

Secondary Research Report

Design 481 / Autumn 2017
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Our secondary research provided us with legitimate studies regarding modern relationships that delve deeper into related topics and situations of interest to our team. Coming together to discuss these outside sources taught us more.

We learned a study has shown that there is a “myth of hookup culture.” Hookup culture, while real to an extent, is largely misunderstood and exaggerated among both young people and adults. This mythology creates confusion among young people about the proper pacing and expectations of a modern day relationship (Weissbourd).

We also discussed choice anxiety and how it is a real, observable phenomenon. People are less likely to actually make a choice the more options they are presented with (Landau).

There is a clear distinction that the media consumption within relationships are perceived as negative when they are inappropriately used to influence the relationship. Distraction from the moment is one cause of frustration and tension within a relationship due to media usage (Morgan, P., Hubler).

Relationships formed online (circa 2013) are observably more stable than relationships formed offline, by a slight margin (Caciopo). Taking this a few steps further, we are negotiating different ways to gauge our needs for attachment and emotional commitments through digital technologies (Trub L, Starks T).

Media, being such a large part of many young adult lives, can insert itself into a relationship more easily than we might initially think. Social norms typically having a great influence over what is posted online can create misperceptions and unattainable expectations of being a certain person, dating a certain person, or having a particular relationship. Technology starting to be able to fulfill emotional needs (explored in depth by a range of popular media, including *Her* (2013)).

Annotated Bibliography – Maxwell

Barkhorn, E. (2013, March 15). Getting Married Later Is Great for College-Educated Women. Retrieved October 15, 2017, from <https://www.theatlantic.com/sexes/archive/2013/03/getting-married-later-is-great-for-college-educated-women/274040/>

A news article from The Atlantic detailing the societal correlations of the rising marriage age for women and men (27 and 29 compared to 20 and 22 in 1960). College educated women benefit the most from marrying later, meanwhile, college educated men experience a correlation between higher income and earlier marriage ages. Men, and women especially, without degrees are likely to marry dramatically earlier and have children before marriage. Couples who have children before marriage are less likely to stay together.

Cacioppo, J. T., Cacioppo, S., Gonzaga, G. C., Ogburn, E. L., & Vanderweele, T. J. (2013). Marital satisfaction and break-ups differ across on-line and off-line meeting venues. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 110(25), 10135-10140. doi:10.1073/pnas.1222447110

A study of nearly 20,000 married Americans which finds that nearly 1/3rd of relationships in America begin online, and that there is a slight, but consistent, increase in stability and consistency among relationships which begin online.

Vozely, L. (2016, January 21). How Millennials Have Finally Put An End To Traditional Relationships. Retrieved October 14, 2016, from <https://www.elitedaily.com/dating/millennials-traditional-relationships/1298956>

An opinion column from The Elite Daily. Written by a 29 year old woman, single, who claims to be deeply affected by millennial commitment phobias. Cites rising age of marriage, lowering rates of marriage. Discusses an atmosphere of confusion over the proper pacing of relationships among millennials, leading to commitment anxiety.

Weissbourd, R., Anderson, T. R., Cashin, A., & McIntyre, J. (2017). *The Talk: How Adults Can Promote Young People's Healthy Relationships and Prevent Misogyny and Sexual Harassment* [Scholarly project]. In Harvard Graduate School of Education. Retrieved October 14, 2017, from <https://mccgse.harvard.edu/thetalk>

A report published by the Harvard Graduate School of Education outlining the results of a five year old study referred to as the Young People's Romantic Relationships Research Project. Key findings include: teens and adults overestimate the size of "hookup culture" which creates unhealthy pressures and confusion about the pacing of relationships; large numbers of teens and adults are unprepared for caring, lasting relationships; misogyny and sexual harassment are still pervasive, yet mostly unacknowledged.

Annotated Bibliography – Kate

Ansari, Aziz and Klinenberg, Eric. (2015). *Modern Romance*. London: Penguin Press, London, UK.

Research studies conducted regarding modern relationships and discussed in Ansari's insightful and comedic voice. Topics include the sometimes overwhelming amount of choices we have in present day when it comes to who we date. This is due to many societal factors such as dating applications, tendencies to move cities and travel more so than even a decade ago, and women having careers and settling down later in life than in the past.

Iyengar, S. and Lepper, M. (2000, June 19). When Choice is Demotivating: Can One Desire Too Much of a Good Thing? Retrieved October 15, 2017, from <https://faculty.washington.edu/jdb/345/345%20Articles/Iyengar%20%26%20Lepper%20%282000%29.pdf>

When presented with a multitude of options, people are much more likely to be dissatisfied with their choice, rethinking and questioning if they made the right one. Decision aversion is more present when making decisions for others rather than for ourselves.

Jonze, Spike (Producer, Director), Ellison, Megan (Producer), & Landay, Vincent (Producer). (2013). *Her* [Motion picture]. United States: Warner Bros.

A major motion picture exploring the future (or near future?) of our relationships with technology and its ability to satisfy our emotional needs. A recently divorced man finds friendship and then love with his operating system. Explores the “needs” of humans versus technological “personalities” and how these coincide, differ, and ultimately cannot satisfy each other although initially it appears so.

Landau, E. (2016, February 8). Commitment for Millennials: Is It Okay, Cupid?. Retrieved October 15, 2017, from <https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/mind-guest-blog/commitment-for-millennials-is-it-okay-cupid/>

Choice anxiety and how it is a real, observable phenomenon. People are less likely to actually make a choice the more options they are presented with.

Annotated Bibliography – Rick

Banks, J., Westerman, D. K., & Sharabi, L. L. (2017). A mere holding effect: Haptic influences on impression formation through mobile dating apps. *Computers In Human Behavior*, 76303-311. doi:10.1016/j.chb.2017.07.035

This experimental study explored the impact of “mere holding” of mobile devices on impressions formed when consuming dating app content. Mere holding (compared to no-touch viewing) was associated with reduced attraction, ascribed personhood, and psychological ownership. Findings suggest that holding may be experienced as a false realization of potential relationships through physical engagement of devices; theoretically, this realization may be understood as an inversion of interpersonal haptic nonverbals, as holding is less about interpersonal intimacy and more about heuristic engagement with the other as an object.

Morgan, P., Hubler, D. S., Payne, P. B., Pomeroy, C., Gregg, D., & Homer, M. (2017). My Partner's Media Use: A Qualitative Study Exploring Perceptions of Problems with a Partner's Media Use. *Marriage & Family Review*, 53(7), 683-695. doi:10.1080/01494929.2016.1263589

The present study is an description of how romantic relationships were impacted by respondents' perceptions of their partners' media use. A sample of 98 respondents were asked to describe their frustration with their romantic partners' media use. From the descriptions, four themes and five subthemes were identified, and these included the following conclusive themes that described an element of frustration: relationship impacts, appropriate media use, amount of media use, and distraction from the moment. Subthemes included media types, context of media use, value of media use, addiction, and virtual reality. Results showed mainly negative descriptions of media use with mentions of a few positive uses. The findings implicate further research on frustration over romantic partner's media use.

Trub L, Starks T. Insecure attachments: Attachment, emotional regulation, sexting and condomless sex among women in relationships. *Computers In Human Behavior* [serial online]. June 2017;71:140-147. Available from: Academic Search Complete, Ipswich, MA. Accessed October 15, 2017.

In a sample of 92 young adult women in romantic relationships, this study aimed to examine whether emotional regulation might constitute an indirect pathway linking attachment and sexting, and the potential implications for engaging in condomless sex. Findings revealed that in young adult women in romantic relationships, attachment anxiety was associated with sexting through difficulty controlling impulses during moments of emotional distress. Also, sexting directly predicted condomless sex. Attachment avoidance and anxiety were both associated with sexting in the bivariate correlations. Findings highlight the role of digital technology in understanding how people's negotiation of needs for attachment and emotional regulation might lead to risky sexual behavior. Interventions targeting the interplay of attachment, emotional regulation and technology use may positively impact relational and behavioral health outcomes.

Weisskirch, R. S., Drouin, M., & Delevi, R. (2017). Relational Anxiety and Sexting. *Journal Of Sex Research*, 54(6), 685-693. doi:10.1080/00224499.2016.1181147

Sexting is commonly understood as the sending and receiving of sexually suggestive or sexually explicit photos, video, or text via cell phone or other technologies. The characteristics that fuel whether one engages in sexting are not well understood. In this study, 459 unmarried, heterosexual undergraduate

students (female = 328; male = 131), aged 18 to 25 years, from three universities completed an online questionnaire about their behaviors with technology and romantic relationships. In general, low attachment avoidance and high fear of negative evaluation from the dating partner predicted sending a sexually suggestive photo or video, sending a photo or video in one's underwear or lingerie, and sending a sexually suggestive text. High fear of negative evaluation predicted sending a nude photo or video as well as sending a text message propositioning sex. Low attachment avoidance, greater fear of negative evaluation, and greater social distress when dating were associated with sexting behaviors.