Hook-Up and Dating Apps

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## Introduction

Hook-up apps are a relatively recent form of digitally mediated dating. They are *apps* – software programs configured for a specific purpose – that play a role in sociotechnical arrangements of *hooking up* – finding a partner for dating or sexual activity. While they are often used for a variety of purposes, from meeting friends to political campaigning, hook-up apps are generally framed or perceived as being associated with romantic and sexual relationships. Hook-up apps feature in a long lineage of analogue and digital tools that have mediated dating, from the telegraph to early online dating websites. This history is reflected in enduring moral panics about how such tools may affect society, such as whether or not they threaten the formation of long-term relationships. This history is also apparent in longstanding scholarly investigations into the nuances of how the different affordances of such technologies shape self-presentation, intimacy, communities, and social inequalities. These inquiries endure in today's studies of hook-up apps. Digital technology has been pivotal in helping marginalized populations to find each other and, particularly, in

how lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer individuals have connected through chat rooms, websites, and contemporary apps. Early hook-up apps popular with gay men, such as Grindr, ushered in the eventual proliferation of hook-up apps marketed to wider populations. Notably, hook-up apps are designed to function on mobile devices, with the smartphone's rapid uptake enabling partner-seeking anywhere and anytime as these apps have become integrated into daily life. They rely on geolocational data, enabling users to check out prospective partners nearby, to arrange meet-ups when travelling, or to access informational resources when settling into a new country. However, their use on personal devices and the intimate nature of users' exchanges also pose new hurdles for research methods and practices. Hook-up apps function within the information age's broader political economy of datafication, data surveillance, and technology-driven profit-making. While they introduce new opportunities for social connection, their affordances and user practices can also re-create and reinforce existing forms of gender and racial discrimination. As apps that overlay digital and physical spaces, their use is fully enmeshed in surrounding cultural, social, political and economic contexts. With these multiple factors in mind, this bibliography presents resources for understanding hook-up apps from perspectives largely situated within communications and cultural studies. While presented according to dominant themes, several entries address multiple aspects of hook-up apps and present a range of findings that are relevant across categories.

## General Overviews and Background

Hook-up apps appear in scholarly research anthologies, books and articles in relation to the contemporary cultural contexts of intimacy, technology, and relationships. Background studies of shifting sexual and dating practices provide a means for understanding the conditions of hook-up culture and dating in which apps have come to play a pivotal role. Bogle 2008 provides an in-depth look at how partner-seeking has changed on university campuses in the USA while Watson, et al. 2017 reviews the research (or lack thereof) about the shifting hook-up practices of lesbian, gay, and bisexual youth. The edited collection Aggleton, et al. 2018 explores a range of changes to young people's sexual practices, including their uptake of digital technologies, which are navigated through sexual citizenship. Duguay, et al. 2017 traces the historical continuity from older technologies to today's hook-up apps while Mowlabocus 2010 and Gudelunas 2012 draw similar connections with regard to gay men's adoption of hook-up apps. Reviewing gay dating app studies, Wu and Ward 2018 identifies overarching themes emerging with regard to the role of hook-up apps in gay men's lives. Smith 2016 provides key findings from the Pew Research Centre that indicate a rapid rise in hook-up app adoption among online Americans. While not limited to apps, the edited collection Degim, et al. 2015 demonstrates how digitally mediated dating and partner-seeking differs across cultural contexts.

Aggleton, P., Cover, R., Leahy, D., Marshall, D., Rasmussen, M. L. 2018. *Youth, sexuality and sexual citizenship*. London: Routledge.

This collection provides a foundation for critically thinking through many of the themes that arise in hook-up app literature regarding young people and intimacy, relationships, self-presentation, participation, inclusion, and privacy. The concept of sexual citizenship is explored throughout, understanding young people as engaging with sociotechnical life in ways that can be both risky and beneficial.

Bogle, K. A. 2008. *Hooking up: Sex, dating, and relationships on campus*. New York and London: New York University Press.

Through in-depth interviews with American college students, this book identifies shifts in young people's practices relating to dating and sexuality. It acknowledges social and cultural influences that have contributed to recent increases in youth engagement in casual sexual relationships.

Degim, I. A., Johnson, J., & Fu, T. 2015. *Online courtship: Interpersonal interactions across borders.* Amsterdam: Institute of Network Cultures

This edited collection brings together multiple perspectives and methodologies to understand digitally mediated dating across several cultural and national contexts. Its chapters address the role of dating websites and apps in relation to varying politics, economic conditions, histories, and cultural conventions across countries.

Duguay, S., Burgess, J., Light, B. 2017. Mobile dating and hookup app culture. In P. Messaris & L. Humphrey's, Eds. *Digital media: Transformations in human communication* [2nd edition], pp. 213-221. New York: Peter Lang.

This chapter situates hook-up apps within the historical context of mediated dating. The authors recognize how many longstanding moral panics about sex and technology are applied to contemporary apps. They discuss ways of analyzing apps to situate them as sociocultural media objects.

Gudelunas, D. 2012. There's an app for that: The uses and gratifications of online social networks for gay men. *Sexuality & Culture*, *16*.4, 347–365.

This article provides an understanding of how hook-up apps feature within gay men's broader history of communication and culture. It draws on findings from interviews and focus groups to identify gay men's motivations and perceived benefits of dating apps, making sense of these within a uses and gratifications framework.

Mowlabocus, S. 2010. *Gaydar culture: Gay men, technology and embodiment in the digital age*. Farnham, UK: Ashgate.

This pivotal book traces the intertwining of gay men's subculture and digital practices in the United Kingdom. The author's concept of "cybercarnality" makes sense of how gay men's subculture has become simultaneously physical and digital. The book examines gay dating websites, cybercottage forums that facilitate cruising, and more recent locative technologies to understand them within the cultural and historical context of gay men's lives.

Smith, A. 2016. *15% of American adults have used online dating apps*[http://www.pewinternet.org/2016/02/11/15-percent-of-american-adults-have-used-online-dating-sites-or-mobile-dating-apps/]*.

> The Pew Research Centre has been collecting survey data about Americans' use of online dating websites and apps for several years. This latest report identifies increases in uptake since their 2013 survey, indicating a rapid spread of dating app use among young people.

Watson, R. J., Snapp, S., Wang, S. 2017. What we know and where we go from here: A review of lesbian, gay, and bisexual youth hookup literature. *Sex Roles, 77,* 801-811.

> Although the literature about dating apps includes many studies concerning gay men, this broader overview of literature about young people's hook-up research reveals that it is generally focused on heterosexual youth. The sexual and relationship practices of lesbian, gay, and bisexual youth are often over-looked in studies focusing on heterosexual college students, warranting more research into this area as a foundation for better understanding hook-up app practices.

Wu, S., & Ward, J. 2018. The mediation of gay men's lives: A review on gay dating app studies. *Sociology Compass*, *12.*2, 1–10. Doi.10.1111/soc4.12560

> Given the proliferation of studies about gay men's use of dating apps, this article provides a thematic review of existing literature. It identifies major themes within these studies, including the role of dating apps within gay men's self-presentation and interactions, community, and interpersonal relationships. The authors call for future research about how dating apps affect gay men's sociability as well as greater technical comparison and examination of dating apps.

## Historical Precedents

The entries in the following subsections provide a sense of technological affordances, user practices, and cultural contexts that carry over into today's hook-up app research. While hook-up apps present new configurations of technologies and users, certain findings and themes relating to self-presentation, intimacy, discrimination, and other factors remain relevant. In contrast, studies identifying fundamental differences in affordances enable an analysis of the changes in hooking up that have developed with the arrival of apps and associated technological shifts.

## Pre-Digital Media

Since a range of media has historically featured in romantic and sexual arrangements of partner-seeking, the following entries examine aspects of this media that hold relevance for understanding today's dating apps. Beauman 2011 provides a lively account of personal advertisements of the past, which appeared in newspapers and magazines. Some self-presentational practices in these ads carry over to the construction of online dating profiles. Woll 1986 explores the opportunities and constraints of videodating, a particularly visual form of mediated dating. Flowers 1998 investigates sex hotlines, exploring how the telephone shaped these intimate exchanges. The text of personal ads, visual media of videodating, and materiality of the telephone are all elements related to contemporary hook-up apps.

Beauman, F. 2011. *Shapely ankle preferr'd: A history of the lonely hearts ad.* London: Chatto & Windus.
> This book provides a history of personal advertisements, examining how individuals have announced their partner-seeking and preferences over the past three centuries. It traces personal advertisements back to 1695 and connects these practices to the contemporary construction of online dating profiles.

Flowers, A. 1998. *The fantasy factory: An insider's view of the phone sex industry.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
> This book explores phone sex hotlines that were advertised in pornography magazines in the 1990s. While substantially different from hook-up apps in that these hotlines perpetuated a fantasy without the potential of in-person encounters, the book examines the technological mediation of the telephone in exchanges of sexual desire and intimacy.

Woll, S. 1986. So many to choose from: Decision strategies in videodating. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, *3.*1, 43–52.
> This study investigates the factors that individuals consider when deciding whether or not to view a potential date's videotape. It demonstrates that even when videodating served as a means of meeting partners, individuals were concerned with sorting their prospects to reduce information overload and deal with time constraints.

## Early Digital Media

With the emergence of pre-Internet technologies and early digital media, Wakeford 2000 illustrates how these technological developments provide opportunities for connection and community formation among those who would not otherwise meet due to the heteronormativity of public space. Focusing on specific technologies and practices, Livia 2002 and Correll 1995 provide fascinating accounts of how gay men and lesbians (respectively) used pre-Internet technologies for flirting, erotic encounters, and participation in broader communities. Embodiment is a key theme across these works, as the authors observe that bodily markers of desirability are translated into digital interactions. Sociotechnical means of

communicating identity and desire are also evident in Campbell 2004, an investigation of gay men's identity negotiation in early Internet Relay Chat rooms.

Campbell, J. E. 2004. *Getting it on online: Cyberspace, gay male sexuality, and embodied identity*. New York: Routledge.

> This detailed ethnographic study examined gay men's negotiation of identity and sexuality in Internet Relay Chat (IRC). Although these online chatrooms were text-based, gay men's experiences were embodied, as their physical characteristics and qualities relating to age, race, class and other elements emerged in their online interactions.

Correll, S. 1995. The ethnography of an electronic bar: The Lesbian Cafe. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, *24*.3, 270–298.

> This paper explores women's interactions in a Bulletin Board System (BBS), the Lesbian Cafe. The BBS re-created some aspects of lesbian bars while opening up new possibilities for meeting other women, such as for flirting or romance, regardless of geographical location.

Livia, A. 2002. Public and clandestine: Gay men's pseudonyms on the French Minitel. *Sexualities*, *5*.2, 201–217.

> This study examines the pseudonyms that gay men used on the French Minitel, a precursor to the Internet. Brief 'pseudos' enabled users to communicate biographical information, from employment status to physical attributes, in ways that shielded their meaning from outsiders while also eroticizing potential encounters.

Wakeford, N. 2000. Cyberqueer. In D. Bell & B. M. Kennedy, Eds. *The cybercultures reader* (pp. 403-415). Abington: Routledge.

> This chapter interrogates the concept of cyberqueer, as a term for understanding the significance of cyberspace for people who do not conform to the norms of heterosexuality. It reviews a range of online arrangements that enable queer connections and communities, assessing their social, political, and economic importance.

## Online Dating

While a great deal of literature about online dating proliferated in the 2000s, this section includes entries that represent common areas of study and key issues. Ellison, et al. 2011, a study of the accuracy of self-presentation in users' dating profiles, reflects an area of research primarily concerned with deceit and identity verification in online dating. Users exchanged and scrutinized multiple forms of media from others in order to assess and filter for potentially viable dates, as Couch and Liamputtong 2008 describes. Such practices were especially pertinent during online dating's early years, as it was viewed as a risky activity

involving encounters with *strangers* on the internet. Surveys such as Hogan, et al. 2011 present findings that counteract this panic about online dating, showing that an increasing number of couples successfully meet online. Gosine 2007 and Hightower 2015 examine gay men and lesbians' negotiation of identity on dating websites, highlighting racist and gendered perceptions of desirability that shape interactions. Gagné 2012, on gay men's online dating in Beirut, takes into account the influence of surrounding historic, economic, social, and political contexts on user practices.

Couch, D. & Liamputtong, P. 2008. Online dating and mating: The use of the Internet to meet sexual partners. *Qualitative Health Research, 18*.2, 268-279.

> This study draws on in-depth, online chat interviews with users of dating websites to understand their experience of online dating, including their motivations and perceptions of these sites. The author finds that users engage in processes of "filtering" others, assessing them through the exchange of multiple forms of media, from text to photographs and webcam interactions. In-person meetings are facilitated through this progressively personalized sharing of media.

Ellison, N. B., Hancock, J. T., & Toma, C. L. 2011. Profile as promise: A framework for conceptualizing veracity in online dating self-presentations. *New Media & Society*, *14*.1, 45–62.

> Focusing on online dating profiles, this article discusses discrepancies between one's online profile and offline self-presentation. The authors develop the concept of "profile as promise" to reflect individuals' anticipation that online dating representations will not differ fundamentally from in-person representations.

Gosine, A. 2007. Brown to blonde at Gay.com: Passing white in queer cyberspace. In K. O'Riordan & D. J. Phillips, Eds. *Queer online: Media, technology & sexuality* (pp. 139–154). New York: Peter Lang.

> This chapter challenges early utopic notions that a text-based, anonymous internet would enable disembodied interactions that are removed from racial politics. Through examination of profiles and exchanges on a gay men's dating website, the author identifies how race becomes re-inscribed in this space.

Hightower, J. L. 2015. Producing desirable bodies: Boundary work in a lesbian niche dating site. *Sexualities*, *18*.1–2, 20–36.

> Through ethnography and interviews, this article explores how lesbian gender labels have evolved over time on dating websites. The author identifies the boundary work involved in users claiming labels of butch, femme, and queer in order to achieve desirability and negotiate gendered presentations of the body.

Hogan, B., Dutton, W. H., & Li, N. 2011. *A global shift in the social relationships of networked individuals: Meeting and dating online comes of age*[https://www.oii.ox.ac.uk/archive/downloads/publications/Me-MySpouse_GlobalReport.pdf]*. Oxford.

> This cross-national survey of couples identifies several trends related to increasing digital mediation of relationships. It draws attention to a rise in online dating from 1997 into the 2000s with the uptake of Web 2.0 technologies. This demonstrates that couples are increasingly meeting online through dating websites as well as through their social networks.

Gagné, M. 2012. Queer Beirut online: The participation of men in GayRomeo.com. *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies*, *8*.3, 113–137.

> This article explores the profile construction and participation of gay men in Beirut on the dating website, GayRomeo.com. Within this localized context, identity politics relating to national and ethnic identity, masculinity, and sexuality also shape self-presentation.

## Research Methods

The growing body of literature pertaining to research methods and hook-up apps grapples with new hurdles encountered in the study of this technology. Atienza 2018 and Condie, et al. 2018 address the subjectivity of the researcher, for whom hook-up apps may be part of everyday life and relationships as well as the research field. Race 2014 and Light, et al. 2018a introduce ways of interrogating the technological and social affordances of hook-up apps. Jørgenson 2016 pairs the analysis of app affordances with an interview method that asks participants to take researchers along with them through app screens and dating experiences. Lastly, Light, et al. 2018b identifies ethical considerations that arise when researchers work with the geolocative data that hook-up apps collect and store.

Atienza, P. M. L. 2018. Censoring the sexual self: Reflections from an ethnographic study of gay Filipinos on mobile dating apps in Manila. *Asia Pacific Journal of Anthropology*, *19*.3, 231–244.

> This article examines the researcher's subjectivity with regard to the intimacy of hook-up app research. It identifies ethical considerations that emerge when sexual encounters occur with research participants and how these instances impact the research field.

Condie, C., Lean, G., James, D. 2018. Tinder matters: Swiping right to unlock new research fields. In C. Costa & J. Condie, Eds. *Doing research in and on the digital: Research methods across fields of inquiry* (pp. 102-115). London: Routledge.

> This chapter examines the role of the researcher in relation to hook-up app research. Drawing on their research about people who use Tinder while traveling, the authors identify the complexities in conducting research on an app, which is installed on one's phone and carried everywhere the researcher goes.

Jørgenson, K. M. 2016. The media go-along: Researching mobilities with media at hand. *MedieKultur: Journal of Media and Communication Research, 32*.60, 32-49.

    This article establishes a method for performing a mobilities-oriented internet ethnography. The method includes observations and interviews involving participant-led tours of mobile media. It is applied to a study of gay men's hook-up app use to identify the importance of the medium in their experiences. The method also addresses challenges related to researcher presence and negotiating access to intimate data in hook-up app research.

Light, B., Burgess, J., Duguay, S. 2018a. The walkthrough method: An approach to the study of apps. *New Media & Society, 20*.3, 881-900.

    This paper presents an approach for critically analyzing apps as relatively closed software systems. It involves establishing an app's environment of expected use through analysis of its vision, operating model, and modes of governance. These are examined in conjunction with a technical walkthrough, through which the researcher analyzes the app's interface, features, and functionality in a step-by-step process.

Light, B., Mitchell, P., & Wikström, P. 2018b. Big data, method and the ethics of location: A case study of a hookup app for men who have sex with men. *Social Media and Society*, *4*.2.

    This article draws on a study of a location-based app that facilitates gay men's public sex, underscoring ethical sensitivities regarding the collection of big data from hook-up apps. The authors identify an ethical tension in scraping, processing, and presenting locational big data when it is associated with sexualities and practices that may incur dangerous consequences if users are rendered identifiable.

Race, K. 2015. Speculative pragmatism and intimate arrangements: Online hook-up devices in gay life. *Culture, Health & Sexuality*, *17*.4, 496-511.

    By combining perspectives from queer theory and science and technology studies, this article provides an analytic framework for studying hook-up apps. It introduces "speculative pragmatism" as an ethnography of affordances, examining design affordances and their associated practices. This framework enables an understanding of how hook-up apps are shaping gay men's sociability.

## Mobility and Geolocation

The use of hook-up apps on mobile devices and apps' integration of geolocative data are arguably the most distinctive new affordances of this genre of digitally mediated dating. Quiroz 2013 observes this key shift from dating websites offering to connect individuals regardless of location to hook-up apps promising to deliver matches dependent upon their nearby whereabouts. Blackwell, et al. 2015 and Choy 2018

examine how these affordances combine with user practices to co-situate users across physical and digital space, creating the opportunity for gay men and lesbians to connect even when located in heteronormative physical spaces. Batiste 2013 articulates this overlaying of the physical and digital as enabling a queer cartography of public space while Renninger 2018 identifies how these cartographies are useful in individuals' neighborhoods, facilitating interaction outside of gay villages. Nash and Gorman-Murray 2016 identifies how this contributes to an intertwining of hook-up apps, users, and urban landscapes but Davis, et al. 2016 highlights how such opportunities for connection may be constrained depending on where individuals live.

Batiste, D. P. (2013). '0 feet away': Queer cartography of French gay men's geo-social media use. *Anthropological Journal of European Cultures, 22*.2, 111-132.
> Through research based in Toulouse, France, the author examines how geo-social aspects of gay men's hook-up apps enable a re-mapping of public space. Apps like Grindr and Scruff reveal the queer cartography of spaces that are otherwise perceived to be heteronormative, allowing gay men to identify each other outside of spaces designated as a gay areas or venues.

Blackwell, C., Birnholtz, J., & Abbott, C. 2015. Seeing and being seen: Co-situation and impression formation using Grindr, a location-aware gay dating app. *New Media & Society*, *17*.7, 1117–1136.
> Through interviews with gay men about their use of Grindr, this study identifies how hook-up apps co-situate users in physical and digital environments. Co-situation enables users to transcend traditional spatial or community boundaries while simultaneously complicating the management of visibility and self-presentation across contexts.

Brubaker, J. R., Ananny, M., Crawford, K. 2016. Departing glances: A sociotechnical account of 'leaving' Grindr. *New Media & Society, 18*.3, 373-390.
> Through interviews with men who stopped using Grindr, this study identifies that understandings of "leaving" the app are associated with an individual's location. Participants' relationships and spatial arrangements shaped the meaning they attached to deleting their account or ceasing to use the app.

Choy, C. H. Y. 2018. Smartphone apps as cosituated closets: A lesbian app, public/private spaces, mobile intimacy, and collapsing contexts. *Mobile Media and Communication*, *6*.1, 88–107.
> This article draws on digital ethnography and interview data to examine how the lesbian dating app Butterfly co-situates women in Hong Kong. The app's spatial and mobile affordances co-situate users across online and offline spaces, enabling the negotiation of lesbian identities and fantasies within specific sociocultural, political, and religious contexts.

Davis, M., Flowers, P., Lorimer, K., Oakland, J., & Frankis, J. 2016. Location, safety and (non)strangers in gay men's narratives on 'hook-up' apps. *Sexualities*, *19*.7, 836–852.

> This article focuses on the use of hook-up apps by economically and geographically marginalized gay men. Through interviews and focus groups, the authors identify an intersection of multiple forms of location – class, generation, and physical space – that affect these men's experiences involving hook-up apps.

Quiroz, P. A. 2013. From finding the perfect love online to satellite dating and "Loving-the-one-you're near": A look at Grindr, Skout, Plenty of Fish, Meet Moi, Zoosk and assisted serendipity. *Humanity & Society*, *37*.2, 181–185.

> This article compares several early dating applications, observing the temporal and geolocational affordances they introduce. It examines how these affordances combine with practices of personal advertising in order to reduce the stigma and increase the uptake of geolocational apps.

Nash, C. J., & Gorman-Murray, A. 2016. Digital technologies and sexualities in urban space. In G. Brown & K. Browne, Eds. *The Routledge research companion to geographies of sex and sexualities* (pp. 399–406). Abingdon and New York: Routledge.

> The authors provide an overview of how lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) people's spaces and interactions have become increasingly mediated by digital technologies. They argue for a "new mobilities" approach for examining the interplay between physical and digital spaces that occurs through mobile apps and technologies.

Renninger, B. J. (2018). Grindr killed the gay bar, and other attempts to blame social technologies for urban development: A democratic approach to popular technologies and queer sociality. *Journal of Homosexuality*. https://doi.org/10.1080/00918369.2018.1514205

> This article challenges perceptions that hook-up apps have caused the demise of gay bars and gay villages or neighborhoods. The author calls for a "democratic approach" that situates apps like Grindr within the broader social and technological context in order to assess their actual influence on changing practices and social spaces. This analysis identifies that hook-up apps can serve purposes that are different from those fulfilled by gay bars and neighborhoods.

## Sociotechnical Affordances

The features, framing, and cultural practices associated with different apps introduce opportunities, challenges, and complexities for different user groups. The following entries closely examine the sociotechnical affordances of specific apps and associated user practices. While Cassidy 2016 examines affordances that generate a sentiment of reluctance in gay men's use of Gaydar, MacKee 2016 reveals how Tinder has emerged in London as an outlet for seeking longer-term relationships instead of the short encounters associated with other hook-up apps. Through an analysis of the popular Chinese dating app

Blued, Wang 2018 reveals how apps' datafication and algorithmic sorting affect users' dating goals. David and Cambre 2016 and Duguay 2017 present in-depth analyses of Tinder, identifying how its swipe configuration and connection to Facebook frame interactions among users. Although Bumble has been marketed as an app that alleviates the gender-based harassment common on Tinder, Bivens and Haimson 2018 highlights how Bumble's features reinstate gender biases.

Bivens, R., & Hoque, A. S. 2018. Programming sex, gender, and sexuality: Infrastructural failures in the "feminist" dating app Bumble. *Canadian Journal of Communication*, *43*.3, 441–459.

> The authors examine Bumble's infrastructure as a self-declared "feminist" dating app. They find that several failures of this infrastructure lead to users' sense of control and safety within the app being optimized for straight, cisgender women. Along with the connections the app makes between straight male bodies and aggressive masculinity, these technical arrangements counteract Bumble's social justice goals.

Cassidy, E. 2016. Social networking sites and participatory reluctance: A case study of Gaydar, user resistance and interface rejection. *New Media & Society*, *18*.11, 2613–2628.

> This article examines the affordances of Gaydar, a gay men's social networking service, to identify how the app and user practices complicate understandings of connection and disconnection. The author finds that individuals continue using Gaydar despite a "participatory reluctance" that stems from how the app shapes relationships and perpetuates stereotypes.

David, G., & Cambre, C. 2016. Screened intimacies: Tinder and the swipe logic. *Social Media and Society*, *2*.2, April-June, 1–11.

> This article focuses on a key functionality of Tinder: the swipe, which is used to sort through profiles. The authors examine Tinder's "swipe logic" as an accelerated pace of profile viewing, which shapes users' practices and relationships with the app.

Duguay, S. 2017. Dressing up Tinderella: Interrogating authenticity claims on the mobile dating app Tinder. *Information, Communication & Society, 20*.3, 351-367.

> Through a close analysis of Tinder's marketing and interface design, this paper identifies how the app appeases user concerns about the safety and authenticity of other users. By importing data from Facebook as an added verification layer and framing the app as populated by normatively attractive users, the author argues that Tinder makes authenticity claims on behalf of its users.

MacKee, F. 2016. Social media in gay London: Tinder as an alternative to hook-up apps. *Social Media and Society*, *2*.3.

This article seeks to understand the role of Tinder within gay men's hook-up app ecology in London. The author finds that Tinder's context and design contribute to individuals' normative self-presentations, which occur in relation to their parallel self-presentations on other apps.

Wang, S. 2018. Calculating dating goals: Data gaming and algorithmic sociality on Blued, a Chinese gay dating app. *Information, Communication & Society.* https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2018.1490796

This article examines the data structure and algorithms that comprise key functionalities of China's largest dating app, Blued. The author examines how user browsing is structured by the app's database, enabling users to sort and filter others according to dating preferences. This, together with an algorithm that evaluates people's attractiveness, gives rise to an algorithmic sociality of calculating and gaming dating goals on the app.

## Self-Presentation

Individuals' self-presentation on hook-up apps involves a range of approaches for conveying personal information, desires and preferences through app profiles and features. Ranzini and Lutz 2016 presents survey data identifying how users' personal characteristics are associated with particular self-presentational styles. Similarly, Ward 2017 examines Tinder users' range of self-presentational motivations while also noting how they learn from others' practices. Ahlm 2016, a study of Grindr users, raises questions about how self-presentation relates to identifiability and privacy while Chan 2016 notes the influence of sociocultural context on self-presentation. In both cases, broader norms relating to sex and sexuality impact self-presentational practices. Identifiability and sexual appeal are also considerations raised in Phillips 2015, an analysis of self-pornographic representations. Other articles identify normative self-presentations and users' imposition of stereotypes upon others. These include an exploration of the hypersexualization of trans women on Grindr in Lloyd and Finn 2017 and an analysis of dominant expressions of masculinity on gay hook-up apps in Rodriguez, et al. 2016.

Ahlm, J. 2016. Respectable promiscuity: Digital cruising in an era of queer liberalism. *Sexualities*, *20*.3, 364–379.

Drawing on ethnographic methods, this article examines the public/private boundaries of Grindr. The author identifies how Grindr's affordances and user practices contribute to a "respectable promiscuity" whereby public interactions on the app lead to discreet private sexual encounters.

Chan, L. S. 2016. How sociocultural context matters in self-presentation: A comparison of U.S. and Chinese profiles on Jack'd, a mobile dating app for men who have sex with men. *International Journal of Communication*, *10*, 6040–6059.

This article compares the self-presentation of men using the hook-up app Jack'd in China and the United States. It finds many sociocultural similarities and differences among profiles, such as Chinese

men being less likely to show their faces in profiles and men in both countries not specifically mentioning goals of sex-seeking.

Lloyd, C. E. M. & Finn, M. D. 2017. Authenticity, validation and sexualization on Grindr: An analysis of trans women's accounts. *Psychology & Sexuality, 8*.1-2, 158-169.

> This article examines trans women's self-identification and interactions with other users on Grindr. While interview participants often experienced hypersexualization from other users and felt pressure to present themselves as de-sexualized, they also identified opportunities for resisting these discourses.

Phillips, C. 2015. Self-pornographic representations with Grindr. *Journal of Visual and Media Anthropology, 1*.1, 65-79.

> This article examines the practice of self-pornographic representation on hook-up apps, as users produce and exchange naked selfies. The author identifies that individuals exercise agency in constructing these self-representations, taking approaches that consider anonymity as well as aesthetics. Self-pornographic representations feature in a gift economy, as visual materials to be exchanged in the construction of intimacy.

Ranzini, G., & Lutz, C. 2016. Love at first swipe? Explaining Tinder self-presentation and motives. *Mobile Media & Communication*, *5*.1, 80-101.

> This article draws on survey data to identify associations between individual qualities and self-presentation on hook-up apps. The authors find that personality characteristics, motives of use, and demographics all affect users' self-presentation and relate to how deceptive users are in their profiles.

Rodriguez, N. S., Huemmer, J., & Blumell, L. E. 2016. Mobile masculinities: An investigation of networked masculinities in gay dating apps. *Masculinities & Social Change*, *5*.3, 241-267.

> Through textual analysis of profiles on gay men's hook-up apps, these authors examine constructions of masculinity. They identify practices of signalling hegemonic masculinity and seeking out others who also express this form of masculinity. Through these practices, an elite user group of masculine-presenting individuals emerges in dating app communities.

Ward, J. 2017. What are you doing on Tinder? Impression management on a matchmaking mobile app. *Information Communication and Society*, *20*.11, 1644–1659.

> Drawing on interviews conducted with Tinder users in the Netherlands, this article identifies multiple aspects of impression management involved in profile creation and evaluation. The study's findings reveal that a range of motivations for Tinder use shape self-presentation. Users also adjust their self-presentation based on the information and images they observe in others' profiles.

## Intimacy and Relationships

A great deal of hook-up app research is concerned with how this technology is shaping sex, intimacy, and the formation of short and long-term relationships. Carpenter and McEwan 2016 presents survey data demonstrating a variety of motivations for using hook-up apps related to sex and relationship seeking but find that users also view these apps as a source of entertainment. Licoppe, et al. 2016 as well as Yeo and Fung 2018 find that gay men's hook-up apps provide a framing for short-term, rapid sexual encounters. In contrast, Tinder's relational associations appear to be more flexible, with Newett, et al. 2017 identifying Tinder as a tool that enables young people to manage degrees of intimacy. Timmermans and Courtois 2018 also observes Tinder's potential for facilitating both sexual encounters and long-term relationships. Similarly, Albury and Byron 2016 finds that young people negotiate the risks of hook-up apps in order to establish a range of relationships. This range includes non-monogamous relationship configurations, as illustrated in Møller and Nebeling 2018. Hobbs, et al. 2017 theorizes that hook-up apps enable new forms of networked intimacy. This resonates with Tang 2017, which looks at the opportunities hook-up apps offer for lesbian romance in Hong Kong, even in the context of enduring conservative cultural values. However, not all use of hook-up apps leads to physical intimacy or in-person dates, as Tziallas 2015 demonstrates that some use is centered on gamified exchanges of images and erotic chat.

Albury, K., & Byron, P. 2016. Safe on my phone? Same-sex attracted young people's negotiations of intimacy, visibility and risk on digital hook-up apps. *Social Media and Society*, *2*.4, 1–10.

> This article draws on data from focus groups with same-sex attracted, young Australians who use dating apps. The authors identify multiple aspects of young people's negotiation of these apps, some of which pose risks but function alongside strategies to manage intimate encounters.

Carpenter, C. J., & McEwan, B. 2016. *The players of micro-dating: Individual and gender differences in goal orientations toward micro-dating apps[http://firstmonday.org/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/6187/5469]*. *First Monday*, *21*.5.

> This exploratory survey-based research aims to understand the motivations of dating app users and non-users. It finds that users' reported main motivation is entertainment, rather than sex-seeking. However, the most frequent users of dating apps possess personality traits predisposed to varied sexual partners.

Hobbs, M., Owen, S., & Gerber, L. 2017. Liquid love? Dating apps, sex, relationships and the digital transformation of intimacy. *Journal of Sociology*, *53*.2, 271–284.

> This article uses mixed methods to examine how dating apps' affordances are shaping intimacy. The authors find that dating apps feature as intermediaries in users' sexual practices and relationship-

seeking. They develop the concept of "networked intimacy" to describe how dating apps have the potential to enhance users' social capital in relation to these aims.

Licoppe, C., Rivière, C. A., & Morel, J. 2016. Grindr casual hook-ups as interactional achievements. *New Media & Society, 18*.11, 2540-2558.

> This study examines the linguistic practices of Grindr users that facilitate pseudonymous, one-time sexual encounters. The authors find that users' interactional practices are supported by the app's design in order to preclude relationship formation and orient users toward sexual encounters.

Møller, K. & Nebeling, P. M. 2018. Bleeding boundaries: Domesticating gay hook-up apps. In R. Andreassen, P. M. Nebeling, K. Harrison & T. Raun, Eds. *Mediated intimacies: Connectivities, relationalities and proximities* (pp. 208-223)*.* London & New York: Routledge.

> This chapter examines how hook-up apps become domesticated into the relationships of non-monogamous gay men. It identifies how hook-up apps can destabilize traditional scripts of intimacy and disturb distinctions between private and public. In turn, users "house-train" these apps to facilitate sexual encounters within the context of multiple relationships.

Newett, L., Churchill, B., & Robards, B. 2018. Forming connections in the digital era: Tinder, a new tool in young Australian intimate life. *Journal of Sociology*, *54*.3, 346-361.

> This article presents survey and interview data to demonstrate how Tinder has become a tool for initiating and managing intimacy in the lives of young Australians. The authors discuss how Tinder shapes the connections formed among young people and how the app is influential in face-to-face settings.

Tang, D. T. S. 2017. All I get is an emoji: Dating on lesbian mobile phone app Butterfly. *Media, Culture and Society*, *39*.6, 816–832.

> This article focuses on how Chinese women use the dating app, Butterfly, in Hong Kong to negotiate intimacy. Its findings illustrate how the app opens up opportunities for love and romance among women but conservative values and dominant cultural norms still shape how they engage romantically.

Timmermans, E. & Courtois, C. 2018. From swiping to casual sex and/or committed relationships: Exploring the experiences of Tinder users. *The Information Society, 34*.2, 59-70.

> This study examines data from Belgian Tinder users to identify gender practices and relationship trends among matches. Its findings point to the potential for both casual sexual encounters and longer-term relationships to emerge from Tinder use.

Tziallas, E. 2015. Gamified eroticism: Gay male "social networking" applications and self-pornography. *Sexuality & Culture, 19*, 759-775.

> This article asserts that the popularity of gay men's hook-up apps is due to the gamification of users' social and sexual interactions. Self-pornification and the exchange of nude photos gives rise to gamified surveillance whereby users participate in screening, monitoring, filtering, and revealing themselves to others, often for the purpose of collecting images and engaging in erotic chat.

Yeo, T. E. D., & Fung, T. 2018. "Mr Right Now": Temporality of relationship formation on gay mobile dating apps. *Mobile Media and Communication*, *6*.1, 3–18.

> This article presents findings from interviews and focus groups with gay men in Hong Kong to explore how dating apps influence the temporality of relationships. They find that apps like Grindr and Jack'd are conducive to accelerated interactions that complicate the formation of longer-term relationships.

## Social Connection and Community

The adoption of hook-up apps can contribute to social connections beyond one-on-one relationships, sometimes enabling non-romantic exchanges of social capital and the formation of communities. Shield 2016 identifies how gay men commonly turn to hook-up apps when settling into a new city to gather information about their surroundings as well as housing and employment. In contrast, Cassidy and Wang 2018 finds that Chinese gay men in Australia form community on a messaging app, which then helps them to navigate the cultural nuances of hook-up apps and in-person situations. Ong 2017 explains the new connections that hook-up apps facilitate in post-disaster zones, where communication among aid workers and locals can help individuals deal with tragedy. Race 2015 examines how hook-up apps structure and facilitate sexual sociability among gay men. However, Miles 2017 is a study of non-heterosexual men in the United Kingdom which demonstrates that hook-up apps may not contribute to a sense of community, even if they indicate that other LGBTQ individuals are nearby.

Cassidy, E., & Wang, W. Y. 2018. Gay men's digital cultures beyond Gaydar and Grindr: LINE use in the gay Chinese diaspora of Australia. *Information Communication and Society*, *21*.6, 851–865.

> This article explores how the use of a social chat application, LINE, can bring together diasporic Chinese gay men living in Australia. Through participant observation, the authors identify how conversations among these men on LINE helped them to navigate and makes sense of their experiences on gay men's hook-up apps as well as across new cultural situations.

Miles, S. 2017. Sex in the digital city: location-based dating apps and queer urban life. *Gender, Place and Culture*, *24*.11, 1595–1610.

> Drawing on interviews with non-heterosexual men in the United Kingdom, this article identifies the tensions that hook-up apps present for building a sense of community. The authors find that although

apps contribute to the blurring of private/public boundaries, their ambiguous social norms complicate physical encounters, failing to ameliorate individuals' ambivalence to notions of queer community.

Ong, J. C. 2017. Queer cosmopolitanism in the disaster zone: 'My Grindr became the United Nations.' *International Communication Gazette*, *79*.6–7, 656–673.

> This article examines the role of hook-up apps among aid workers and locals in a post-disaster context. Through ethnographic methods conducted in the central Philippines after Typhoon Haiyan in 2013, the author finds that hook-up apps enabled connections among foreign aid workers and local LGBTQ people living in a predominantly Catholic village. The presence of aid workers and the relationships facilitated by hook-up apps opened up new opportunities for sexual expression, healing, and belonging.

Race, K. 2015. 'Party and play': Online hook-up devices and the emergence of PNP practices among gay men. *Sexualities, 18*.3, 253-275.

> This article investigates the role of hook-up app infrastructures in gay men's Party 'n' Play practices relating to playful sexual activity that includes the use of drugs for some participants. The author identifies how hook-up apps are conducive to sexual sociability as they are used to pre-specify desires, co-construct fantasies, and arrange extended sessions of sexual and social interactivity.

Shield, A. 2016. New in town: Gay immigrants and geosocial dating apps. In A. Dhoest, L. Szulc, & B. Eeckhout. Eds., *LGBTQs, media, and culture in Europe: Situated case studies*. London: Routledge.

> This chapter examines the experiences of recent immigrants to Copenhagen to understand their use of gay men's hook-up apps. The author finds that individuals use these apps for a range of purposes alongside dating and romance, which include information exchange, friendship, and activism against racial discrimination and exclusion.

## Inequalities, Racism, and Gender-Based Violence

Racial and gender inequalities can carry over into hook-up apps while apps' design and governance can also reinforce or exacerbate discriminatory and violent behaviour. Daroya 2018 and Raj 2011 interrogate the overt racial discrimination present on Grindr, identifying racialized discourses and norms that establish a hierarchy of desirability. These studies share similarities with Carlson 2019, which illustrates the sexual racism that Indigenous Australians experience on hook-up apps. Racial discourses are again apparent in Mason 2016, a study of Tinder users whose profile photos depict them in humanitarian or volunteer settings. Farvid and Aisher 2016 communicates the opportunities and risks that hook-up apps introduce for young women while Gillett 2018 articulates the extent of such risks, reporting on the high frequency of sexual harassment and gender-based violence that women encounter. Shaw 2016 and Hess

and Flores 2018 examine responses to sexual harassment on hook-up apps, analyzing social media pages for exposing, shaming, and speaking back to sexually aggressive, entitled, and violent behaviour.

Carlson, B. 2019. Love and hate at the cultural interface: Indigenous Australians and dating apps. *Indigenous Sociology: Contemporary Theoretical Perspectives.* https://doi.org/10.1177/1440783319833181

> This article explores Indigenous Australians' use of dating apps, looking at how gay men and heterosexual women both negotiate the boundary work of being Indigenous on these apps. The author finds that Indigenous users are often subject to sexual racism, as other users express sexual preferences based on racial discrimination, as well as pressures to present themselves as white in order to be perceived as desirable.

Daroya, E. 2018. "Not into chopsticks or curries": Erotic capital and the psychic life of racism on Grindr. In D. W. Riggs. Ed, *The psychic life of racism in gay men's communities,* pp. 67-80. London: Lexington Books.

> This chapter examines Asian men's experiences on Grindr to identify how racism characterizes interactions on the app. The author identifies how users' racialized discourses shape who is seen as desirable, reaffirming whiteness as a dominant standard of desirability while reinforcing Orientalist discourses about Asian men as undesirable.

Farvid, P., & Aisher, K. 2016. *"It's just a lot more casual": Young heterosexual women's experience of using Tinder in New Zealand[http://adanewmedia.org/2016/10/issue10-farvid-aisher/]*. *Ada: A Journal of Gender, New Media, and Technology*, *10*.

> This article is an in-depth analysis of young heterosexual women's use of Tinder in New Zealand. Interview participants discussed being able to access new opportunities for pleasure and intimacy while also navigating the danger of potentially sexually aggressive interactions with male users.

Gillett, R. 2018. Intimate intrusions online: Studying the normalisation of abuse in dating apps. *Women's Studies International Forum*, *69*, 212–219.

> This article examines the high frequency of sexual harassment and dating violence experienced by women who use dating apps. It draws on the framework of the "continuum of sexual violence" to interrogate how this abuse becomes normalized. This provides researchers with a conceptual tool for further investigating the implications of gender-based abuse on apps.

Hess, A., & Flores, C. 2018. Simply more than swiping left: A critical analysis of toxic masculine performances on Tinder Nightmares. *New Media and Society*, *20*.3, 1085–1102.

This article examines the Tinder Nightmares Instagram page, where women post screenshots of toxic masculine interactions they have encountered on Tinder. The authors identify how the page plays a role in counter-disciplining Tinder users, by shaming and circulating their practices outside of the app's context.

Mason, C. L. 2016. Tinder and humanitarian hook-ups: The erotics of social media racism. *Feminist Media Studies, 16*.5, 822-837.

This article considers the phenomenon of Tinder users whose profiles show them in humanitarian or volunteer settings. It draws attention to the racial erotics involved in these images and how they evoke a mediated "matrix of desire" that relies on particular discourses of race, class, and gender.

Raj, S. 2011. Grindring bodies: Racial and affective economies of online queer desire. *Critical Race and Whiteness Studies, 7*.2, 1-12.

This article uses an autoethnographic lens to examine how Grindr gives rise to new subjectivities and norms relating to race, masculinity, bodies and geography. The author identifies how whiteness becomes a form of capital, accruing privilege for some users while bodies that do not pass as white are fetishized or marked as undesirable.

Shaw, F. 2016. "Bitch I Said Hi": The Bye Felipe campaign and discursive activism in mobile dating apps. *Social Media and Society*, *2*.4.

The author analyzes an Instagram page, Bye Felipe, which was developed in response to the sexual harassment that women experience on dating apps. Women post examples of these interactions that, in turn, accumulate into a form of "feminist discursive activism" that visibly demonstrates their collective experience.

**Markets and Politics**

Hook-up apps function within broader political and economic contexts. Albury, et al. 2017 highlights how hook-up apps render intimate user information into data flows that can be channeled toward economic aims. Liu 2016 examines how, under the surveillance of the Chinese government, a hook-up app's framing becomes increasingly sexually conservative. In contrast, Murray and Ankerson 2016 finds that the fast-paced North American app market and rapid matching technology do not pair well with the temporality of lesbian dating. As apps' governance stipulations often reflect their political and economic values, Roth 2015 examines normative discourses that shape what users can and cannot do on gay men's hook-up apps. Mowlabocus, et al. 2016 identifies how app store policies and other aspects of hook-up app arrangements can constrain health outreach endeavours. However, Brennan 2017 identifies some users' strategies for subverting app rules and regulations in order to generate individual revenue.

Albury, K., Burgess, J., Light, B., Race, K., & Wilken, R. 2017. Data cultures of mobile dating and hook-up apps: Emerging issues for critical social science research. *Big Data & Society*, *4*.2.

> This article explores the multiple forms of data that flow in relation to hook-up apps. The authors discuss these as "data cultures," which are generated in relation to apps' economic imperatives, technological infrastructures, and user practices. They propose that data production, algorithmic processing, and cross-platform sharing of data should be considered in app research frameworks.

Brennan, J. 2017. Cruising for cash: Prostitution on Grindr. *Discourse, Context and Media*, *17*, 1–8.

> This article examines conversations in a discussion forum on Reddit about the use of Grindr to solicit sex in exchange for money. The author argues that those seeking payment view themselves as "mobile pornographers" drawing on the affordances of mobile apps to generate profit.

Liu, T. 2016. Neoliberal ethos, state censorship and sexual culture: A Chinese dating/hook-up app. *Continuum*, *30*.5, 557–566.

> This article examines the Chinese hook-up app, Momo, to understand its use and marketing within the country's particular sociocultural and political context. The author identifies contextual factors giving rise to Momo's popularity as well subsequent developments, related to government pressure and foreign investment, resulting in the app becoming more sexually conservative.

Mowlabocus, S., Haslop, C., & Dasgupta, R. K. 2016. From scene to screen: The challenges and opportunities of commercial digital platforms for HIV community outreach. *Social Media and Society*, *2*.4, 1-8.

> Drawing on data from a broader research project evaluating the need for a digital outreach program in London and Brighton, UK, this article identifies how commercial hook-up apps pose challenges for gay men's health promotion. While hook-up apps offer opportunities for peer educators to identify local cohorts of gay men, these apps also place constraints on outreach activity that does not align with their commercial aims.

Murray, S., & Ankerson, M. S. 2016. Lez takes time: Designing lesbian contact in geosocial networking apps. *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, *33*.1, 53–69.

> The authors trace the design and marketing of a lesbian-focused app, Dattch, later re-branded as Her. They identify that the marketing and branding strategies applied to gay men's hook-up apps break down in relation to the temporality of lesbian dating, which is also counter to the rapid, capital-driven technology market.

Roth, Y. 2015. "No overly suggestive photos of any kind": Content management and the policing of self in gay digital communities. *Communication, Culture & Critique*. *8*.3, 414-432.

This article investigates the content management policies of gay-targeted social networking services. It applies an interdisciplinary analytical lens to understand the normative characteristics of such policies, identifying how particular values structure user stipulations, which are then supported by the app's technology.