sociability, sharing, and authenticity rather than the approval mechanisms and influencer systems of traditional social networks.

Built by Sacha Lazimi, Jérémie Aouate, and Arthur Patora, Yubo currently has over 25 million users, with tens of thousands of new members joining the community every day. Since its launch in 2015, Yubo's users have formed more than 2 billion friendships on the platform, sent over 10 billion written messages and launched over 30 million live video streams. Since late 2018, users have had the opportunity to upgrade to a premium account and discover exclusive features. This growth has meant a gross revenue of approximately €8.9 million as of the end of 2019.

Already widely adopted in the USA and Canada, the United Kingdom, the Nordic countries, Australia and France, this new round of funding will help Yubo conquer new territories, notably Japan and Brazil.

10.2.1.3 [Freer \(2021\)](#). Yubo adds digital currency to Gen Z social app. *Business of Apps*.

EXCERPT: Yubo, the platform where young people can socialise free from ads or influencers, just launched YuBucks, a virtual currency.

The feature can be used to pay other users on the network, much like in-app gifts are traceable between users. The app said that since it launched YuBucks in beta mode, it

noticed a higher turnover of more than 20% and the number of users who made at least one purchase rose 10%.

Yubo saw a 550% growth in 2020 attracting some 50 million users in 40 countries. In the UK alone, it reached 74% more users since December 2020.

“The launch of YuBucks and upcoming launch of Pixels, is another step forward in strengthening our unique business model that monetises through social commerce as well as enhances the in-app experience for our users,” said Sacha Lazimi, Co-founder and CEO of Yubo.

“Our freemium business models allow us to keep our users’ data safe and protected, which is a top priority for us and our users. We are carving a new path in social media – at Yubo, we believe you shouldn’t have to sell your personal data in order to enjoy and experience a platform.”

For mid-July, the app has another paid-for feature planned: so-called Pixels. They’ve been created in collaboration with Banfan.

Pixels are essentially a collection of digital art to show how a user feels or highlight their personality.

Yubo users can collect Pixels and then send them to friends.

10.2.1.4 [O’Brien \(2019\)](#). *Teens using Yubo may be at risk – study.* The Irish Times.

EXCERPT: A new study by Dublin City University (DCU) has found that many users are sharing content through secondary profiles such as Instagram and Snapchat. This, it found, was jeopardising their privacy and leaving themselves vulnerable.

...The app encourages users to describe themselves using emojis. Some 65 per cent of the profiles in this study contained emojis and half of the eight most frequently used emojis were categorised as having a sexual meaning.

Sexually suggestive or sexualised images on profiles, however, were very rare, it found.

...Liam Challenor, doctoral researcher at DCU's national anti-bullying centre, said its research identified 15 year olds as the most prevalent users of Yubo, representing almost one-third of the overall sample.

“We also found that this age group engaged in more ‘risky’ behaviours on the app than other ages,” he said.

...The split between male and female was fairly even. A total of 60 per cent were between the ages of 13 and 16, and 40 per cent were 16 or 17.

Yubo users can share their username or snapcode in their bio or on profile pictures, though recent changes on the app mean they can no longer connect their Instagram or Snapchat accounts.

...The research found that 80 per cent of users had public Instagram profiles, while 7 per cent shared their Snapchat details publicly.

10.2.1.5 [Kitt \(2020\)](#). The story behind Yubo: Tinder for teens unraveled. *Veritas Shield*.

EXCERPT: **“Most of the time you just find people who want to hook up,” Xio Moran ‘21 said.**

The “swipe feature” is simply a manner of culling, separating the grain from the chaff, if you will. Users sift through the photos randomly presented to them, swiping right on those that please them and swiping left on those that fail to make the cut. If both users pass each other’s 10-second assessment, they are matched, allowing them to engage in conversation and photo-sharing.

Even the Tinder and Yubo icons share eerie similarities. The apps are both identified by white shapes, Yubo’s semicircle and Tinder’s flame, in front of a bright background. Much less risqué, the semicircle is Yubo’s neutered Tinder flame.

Although Yubo is somewhat of a teen Tinder by design, relatively few Yubo encounters evolve into relationships, or even real-life interaction. Instead, teens go on the app to receive affirmation.

“People are just on the app to tell you if you’re pretty or not. It’s kind of addictive to get compliments,” Eunice Kang ‘21 said.

...Most of my matches were not as memorable as these three, though. **Most were average teenagers looking for one thing, and one thing only: nude photos. These conversations usually lasted three minutes at most.**

—Wyd rn? (for boomers, this translates to “What are you doing right now?”) — Oh I’m just chillin (my attempt at using the abbreviated vernacular of my more socially aware peers) — Chilling where? — In my room — I wish I could be there so I could #%%&%%@#!*&%-

10.2.1.6 [Kramer \(2021\)](#). Yubo app is a haven for Gen Z, safety concern for parents. *Protocol*.

EXCERPT: This apparently dangerous, child-oriented social media app has been having a moment among the kids these days, albeit a quiet one. Engagement on the app — its users are mostly teens ages 13 to 25, based in the U.S., Canada and Australia — increased nearly 400% in the last year, and while the founders won't provide daily usage statistics, they've collected at least 45 million users.

At its core, Yubo turns the idea of "stranger-danger" on its head. The app very openly wants young people to make new friends with strangers on the internet. If that makes you afraid for your own children, or for the future as a whole, you're not alone. And, in the eyes of Yubo CEO and co-founder Sacha Lazimi, you're also very wrong.

"There is no difference for this generation between online and offline," he said. "Older generations don't understand this. When you don't understand something, you are scared right away. This is normal, for them to be scared."

10.2.1.7 Cases of sexual predation on Yubo

- <https://www.wogx.com/news/man-28-lures-young-teen-for-sex-on-popular-app-police-say>
- <https://www.cincinnati.com/story/news/2019/02/14/man-accused-sexually-exploiting-12-year-old-he-met-yubo-app/2868063002/>

10.2.1.7 [Bowles & Keller \(2019\)](#). Video Games and Online Chats Are ‘Hunting Grounds’ for Sexual Predators. *The New York Times*.

EXCERPT: Yubo disables accounts when it finds an age discrepancy, often requiring users to provide a government-issued ID. But users frequently object to providing documentation, and many children do not possess it. In February, a 26-year-old Ohio [man was charged with sexual exploitation](#) after claiming to be 13 on Yubo and luring a 12-year-old girl, the authorities said.

10.2.1.8 [wtf is yubo?](#) (cringe warning) first time on dating app

EXCERPT: ...So i am not a dating app person i've never used one um the only time i've gone on one is like with my friends like on their dating apps to like swipe through and like have fun or whatever that was a really weird way of explaining that but i myself have never signed up for one so today we are going to be signing up for a little baby dating app **for little babies who are under 18 called a yubo i'm sure 80 of you know what that is which weirds me out a little bit but that's okay i'm definitely terrified of someone that i know seeing my profile but again that's okay actually one of my favorite couples of all time that i know semi met on ubo so i'm not going to knock it until i try it however i'm not going to be trying to find love today** um it's mostly just going to be me trolling people so yubo is kind of marketed as like an omegle kind of thing

...it's not specifically a dating app the whole goal is to make friends and groups but we all know what it's used for so all right i need a face pick it's all pictures of my acne that's upsetting how does this work powers what is the power can i set my bio here's my bio i'm not enjoying it okay guys this is terrifying okay it scares me to be still it's terrifying yeah all right let's start accepting some people okay so i'm literally so sad but like half my foot is deleted like my screen recording

...so he has hit me up first um in his thing he's 15. that is it says 14 and something about that feels so wrong so i'm just no ew oh my god all these people this guy's literally not 17. there's no way he looks 12. there's no way hit me up first i wish they had that emoji where it was like a team i feel like i have to keep this more for them more more than 30 minutes now because i paid 10 dollars i still can't believe that that wasn't impulse buy nipples i should not have been that's like my biggest regret of my

10.2.1.9 [How to use Yobo](#)

To enter adult chat is easy

10.2.2 GRINDR

10.2.2.1 [Mendez \(2022\)](#). *The Teens Slipping Through the Cracks on Dating Apps*. The Atlantic.

EXCERPT: The exact number of minors who secretly make profiles is hard to quantify, but estimations exist. According to a [Northwestern University study](#) published in 2018, more than 50 percent of sexually active gay and bisexual underage boys have had sex with people they met on apps such as Grindr.

...Tristien Nguyen, a 19-year-old gay man, who started a Grindr account at age 15, summed up the situation bluntly: “I only met up with creeps, I only talked to creeps, and it changed my viewpoint on older people in my community.” He felt deeply unsettled that so many men were willing to meet up after learning his true age. “Some of them were old enough to be my grandpa,” he told me about the people who messaged him. Nguyen’s profile was flagged and taken down several times, but each time he found that making a new one was easy.

...he [GBH News Center for Investigative Reporting found](#) that from 2015 to 2021, more than 100 men—including police officers, teachers, and priests—were charged in the United States with crimes related to sexually assaulting minors or attempting to engage in a sexual act with a minor through Grindr.

...Similarly, the United Kingdom’s Sunday Times [has reported](#) that, from 2015 to 2019, there were at least 30 cases of child rape and 60 cases of children being otherwise sexually exploited on dating apps in the U.K. (Both Tinder and Grindr emphasized their efforts to keep minors off their platform in statements to The Sunday Times.)

10.2.3 essay/studies on young kids and getting involved through livestreaming services, fb, ig, tiktok, etc.

* * * * *

10.3 DATING APPS WITHIN LGBTQ+ COMMUNITIES

10.3.1 [Obarska, Szymczak, Lewczuk, & Gola \(2020\)](#). Threats to Mental Health Facilitated by Dating Applications Use Among Men Having Sex With Men. *Frontiers in Psychiatry*.

ABSTRACT: In the last years, dating applications (DAs) have had a significant impact on the way in which people seek sexual and romantic relationships. Social groups, such as men having sex with men (MSM), who can experience discrimination and social isolation, find DAs especially engaging and helpful in finding sexual partners. Previous studies have provided evidence showing vulnerability to mental health problems among the MSM population—these problems can be potentially facilitated by DAs use.

Excessive use of DAs is associated with lower well-being and life satisfaction, depression, higher substance use, and lower sleep quality. Therefore, there is a need for a better understanding of psychological functioning and risk factors associated with the use of DAs among MSM, which we focus on in this review. We also discuss two relatively new research areas: compulsive sexual behavior disorder and chemsex, and their relation to geosocial-networking mobile technologies. Finally, we point out the limitations of available studies on the mental health of MSM using DAs and propose further research directions.

10.3.2 [Jaspal \(2017\)](#). Gay Men's Construction and Management of Identity on Grindr. *Sexuality & Culture*.

ABSTRACT: This study explores gay men's construction and management of identity on Grindr. A sample of gay men was interviewed and the data were analyzed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis. **The following themes are outlined: (1) constructing and re-constructing identities on Grindr; (2) bolstering sexual self-efficacy; (3) managing online and offline identities.** Despite the apparent social psychological benefits of geospatial gay social networking applications, **the pressures of coercive norms on the application as well as perceived "addiction" to it can result in threats to identity, thereby challenging social and psychological wellbeing.**

10.3.3 [Zervoulis, Smith, Reed, & Dinos \(2020\)](#). Use of 'gay dating apps' and its relationship with individual well-being and sense of community in men who have sex with men. *Psychology & Sexuality*.

ABSTRACT: There is growing literature and empirical work that is investigating if and how mobile phone and tablet dating apps are influencing the lives of their users. An online questionnaire-based study was developed to investigate how men who have sex with men (MSM) use 'gay dating apps' (GDAs), and how such use may relate to different aspects of their lives on an individual and on a collective level. The study

included data from 191 MSM living in the UK with varying levels of GDAs use and reasons for using them. **Beyond some descriptive information on use of GDAs, the findings showed that, overall, high users of GDAs report a lower sense of community, higher levels of loneliness and lower levels of satisfaction with life. Still, there is some evidence that those MSM who use GDAs mainly for sexual encounters report higher levels of self-esteem and of satisfaction with life compared to those who use GDAs mainly for other reasons.** It appears that such GDAs cater effectively for those looking for sexual partners, but may have negative implications for those who look for other types of relationships and interactions.

10.3.4 [Lauckner, Truszczynski, Lambert, Kottamasu, Meherally, Schipani-McLaughlin, Taylor, & Hansen \(2019\).](#) “Catfishing,” cyberbullying, and coercion: An exploration of the risks associated with dating app use among rural sexual minority males. *Journal of Gay & Lesbian Mental Health*.

ABSTRACT: This qualitative study (N = 20) examined the online and mobile dating app use of sexual minority males living in non-metropolitan areas. Many participants reported negative experiences while using dating sites or apps. **Specifically, they discussed instances of deception or “catfishing,” discrimination, racism, harassment, and sexual coercion (often mentioned in the context of young, sexually inexperienced men).** The results indicate that the use of dating apps could pose mental health risks due to such negative and traumatic experiences. Future research should explore the health and mental health impacts of dating app use in order to improve care and services for the sexual minority male population.

10.3.5 [Mitchell \(2020\).](#) A profile of single Americans. *Pew Research Center’s Social & Demographic Trends Project*.

EXCERPT: [Previous research](#) suggests that online dating is a particularly common way to meet for populations with a small pool of potential partners, such as LGB daters. The survey finds that partnered LGB adults are just as likely to have met their partner online (28%) as through friends and family (24%). This is far higher than the share of straight Americans who met their partner online (11%). Even when controlling for the fact that LGB adults tend to be younger than their straight counterparts, they are still much more likely to have met their partner online. For example, among partnered LGB adults younger than 40, 32% met their partner online compared with 17% of straight adults in

the same age group.⁴ Single LGB adults are also [more likely](#) than single straight adults to be currently online dating (37% vs. 24%).

FIGURE:

Meeting online is one of the most popular ways for LGB adults to meet partners

% of partnered adults in each group saying they first met their spouse or partner ...

	Online	Through friends or family	Through work	Through school	At a place of worship	At a bar or restaurant	Somewhere else
All partnered adults	12	32	18	17	5	8	8
Ages 18-29	21	31	13	25	4	2	4
30-49	15	34	17	15	4	8	6
50-64	8	30	21	16	5	10	9
65+	5	30	20	15	5	10	15
Urban	14	31	16	16	5	8	10
Suburban	14	29	19	17	5	8	7
Rural	8	37	17	17	4	8	9
Straight	11	32	19	17	5	8	9
Gay, lesbian or bisexual	28	24	15	16	1	9	7

Note: "Partnered adults" are those who are married, living with a partner or in a committed romantic relationship. Share of respondents who didn't offer an answer not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Oct. 16-28, 2019.

"Nearly Half of U.S. Adults Say Dating Has Gotten Harder for Most People in the Last 10 Years"

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10.4 SEXUAL ASSAULT, CATFISHING, AND DATING SAFETY

Catfishing, stalking, sexual assault...

10.5 GHOSTING, BREADCRUMMING, AND PHUBBING

10.5.1 [Roberts, & David \(2016\)](#). My life has become a major distraction from my cell phone: Partner phubbing and relationship satisfaction among romantic partners. *Computers in Human Behavior*.

ABSTRACT: Partner phubbing (Pphubbing) can be best understood as the extent to which an individual uses or is distracted by his/her cell phone while in the company of his/her relationship partner. The present study is the first to investigate the oft-occurring behavior of Pphubbing and its impact on relationship satisfaction and personal well-being. In Study 1, a nine-item scale was developed to measure Pphubbing. The scale was found to be highly reliable and valid. Study 2 assessed the study's proposed relationships among a sample of 145 adults. **Results suggest that Pphubbing's impact on relationship satisfaction is mediated by conflict over cell phone use.** One's attachment style was found to moderate the Pphubbing – cell phone conflict relationship. **Those with anxious attachment styles reported higher levels of cell phone conflict than those with less anxious attachment styles. Importantly, Pphubbing was found to indirectly impact depression through relationship satisfaction and ultimately life satisfaction.** Given the ever-increasing use of cell phones to communicate between romantic partners, the present research offers insight into the process by which such use may impact relationship satisfaction and personal well-being. Directions for future research are discussed.

10.5.2 [Navarro, Larrañaga, Yubero, & Villora \(2020\)](#). Psychological Correlates of Ghosting andBreadcrumbing Experiences: A Preliminary Study among Adults. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*.

ABSTRACT: The present study aimed to examine differences in three psychological constructs (satisfaction with life, loneliness, and helplessness) among adults experiencing ghosting and breadcrumbing. A sample of 626 adults (303 males and 323 females), aged from 18 to 40 years, completed an online survey asking to indicate whether someone they considered a dating partner had ghosted or breadcrumbing them in the last year and to complete three different scales regarding satisfaction with life, loneliness, and helplessness. The results showed that those participants who had indicated experiencing breadcrumbing or the combined forms (both breadcrumbing and ghosting) reported less satisfaction with life, and more helplessness and self-perceived loneliness. **The results from the regression models showed that suffering breadcrumbing would significantly increase the likelihood of experiencing less satisfaction with life, and of having more feelings of loneliness and helplessness.**

However, no significant relation was found between ghosting and any of the examined psychological correlates.

10.5.3 [Timmermans, Hermans, & Oprea \(2021\)](#). Gone with the wind: Exploring mobile daters' ghosting experiences. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*.

ABSTRACT: This study explores 328 mobile daters' (63% females; 86% heterosexuals) experiences with ghosting, using both open- and close-ended questions. First, we used thematic analysis to explore mobile dating app users' motivations to ghost, the reported consequences of experiencing ghosting and reported strategies to cope with having been ghosted. Next, quantitative analyses were carried out to predict the likelihood of ghosting other users and which factors contribute to experiencing ghosting as more painful. **As both our qualitative and quantitative analyses suggest, experiencing ghosting on a dating app can be quite painful and has an impact on users' self-esteem and mental well-being.** However, our findings on ghosters' motives also stress a nuanced perspective on ghosting behavior, given that it is not necessarily done with harmful or conscious intent. As such, our findings also hold practical implications given that insights into mechanisms to cope with ghosting can help dating app users to rationalize their ghosting experience and thus limit its impact.

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10.6 TRENDS IN SEX FREQUENCY, DATING, AND MARRIAGE

10.6.1 [Ingraham \(2019\)](#). The share of americans not having sex has reaced a record high. *Washington Post*.

EXCEPRT: The share of U.S. adults reporting no sex in the past year reached an all-time high in 2018, underscoring a three-decade trend line marked by an aging population and higher numbers of unattached people.

But among the 23 percent of adults — or nearly 1 in 4 — who spent the year in a celibate state, a much larger than expected number of them were 20-something men. For most of the past three decades, 20-something men and women reported similar rates of sexlessness. But that has changed in recent years. Since 2008, the share of men younger than 30 reporting no sex has nearly tripled, to 28 percent. That's a much

steeper increase than the 8 percentage point increase reported among their female peers.

There are several potential explanations for this, Twenge said. [Labor force participation among young men has fallen](#), particularly in the aftermath of the last recession.

Researchers also see a “connection between labor force participation and stable relationships,”

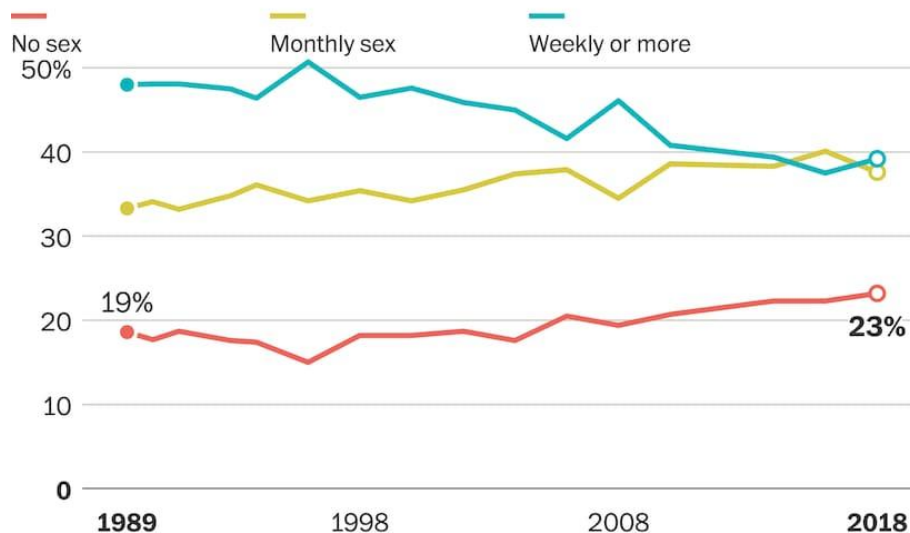
...Young men also are more likely to be living with their parents than young women: In 2014, for instance, [35 percent of men age 18 to 34 were living in their parents' home](#), compared with 29 percent of women in that age group. At the risk of stating the obvious, “when you’re living at home it’s probably harder to bring sexual partners into your bedroom,” Twenge said.

One final factor that may be affecting Americans’ sexual habits at all ages is technology. “There are a lot more things to do at 10 o’clock at night now than there were 20 years ago,” Twenge said. “Streaming video, social media, console games, everything else.”

FIGURE 1:

More than ever, Americans aren't having sex

Percentage of Americans reporting no sex, monthly sex, or sex weekly or more in the past year



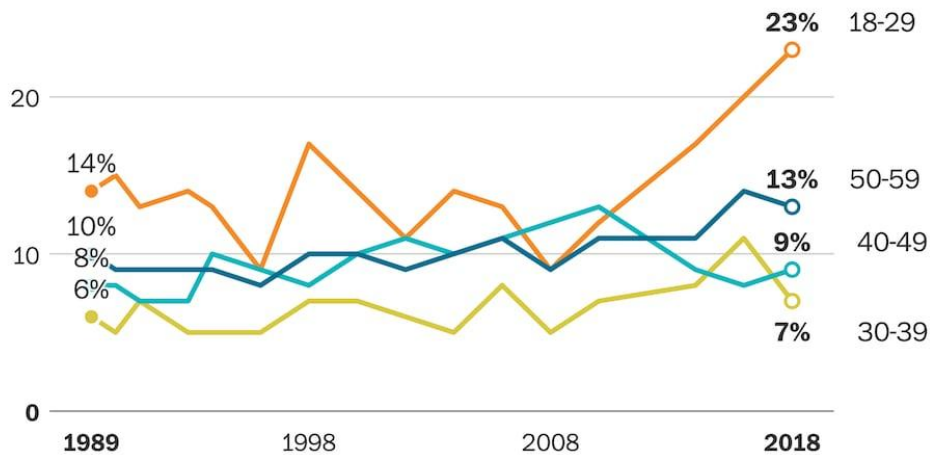
Source: General Social Survey

THE WASHINGTON POST

FIGURE 2:

Lack of sex is driven mainly by the young

Percent reporting no sex in the past year, by age



Note: Rates of no sex among adults over age 60 have consistently hovered around 50 percent and are not shown here.

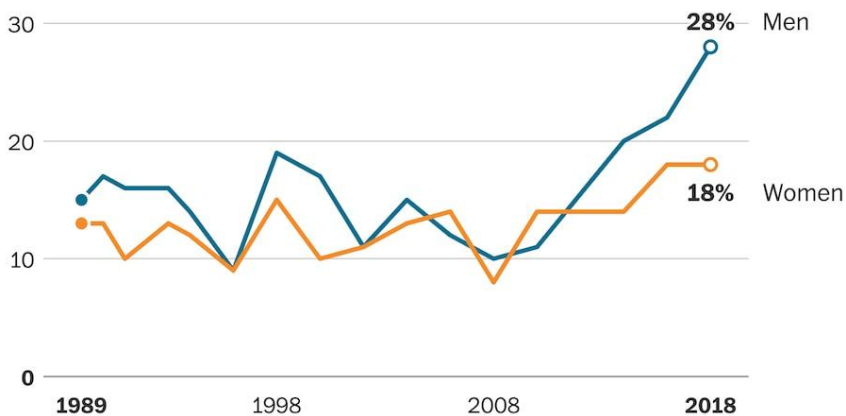
Source: General Social Survey

THE WASHINGTON POST

FIGURE 3:

Young men driving the decline in sex

Share of men and women between ages 18 and 30 reporting no sex in the past year



Source: General Social Survey

THE WASHINGTON POST

10.7.2 [Lehman \(2020\)](#). Fewer American high schoolers having sex than ever before.
Institute for Family Studies.

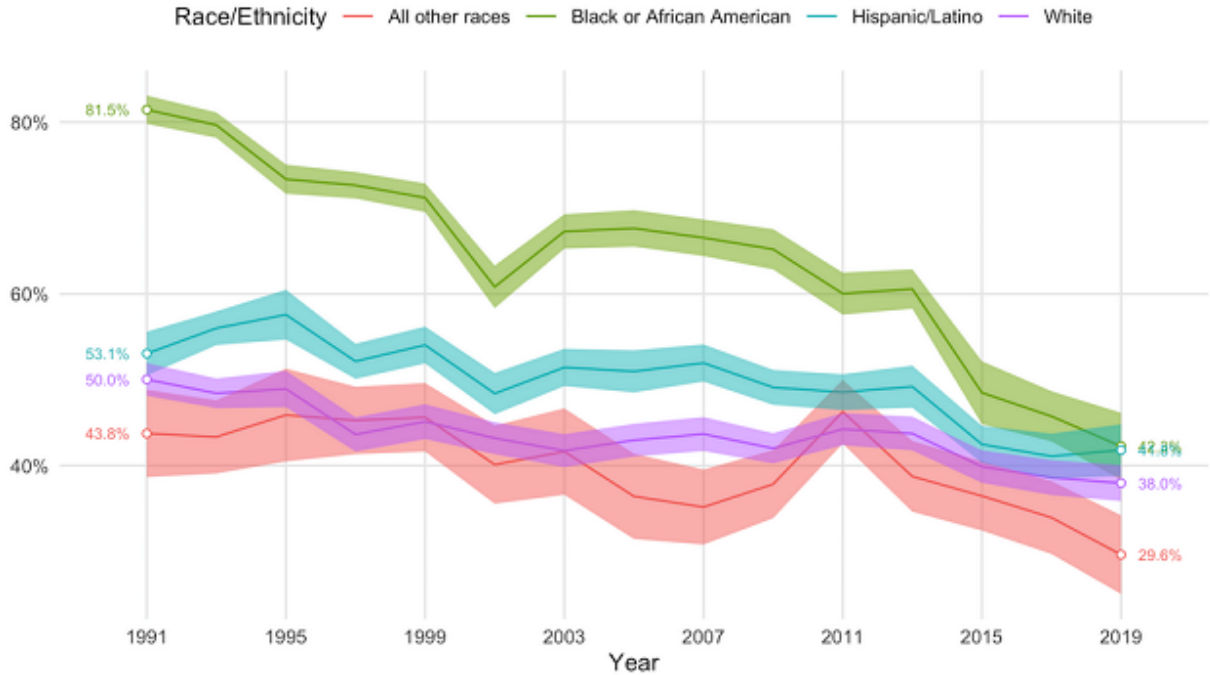
EXCERPT: Fewer than 40% of American high schoolers have ever had sexual intercourse, a decline of over 15 percentage points since the early 1990s. The historic drop is one of the findings in the [2019 iteration of the Youth Risk Behavior Survey \(YRBS\)](#), a biannual survey administered by the CDC that tracks risky behaviors, including sexual intercourse, among America's high schoolers. Administered to high school students across the country since 1991, the YRBS offers one of the more detailed longitudinal views of the state of high school sexual activity.

What this year's report shows is yet another drop in that activity, consistent with the more or less continuous trend since 1991. Closer examination reveals that most teens are having less sex and delaying sex longer, and that sexually-active teens have fewer lifetime sexual partners. That confirms other data indicating that American teenagers are far more risk averse than their parents, challenging the popular media representation of an increasingly sexualized adolescent life.

In 2019, some 38.4% of high schoolers reported that they had ever had sex, down from 39.5% in 2017, 46% in 2009, and 54% in 1991. (The YRBS only tracks frequency of "sexual intercourse" and does not ask about other sex-related but non-intercourse activities.)

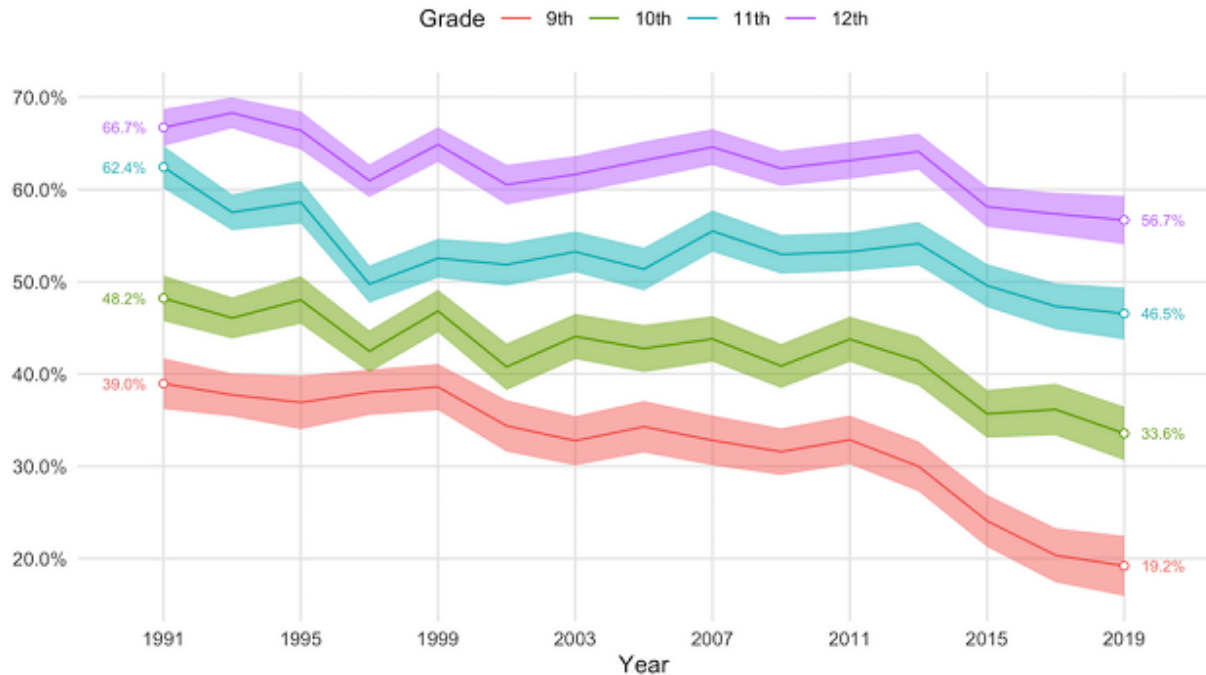
Boys were slightly more likely (39.2%) than girls (37.6%) to self-report having had sex, a disparity that appears across most surveys and likely represents response bias. Just 27.4% of teens were currently sexually active, a decline from 28.7% a year ago, 34.2% a decade ago, and 37.5% in 1991.

Share of High Schoolers Who Have Ever Had Sex, by Race, 1991 - 2019



Source: YRBS

Share of High Schoolers Who Have Ever Had Sex, by Grade, 1991 - 2019



Source: YRBS

10.6.3 [Herbenick, Rosenberg, Golzarri-Arroyo, Fortenberry, & Fu \(2022\)](#). Changes in Penile-Vaginal Intercourse Frequency and Sexual Repertoire from 2009 to 2018: Findings from the National Survey of Sexual Health and Behavior. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*.

ABSTRACT: Solo and partnered sexual behaviors are relevant to health, well-being, and relationships. Recent research shows that sexual frequency has declined in the U.S. and in other countries; however, measurement has been imprecise. We used data from 14- to 49-year-old participants in the 2009 and 2018 waves of the National Survey of Sexual Health and Behavior (NSSHB), a confidential U.S. nationally representative survey that is conducted online. We aimed to: (1) assess changes in frequency of past-year penile-vaginal intercourse and (2) examine combinations of past-year sexual behaviors for each of the two waves. We hypothesized that we would observe lower frequency of penile-vaginal intercourse (PVI) from 2009 to 2018 and that we would observe greater engagement in sexual repertoires involving non-coital partnered behaviors (e.g., partnered masturbation, oral sex) in 2018 as compared to 2009. Participants were 4155 individuals from the 2009 NSSHB (Adolescents: 406 females, 414 males; Adults: 1591 women, 1744 men) and 4547 individuals from the 2018 NSSHB (Adolescents: 416 females, 411 males; Adults: 2007 women, 1713 men). Compared to adult participants in the 2009 NSSHB, **adults in the 2018 NSSHB were**

significantly more likely to report no PVI in the prior year (28% in 2018 vs. 24% in 2009). A similar difference in proportions reporting no PVI in the prior year was observed among 14–17-year-old adolescents (89% in 2018 vs. 79% in 2009).

Additionally, for both adolescents and adults, **we observed decreases in all modes of partnered sex queried and, for adolescents, decreases in solo masturbation.**

From: [Changes in Penile-Vaginal Intercourse Frequency and Sexual Repertoire from 2009 to 2018: Findings from the National Survey of Sexual Health and Behavior](#)

Sexual behavior	2009			2018		Chi-square
	More than a year ago or never	At least once in the past year	More than a year ago or never	At least once in the past year		
Adolescents (ages 14–17)						
Masturbated alone	<i>n</i>	355	453	490	320	<.001
	%	44.0	56.0	60.5	39.5	
Masturbated with a partner	<i>n</i>	707	98	757	54	<.001
	%	87.8	12.2	93.3	6.7	
Gave oral sex	<i>n</i>	672	139	745	62	<.001
	%	82.8	17.2	92.3	7.7	
Received oral sex	<i>n</i>	643	168	726	79	<.001
	%	79.3	20.8	90.1	9.9	
Penile-vaginal intercourse	<i>n</i>	642	165	722	90	<.001
	%	79.5	20.5	89.0	11.1	
Anal intercourse	<i>n</i>	773	36	802	14	.001
	%	95.6	4.4	98.3	1.7	

<i>Adults (ages 18–49)</i>						
Masturbated alone	<i>n</i>	807	2144	975	2573	.898
	%	27.4	72.7	27.5	72.5	
Masturbated with a partner	<i>n</i>	1708	1238	2356	1201	<.001
	%	58.0	42.0	66.2	33.8	
Gave oral sex	<i>n</i>	1029	1939	1408	2151	<.001
	%	34.7	65.3	39.6	60.4	
Received oral sex	<i>n</i>	977	1990	1345	2216	<.001
	%	32.9	67.1	37.8	62.2	
Penile-vaginal intercourse	<i>n</i>	691	2254	998	2556	<.001
	%	23.5	76.5	28.1	71.9	
Anal intercourse	<i>n</i>	2353	588	2948	636	.020
	%	80.0	20.0	82.3	17.8	

10.6.4 [Lei & South \(2021\)](#). Explaining the Decline in Young Adult Sexual Activity in the United States. *Journal of Marriage and Family*.

ABSTRACT: OBJECTIVE: The main goal of this study is to identify the causes of the decline in sexual activity among young adults in the United States.

BACKGROUND: The frequency with which young adults have sexual intercourse has declined over recent decades, but the sources of this trend are not well understood. Trends in economic insecurity, relationship formation, parental coresidence, use of electronic media, psychological distress, and alcohol consumption have all been suggested as possible causes.

METHOD: Logistic regression models of recent sexual activity were estimated using longitudinal data from the Transition to Adulthood Supplement of the Panel Study of Income Dynamics for respondents ages 18 to 23 (n = 3,213) spanning 2007 to 2017. Mediation analysis was performed to identify the explanatory factors that account for the decline in sexual activity. Fixed-effect logistic regression models were estimated for a subset of respondents (n = 655) to help identify causal effects.

RESULTS: Of the possible explanations considered, the **decline in the formation of romantic relationships and decreasing alcohol consumption are the most important, but declining earnings and increasing use of computer games also play important roles.** Overall, the measured explanations explain three-quarters of the decline in young adult sexual activity. Within individuals, forming a romantic relationship, going to college, and alcohol consumption likely have causal effects on the probability of engaging in sexual intercourse.

CONCLUSION: Trends in the formation of romantic relationships, alcohol consumption, computer gaming, and earnings explain a substantial portion of the decline in young adult sexual activity.

CHART:

Table 3. *Logistic Regression Models of Engaging in Sexual Intercourse: Panel Study of Income Dynamics Transition to Adulthood Supplement, 2007 to 2017*

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Year of observation	-0.040***	-0.034**	-0.035**	-0.037**	-0.032**	-0.046***	-0.040***	-0.030**	-0.013
Age	0.171***	0.108***	0.108***	0.136***	0.170***	0.174***	0.170***	0.112***	-0.029
Female	0.275**	0.326***	-0.191*	0.255**	0.216*	0.268**	0.278**	0.384***	-0.115
Race and ethnicity									
White (ref.)									
Black	0.070	0.161	0.437**	0.102	0.080	0.039	0.073	0.213†	0.718***
Hispanic	-0.106	-0.079	-0.014	-0.074	-0.129	-0.114	-0.108	-0.005	0.148
Other	-0.582*	-0.482†	-0.528*	-0.575*	-0.571*	-0.601*	-0.584*	-0.453†	-0.305
College status									
Not enrolled (ref.)									
Not enrolled, college graduate	-0.285†	-0.308†	-0.229	-0.327*	-0.316†	-0.325*	-0.295†	-0.426*	-0.501**
Enrolled in college	-0.309**	-0.226*	-0.057	-0.357***	-0.325**	-0.362***	-0.316**	-0.387***	-0.196
Self-rated health	0.052	0.034	0.033	0.044	0.041	0.053	0.037	0.069	0.022
Religious attendance	-0.199***	-0.196***	-0.254***	-0.195***	-0.203***	-0.201***	-0.201***	-0.166***	-0.212***
Household structure									
Intact family (ref.)									
Biological and stepparent	0.427**	0.409**	0.445**	0.410**	0.430**	0.433**	0.428**	0.453***	0.446**
Nonpartnered biological parent	0.449***	0.448***	0.496***	0.450***	0.439***	0.456***	0.448***	0.479***	0.524***
Parental education	-0.024	-0.024	-0.010	-0.034	-0.023	-0.024	-0.022	-0.040†	-0.038†
Employed		0.087							0.022
Earnings		-0.210***							-0.130*
Earnings squared		0.029***							0.018**
Relationship status									
Not in a relationship (ref.)									
In a romantic relationship			2.092***						2.143***
Married or cohabiting			3.327***						3.504***
Coresidence with parents				-0.424***					-0.162†
Computer games					-0.124***				-0.104*
Internet use						0.104†			0.112†
Television watching						0.050			0.028
Psychological distress							-0.014		-0.010
Drinking								0.220***	0.295***
Constant	-2.207***	-1.381*	-2.060**	-1.133†	-1.859**	-2.733***	-2.062***	-1.724**	-0.440
Number of person-years	5,671	5,671	5,671	5,671	5,671	5,671	5,671	5,671	5,671
Number of persons	3,213	3,213	3,213	3,213	3,213	3,213	3,213	3,213	3,213

Note: † $p < .1$, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

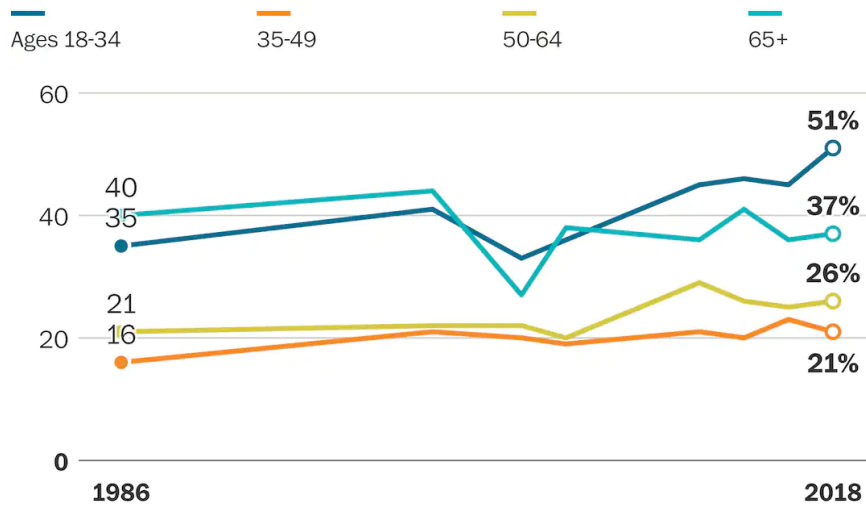
10.6.5 [Bonos & Guskin \(2019\)](#). It's not just you: New data shows that more than half of young people in America don't have a romantic partner. *Washington Post*.

EXCERPT: Spivey has a lot of company in her frustration, and in her singledom. **Just over half of Americans between the ages of 18 and 34 — 51 percent of them — said they do not have a steady romantic partner, according to data from the [General Social Survey](#) released this week.** That 2018 figure is up significantly from 33 percent in 2004 — the lowest figure since the question was first asked in 1986 — and up slightly from 45 percent in 2016. The shift has helped drive singledom to a record high among the overall public, among whom 35 percent say they have no steady partner, but only up slightly from 33 percent in 2016 and 2014.

FIGURE:

Just over half of 18- to 34-year-olds have no steady partner

Among U.S. adults



Q: Which of these statements applies to you? I am married and living in the same household as my husband or wife. I am living as married and my partner and I together live in the same household. I have a husband or wife or steady partner but we don't live in the same household. I don't have a steady partner.

Source: General Social Survey conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago

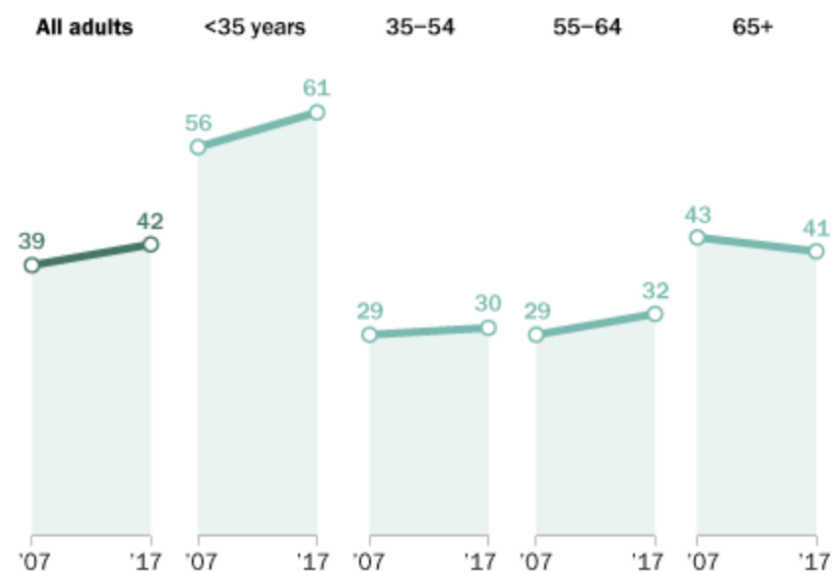
...There are several other trends that go along with the increase in young single Americans. Women are [having fewer children](#), and they're having them later in life. The median [age of first marriage is increasing](#). And according to a [2017 report from the Pew Research Center](#), among those who have never married but are open to it, most say a major reason is that they haven't found the right person.

...The GSS survey reflects similar trends from the federal Current Population Survey as [analyzed by the Pew Research Center](#). The CPS data asked about living with a spouse or partner as opposed to simply having one. The Pew analysis found 42 percent of American adults who did not live with a spouse or partner in 2017, up from 39 percent in 2007. It also found an increase in the share of adults under 35 who didn't live with a spouse or partner over that period, from 56 percent to 61 percent.

FIGURE:

A growing share of Americans are 'unpartnered'

% of adults without a spouse/partner present, by age



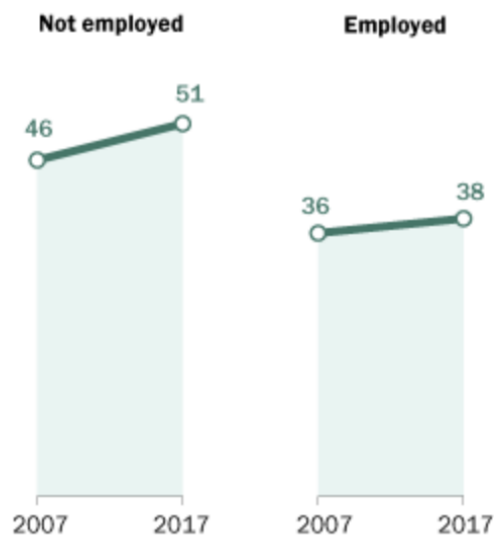
Note: Unpartnered adults are those without a spouse/partner present.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 2007 and 2017 Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplement (IPUMS).

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Among working age adults, the share living without a partner has increased more among those not employed

% of adults ages 18-64 without a spouse/partner present



Note: Unpartnered adults are those without a spouse/partner present. Not employed adults include the unemployed and those not in the labor force.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 2007 and 2017 Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplement (IPUMS).

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...According to the General Social Survey data, 41 percent of Democrats are without a steady partner, compared with 29 percent of Republicans. Black Americans are more likely than white Americans to not have a steady partner: 51 percent vs. 32 percent, respectively.

The share of non-partnered Americans is also higher among those unemployed — 54 percent, up from 44 percent in 2016. Just under a third — 32 percent — of employed adults don't have a steady partner.

10.6.6 [Curtin & Sutton \(2018\)](#). Marriage rates in the United States, 1900-2018.

EXCERPT: Studies have shown that adults in the United States are increasingly postponing marriage, and that a record number of current youth and young adults are

projected to forego marriage altogether. Marriage has been shown to be correlated with positive health outcomes and longevity, and a recent report showed that age-adjusted death rates for both males and females are lowest for those who were married at the time of death.

...Much variation can be seen in marriage rates over the 1900–2018 period, with the most pronounced fluctuations occurring during the 1930s and 1940s, at the time of the Great Depression and World War II. Marriage rates ranged between 9.3 (per 1,000 population) and 12.0 from 1900 to 1929 and then declined to a relative low of 7.9 in 1932. The marriage rate more than doubled between 1932 and 1946 when it reached an all-time high of 16.4, and then it generally declined to 8.4 in 1958 and stabilized at 8.5 during 1959–1962.

Marriage rates increased beginning in 1963, reaching a relative peak of 10.9 in 1972. The rate then fell to 9.9 during 1976 and 1977 before increasing to 10.6 in 1980–1982. From 1982 to 2009, marriage rates almost steadily declined, before stabilizing from 2009 to 2017 at a range between 6.8 and 7.0. From 2017 to 2018, the rate dropped 6%, from 6.9 per 1,000 population to 6.5, the lowest of the 1900–2018 period.

United States marriage rate, 1900-2018

Rate per 1,000 population

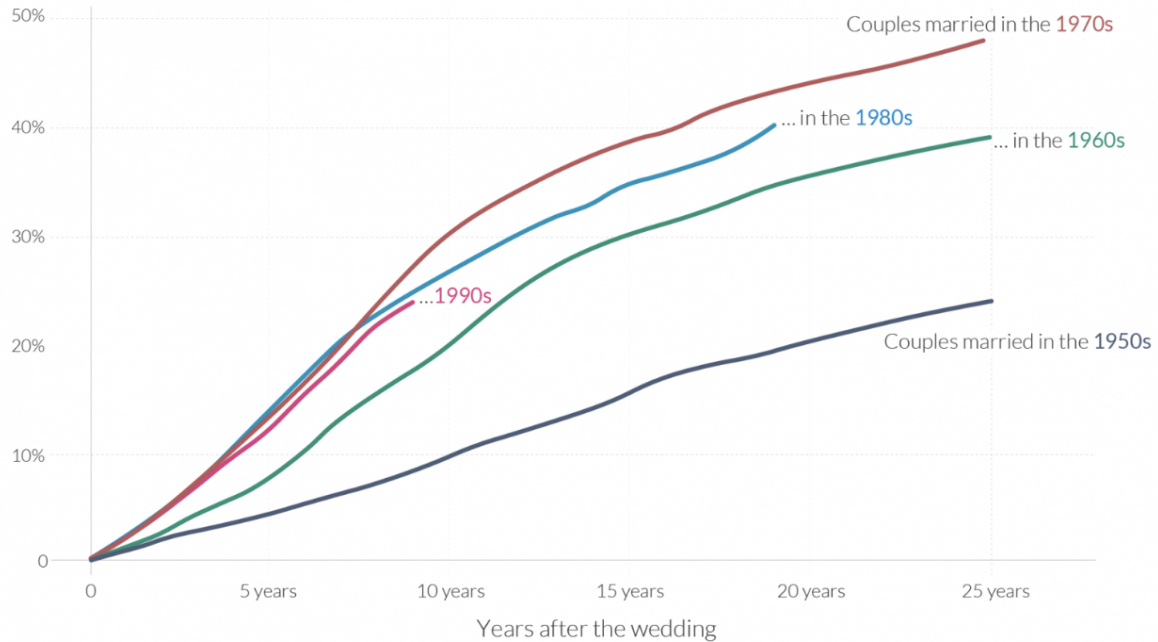


Share of marriages ending in **divorce** in the US, by year of marriage¹⁶

Share of marriages ending in divorce in the US

Shown is the share of couples in the United States who were divorced a given number of years after the wedding, broken down by the decade of marriage e.g. "1950s" represents couples married between 1950 and 1959.

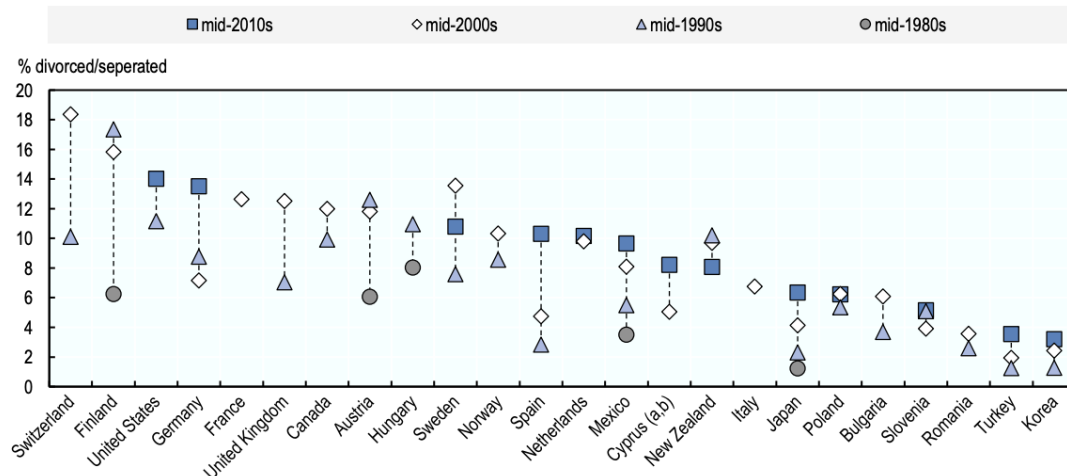
Our World
in Data



Source: Betsey Stevenson & Justin Wolfers (2007). Marriage and divorce: Changes and their driving forces.

OurWorldinData.org
Licensed under CC-BY by the author Esteban Ortiz-Ospina.

Chart SF3.2.B. Proportion of parents (16+ year-olds) that are separated or divorced, various years



Note: 'Parents' are those who report at least one child when asked the question 'Have you had any children?'. Those who report that they have not had any children are classified as 'not a parent'. For "mid-1980s", data for Japan refer to 1981, for Hungary to 1982, for Austria, Finland and Mexico to 1990. For "mid-1990s", data for Spain refer to 1995, for Austria, Bulgaria, Korea, Mexico, Norway, Sweden and Turkey to 1996, for Hungary and New Zealand to 1998, for Germany, Poland, Romania and the United States to 1999, and for Canada, Finland and Japan to 2000. For "mid-2000s", data for Korea refer to 2001, for New Zealand to 2004, for Finland, Italy, Mexico, Romania and Slovenia to 2005, for Bulgaria, Canada, Cyprus, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, and the United Kingdom to 2006, and for Spain, Switzerland and Turkey to 2007. For "early-2010s", data for Japan and Korea refer to 2010, Chile, Cyprus, Estonia, New Zealand, the Russian Federation, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey and the United States to 2011, for Australia, Mexico, the Netherlands and Poland to 2012, and for Germany to 2013.

a. See note b. to Table SF3.2.A

b. See note c. to Table SF3.2.A

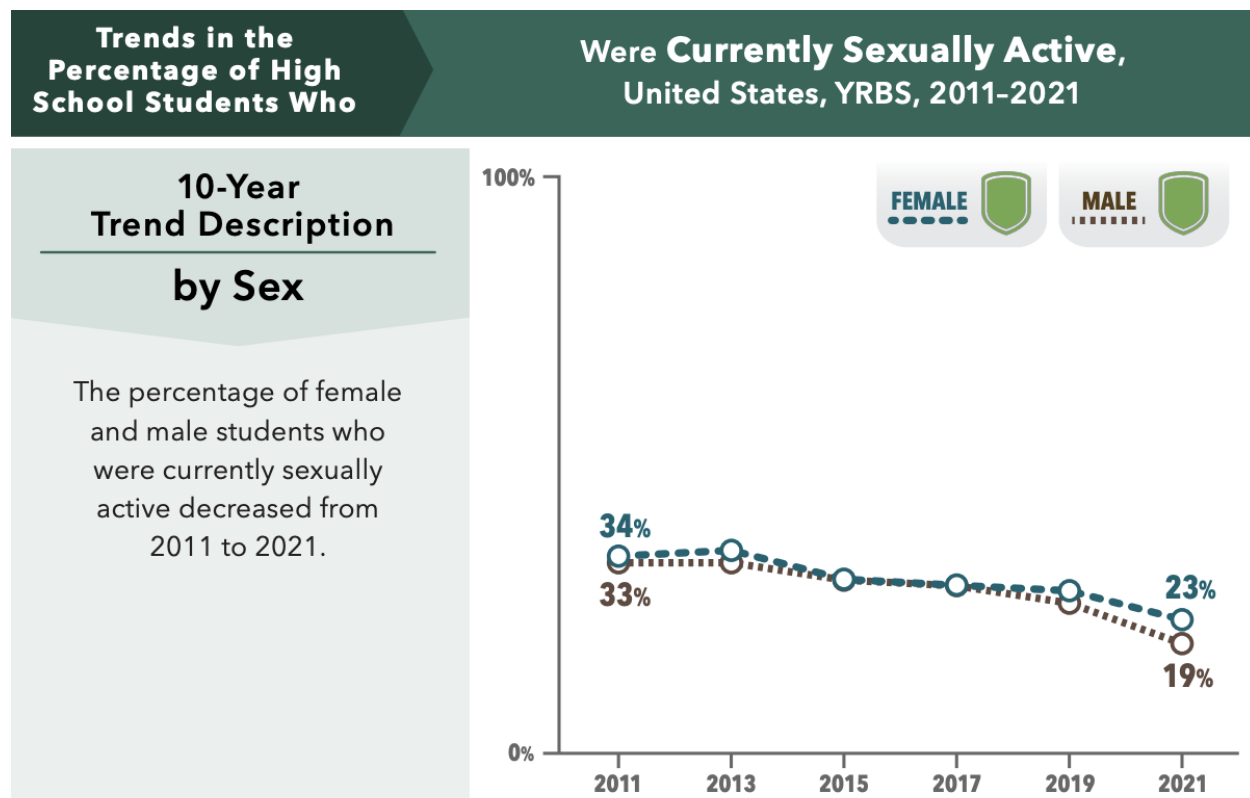
Source: World Values Survey various waves

<https://www.oecd.org/els/family/database.htm>

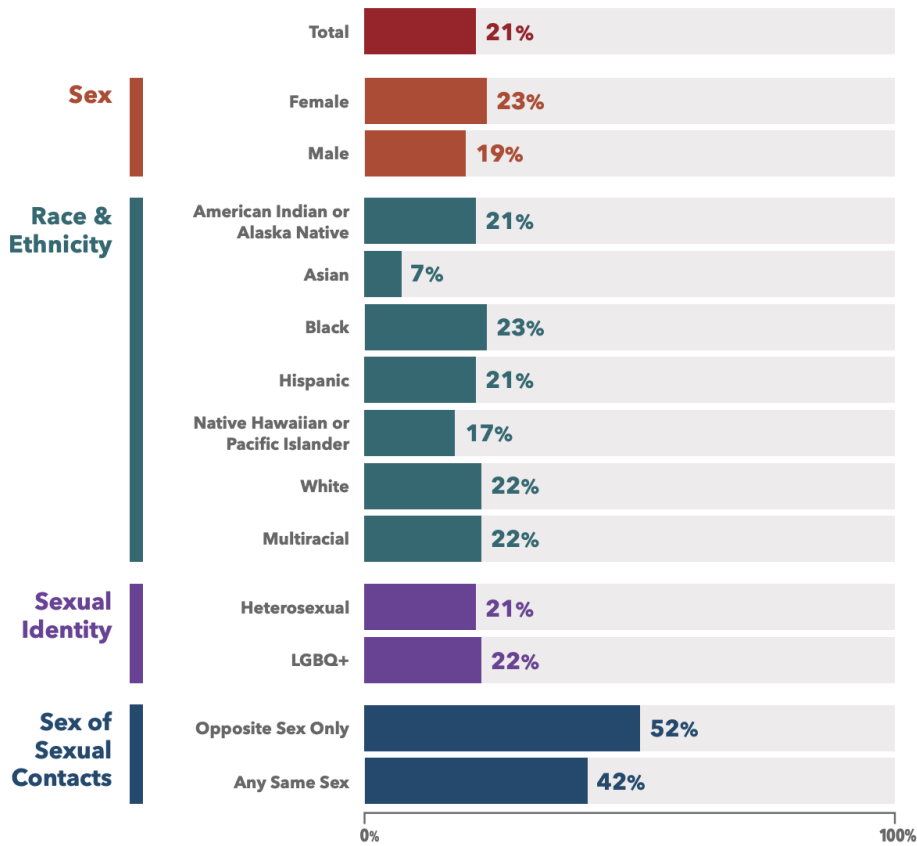
10.6.7 South & Lei (2021). Why Are Fewer Young Adults Having Casual Sex? *Socius: Sociological Research for a Dynamic World*.

ABSTRACT: Fewer young adults are engaging in casual sexual intercourse now than in the past, but the reasons for this decline are unknown. The authors use data from the 2007 through 2017 waves of the Panel Study of Income Dynamics Transition into Adulthood Supplement to quantify some of the proximate sources of the decline in the likelihood that unpartnered young adults ages 18 to 23 have recently had sexual intercourse. **Among young women, the decline in the frequency of drinking alcohol explains about one quarter of the drop in the propensity to have casual sex. Among young men, declines in drinking frequency, an increase in computer gaming, and the growing percentage who coreside with their parents all contribute significantly to the decline in casual sex.** The authors find no evidence that trends in young adults' economic circumstances, internet use, or television watching explain the recent decline in casual sexual activity.

10.6.8 [Youth Risk Behavior Survey Data Summary & Trends Report: 2011-2021](#). CDC.

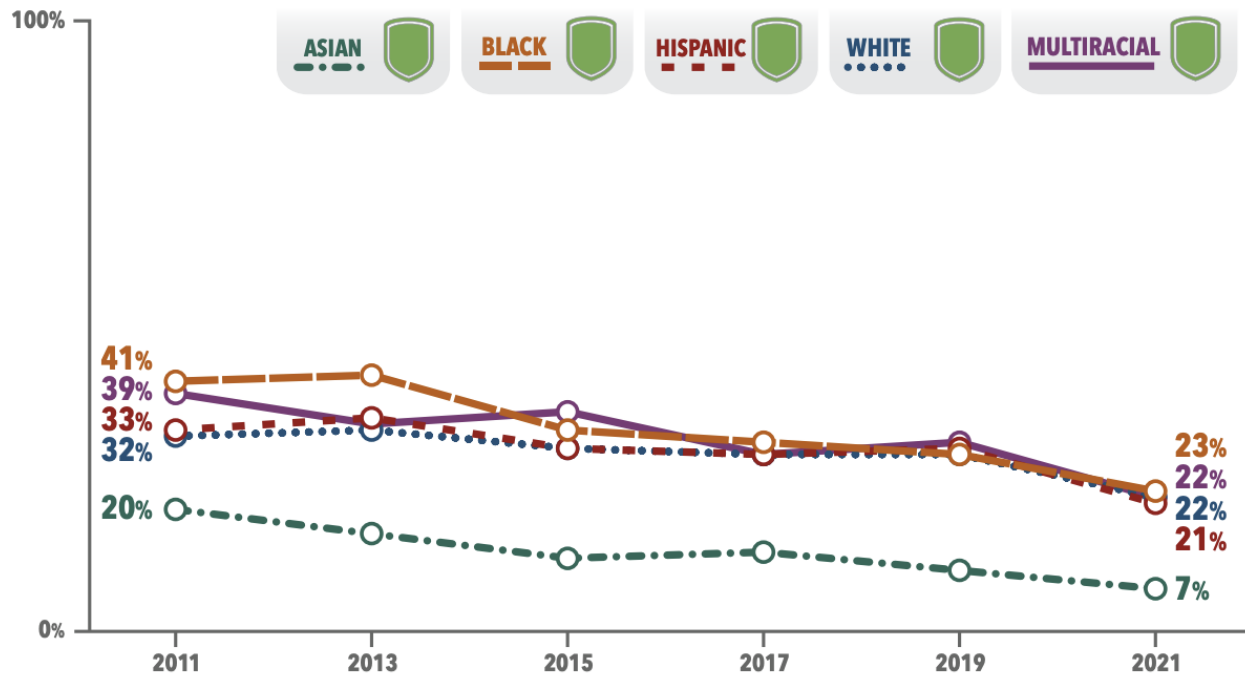


Percentage of High School Students Who
Were Currently Sexually Active,
by Demographic Characteristics, United States, YRBS, 2021



10-Year Trend Description by Race & Ethnicity

The percentage of students from each racial and ethnic group who were currently sexually active decreased from 2011 to 2021.



10.6.9 [Mitchell \(2020\)](#). A profile of single Americans. *Pew Research Center's Social & Demographic Trends Project*.

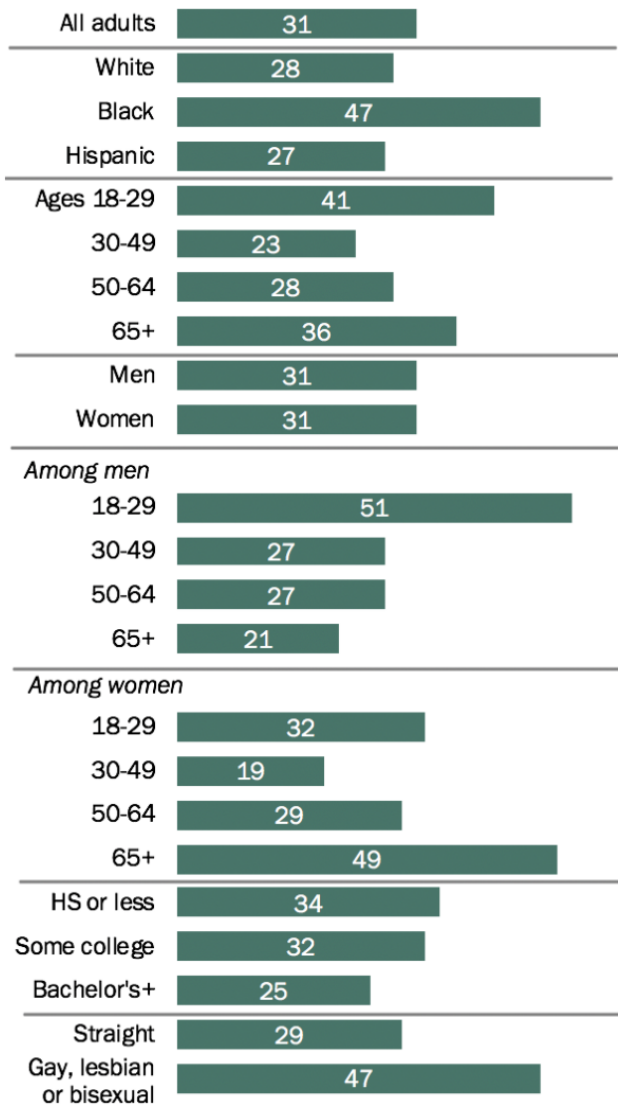
EXCERPT: While about three-in-ten U.S. adults (31%) say they are single – that is, not married, living with a partner or in a committed romantic relationship – that share varies widely across demographic groups. The youngest and oldest Americans are the most likely to be single – 41% of those ages 18 to 29 and 36% of those 65 and older say they are single, compared with 23% of those 30 to 49 and 28% of those 50 to 64.

These age differences bely huge differences by gender. Among men, those younger than 30 are by far the most likely to be single: About half of men in this age group (51%) are single, compared with only 27% of those ages 30 to 49 and 50 to 64 and 21% of men 65 and older. Women, by contrast, are by far most likely to be single later in life – roughly half of women ages 65 and older are unpartnered (49%), while those ages 30 to 49 are the least likely to be single

(19%). Roughly three-in-ten women ages 18 to 29 (32%) and 50 to 64 (29%) are single.

Share of U.S. adults who are single varies by demographic groups

% of adults in each group who are single

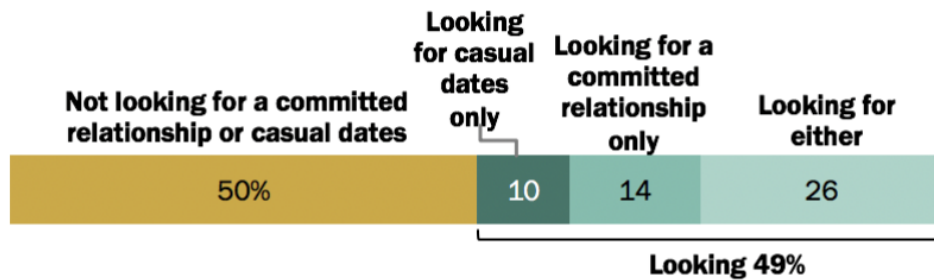


Note: "Single" adults are those who are not married, living with a partner or in a committed romantic relationship. White and Black adults include those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic. Hispanics are of any race. "Some college" includes those with an associate degree and those who attended college but did not obtain a degree.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Oct. 16-28, 2019.

Half of singles are not looking to date

% of single adults saying they are currently ...



Note: "Single adults" are those who are not married, living with a partner or in a committed romantic relationship. Figures may not add to subtotals due to rounding. Share of respondents who didn't offer an answer not shown.

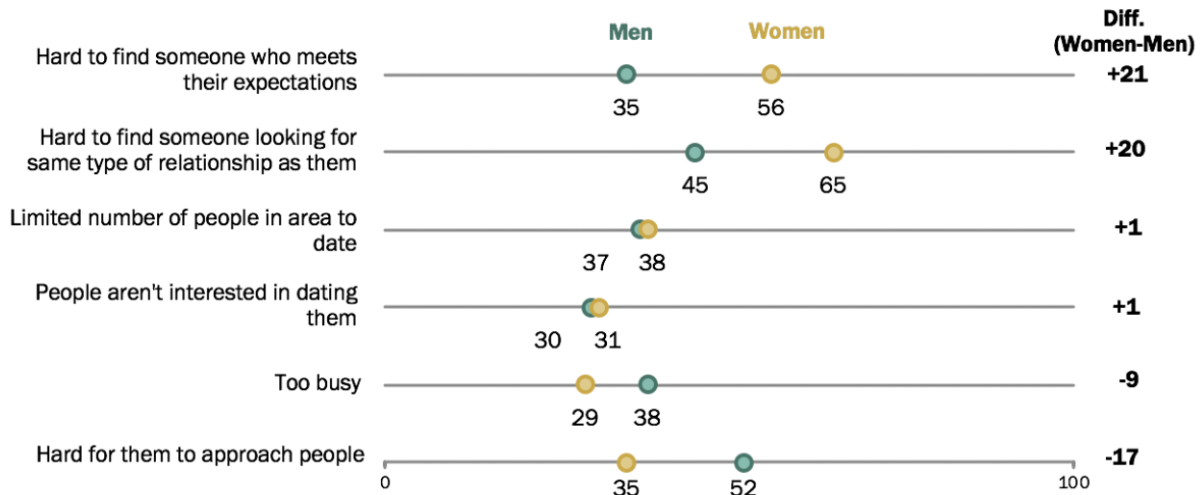
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Oct. 16-28, 2019.

"Nearly Half of U.S. Adults Say Dating Has Gotten Harder for Most People in the Last 10 Years"

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Women say it's hard to find someone who is looking for the same kind of relationship and meets their standards

% saying each of the following is a major reason it has been difficult to find people to date, among daters who have found it very or somewhat difficult in the past year



Note: "Daters" are those who are not married, living with a partner or in a committed romantic relationship and have indicated that right now they are looking for: a committed romantic relationship only, casual dates only or either a committed romantic relationship or casual dates.

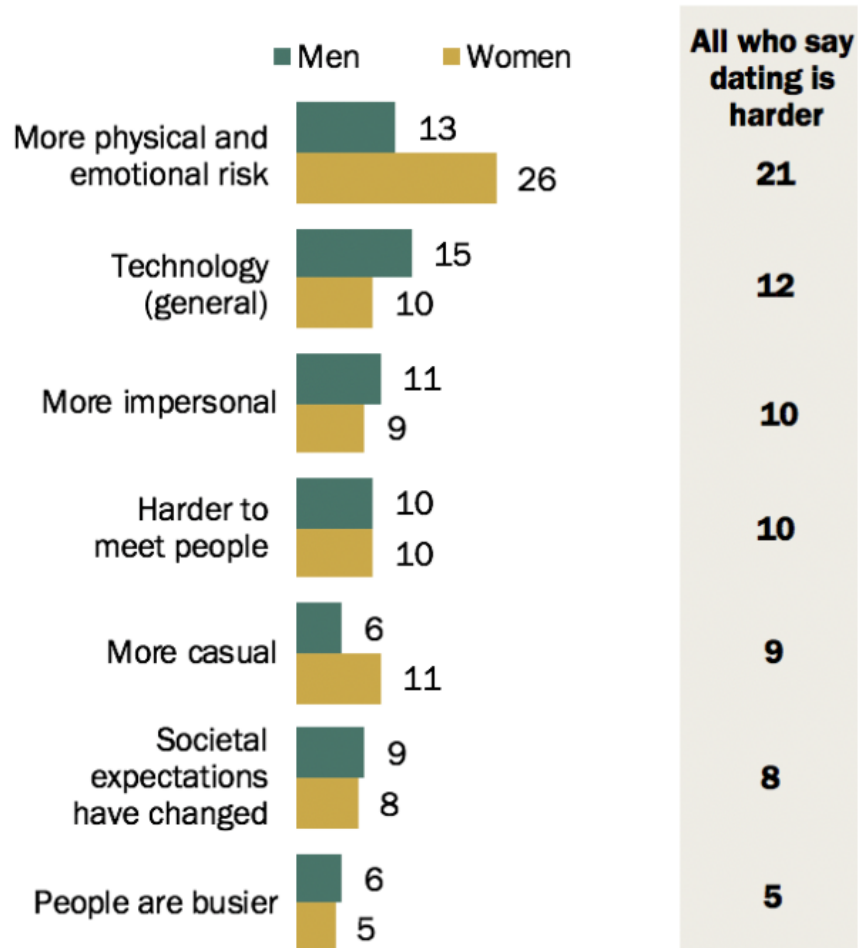
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Oct. 16-28, 2019.

"Nearly Half of U.S. Adults Say Dating Has Gotten Harder for Most People in the Last 10 Years"

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Women are twice as likely as men to say dating is harder than 10 years ago because it's riskier now

*Among those who say dating is **harder** now than it was 10 years ago for most people, % saying it is because of each of the following reasons [OPEN END]*



*Among those who say dating is **easier** now than it was 10 years ago for most people, % saying it is because of each of the following reasons [OPEN END]*

Too add:

<https://ifstudies.org/blog/the-college-dating-divide>

<https://twitter.com/AlecStapp/status/1628180622786035712>

<https://thehill.com/blogs/blog-briefing-room/3868557-most-young-men-are-single-most-young-women-are-not/>

* * * * *

10.7 UNCLASSIFIED

10.7.1 [Tyro Partners \(2019\)](#). The Dating Market: Thesis Overview.

EXCERPT: At a high level, it is important to understand that most new relationships in 2019 begin online. Traditional methods such as introductions by friends and family, meeting at work, etc. have been outmoded and are increasingly outlier outcomes.

The graphs below show what “Generation 1.0” of online dating did to matching dynamics, and then the inflection that occurred in “Generation 2.0.” Adoption in the US was slow and then exploded as the cultural taboo faded, and online dating flipped from being a cultural taboo to a cultural norm. This is now occurring in many other markets globally. The culture flipping dynamic is why dating company metrics appear to stall and then spike at seemingly strange intervals¹. In the US, the confluence of the financial crisis causing individuals to look for free ways to meet people, the inflection in smartphone penetration, and resulting shift to mobile apps caused the mix shift to radically accelerate

A conservative estimate of the percentage of new relationships begun online in 2019 is at least 65%, but likely over 75%. So, online dating now produces most new relationships. Why? From the perspective of prime reproductive age individuals, cost structures (safety, monetary, time, social frictions, etc.) have shifted, with many dropping to effectively zero. Because costs (physical safety, social stigma) have been disproportionately impactful to women, their elimination has had the effect of flipping the power dynamic in the market to favor women in prime reproductive age, though the dynamic changes with age.

The cost of instantly searching for potential mates is now effectively zero. Click a button, download the app. Photos, etc. automatically populate your profile from Facebook, Twitter, etc. A user can be looking for matches within 2 minutes. Further, the number of available potential mates is now effectively infinite, thus materially changing marginal and opportunity costs for market participants. The social costs of rejecting a potential mate are now likewise effectively zero, making introductions within existing social groups (friends, family friends, church, etc.) structurally inferior propositions given

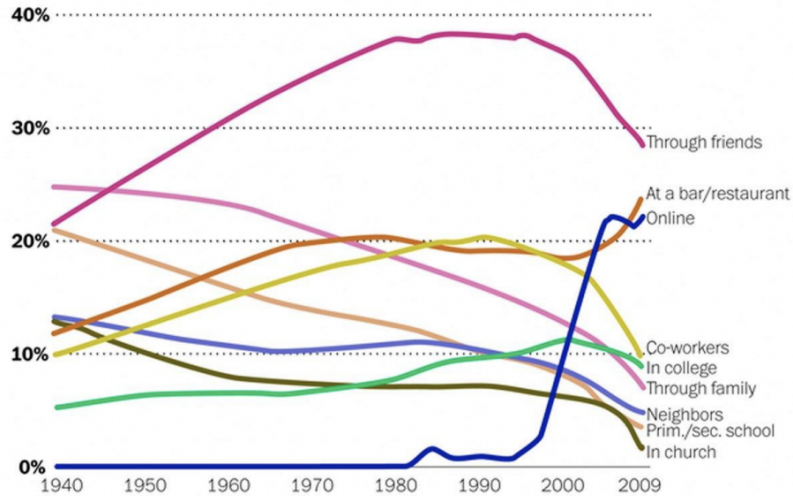
significant social and reputational risk in the event of an adverse outcome. This has led to the rise of “ghosting,” where one side of a relationship simply stops responding rather than suffer an uncomfortable break up conversation. Rude? Sure. But given no actual viable retribution mechanism, it has become the norm.

It's important to note that Facebook integration into dating with their proposed dating product reintroduces potential retribution threats and social downside. This is a primary reason why we think Facebook's dating efforts will stall. The growing generational cohorts (Gen X, Gen Z) structurally lack the balance sheet and income power to purchase many fixed assets (housing, etc.) that the Baby Boomer generation participated in, leading to a secular rise in a “renter's economy.” Because housing, transportation, etc. are now largely short-term commitments, many of the financial limitations that contributed to marriage decisions are now void, and the marginal costs of trial cohabitation are lower (12-month leases, etc.).

Reductions in marginal and opportunity costs lead individuals to exit potential or new relationships faster, and over time allow individuals to acquire more information about long term mate compatibility. People are less likely to stay in negative relationships, more likely to cut things off when red flags are spotted, and less likely to go on multiple dates when a spark is not there. This is leading to more short-term relationships, significant delays in marriage age, and increases in required marriage circumstances.

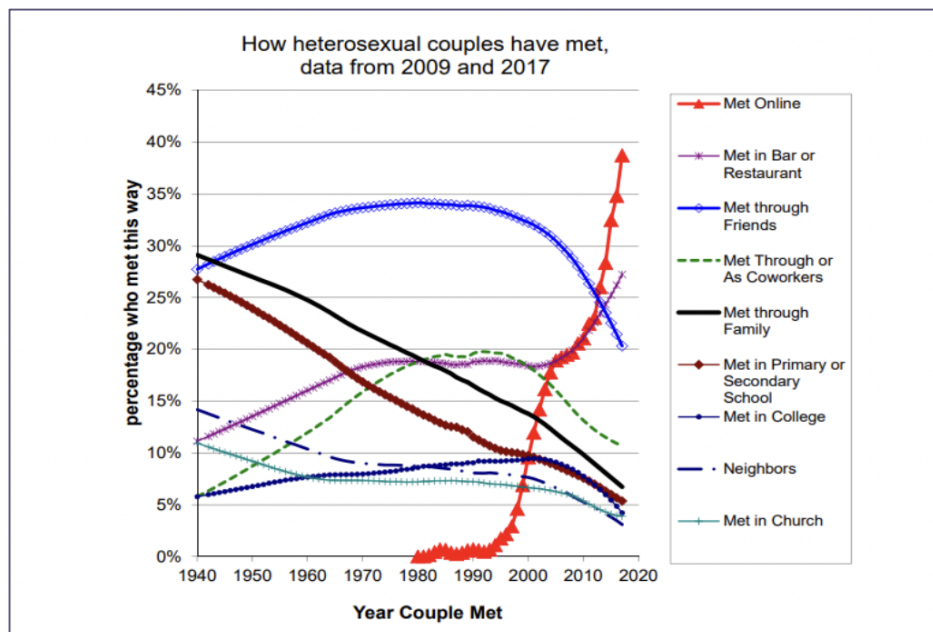
With the advent of online dating, women in prime reproductive age are in the dominant position in the dating market for the first time in human history. This comes with huge social ramifications. Setting aside local and recent context, dating has historically been drastically riskier for women than men (and it still is, but less so). Physical safety has been an ever-present issue for women in meeting potential dates, not to mention after agreeing to be alone with them on a date. In the era of online dating, women are at significantly less risk simply by not being in the immediate proximity of their prospects, and rejecting a prospect has no downside risk. Women globally also have more upside potential because they can draw from larger prospect pools than ever before. **Due to the significantly higher biological risks associated with reproduction, women are intrinsically far more selective when evaluating potential mates than males. In an online dating context, this selectivity is more apparent than ever, with significant knock-on effects for the rest of the culture. There is less pressure to "settle" than at any other time in modern history because of the availability of alternatives and the speed of interactions. This is an area ripe for further academic research.**

How straight couples met their partners



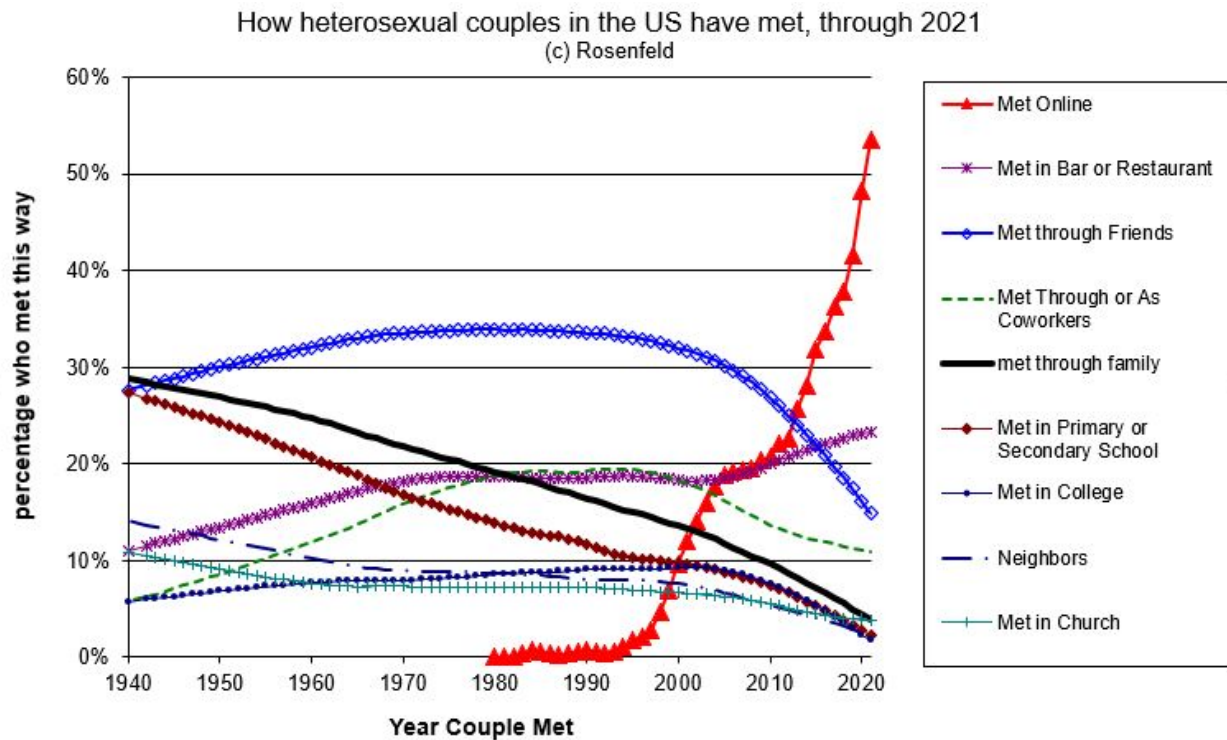
WAP0.ST/WONKBLOG

Source: Searching for a Mate: The Rise of the Internet as a Social Intermediary

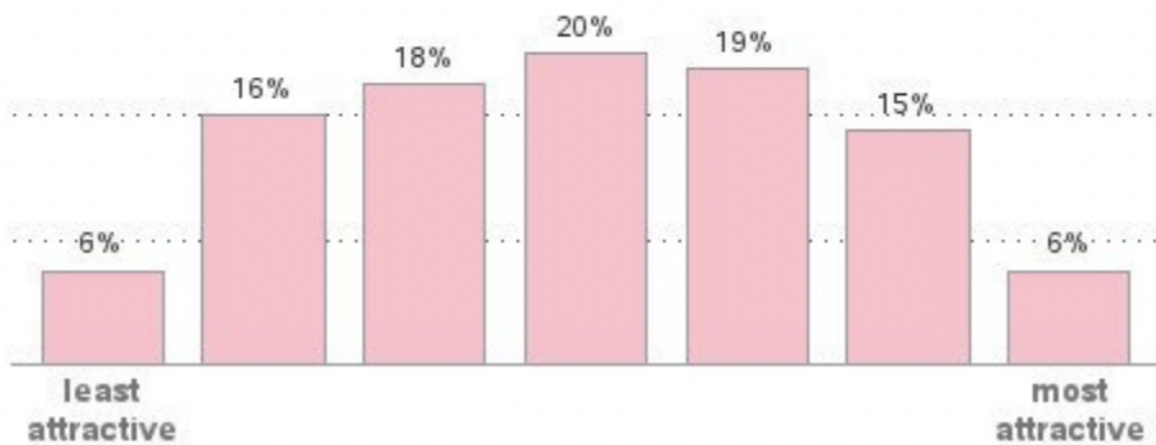


The primary explanatory factor for why the share of dating online grew rapidly is likely platform access via smartphone proliferation and the shift to mobile only websites.

UPDATED IN 2021:



How Men Rate Women on okcupid.com



How Women Rate Men

on okcupid.com

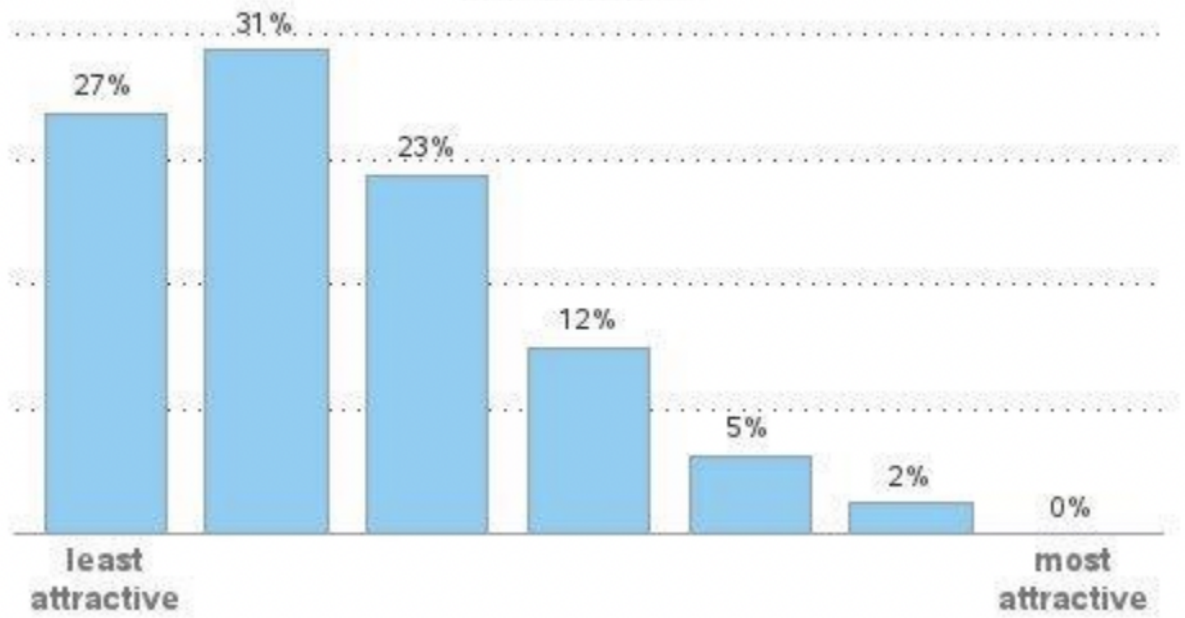
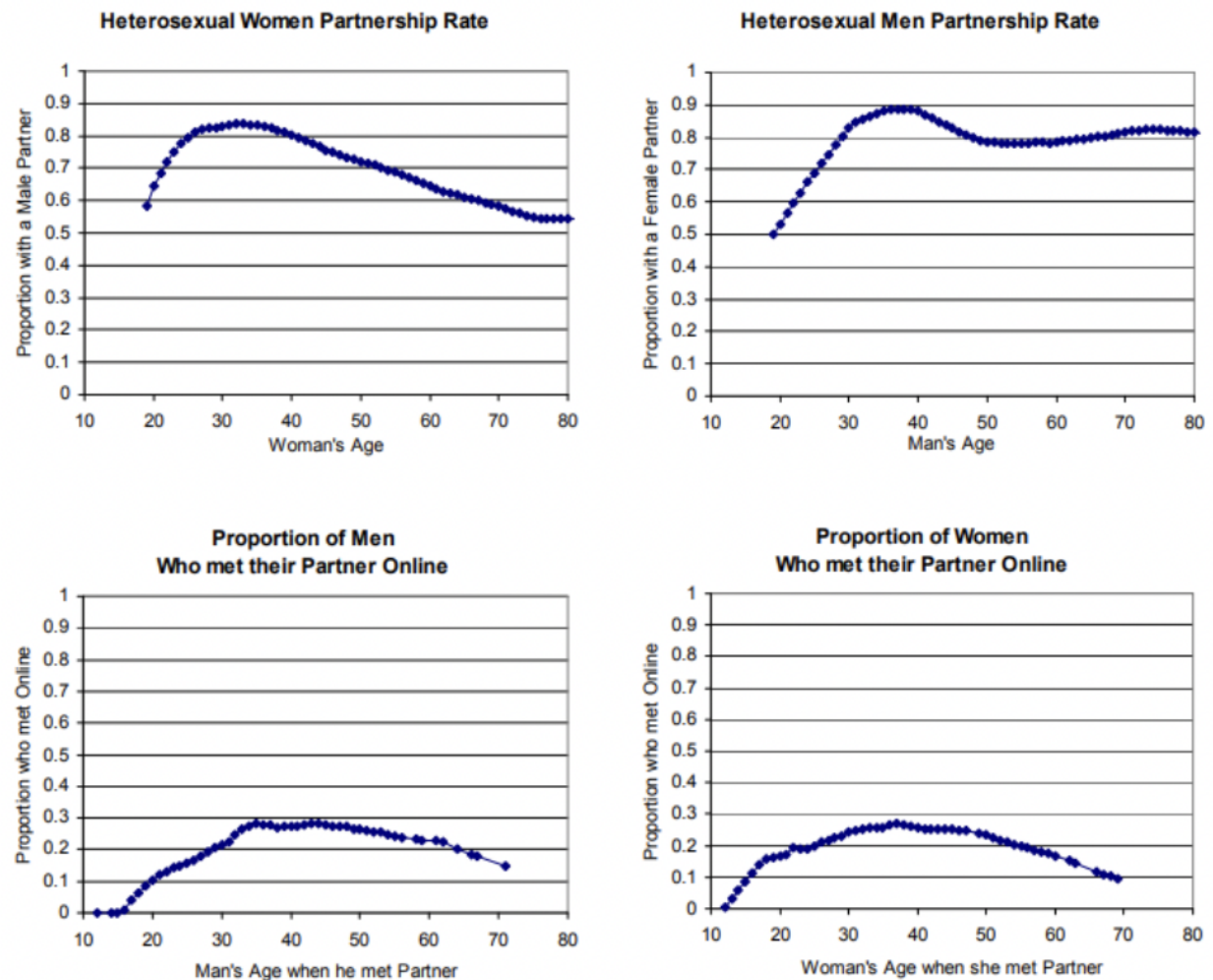


Figure 2: The relationship between Partner Availability and Meeting Online



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10.9 SOCIAL MEDIA AND DATING

10.9.1 [Dunn, & Langlais \(2020\)](#). "Oh, Snap!": A Mixed-Methods Approach to Analyzing the Dark Side of Snapchat. *The Journal of Social Media in Society*.

ABSTRACT: Snapchat, a multimedia messaging application, has over 300 million users and is currently the third most popular social media platform for young adults. Despite its popularity and unique ephemeral content, few studies examine how Snapchat is related to mental and relational health. The goal of this study therefore is to employ a mixed-methods approach to examine the dark side of Snapchat, paying close attention

to how the behaviors and ephemeral content on this platform may be detrimental for young adults' mental health and the quality of their romantic relationships. Quantitative data comes from 118 undergraduate students who completed an online survey. Qualitative data comes from 10 undergraduate students who participated in one-on-one, in-depth interviews and another 11 students who participated in two focus groups. Results reveal that intensity of Snapchat use is associated with lower mental health. **Additionally, spending time on Snapchat, communicating with others on Snapchat, monitoring ex-partners on Snapchat, and using the Snap Map feature are associated with increased jealousy in romantic relationships.** In short, Snapchat appears detrimental for young adults' mental health and romantic relationships. The study concludes with practical advice for Snapchat users that may promote mental well-being and healthy romantic relationship development.

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10.10 JOURNALISM

<https://www.vox.com/the-goods/22442114/nancy-jo-sales-nothing-personal-tinder-bumble-hinge-dating-apps>

<https://theconversation.com/from-ghosting-to-backburner-relationships-the-reasons-people-behave-so-badly-on-dating-apps-179600>

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