

From Dating to Hooking Up: Where have we been, where are we going?

How and why have dating and sex norms changed over time in the United States?

How have the relationships among dating, sex, love, and marriage changed over time?

How have gender norms in dating, sex, love and marriage changed over time?

Courting during the 1700s & ^{t1}1800s

1700s to 1830s: Courting to meet rational needs.

- ◆ Marrying off daughters early, to support workload in agriculture-based economy.
- ◆ Belief that love came after marriage.
- ◆ Couples knew each other through informal yet structured social relations, such as church.
- ◆ Parents involved, but couples not always chaperoned.
 - ☞ *Over time, premarital pregnancy reached a high of 30%, then later declined when it became characterized as “impure.”*
- ◆ Women’s sexual pleasure highly valued.

Courting during the 1700s and 1800s, con't.

1830s to 1880s:

Courting became formalized in era of highly structured, “separate spheres” for men and women. Victorian era.

- ◆ “going calling” – Young men asked family’s (father’s) permission to court young women.
- ◆ “stepping out” – Engaged in chaperoned activities.
- ◆ engagement, with father’s permission.
- ◆ Movement toward marriage based on choice.



Romantic love (sincerity, honesty, intimacy) viewed as main requirement for marriage. Sexual relations highly restricted.

Matched according to economic status, education, family background, status and prestige.

Arranged marriages occurred among aristocratic families.

Late 19th to Early 20th Century: from Courtship to Dating

t2

- ◆ *Freedom from parental control.*
- ◆ *Goal to have fun.*
- ◆ *More stylized, formal, traditional in 1930s (Great Depression decade) through post WWII era.*

Farm to city
Telephone, cars
Co-ed high schools
Working class women living alone
WWI(1914-1919) - Middle class women work
in offices
Women's freedom
Affluence and leisure



Dating from 1940s to early 1960s

Steady dating: most important pattern post-WWII.

- ◆ In-between casual dating & engagement.
- ◆ “transition period” to marriage.
- ◆ Sexual intimacy based on level of commitment.

- ◆ LeMasters (1957): 1950s Dating Stages (p. 114)

7th, 8th

group dating, “crushes”

9th, 10th

random dating between “steadies”

11th, 12th

steady dating (exclusive)

College

pinning

College/

post-high school

engagement

Ages 19-24

marriage (early marriage; *strong economy*)

Dating at end of 20th Century t4

A major change: Greater informal sexual contacts

- ◆ More co-ed high schools & colleges.
- ◆ **Shared living quarters in college.**
- ◆ Shared apartments and houses.
- ◆ Equal numbers of men and women in college.

→ Variations in dating & partnering patterns.

Formalized roles?

Stages of commitment?

Love linked to sex? Sex for fun?

Stages to cohabitation or marriage?

Contemporary Types of Intimate & Sexual Relationships

“Getting together”

Informal

Not marriage-oriented

“Hooking Up” or “Joined at the Hip”

Sex for fun

Open relationships

Friends with benefits

“Booty calls”

Dating?

Characteristics of Dating Today (Ch. 5, pp 116-117)

- **Courtship is no longer vital in our culture** (Cere 2000)
- **“Hooking up or joined at the hip”** (Glenn & Marquardt 2001; Institute for American Values study)
 - ◆ Study of 1000 female college students
 - ◆ HU: Sexual intimacy w/o emotional involvement
 - ⇒ *Sex and love are decoupled!*
 - ◆ Alcohol, physical attraction
 - ◆ Emotions range from feeling hurt & awkward to strong & sexy
 - ◆ Men have most of the power (?)
 - ◆ *YET: Most college women want to get married*

Characteristics of Dating Hooking Up Today

(Ch. 5, pp 116-117)

- **“Sex without strings and relationships without rings”**
- (Popenoe and Whitehead 2002)
 - ◆ Study of non-college men and women
 - ◆ Casual sex is common and expected, and it is not linked to commitment, obligation, investment, emotional intimacy, etc.
 - ◆ *Men and women want to marry “best friend” or “soul mate,”*
YET: Relationships linked to sex, not love.

Hooking Up: The Relationship Contexts of “Nonrelationship” Sex (Among High School Adolescents)

(Manning, Giordino, and Longmore 2006)

Toledo Adolescent Relationships Study: Random sample of over 1300 7th, 9th, and 11th grade adolescents in Lucas County, OH. Years: 2001, 2001, 2002, 2004, 2006)

More than one half of sexually active teens have had sexual partners they are not dating.

Adolescents having sex outside of the dating context are choosing partners who are friends or ex-girlfriends and/or boyfriends.

One third of these non-dating sexual partnerships are associated with hopes or expectations that the relationship will lead to more conventional dating relationships.

Hooking up in college tends to involve less familiarity.

Many college women are confused and frustrated by the lack of rules and clarity on their campuses when it came to sex and relationships. A student at the University of Virginia observed, “there's definitely some weird do's and don'ts about dating . . . [you ask when] is it officially a date, or when are you officially in a relationship . . . [and] people struggle with do they say they are this guy's girlfriend.”

One common source of confusion is how to know when you are a couple, or when you have become girlfriend and boyfriend – which means that the relationship is sexually exclusive. Many women said the only way to know if you are actually a couple is to talk about the relationship. This is known as “the talk.”

A Rutgers student said the conversation is basically: “What are we? And this is provoked because, “You never know what to say . . . and you're like, are we friends? Are we something more than that? You just don't know. I think that happens all the time.” (Glenn & Marquardt 2001)

Hooking Up in Today's World

“Hooking up is a...

A non-conversational,

◆ emotionless

meaningless

commitment-less

PHYSICAL ENCOUNTER”

(Reisser 2001)

Extradyadic Sexual Relationships

Hansen's (1987) Survey of 215 College Students:

- * 35% M; 12% F extradyadic sexual intercourse
- * Belief that **partner's** infidelity more harmful than own.

Wiederman and Hurd's (1999) study of 621 college students:

- * Majority experienced extradyadic involvement (dating or sexual intimacy)
- * Men more likely to experience extradyadic sexual intimacy

Predictors of dating infidelity:

- * less belief sex, love, marriage associated.
- * believe can deceive partner.
- * sexual sensation-seeking.

The problem....

Baby boomers are living it up?

About 30% of 45-59 year olds are unattached.

AARP Study: 45% of M and 38% F are having sex once a week, and most of these folks are not dating in order to get married.

Only 39% of these folks use protection when they have sex.....

1990-2004: Rates of AIDS among 50+ grew sevenfold.



The New Monogamy: Marriage with Benefits



Stephanie Coontz, professor of history at Evergreen State College in Washington...

“What’s new here is not that couples are being non-monogamous...It’s that couples are negotiating the terms of their monogamy.”

--Communication is key.

--what’s most common: Men are more comfortable in non-monogamous relationship with a woman who is bisexual...that way they can have threesomes without worrying about another guy being around. Women still crave male attention, however, and this can be problematic for men.

Monogamy w/ benefits vocabulary

Above the waist rule: any touching above the beltline is fair game.

Body-fluid monogamy: Latex required for outside sexual activity, but not for the couple.

Cheating: secret sex breaks the rules; it's lame.

Don't ask/Don't tell: Agreement to fool around if it's discreet.

Party bisexual: woman or man who engages in same-sex sex-play after multiple martinis.

Polyamory: Philosophy of being involved with multiple long-term, intimate partners.