Love At First Swipe

Anonymous

Department of English, Anoka-Ramsey Community College

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Prof. Chris McCarthy

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I have never used a dating app, but I haven't bothered to even give it a try. My parents met through eHarmony, so I know that it is possible to find love on an app, but I'd rather hold out hope that I'm going to meet my true love the normal way rather than wasting my time going on countless dates and being let down by every failed one. In the article, *Don't Let Your iPhone Dating Apps Get in the Way of Real Romantic Connection* from USA Today, Surya Gowda (2025) argues that online dating can get in the way of a genuine lovey dovey relationship. Gowda believes that using online dating platforms cannot be an accurate place to find true love because rejection online can decrease confidence, users become less assured that they even will be able to find the one, and they are then less likely to risk going up to someone in person because to them meeting through a screen feels like the safer option. I agree with the main points of Gowda's argument. I think that online dating is a good resource but is not the only resource. After a few dead-end dates, users could become less confident, and they also become less likely to pursue someone in real life. Rejection can cause a loss of self-confidence. Gowda and I both believe that users need to step out of their comfort zones and take the risk in taking their love lives off the screen and beyond the swipes.

While using dating apps, users can meet a ton of different people, and depending on where they set their radius, they could possibly connect with people from all over the world. In the article, Gowda (2025) proclaims that, "Young adults clearly view online dating services as useful tools for meeting potential dates and expanding their dating pools. But do they have much faith that the people they meet on dating apps could someday become their long-term romantic partners?" I have noticed that it can often be hard to make friends who have similar interests as me, so I can understand how it would open opportunities if more people were pooled into my friend selection. Most of my classmates are dating or have dated before, but to me they don't seem like mature relationships. Nearly all of them are sexually active in their relationships or

with people they just met. I recall asking a former classmate of mine what she did the past weekend, and she told me that she had done a bunch of "stuff" with a guy she hardly knew. I was shocked just how openly she was sharing all of this with me when I hardly knew her. An article I found to support this from a Penn State student who also addresses the influence dating apps have had on relationship norms, especially during the college years. In the article, *Hook-up Culture, Dating Apps, and Relationships* from Penn State, the student (2021) acknowledges that, "the problem with dating apps like Hinge, Tinder and Bumble is that one never knows whether the person they match with on that app is looking for a relationship of just a hook-up." Some of the younger generation views dating apps as a place to either meet new people or hook up. It is rare that the sites are used to find promising mates that will hang around longer than a one-night stand. This could be for many reasons, but I believe that the biggest is out of fear. Fear of being lonely, fear of being misunderstood, and the fear of not having a safety net.

It has become easier for the younger generation to communicate online because that is how they've grown up. Instead of guys asking for girls' numbers in person, they are now direct messaging them, adding them on snapchat, or following them on Instagram to show the girl they are interested in her. People have lost their confidence and instead opt for safer options such as online dating platforms. In the article, Gowda (2025) made clear that, "Being in possession of the safer option of using a dating app, according to Mukkamala, makes one less likely to take the risk of pursuing someone they met or could potentially meet in real life." Of course, when people are given the option to take the easier route they will. This is an example of convenience over connection. If a user thinks that they will be able to find true love online, then why would they even consider anyone who isn't on that app. They most likely wouldn't because it's too much risky work to go up to someone in person when you could just match with someone online and all the heavy lifting is done for you. In "*Online Dating and Mental Health*" from Habor

Psychiatry and Mental Health, Habor Mental Health (2023) declares that "those individuals who may have struggles with making connections in person or establishing romantic relationships with conventional dating appear to have an advantage within online dating." Different things work well for different people. For that relationship to continue being successful they will need to meet in person at some point to progress the relationship. I dated a guy once who was much more comfortable talking to me through a screen, but when we met up in person, he would turn into a completely different person. I understand that people have social anxiety, but I do think that for a strong relationship to be built, both people need to be their confident genuine selves. If people are themselves, they will have a better chance of finding someone who accepts them for who they are.

In addition, social media and dating platforms have created a very socially connected and dependent society. For some, their self-worth and confidence are based on how many likes or swipes they receive. In the article, Gowda (2025) acknowledges that "If you're a man who is less successful on the apps, for example, you may lose self-confidence and be even more hesitant to approach a women in real life – where you might, in fact, have better odds of success." Rejection can be an incredibly difficult thing to deal with. I'm sure the majority of people have been rejected in one way or another throughout their life so far. Habor Psychiatry (2023) recognizes that "Those daters who are seeking validation are more vulnerable and sensitive to rejections or are positively impacted by attention. Studies show that the purist of external validation, whether through online dating or social media correlate with emotional distress." There was this guy I had a crush on when I was younger; he was my first real crush, so this was a pretty big deal at the time. I had been dared to tell him that I liked him and the response I got back was pretty heart breaking. I recall wondering if I would ever heal from such a deep cut, but it only took a couple of days for me to forget that it even happened. Rejection can be a tough thing to work through,

but someone should never stay stuck there. It is okay to grieve the loss of something that could have been, but that doesn't mean they need to swear off asking someone else out for the rest of their lives. People can't hide behind a screen, in hopes that they will never get their feelings hurt. It is okay to mess up and get embarrassed, but it is what you do with that pain that matters. I don't want people to lose the confidence they have in themselves just because online dating doesn't work for them.

With all the new technology swishing around in our world, it can be easy to think old with the old and in with the new. However, not all old ways of life need to die with our new progression. Gowda (2025) expresses that "We shouldn't let our iPhone addictions blind us to the possibility that if we take a bit of a risk, we may just end up finding love where previous generations did – that is, in the wild." Phones have changed the way that we communicate with others. Now instead of having to wait to see someone to share something with them, we can send them a text message that will reach them in under a second. We have become blinded by this new way of communication which involves, likes, dislikes, follows, and unfollows. I had a friend who did something they liked to call "friend cleansing." When they got tired of someone, they would just block them, and act like they didn't exist. I'm sure you'd imagine this to be something that took place online, but no they did this in person. I watched as they did this to countless people around us, including a guy they had once liked, until one day I became a victim of their "cleansing." People have gotten all too comfortable with the way they treat each other harshly. There are still opportunities to grow romantic relationships with others they are around so they can't burn all of their bridges. If dating platform users choose to get off their screens and go out into the world, I bet they'd have a better chance at a connection they really think they do.

There are a lot of things that need to be considered before someone puts themselves out on a dating app. This could affect the way that they feel about themselves if they are rejected, it

could potentially stop them from pursuing someone in real life, and it could make them less confident that their true match is out there, however, it should never cause them to overlook a potential partner in the real world by not taking the risk. While I was writing this essay, I discovered just how much technology has affected my general interactions with other people. I want to be better at meeting up with people in person, rather than digitally. I want to be approachable for people to come and talk to me as well and I want to approach people too. People are just as scared of you as you are of them. If given the chance to pursue someone in person, take it because who knows what could happen between the two of you, the possibilities are endless.

References

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