Online Relationships: A New Place for Hooking Up?

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Introduction
The purpose of this poster is to examine what people say about online relationships and determine whether they are avenues for freedom or a new way to get tangled up.

Methods
- Students from several classes at John Jay collected survey data from more than 500 people about their relationships, ideas about sex and sexuality, their experiences with the internet, and other ways of “hooking up” that are new and novel.
- The analysis of the data examined differences between men and women, and between people of different racial/ethnic backgrounds. Here, the findings from male/female differences are presented.

Findings
We have found that males are more likely to date online or use it to hook up in comparison to females. We can immediately see that 60% of females say that they will not consider meeting someone online in comparison to nearly 40% of men. There seems to be stigma attached to online dating; people may be embarrassed to admit to it.

Most of the people surveyed were between the ages of 18-24. Despite all the public discussion about long-distance relationships that the internet has enabled, online dating, sexting, video chatting apps like Skype and FaceTime, Tinder, Grinder, and all the electronic media that helps find partners, 85% of the women and 70% of the men in our sample said that they had not used the internet to meet someone that they didn’t know.

Online encounters for dating and sexuality are going to continue to be an upwards trend, but they are not as big as many seem to believe. Apps such as Tinder and Grindr have millions of downloads on Apple Store and Play Store, respectively. Many of the older individuals interviewed had less inclination to date or even talk to people online, though many will use Facebook to find and develop new connections. Those who use dating apps are very open about themselves when talking about their hookups. As dating sites begin to target specific demographics such as christianmingle.com and farmersonly.com, people are funneled into categories that might make it more palatable to the wider public, but much of the public still seem to believe that not everything that appears on the internet is true. Maybe a sucker is not born every minute, after all.

Acknowledgements