



Dating Apps and Social Media: The Blurring of Boundaries in Sexual Assault and Consent

Yujia Zhu

Sofia University, USA

Abstract

The rise of dating apps and social media has revolutionized interpersonal relationships, creating new opportunities for connection while simultaneously complicating traditional understandings of sexual consent and assault. The immediacy and accessibility of digital communication blur the boundaries between virtual and real-world interactions, making consent more ambiguous and vulnerable to misinterpretation. Features such as text messaging, emojis, and digital flirtation introduce new complexities to consent negotiation, while the persistence of digital records challenges individuals' ability to retract consent. Additionally, technology-facilitated sexual violence (TFSV) disproportionately impacts women and marginalized groups, raising concerns about digital coercion, online harassment, and privacy violations. The gamification of dating apps further exacerbates issues of consent by encouraging impulsive decision-making and reducing personal agency in intimate encounters. This study employs a systematic literature review, drawing from peer-reviewed sources across law, psychology, digital ethics, and gender studies to analyze the evolving complexities of consent in digital spaces. A thematic analysis identifies key patterns in how digital interactions shape perceptions of consent, focusing on factors such as algorithmic influence, social coercion, and legal limitations. By synthesizing interdisciplinary insights, this research critically examines the erosion of clear consent frameworks, the legal and ethical implications of these blurred boundaries, and the role of tech companies in safeguarding users. The findings advocate for legal reforms, enhanced digital literacy programs, and AI-driven consent mechanisms to address the emerging challenges of consent in the digital age.

Keywords: Digital consent, technology-facilitated sexual violence (TFSV), online harassment, digital coercion, legal implications of digital consent

1. Introduction

The rise of dating apps and social media platforms has significantly transformed modern relationships, reshaping interpersonal boundaries and introducing new dynamics of virtual intimacy. Dating apps like Tinder, Bumble, and Grindr have become primary tools for initiating romantic and sexual relationships, offering users unprecedented access to potential partners. This shift has been accompanied by both opportunities and challenges. On one hand, these platforms democratize the dating landscape, allowing individuals to connect beyond traditional

social circles and geographical constraints, thus broadening the scope of partner-seeking behaviors (Coduto & Fox, 2024; Wen, 2024). However, the digital nature of these interactions also blurs the lines between real and virtual spaces, leading to a decrease in commitment and an increase in psychological strain as users navigate a seemingly infinite pool of potential partners (Yakushina, 2023). The ease of contact and the multiplicity of choices can lead to superficial connections and unmet expectations, as seen in the experiences of men seeking men online, who often encounter hierarchies based on age, race, and other factors (Adam et al., 2024). Moreover, the digital environment has facilitated new forms of interpersonal violence, such as technology-facilitated sexual violence (TFSV), which disproportionately affects women and sexual minorities on dating apps (Kettrey et al., 2024; Porter et al., 2024). Social media platforms like Instagram and Snapchat further complicate relationship dynamics by enabling behaviors that challenge traditional notions of fidelity, such as “micro cheating” and emotional infidelity, which can lead to increased surveillance and privacy invasions (Foster et al., 2023). The COVID-19 pandemic has further accelerated these trends as restrictions on physical interactions pushed more people towards digital platforms for intimacy, leading to a redefinition of romantic relationships and the emergence of new intimacy phenomena (Iglesias et al., 2023; Portolan, 2022). Despite these challenges, digital communication technologies continue to play a crucial role in modern relationships, necessitating a balanced approach to leveraging these tools for enhancing interpersonal connections while addressing the associated risks (Coduto & Fox, 2024; Wen, 2024). This paper will explore how dating apps and social media contribute to boundary blurring in sexual consent and assault, and the intersection of online interactions and real-world consequences.

Digital communication has significantly altered the landscape of consent, complicating traditional frameworks that were primarily built around in-person interactions. In the context of dating apps and social media, the immediacy and accessibility of communication create blurred boundaries, where implied or assumed consent may not align with an individual’s actual intent. Text messages, emojis, and social media interactions can be misinterpreted, with flirtatious exchanges online sometimes being taken as a green light for physical intimacy offline. Unlike face-to-face interactions, digital communication lacks crucial nonverbal cues that help clarify consent, such as tone of voice, body language, and immediate verbal confirmation. Furthermore, the permanence of digital exchanges creates additional complications; messages, photos, and videos can be saved, shared, or manipulated, making it difficult for individuals to retract consent or establish clear boundaries. The phenomenon of “digital coercion,” where persistent messaging, emotional manipulation, or threats pressure someone into unwanted interactions, further illustrates how traditional notions of consent fail to fully capture the complexities introduced by modern technology.

The legal, psychological, and ethical implications of this shift are profound. Legally, existing sexual assault and harassment laws often struggle to keep pace with the nuances of digital consent. Many jurisdictions focus on physical encounters, leaving gaps in how to address online coercion, unsolicited explicit content, or threats made via social media. The challenge of proving intent and mutual agreement in a digital context adds another layer of complexity, as screenshots or chat logs may lack context or fail to capture the full extent of manipulation. Psychologically, the rise of digital intimacy and blurred boundaries can have long-term consequences, particularly for victims who experience trauma from online harassment or coercion that later escalates into in-person assault. The anonymity and distance provided by digital platforms also embolden perpetrators, increasing instances of predatory behavior that may not have occurred in traditional face-to-face settings. Ethically, there is an urgent need to redefine digital consent and establish clearer guidelines for responsible online interactions. Tech companies, social media platforms, and dating apps have a moral obligation to integrate stronger safeguards, consent education, and reporting mechanisms to prevent harm.

As digital communication continues to shape modern relationships, addressing these evolving challenges requires a multidisciplinary approach that combines legal reform, psychological support, and ethical discourse to protect individuals from the risks of boundary blurring in the digital age.

This paper argues that integrating interdisciplinary perspectives, drawing from law, psychology, gender studies, digital media, and ethics, is essential to comprehensively understand and address the complexities surrounding consent in the age of dating apps and social media. As virtual intimacy increasingly blurs interpersonal boundaries, these platforms reshape how consent is communicated, interpreted, and violated, necessitating a multifaceted approach to redefine consent norms, enhance legal protections, and promote ethical digital interaction.

2. Methodology

This literature review employs a systematic and integrative approach to analyze how dating apps and social media contribute to the blurring of boundaries in sexual assault and consent. By incorporating a diverse range of interdisciplinary perspectives, this study seeks to provide a nuanced understanding of the legal, psychological, and ethical implications of digital interactions in consent negotiations. The methodology consists of three key components: the selection of literature, thematic analysis, and synthesis of interdisciplinary perspectives.

The literature selection process for this systematic review was designed to ensure academic rigor, topical relevance, and interdisciplinary breadth. To establish a credible foundation for analysis, the review prioritized peer-reviewed journal articles, scholarly books, legal texts, and empirical studies. These sources were retrieved from reputable academic databases such as Google Scholar, JSTOR, PubMed, Springer, Taylor & Francis, and Wiley. By focusing on peer-reviewed and primary sources, the review upheld high standards of academic credibility and methodological reliability.

Relevance to the research topic was a key inclusion criterion. Selected studies had to directly engage with the intersection of digital communication technologies, specifically dating apps and social media, issues related to sexual consent, sexual assault, or technology-facilitated sexual violence (TFSV). Literature was considered eligible if it contributed to a nuanced understanding of how sociotechnical systems and digital affordances impact user behavior, especially in relation to consent negotiation, psychological well-being, legal accountability, and social dynamics. This thematic focus ensured that the review remained aligned with its central inquiry into the complexities of digital consent. The review emphasized recency in publication, selecting works from 2014 to 2024 to capture the latest developments in digital dating culture, platform design, and legal reform. However, this temporal scope was applied flexibly to include seminal works foundational to the theoretical framing of consent, even if published prior to 2014. These foundational texts were deemed essential for establishing the historical and conceptual context of digital consent and its evolution.

An interdisciplinary approach was essential to reflect the multifaceted nature of the topic. As such, the review incorporated literature from a range of academic disciplines, including law, psychology, digital ethics, gender studies, and computer science. Legal scholarship offered insight into how jurisdictions interpret digital consent and navigate prosecutorial challenges. Psychological and behavioral science perspectives illuminated the emotional and cognitive dimensions of digital coercion and trauma. Digital ethics and technology studies explored algorithmic influences and platform design, while gender and social studies provided critical frameworks for understanding power, marginalization, and intersectionality in digital interactions.

The review was primarily limited to studies from Western contexts such as the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Australia, due to their dominance in academic publishing and digital policy development. It acknowledged the limitation of excluding non-English-language sources and Global South perspectives, recognizing that future research should address this gap to enhance cross-cultural applicability and representation in the discourse on digital consent. Exclusion criteria were applied to maintain methodological clarity and relevance. Sources that were outdated, particularly those predating the proliferation of smartphones and contemporary dating apps, were excluded unless they offered foundational theoretical insights. Non-academic opinion pieces, popular journalism, and articles lacking clear methodological grounding were also omitted. Studies were favored if they employed transparent research designs, disclosed participant demographics, and demonstrated ethical rigor. Preference was given to literature utilizing qualitative, quantitative, or mixed-methods approaches with well-articulated research questions and reliable instruments for examining digital consent, coercion, or harassment.

A thematic analysis was conducted to identify key patterns and trends across the selected literature. Initially, the literature was reviewed in depth to identify recurring themes and critical arguments. The next step involved coding key concepts such as “digital coercion,” “technology-facilitated sexual violence (TFSV),” “gamification of dating apps,” and “legal challenges of digital consent.” These codes were then systematically grouped into broader themes that reflect significant areas of concern, including the normalization of boundary blurring, the role of algorithms in shaping consent, and the psychological and legal implications of digital interactions. The themes were refined to ensure they aligned with the research objectives, eliminating redundancies and identifying gaps in coverage. Finally, a structured synthesis of these themes was developed, allowing for a cohesive analysis that connects insights from multiple disciplines to offer a comprehensive understanding of digital consent complexities.

Given the intricate nature of digital consent, this study adopted an interdisciplinary perspective to synthesize insights from various fields. Legal studies provide an understanding of how existing sexual assault laws interpret digital consent, the challenges in prosecuting technology-facilitated crimes, and proposed legal reforms. Psychological and behavioral science perspectives highlight the cognitive and emotional impacts of digital interactions on consent negotiation, including the effects of digital coercion, social pressure, and the psychological distress associated with ambiguous consent. Digital ethics and technology studies examine the role of algorithmic matchmaking, gamification, and AI-driven consent mechanisms in shaping user behaviors on dating apps. Additionally, gender and social studies investigate power dynamics in digital courtship, the disproportionate impact of digital sexual violence on marginalized groups, and the role of social media in digital activism movements such as #MeToo. This interdisciplinary synthesis ensures that the analysis moves beyond isolated perspectives to present a more holistic and nuanced exploration of digital consent challenges.

Despite the rigorous approach taken in this literature review, several limitations must be acknowledged. One significant constraint is the reliance on existing academic research, which may not fully capture recent shifts in user behavior or real-time platform policy changes. Additionally, the focus on English-language sources may limit insights from non-Western perspectives, which could provide alternative understandings of digital consent frameworks. Future research could benefit from empirical studies that analyze user experiences directly, as well as legal case studies addressing digital sexual violence in various cultural and legal contexts.

In conclusion, this methodological approach ensures a structured and critical examination of how dating apps and social media contribute to the erosion of clear consent frameworks. By

integrating perspectives from multiple disciplines, this review provides a comprehensive analysis of the evolving challenges of digital consent, offering valuable insights for policy recommendations and future research directions.

3. The Evolution of Dating Apps and Social Media in Intimate Relationships

The transition from traditional courtship to online matchmaking represents a significant shift in how romantic relationships are initiated and developed, driven by the advent of digital communication technologies. Historically, traditional dating involved personal introductions through social networks or chance encounters in public spaces, such as bars and restaurants, which have now been largely supplanted by online platforms (Ali & Wibowo, 2011; Wen, 2024). The rise of online dating services has been fueled by the increasing accessibility of the internet and the convenience it offers to individuals balancing multiple roles and responsibilities in modern society (Cabrera-Frias, 2013). This shift is not merely a technological evolution but also a response to societal changes, where the immediacy and anonymity provided by dating apps have redefined intimacy and courtship practices (Panulaya et al., 2024; Wu & Trotter, 2022). Anonymity allows users to explore potential matches without the immediate pressure of face-to-face interactions, while accessibility ensures that a diverse range of individuals can participate in the dating scene, regardless of geographical or social constraints (Schmitz, 2017). The immediacy of dating apps, characterized by features like swiping and instant messaging, streamlines the mate selection process, making it more efficient compared to traditional methods (Schwartz & Velotta, 2018). However, this digital transformation also brings challenges, such as the potential for superficial interactions and the reinforcement of social hierarchies based on physical appearance and other attributes (Adam et al., 2024). Despite these challenges, online dating has democratized the search for partners, allowing for greater diversity in relationships and fostering new social networks beyond traditional kinship and friendship circles (Adam et al., 2024). As online dating continues to evolve, it reflects broader societal trends towards individualism and rational choice, positioning itself as a logical consequence of modernity rather than an anomaly (Schmitz, 2017). This ongoing evolution underscores the need for balanced perspectives on leveraging technology to enhance interpersonal connections in the digital age (Wen, 2024).

Social media platforms like Instagram, Snapchat, and TikTok have emerged as indirect dating platforms, facilitating romantic and sexual interactions among users, particularly young people. These platforms allow for passive and indirect courtship initiation, where users can gather information and engage in subtle interactions without the pressure of face-to-face encounters (Ovadia, 2016; Regmi et al., 2022). The culture of “sliding into DMs” (direct messages) exemplifies this trend, where individuals initiate private conversations that can lead to romantic or sexual relationships. This practice often blurs intentions, as the informal and casual nature of social media communication can lead to misunderstandings about the seriousness or nature of the interaction (Groggel, 2023). Emojis, for instance, are used to convey nonverbal cues and can either clarify or obscure the intentions behind messages, adding another layer of complexity to digital flirtations (Groggel, 2023). The use of these platforms for romantic purposes is not without risks; issues such as digital dating abuse, where controlling behaviors and privacy violations occur, are prevalent among teenagers (Belotti et al., 2022). Despite these challenges, social media offers opportunities for relationship initiation and maintenance, as seen with TikTok, where users engage in sharing and viewing relationship content, which can both enhance and complicate romantic dynamics (Langlais et al., 2024). The digital landscape has significantly transformed how romantic relationships are formed and maintained, with online interactions now surpassing traditional methods of meeting partners (Wen, 2024). This shift underscores the need for comprehensive education on digital literacy

and healthy relationship practices to navigate the opportunities and risks presented by these platforms (Habito et al., 2021; Lykens et al., 2019). Overall, while social media provides a convenient and expansive avenue for romantic exploration, it also necessitates a critical understanding of the implications for personal and sexual health (Döring et al., 2021).

The impact of technology-driven shifts such as ghosting, breadcrumbing, and hookup culture on perceived consent is multifaceted, influencing both the dynamics of consent and relationship norms. Ghosting and breadcrumbing, as manifestations of modern dating culture, contribute to ambiguous communication and uncertainty in relationships, which can complicate the understanding and negotiation of consent. These behaviors often leave individuals without closure or clear communication, potentially leading to misinterpretations of consent and intentions in subsequent interactions (Urusova & Khusyainov, 2019). The hookup culture, prevalent in online dating platforms, further complicates consent by normalizing casual sexual encounters, which may not always involve explicit discussions of consent, thus increasing the risk of nonconsensual experiences (Zytko et al., 2021). The pressure dynamics in online conversations, often leading to offline encounters, are exacerbated by the design of dating apps that may not adequately facilitate discussions around consent. Studies suggest that dating apps could be redesigned to mediate consent more effectively by incorporating AI-driven conversation prompts that guide users towards discussing consent and sexual boundaries before meeting in person (Furlo et al., 2021). However, the current digital consent mechanisms often commodify user interactions, reducing them to data points that can perpetuate power imbalances and limit genuine agency in consent negotiations (Carmi, 2021). Furthermore, social coercion and traditional sexual scripts can pressure individuals, particularly women, into acquiescing to unwanted sexual activities to maintain relationship satisfaction or avoid negative outcomes; this highlights the covert pressures that exist even in the absence of explicit partner pressure (Conroy et al., 2015; Powell, 2007). These dynamics underscore the need for a more nuanced understanding of consent that incorporates ongoing, enthusiastic, and informed negotiation, as advocated by feminist models of consent (Strengers et al., 2021). Overall, the integration of technology in dating and relationships necessitates a reevaluation of consent practices to ensure they are equitable and reflective of the complexities introduced by digital interactions.

4. Boundary Blurring: How Dating Apps and Social Media Complicate Consent

Dating apps have significantly transformed the landscape of romantic interactions by incentivizing rapid decision-making and riskier encounters through their design and algorithmic matchmaking. The gamification of dating apps, such as Tinder, encourages users to engage in a game-like experience where the primary goal is to accumulate matches rather than form meaningful connections. This design prioritizes immediate gratification and entertainment, often leading users to make quick, superficial decisions based on limited information, which can result in riskier encounters (Nader, 2024). The swipe culture, characterized by rapid acceptance or rejection of potential partners, fosters a disposable and standardized approach to relationships, further exacerbating the tendency towards quick decision-making (Rodrigues & Baldi, 2017). Additionally, the fear of missing out (FOMO) and decision fatigue are prevalent among users, driven by the excessive swiping culture. This behavior is linked to a reliance on algorithms, which users trust to alleviate the negative feelings associated with these compulsive behaviors (Binder et al., 2024). The psychological effects of this gamified swiping culture are profound, as users often experience a libidinal economy within the app, oscillating between validation and humiliation, which can impact their self-esteem and perception of personal worth (Bandinelli, 2022). Moreover, the algorithmic processes on these platforms can perpetuate perceived harms, such as damaging self-esteem

and encouraging antisocial behavior, as users navigate the tension between the app's commercial interests and their personal goals (Alizadeh et al., 2024). The reliance on AI-driven matchmaking algorithms further complicates the dynamics, as users' perceptions of these algorithms' fairness and effectiveness can influence their trust and engagement with the platform (Paul & Ahmed, 2023). Ultimately, while dating apps offer a novel approach to finding romantic partners, their design and algorithmic underpinnings can lead to rapid decision-making and riskier encounters, with significant psychological implications for users.

The normalization of persistent pursuit and the challenges of escaping digital harassment are complex issues deeply rooted in societal norms and technological advancements. Persistent pursuit, often perceived as “playful” pressure, is a behavior that can blur the lines between romantic interest and coercion. This behavior is frequently gendered, with men more often engaging in such pursuits, which can be explained through theories like coercive control and relational goal pursuit (Davis et al., 2012). These pursuits can manifest as obsessive relational intrusion, where an individual's privacy is persistently invaded to advance an unwanted relationship (Spitzberg et al., 2001). Such behaviors are not only invasive but can also be psychologically damaging, as they often involve manipulation and coercion tactics that exploit power imbalances in relationships (Bright, 2016). In the digital realm, harassment becomes even more pervasive and difficult to escape. Digital coercive control, characterized by the use of technology to exert power and control, creates a sense of omnipresence and omnipotence for the perpetrator, making it challenging for victims to find respite (Harris & Woodlock, 2021). This form of harassment is particularly insidious as it transcends physical boundaries, allowing abusers to maintain control even after a relationship has ended (Stark, 2024). Women in leadership roles are especially vulnerable to digital harassment, which aims to silence and limit their public presence, thereby undermining democratic practices (Faith & Fraser, 2019). The psychological impact of such harassment is profound, often leading to significant emotional distress and a reduction in personal agency (Faith & Fraser, 2019). Addressing these issues requires a nuanced understanding of the interplay between coercion, manipulation, and the digital landscape, as well as the development of robust intervention strategies to protect victims and hold perpetrators accountable (Maass, 2010).

5. Sexual Assault and the Digital Age: Case Studies and Real-World Implications

Current sexual assault laws face significant challenges in addressing digital interactions due to the evolving nature of technology and the complexities of consent in virtual environments. Traditional legal frameworks often struggle to encompass the nuances of digital interactions, such as virtual rape and digital rape, which involve nonconsensual acts perpetrated through digital means (Khan & Barure, 2024; Rajput, 2024). The legal definitions of consent in digital contexts differ from those in physical encounters, primarily because digital interactions can obscure the boundaries of consent through the anonymity and detachment provided by technology (Rooney & Foley, 2018). For instance, the concept of digital rape, which includes nonconsensual penetration using digital means, is subject to varied interpretations and lacks uniformity across jurisdictions, leading to prosecutorial challenges and inconsistent judicial outcomes (Khan & Barure, 2024). Moreover, the ethical considerations of virtual sexual assault highlight the moral wrongs associated with nonconsensual digital interactions, despite objections that such acts are not “real” or are merely part of a game (Danaher, 2022). The digital age has also transformed how sexual violence is perpetrated and recorded, raising critical questions about the adequacy of existing legal frameworks to address these new forms of abuse effectively (Hutchins, 2024). The pervasive nature of technology-facilitated sexual violence (TFSV) further complicates the legal landscape, as it encompasses a range of behaviors from online harassment to image-based

exploitation, often disproportionately affecting young women (Henry & Powell, 2018; Powell & Henry, 2017). The gendered constraints of consent in digital contexts, particularly in youth image sharing, underscore the need for educational reforms to address the normalized cultures of abuse that compromise consent (Setty et al., 2022). Overall, there is a pressing need for comprehensive legal reforms and international cooperation to develop effective frameworks that address the unique challenges posed by digital sexual violence, ensuring justice for victims and adapting to the rapid advancements in technology (Sari et al., 2024; Yang, 2024).

The intersection of dating apps, social media, and sexual assault has been a significant area of concern and study, as evidenced by various research findings. Notable cases of sexual assault facilitated by dating apps highlight the vulnerabilities users face, particularly those with disabilities, who experience higher rates of victimization compared to their nondisabled counterparts (Wolbers & Boxall, 2024). The retrospective review of sexual assault medical forensic examination charts further underscores the unique and violent nature of dating app-facilitated sexual assaults (DAppSAs), with a significant portion of these assaults involving severe physical violence and targeting vulnerable populations such as college students and individuals with mental illnesses (Valentine et al., 2022). The pervasive nature of TFSV is also evident among university students, with a significant percentage reporting experiences of TFSV, particularly among women and non-heterosexual students (Porter et al., 2024). In response to these issues, social media has played a crucial role in digital activism, particularly through movements like #MeToo, which has provided a platform for survivors to share their experiences and challenge systemic injustices (Rijal & Adzmy, 2023; Zhang, 2023). The #MeToo movement has been instrumental in changing public perceptions of sexual harassment and assault, fostering a collective understanding of these issues as systemic rather than isolated incidents (Rachmadia et al., 2024). Social media platforms, especially Twitter, have been pivotal in facilitating feminist activism, allowing users to engage in hashtag activism, share resources, and promote social actions (Li et al., 2021). Despite its successes, the #MeToo movement has faced criticism for not fully representing diverse survivor experiences, highlighting the ongoing need for inclusive and comprehensive approaches to addressing sexual violence (Loney-Howes, 2022). Overall, the integration of dating apps and social media in the discourse on sexual violence underscores the need for coordinated efforts to enhance safety measures on digital platforms and support survivors through both online and offline interventions (Filice et al., 2024; Valentine et al., 2022).

Tech companies, particularly those operating dating apps, play a crucial role in preventing sexual harassment and assault, yet significant gaps remain in their responsibility and the effectiveness of their reporting mechanisms and safety features. The prevalence of TFSV on dating apps is alarmingly high, with studies indicating that over half of users have experienced some form of harassment, particularly women and sexual minorities (Porter et al., 2024) (Gewirtz-Meydan et al., 2023). Despite this, many dating apps, such as Tinder and Bumble, have been criticized for inadequate interventions to protect users, lacking robust privacy controls and verification processes (Lee, 2023). The reliance on increased surveillance and partnerships with law enforcement as safety measures has been critiqued for potentially making marginalized users less safe, as these measures can lead to further stigmatization and privacy violations (Stardust et al., 2022). Moreover, the reporting mechanisms on these platforms are often insufficient, with victim-survivors more likely to report in-person rather than online incidents, and marginalized groups, such as LGB+ women, experiencing more negative outcomes when they do report (Lawler & Boxall, 2023). The infrastructural neglect of vulnerable populations, such as people with disabilities, further exacerbates the risk of victimization, highlighting the need for more inclusive and protective measures (Wolbers & Boxall, 2024). While some tech solutions aim to tackle sexual violence, they are often misjudged and fail to address the root causes of harassment, instead offering superficial fixes

that do not empower users or improve their safety (Pozniak, 2023). The profit motives of tech companies may also contribute to their reluctance to implement effective solutions, as they benefit from the engagement that controversial content can generate (Veale, 2020). To address these issues, there is a call for the development of domain-specific Responsible Social Media Guidelines that prioritize user safety and consent, ensuring that data collection and sharing practices are transparent and consensual (Lee, 2023; Stardust et al., 2022). Overall, tech companies must adopt a more proactive and comprehensive approach to safeguarding users, particularly those from marginalized communities, to effectively combat sexual harassment and assault on their platforms.

6. Psychological and Societal Consequences

The mental health impact on victims of digital coercion and sexual exploitation is profound and multifaceted, as evidenced by various studies. Victims of technology-facilitated abuse (TFA), including digital coercion and sexual exploitation, often experience severe psychological distress, including symptoms akin to moderate-to-severe depression and anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and even suicidal behavior (Rothman et al., 2023; Usher et al., 2023). The prevalence of TFA is notably high among women, gender minorities, and LGBTQPA+ individuals, who are at an elevated risk of experiencing such abuse (Rothman et al., 2023). Revenge porn, a form of TFA, exacerbates these mental health issues by subjecting victims to social stigmatization, isolation, and depression, further complicating their social and professional lives (Fernando et al., 2023; Kamal & Newman, 2016). The psychological impact of revenge porn is comparable to that of sexual assault, with victims reporting trust issues, anxiety, depression, and suicidal thoughts (Bates, 2017). Cyberbullying and public shaming, often employed as tools of coercion, contribute to the silencing of victims by inducing feelings of shame, disgrace, and loss of identity, which can lead to social withdrawal and limited mobility (Anita et al., 2022; Gaur & Maini, 2023). These tactics not only inflict emotional distress but also discourage victims from seeking help or speaking out, thereby perpetuating the cycle of abuse (Sugiura & Smith, 2019). The use of digital technologies in sexual abuse, such as sextortion, further compounds these issues, with victims experiencing paranoia, anxiety, and a pervasive sense of hopelessness (Fletcher et al., 2024). The intersection of digital coercion, cyberbullying, and public shaming creates a complex web of psychological trauma that necessitates comprehensive prevention strategies and support systems to aid victims in their recovery and reintegration into society (Say et al., 2015; Usher et al., 2023). Mental health professionals play a crucial role in addressing these issues, emphasizing the need for increased awareness and legislative measures to protect victims and hold perpetrators accountable (Kamal & Newman, 2016).

The normalization of casual encounters and the pervasive influence of pornography and hypersexualized digital culture have significantly impacted personal boundaries and relationship expectations. The casualization of intimacy, as explored in the context of consensual non-monogamy, reflects a broader cultural shift where personal relationships mirror the precarity and flexibility of modern labor markets. This shift emphasizes autonomy and adaptability, often requiring enhanced communication skills to navigate the complexities of nontraditional relationships, which can blur traditional boundaries and expectations (Griebing, 2012). Concurrently, the hypersexualization of society, driven by the mainstreaming of pornography and sexualized media, has altered perceptions of intimacy and gender norms. This cultural shift is evident in the way pornography influences dating behaviors and gender dynamics, often perpetuating aggressive and objectifying portrayals of women, which can negatively impact relationship dynamics and expectations (Ratnasari & Hulu, 2022; Stepanko, 2022). The omnipresence of sexual content in media and online platforms has further normalized casual sexual encounters, challenging traditional notions of privacy and intimacy

(Attwood, 2009; Kammeyer, 2007). This hypersexualized environment, particularly affecting youth, has led to a normative intimacy that blurs the lines between public and private spheres, complicating the development of healthy personal boundaries (Enson, 2017; Mercier, 2016). Moreover, the digital age has facilitated new forms of sexual expression and exploration, such as cyber dating and hookup culture, which redefine relational spaces and challenge conventional psychoanalytic ideals about sexual well-being (Bankov, 2022; Corbett, 2013). These cultural transformations underscore the need for a nuanced understanding of how digital and hypersexualized influences reshape personal boundaries and relationship expectations in contemporary society.

Intersectionality plays a crucial role in understanding the vulnerabilities faced by marginalized groups, such as women, LGBTQ+ individuals, and racial minorities, particularly in the context of digital interactions and online dating. These groups often experience compounded forms of marginalization due to the intersection of multiple identities, which can exacerbate their vulnerability to discrimination and exclusion. For instance, migrant women and LGBTQ+ individuals face significant barriers in accessing essential services and legal protections, often experiencing gender-based violence and labor exploitation, which are further intensified by their ethnic backgrounds (Ekmekçi, 2024). Similarly, Black and Latina transgender women in the United States encounter systemic racial and ethnic oppression, which necessitates intersectional considerations in public policy and healthcare to address these disparities (Webster, 2021). The digital divide further complicates these issues; marginalized groups often lack the techno-capital necessary for digital inclusion, facing barriers such as skills deficits and self-doubt, which are influenced by gendered family dynamics and socio-economic status (Silva et al., 2024). In online dating, power dynamics are skewed, with privileged groups often holding more social capital, while marginalized individuals face biases that limit their agency and opportunities for connection (Martin-Gutierrez et al., 2024). This digital exclusion is compounded by broader societal issues such as cyber-racism and misinformation, which disproportionately affect vulnerable communities (Du et al., 2017). Addressing these challenges requires an intersectional approach that considers the unique experiences and needs of these groups, advocating for inclusive policies and digital literacy programs that empower marginalized individuals and promote equitable access to digital platforms (Di Cesare, 2015; Tsatsou, 2021). By understanding and addressing the intersectional nature of these vulnerabilities, it is possible to create more inclusive and supportive environments both online and offline.

7. Solutions and Recommendations

Updating consent laws to address digital coercion and holding tech companies accountable for user safety are critical areas of policy and legal reform in the digital age. The concept of digital coercion, particularly in the context of domestic violence, highlights the need for legal frameworks that recognize the unique and pervasive nature of technology-facilitated abuse, which often transcends physical boundaries and imposes significant psychological harm on victims (Harris & Woodlock, 2019). Current consent laws, particularly in consumer privacy, are often inadequate, as they fail to fully protect individuals from the misuse of their data by digital platforms. The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission's recommendations for reforming the Privacy Act of 1988 emphasize the need for more robust consent mechanisms, suggesting that consent alone is insufficient and must be supplemented by other protective measures (Clifford & Paterson, 2020; Nicholls, 2022). In the realm of digital rape and nonconsensual dissemination of intimate images, there is a pressing need for legal clarity and uniformity across jurisdictions to effectively prosecute such crimes and protect victims (Khan & Barure, 2024; Yadav, 2023). Furthermore, the UK's Online Safety Act exemplifies efforts to hold tech companies accountable by imposing legal responsibilities to prevent and remove

harmful content, although its focus on content control may limit its effectiveness in addressing evolving digital threats (Health, 2024; Nash & Felton, 2024). The challenge of balancing user safety with privacy rights is evident in the tension between surveillance measures and the protection of personal data, as seen in the debate over safety features on dating apps (Stardust et al., 2022). Ultimately, a comprehensive approach that includes international cooperation, technological solutions, and continuous legal refinement is necessary to combat cyber sexual violence and ensure user safety in the digital landscape (Yang, 2024). In real world application, governments can fund interdisciplinary task forces involving technologists, survivors of digital abuse, legal experts, and ethicists to co-develop national digital safety standards. An international coalition could launch a *Global Consent and Digital Safety Compact*, providing shared legal definitions and technology standards while supporting localized implementation strategies.

AI moderation and reporting tools for harassment and opt-in features for explicit digital consent agreements are emerging as critical interventions in the digital landscape to combat online harassment and ensure user safety. AI tools, leveraging advanced sentiment analysis and natural language processing (NLP), are increasingly being used to detect and moderate harmful content, such as cyberbullying and online harassment, by scanning and interpreting online interactions to identify instances of abuse (Aggarwal & Gaur, 2023; Kritika, 2024; Vyawahare et al., 2024). These tools are particularly vital in protecting vulnerable groups, including women and children, from online threats, as they can automate the identification and response to harmful content, thereby promoting safer online environments (Aggarwal & Gaur, 2023; Vyawahare et al., 2024). However, the effectiveness of these AI-based interventions is often hampered by issues of transparency and the lack of publicly available resources to scrutinize the algorithms used by social media and gaming platforms (Verma et al., 2023). Despite these challenges, AI-driven solutions like chatbots are being developed to provide real-time, personalized interventions for cyberbullying, offering a promising avenue for prevention and support (Lian et al., 2023). Additionally, the concept of decentralized moderation, which involves user participation in content moderation, is being explored to address the multidimensional nature of online abuse, particularly against women (Barrington, 2023). On the other hand, opt-in features for explicit digital consent agreements are crucial for ensuring that users have control over their online interactions and consent to the terms of engagement, although specific studies on this aspect are less prevalent in the current literature. Overall, while AI-based tools and consent mechanisms hold significant potential in mitigating online harassment, ongoing research and development are necessary to enhance their effectiveness and user acceptance (Singh & Nambiar, 2024; Tan et al., 2024). In real world application, a social media platform could roll out an “Explicit Digital Boundaries” toolkit that allows users to predefine types of acceptable interaction, backed by NLP monitoring and auto-flagging when boundaries are violated. A dating app could pilot a “Transparency Tracker” that shows users anonymized data on how many harassment reports are reviewed, responded to, and resolved each month.

Digital literacy programs focusing on online safety and public campaigns redefining modern consent are crucial in today's digital age, where the internet is an integral part of daily life. Digital literacy programs aim to equip individuals, especially children and young people, with the skills necessary to navigate the internet safely. These programs often combine technical safeguards, such as parental controls, with educational initiatives that foster critical thinking and responsible online behavior, thereby empowering children to protect themselves online and reducing reliance on parental monitoring (Hepburn & Christie, 2020; Oshodi et al., 2024). For instance, in the UK, changes to the curriculum have been implemented to ensure that online safety is taught in schools, addressing the shortcomings identified in previous online safety education efforts (Hepburn & Christie, 2020). Similarly, in Indonesia, digital literacy

programs for students focus on improving digital security awareness and social media ethics, aiming to reduce cyberbullying and misinformation (Hidayat et al., 2024). On the other hand, public campaigns redefining modern consent are essential in addressing issues of sexual consent, particularly among young people. These campaigns are increasingly informed by scientific evidence and emphasize the importance of clear communication and understanding of coercive discourse (Cañaveras et al., 2024). The Teach Us Consent initiative in Australia highlights the complexities of consent, challenging traditional notions of “yes means yes” and “no means no” by emphasizing the nuances and ambiguities in consent communication (Featherstone et al., 2023). Furthermore, Canadian workshops on meaningful digital consent stress the need for transparency and improved digital literacy to foster public trust in digital interactions (Shen et al., 2022). Overall, both digital literacy programs and consent awareness campaigns play a vital role in creating a safer and more informed digital society, addressing both technical and ethical dimensions of online interactions (Pieczywok, 2022; Santhosh & Thiyagu, 2022). In real world application, in a school setting, students could complete a mandatory "Digital Boundaries & Ethics" certification before gaining access to school-approved online platforms or social apps.

To address digital coercion and cyber sexual violence meaningfully, interventions must be multi-tiered and cross-sectoral. This includes not only updating consent laws and developing robust AI tools but also embedding cultural shifts through education and creating global accountability mechanisms. These strategies, when thoughtfully applied, can contribute to a safer, more equitable digital ecosystem for all.

8. Conclusion

The rise of dating apps and social media has significantly complicated the traditional understanding of sexual consent. Unlike face-to-face interactions, digital communication lacks crucial nonverbal cues such as body language and tone of voice, which help clarify intent and mutual agreement. Flirtatious text exchanges, emojis, and suggestive images are often misinterpreted as indications of consent, creating ambiguity when digital interactions transition into real-world encounters (Porter et al., 2024). The phenomenon of “digital coercion,” where individuals use persistent messaging, emotional manipulation, or threats to pressure someone into unwanted interactions, further exemplifies how online communication erodes clear consent boundaries (Kettrey et al., 2024).

Dating apps, by design, promote gamified engagement, encouraging rapid decision-making and fostering a culture where superficial interactions dominate (Nader, 2024). This fast-paced environment creates a setting where individuals may feel compelled to engage in interactions they do not fully consent to, as social norms around consent become increasingly ambiguous (Rodrigues & Baldi, 2017). Additionally, the concept of “digital permanence” exacerbates issues of retracted consent since messages, images, and videos can be saved, shared, or manipulated, making it challenging for individuals to assert boundaries after initial engagement (Foster et al., 2023). The normalization of hypersexualized behaviors on social media platforms also complicates consent by fostering unrealistic expectations about intimacy. Practices such as “sliding into DMs” and “breadcrumbing” blur the lines between casual flirtation and coercion, reinforcing gendered power dynamics where persistence is often rewarded rather than discouraged (Groggel, 2023). As a result, social media not only alters courtship behaviors but also influences how consent is perceived and negotiated in modern relationships (Döring et al., 2021).

The current legal framework for addressing digital consent struggles to keep pace with these technological advancements. Many jurisdictions still focus on physical encounters when defining sexual assault, leaving gaps in how digital coercion, unsolicited explicit content, and

threats via social media should be addressed (Rajput, 2024). Cases of technology-facilitated sexual violence (TFSV) highlight the inadequacies of existing laws, as victims often face difficulties proving intent and establishing clear legal grounds for digital consent violations (Henry & Powell, 2018). Beyond legal considerations, there is a growing cultural need to redefine digital consent and develop more nuanced ethical guidelines. Tech companies bear significant responsibility in integrating stronger consent mechanisms, improving user safety, and ensuring better reporting mechanisms for harassment and coercion (Gewirtz-Meydan et al., 2023). However, many platforms, including Tinder and Bumble, have been criticized for inadequate responses to harassment reports, often prioritizing engagement metrics over user protection (Lee, 2023). To mitigate these challenges, experts advocate for legal reforms that explicitly address digital consent violations, along with education initiatives to promote digital literacy. The development of AI-driven moderation tools and opt-in digital consent agreements could also play a critical role in shaping safer online environments (Vyawahare et al., 2024). Furthermore, social movements like #MeToo have demonstrated the power of digital activism in raising awareness about consent violations, but challenges remain in ensuring these conversations lead to substantive policy changes (Zhang, 2023).

The complex intersection of dating apps, social media, and sexual consent demands a multidisciplinary approach that includes legal, technological, psychological, and cultural solutions. As digital platforms increasingly control human connections, the traditional definition of consent, which was previously based on direct communication is being rapidly altered by ambiguous online signals, algorithmic pairing, and the normalization of hyper-connectivity. In the absence of proactive and deliberate intervention, the ongoing erosion of consent boundaries in digital interactions would expose individuals, particularly women, LGBTQ+ users, and other oppressed groups, to exploitation, coercion, and emotional anguish.

The evolving dynamics of digital intimacy need a new definition of consent that includes both individual liberty and the overall framework of platform design and user engagement. Ephemeral communications, geolocation monitoring, and gamified swiping processes can all conceal transparent communication, allowing for manipulation or compulsion. As a result, overcoming these concerns requires immediate and ongoing collaboration among politicians, technology companies, educators, and advocacy organizations. This includes developing more comprehensive legal frameworks that accurately reflect the dynamics of digital relationships, designing platforms with integrated protections that prioritize user safety and informed consent, and launching public awareness campaigns to promote digital literacy and respect in online interactions. Only by working together can we hope to build a safer, more ethically aware digital environment, one in which consent is continually reaffirmed and honored rather than expected, neglected, or exploited.

Acknowledgments

I am very grateful for the academic tools and research that have inspired this study. My profound gratitude extends to my family for their steadfast support and encouragement during this journey. Your confidence in my work has been a wellspring of strength and motivation.

References

- Adam, B. D., Brennan, D. J., Davies, A., & Collicot, D. (2024). *Dating apps and shifting sexual subjectivities of men seeking men online*. *Sexuality & Culture*, 28, 2325–2343. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12119-024-10231-1>
- Aggarwal, A., & Gaur, S. (2023). *Applying artificial intelligence to explore online harassment and cyberbullying prevention*. In S. Ponnusamy, V. Bora, P. Daigavane, & S. Wazalwar (Eds.), *Impact of AI on advancing women's safety* (pp. 104-120). IGI Global Scientific Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.4018/979-8-3693-2679-4.ch007>

- Ali, A., & Wibowo, K. (2011). Online dating services - Chronology and key features comparison with traditional dating. *Competition Forum*, 9(2), 481-488. <https://search.proquest.com/docview/912867897?accountid=8194>
- Alizadeh, F., Lawo, D., Stevens, G., Zytka, D., & Eslami, M. (2024). When the “matchmaker” does not have your interest at heart: Perceived algorithmic harms, folk theories, and users’ counter-strategies on Tinder. *Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction*. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3689710>
- Anita, G., Mulyana, D., & Aristi, N. (2022). “Embarrassing and disgraceful”: Technology-facilitated sexual violence and victim’s healing process. *Jurnal Kajian Komunikasi*, 10(2), 228. <https://doi.org/10.24198/jkk.v10i2.42265>
- Attwood, F. (2009). *Mainstreaming sex: The sexualization of Western culture*. I.B. Tauris. <https://shura.shu.ac.uk/2763/>
- Bandinelli, C. (2022). Dating apps: Towards post-romantic love in digital societies. *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, 28(7), 905–919. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10286632.2022.2137157>
- Bankov, K. (2022). Cultural transformations of love and sex in the digital age. In *The Digital Mind. Humanities - Arts and Humanities in Progress* (Vol. 22, pp. 83–88). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-92555-0_6
- Barrington, S. (2023). *The feasibility of algorithmic detection and decentralised moderation for protecting women from online abuse*. <https://doi.org/10.48550/arxiv.2301.07144>
- Bates, S. (2017). Revenge porn and mental health: A qualitative analysis of the mental health effects of revenge porn on female survivors. *Feminist Criminology*, 12(1), 22–42. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1557085116654565>
- Belotti, F., Ieracitano, F., Donato, S. M., & Comunello, F. (2022). Towards ‘romantic media ideologies’: Digital dating abuse seen through the lens of social media and/or dating in teenage narratives. *Communication Review*, 25(1), 30–53. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10714421.2022.2033576>
- Binder, A., Stević, A., Matthes, J., & Thomas, M. F. (2024). Dating algorithms? Investigating the reciprocal relationships between partner choice FOMO, decision fatigue, excessive swiping, and trust in algorithms on dating apps. *New Media & Society*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14614448241270542>
- Bright, K. (2016). Controlling or coercive behaviour in an intimate or family relationship: a new domestic abuse offence in England and Wales. *Journal of Commonwealth Law and Legal Education*, 11(1), 99–106. <http://oro.open.ac.uk/56387/>
- Cabrera-Frias, L. (2013). Cyber courtship: Computer matchmaking and trends in online romance, *Synesis: A Journal of Science, Technology, Ethics, and Policy*, 4(1). http://www.synesisjournal.com/vol4_g/Luz%20Cabrera-Frias_2013_G1-4.pdf
- Cañaveras, P., De Botton, L., Carbonell, S., Elboj, C., Aubert, A., & López de Aguilera, G. (2024). Youth voices participating in the improvement of sexual consent awareness campaigns. *Sexes*, 5(4), 579–595. <https://doi.org/10.3390/sexes5040038>
- Carmi, E. (2021). *A feminist critique to digital consent*. *Seminar.net*, 17(2). <https://doi.org/10.7577/SEMINAR.4291>

- Clifford, D., & Paterson, J. M. (2020). Consumer privacy and consent: Reform in the light of contract and consumer protection law. *Australian Law Journal*, 94(10). <https://findanexpert.unimelb.edu.au/scholarlywork/1467447-consumer-privacy-and-consent--reform-in-the-light-of-contract-and-consumer-protection-law>
- Coduto, K. D., & Fox, J. (2024). Romantic relationship initiation and escalation through mobile dating apps: Affordances, modality weaving, and paradoxical beliefs. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 41(11), 3337–3358. <https://doi.org/10.1177/02654075241265064>
- Conroy, N. E., Krishnakumar, A., & Leone, J. M. (2015). Reexamining issues of conceptualization and willing consent the hidden role of coercion in experiences of sexual acquiescence. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 30(11), 1828–1846. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260514549050>
- Corbett, K. (2013). Shifting sexual cultures, the potential space of online relations, and the promise of psychoanalytic listening. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 61(1), 25–44. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0003065112470562>
- Danaher, J. (2022). *The ethics of virtual sexual assault*. In C. Véliz (Ed.), *Oxford handbook of digital ethics*. Oxford Handbooks Online. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780198857815.013.14>
- Davis, K. E., Swan, S. C., & Gambone, L. J. (2012). Why doesn't he just leave me alone? Persistent pursuit: A critical review of theories and evidence. *Sex Roles*, 66(5), 328–339. <https://doi.org/10.1007/S11199-010-9882-3>
- Di Cesare, M. (2015). Women, marginalization, and vulnerability. *Genus*, 70. <https://doi.org/10.4402/GENUS-637>
- Döring, N., Krämer, N. C., Mikhailova, V., Brand, M., Kruger, T. H. C., & Vowe, G. (2021). Sexual interaction in digital contexts and its implications for sexual health: A conceptual analysis. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12. <https://doi.org/10.3389/FPSYG.2021.769732>
- Du, J. T., Xie, I., Narayan, B., Abdi, E. S., Wu, H., Liu, Y.-H., & Westbrook, L. (2017). Vulnerable communities in the digital age: Advancing research and exploring collaborations. *iConference 2017 Proceedings*. <http://hdl.handle.net/2142/96785>
- Ekmekçi, E. (2024). Beyond borders: The intersection of migration, gender, and identity in shaping the lives of vulnerable populations. *Next Generation Journal for the Young Researchers*, 8(1). <https://doi.org/10.62802/4hq4p87>
- Enson, S. (2017). Evaluating the impact of hyper-sexualization on the lives of young people. *British Journal of School Nursing*, 12(6), 274–278. <https://doi.org/10.12968/BJSN.2017.12.6.274>
- Faith, B., & Fraser, E. (2019). *Digital harassment of women leaders: A review of the evidence*. <https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/20.500.12413/14765>
- Featherstone, L., Byrnes, C., Maturi, J., Minto, K., Mickelburgh, R., & Donaghy, P. (2023). Communicating consent in schools and online. In *The limits of consent* (pp. 63–83). Palgrave Socio-Legal Studies. Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-46622-9_4
- Fernando, Z., Teeraphan, P., Barkhuizen, J., & Agusalim, A. (2023). Revenge porn: Digital crimes and implications for victims. *Kosmik Hukum*, 23(2), 157–171. <https://doi.org/10.30595/kosmikhukum.v23i2.18542>

- Filice, E., Matharu, A., Parry, D. C., & Johnson, C. W. (2024). A thousand catcalls: Survivors' experiences of sexual violence in online dating. *Leisure Sciences*, 1–19. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01490400.2024.2330946>
- Fletcher, R., Tzani, C., & Ιωάννου, M. (2024). Consequences of online sextortion on victims: Findings from open-access data and an online survey. *Assessment & Development Matters*, 16(2), 36–43. <https://doi.org/10.53841/bpsadm.2024.16.2.36>
- Foster, M. E., Omapang, A. K. B., & Johnson-Zafirris, M. (2023). Is it (micro)cheating? how social media confound assumptions in romantic relationships. *AoIR selected papers of internet research*. <https://doi.org/10.5210/spir.v2023i0.13419>
- Furlo, N., Gleason, J., Feun, K., & Zytka, D. (2021). Rethinking dating apps as sexual consent apps: A new use case for ai-mediated communication. *Conference on Computer Supported Cooperative Work*, 53–56. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3462204.3481770>
- Gaur, A., & Maini, S. (2023). *Neuropsychological impact of cyber victimisation in females*. In D. Mishra (Ed.), *Cyberfeminism and gender violence in social media* (pp. 139–150). IGI Global Scientific Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-6684-8893-5.ch009>
- Gewirtz-Meydan, A., Opuda, E., & Tarshish, N. (2023). Dating apps: A new emerging platform for sexual harassment? A scoping review. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, 25(1). <https://doi.org/10.1177/15248380231162969>
- Griebing, B. (2012). *The casualization of intimacy: Consensual non-monogamy and the new sexual ethos* [Doctoral dissertation, University of Pennsylvania]. <https://repository.upenn.edu/handle/20.500.14332/32402>
- Groggel, A. (2023). The power of a □: Emojis reducing ambiguity in digitally mediated romantic encounters. *Symbolic Interaction*, 46(4), 440–472. <https://doi.org/10.1002/symb.668>
- Habito, C. M., Morgan, A., & Vaughan, C. (2021). “Direct” and “instant”: the role of digital technology and social media in young Filipinos' intimate relationships. *Culture, Health & Sexuality*, 24(5), 1–19. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13691058.2021.1877825>
- Harris, B., & Woodlock, D. (2019). Digital coercive control: Insights from two landmark domestic violence studies. *British Journal of Criminology*, 59(3), 530–550. <https://doi.org/10.1093/BJC/AZY052>
- Harris, B., & Woodlock, D. (2021). Digital coercive control and spatiality: Rural, regional, and remote women's experience. In B. Harris & D. Woodlock (Eds.), *Digital coercive control and spatiality: rural, regional, and remote women's experience* (pp. 387–406). Emerald Publishing Limited. <https://doi.org/10.1108/978-1-83982-848-520211030>
- Henry, N., & Powell, A. (2018). Technology-facilitated sexual violence: A literature review of empirical research. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, 19(2), 195–208. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1524838016650189>
- Hepburn, D., & Christie, L. (2020). *Online safety education*. <https://post.parliament.uk/research-briefings/post-pn-0608/>
- Hidayat, A., Salim, R. F., Ilyas, I., & Suherman, F. (2024). Program literasi digital dan etika media sosial bagi pelajar. *Jurnal Pengabdian Tri Bhakti*, 6(1), 63–70. <https://doi.org/10.36555/jptb.v6i1.2288>

- Hutchins, J. (2024). Book review: Anna Gjika, When rape goes viral: Youth and sexual assault in the digital age. *Theory in Action*, 17(3), 73–79. <https://doi.org/10.3798/tia.1937-0237.2414>
- Iglesias, J. G., Heaphy, B., & Yodovich, N. (2023). An intimate revolution: Digital practices of intimacy during covid-19 and beyond. *AoIR Selected Papers of Internet Research*. <https://doi.org/10.5210/spir.v2023i0.13421>
- Kamal, M., & Newman, W. J. (2016). Revenge pornography: Mental health implications and related legislation. *Journal of the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law*, 44(3), 359–367. <http://jaapl.org/content/44/3/359>
- Kammeyer, K. C. W. (2008). *A hypersexual society: Sexual discourse, erotica, and pornography in America today*. Palgrave Macmillan. <http://ci.nii.ac.jp/ncid/BA90416462>
- Kettrey, H. H., Nwajei, M., Quinn, S. B., Leslie, M., Paradise, E., & Wishon, D. (2024). Gendered affordances of digital technology in mitigating the perceived risk of dating app matches perpetrating sexual assault or “making stories” of assault. *Social Media and Society*, 10(3). <https://doi.org/10.1177/20563051241269296>
- Khan, W., & Barure, P. (2024). Understanding digital rape: A comprehensive study of legislation and case law. *International Journal for Multidisciplinary Research*, 6(4). <https://doi.org/10.36948/ijfmr.2024.v06i04.24362>
- Kritika. (2024). Forestalling cyber bullying and online harassment. In S. Ponnusamy, V. Bora, P. Daigavane, & S. Wazalwar (Eds.), *Wearable devices, surveillance systems, and AI for women's wellbeing* (pp. 148-181). IGI Global Scientific Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.4018/979-8-3693-3406-5.ch010>
- Portolan, L. (2022). *Love, intimacy and online dating*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003120353>
- Langlais, M. R., Boudreau, C. L., & Asad, L. (2024). TikTok and romantic relationships: A qualitative descriptive analysis. *American Journal of Qualitative Research*, 8(3), 95–112. <https://doi.org/10.29333/ajqr/14896>
- Lawler, S., & Boxall, H. (2023). Reporting of dating app facilitated sexual violence to the police: Victim-survivor experiences and outcomes. *Trends & Issues in Crime and Criminal Justice*, 662. Canberra: Australian Institute of Criminology. <https://doi.org/10.52922/ti78887>
- Lee, K. S. (2023). Examining safety and inclusive interventions on dating apps by adopting responsible social media guidelines. *Proceedings of the 2023 ACM Conference on Information Technology for Social Good*, 537–546 <https://doi.org/10.1145/3582515.3609579>
- Li, M., Turki, N., Izaguirre, C. R., DeMahy, C., Thibodeaux, B. L., & Gage, T. (2021). Twitter as a tool for social movement: an analysis of feminist activism on social media communities. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 49(3), 854–868. <https://doi.org/10.1002/JCOP.22324>
- Lian, A.T., Costilla Reyes, A., Hu, X. (2023). CAPTAIN: An AI-based chatbot for cyberbullying prevention and intervention. In H. Degen & S. Ntoa, S. (Eds), *Artificial intelligence in HCI. HCII 2023. Lecture notes in Computer Science* (pp. 98–107). Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-35894-4_7
- Lykens, J. E., Pilloton, M., Silva, C. L., Schlamm, E., Wilburn, K., & Pence, E. (2019). Google for sexual relationships: mixed-methods study on digital flirting and online dating among

- adolescent youth and young adults. *JMIR Public Health and Surveillance*, 5(2). <https://doi.org/10.2196/10695>
- Maass, V. S. (2010). *Coping with control and manipulation*. Praeger. <https://doi.org/10.5040/9798400632105>
- Martin-Gutierrez, S., Cartier van Dissel, M. N., & Karimi, F. (2024). *Intersectional inequalities in social networks*. <https://doi.org/10.48550/arxiv.2410.21189>
- Mercier, É. (2016). Pornographie, nouveaux médias et intimité normative dans les discours sur l'hypersexualisation des jeunes. *Canadian Journal of Communication*, 41(2). <https://doi.org/10.22230/CJC.2016V41N2A2986>
- Nader, K. (2024). The gamification of dating online. In *Theoria*, 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1111/theo.12549>
- Nash, V., & Felton, L. (2024). Treating the symptoms or the disease? Analysing the UK Online Safety Act's approach to digital regulation. *Policy & Internet*, 16, 818–832. <https://doi.org/10.1002/poi3.404>
- Nicholls, R. (2022). Reform in Australia: A Focus on Informed Consent. *Global Privacy Law Review*, 3(3), 177–189. <https://doi.org/10.54648/gplr2022018>
- Oshodi, A. N., Adelodun, M. O., Anyanwu, E. C., & Majebi, N. L. (2024). Combining parental controls and educational programs to enhance child safety online effectively. *International Journal of Applied Research in Social Sciences*, 6(9), 2293–2314. <https://doi.org/10.51594/ijarss.v6i9.1592>
- Ovadia, E. R. (2016). *The role of social and modern media in romantic courtship initiation*. https://ses.library.usyd.edu.au/bitstream/2123/15812/1/Ovadia_ER_Thesis.pdf
- Panulaya, T. S., Domingo, D., Pelenio, H., Colobong, R. J., De Leon, B. N., Balmes, A., Dela Cruz, E., Gabriel, K. M., & Cruz, J. I. S. (2024). Exploring digital love: A conversational analysis of online courtship among adults. *E-DAWA*, 4(1). <https://doi.org/10.56901/rcyv3326>
- Paul, A., & Ahmed, S. (2023). Computed compatibility: examining user perceptions of AI and matchmaking algorithms. *Behaviour & Information Technology*, 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0144929x.2023.2196579>
- Pieczywok, A. (2022). School education and public-awareness campaigns in the sphere of counteracting cyberviolence. *Cybersecurity and Law*, 6(2), 143–150. <https://doi.org/10.35467/cal/146481>
- Porter, A., Falcon, A., Graefe, B., Metheny, N., Cooper, S., & Astorini, A. (2024). Swipe left on sexual harassment: understanding and addressing technology-facilitated sexual violence on dating apps. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 8862605241265672. <https://doi.org/10.1177/08862605241265672>
- Powell, A. (2007). *Sexual pressure and young people's negotiation of consent*. http://aifs.gov.au/acssa/pubs/newsletter/n14pdf/n14_4.pdf
- Powell, A., & Henry, N. (2017). *Sexual violence in a digital age*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Pozniak, H. (2023). *Can tech help end sexual violence?* <https://doi.org/10.1049/et.2023.0708>
- Rachmadia, T., Pramana, G. I., & Erviantono, T. (2024). Analisis gerakan #MeToo di sosial media pada tahun 2017 dalam perspektif feminisme radikal kultural. *Socio-Political Communication and Policy Review*, 1(4), 152–157. <https://doi.org/10.61292/shkr.150>

- Rajput, S. (2024). Legal dimensions of virtual rape: contemporary issues and challenges. *International Journal for Multidisciplinary Research*, 6(2). <https://doi.org/10.36948/ijfmr.2024.v06i02.15496>
- Ratnasari, R., & Hulu, R. (2022). The impact of pornography exposure on adolescent dating behavior: In-sights from Beringin Jaya Village, Singing Hilir District, Kuantan Singingi Hilir Regency. *Law and Economics*, 16(2), 144–157. <https://doi.org/10.35335/laweco.v16i2.57>
- Regmi, P. R., van Teijlingen, E., Silwal, R. C., & Dhital, R. (2022). Role of social media for sexual communication and sexual behaviors: A focus group study among young people in Nepal. *Journal of Health Promotion*, 10(1), 153–166. <https://doi.org/10.3126/jhp.v10i1.50995>
- Rijal, N. K., & Adzmy, M. F. (2023). Strategi Aktivisme Digital #MeToo Movement di Amerika Serikat. *Ganaya*, 6(1), 69–84. <https://doi.org/10.37329/ganaya.v6i1.2004>
- Rodrigues, R., & Baldi, V. (2017). Interaction mediated by a swipe culture: An observation focused on mobile dating applications. *Iberian Conference on Information Systems and Technologies*, 1–4. <https://doi.org/10.23919/CISTI.2017.7975868>
- Rooney, V. M., & Foley, S. N. (2018). An online consent maturity model: Moving from acceptable use towards ethical practice. *New Security Paradigms Workshop*, 64–79. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3285002.3285003>
- Rothman, E. F., Sheridan-Johnson, J., Maitra, P., Shulruff, T., Sniffen, C. K., & Mumford, E. A. (2023). Stress, suicidality, post-traumatic stress disorder, emotional distress, and social isolation among U.S. adults experiencing online abuse or harassment. *Violence and Gender*, 10(3). <https://doi.org/10.1089/vio.2022.0053>
- Santhosh, T., & Thiyagu, K. (2022). Cyber safety and security awareness initiatives in India - A systematic review. *I-Manager's Journal of Education Technology*, 19(1), 42. <https://doi.org/10.26634/jet.19.1.18596>
- Sari, H. B., Ningsih, N. M. A. P. C., Kristina, N. M. Y., Rismayanti, N. P. I., Thalib, E. F., Meinarni, N. P. S., & Julianti, L. (2024). Digital ethics and citizenship challenges in cyberspace: An overview from perspective morals and laws. *Jurnal Notariil*, 9(1), 33–39. <https://doi.org/10.22225/jn.9.1.2024.33-39>
- Say, G. N., Babadağı, Z., Karabekiroglu, K., Yüce, M., & Akbaş, S. (2015). Abuse characteristics and psychiatric consequences associated with online sexual abuse. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking*, 18(6), 333–336. <https://doi.org/10.1089/CYBER.2014.0494>
- Schmitz, A. (2017). Online dating – A meeting point for the modern individual and traditional individualism (pp. 13–28). In *The structure of digital partner choice*. Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-43530-5_2
- Schwartz, P., & Velotta, N. (2018). Online dating: Changing intimacy one swipe at a time? In J. Van Hook, S. McHale, & V. King, V. (Eds.), *Families and technology. National symposium on family issues*, 9, 57–88. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-95540-7_4
- Setty, E., Ringrose, J., & Regehr, K. (2022). *Digital sexual violence and the gendered constraints of consent in youth image sharing*. In M. Horvath & J. Brown (Eds.), *Rape* (2nd ed., pp. 45–61). Routledge eBooks. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003163800-6>

- Shen, N., Kassam, I., Ilkina, D., Wickham, S. E., & Carter-Langford, A. (2022). Meaningful digital consent in Canada: Recommendations from Pan-Canadian consent management workshops. *Healthcare Quarterly*, 24(4), 40–47. <https://doi.org/10.12927/hcq.2022.26712>
- Silva, C., Mora, A. R., & Straubhaar, J. D. (2024). ‘Yo soy la única burra’ [I’m the only dumb one]. Not anymore. An intersectional approach to digital inclusion. *Palabra Clave [Keyword]*, 26(4.), e2647. <https://doi.org/10.5294/pacla.2023.26.4.7>
- Singh, S., & Nambiar, V. (2024). Role of artificial intelligence in the prevention of online child sexual abuse: A systematic review of literature. *Journal of Applied Security Research*, 19(4), 586–627. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19361610.2024.2331885>
- Spitzberg, B. H., Marshall, L. L., & Cupach, W. R. (2001). Obsessive relational intrusion, coping, and sexual coercion victimization. *Communication Reports*, 14(1), 19–30. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08934210109367733>
- Stardust, Z., Gillett, R., & Albury, K. (2022). Surveillance does not equal safety: Police, data and consent on dating apps. *Crime, Media, Culture*, 19, 274–295. <https://doi.org/10.1177/17416590221111827>
- Stark, E. (2024). The technology of coercive control I. *Coercive control: How men entrap women in personal life* (2nd ed., pp. 283–329). Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780197639986.003.0009>
- Stepanko, S. (2022). The effects pornography has on dating and gender norms. *Canadian Journal of Family and Youth*, 14(2), 71–81. <https://doi.org/10.29173/cjfy29768>
- Strengers, Y., Sadowski, J., Li, Z., Shimshak, A., & Mueller, F. “Floyd.” (2021). What can HCI learn from sexual consent?: A feminist process of embodied consent for interactions with emerging technologies. *Proceedings of the 2021 CHI Conference Human Factors in Computing Systems*, 405, 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3411764.3445107>
- Sugiura, L., & Smith, A. (2019). *Victim blaming, responsabilization and resilience in online sexual abuse and harassment* (pp. 45–79). Palgrave Macmillan Ltd. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-42288-2_3
- Tan, Y., Vandebosch, H., Pabian, S., & Poels, K. (2024). A scoping review of technological tools for supporting victims of online sexual harassment. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 78. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.avb.2024.101953>
- Tsatsou, P. (2021). Vulnerable people’s digital inclusion: intersectionality patterns and associated lessons. *Information, Communication & Society*, 9, 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2021.1873402>
- Urusova, E., & Khusyainov, T. (2019). *Non-accidental meetings: How technologies are known through dating and relationships in the postmodern society*. 4, 31–40. <https://doi.org/10.15688/LP.JVOLSU.2018.4.4>
- Usher, K., Jones, R., Rice, K., & Jackson, D. (2023). Technology-facilitated sexual abuse and mental health: What mental health nurses and mental health professionals need to know. *International Journal of Mental Health Nursing*, 32(8). <https://doi.org/10.1111/inm.13178>
- Valentine, J., Miles, L. W., Hamblin, K. M., & Gibbons, A. W. (2022). Dating app facilitated sexual assault: A retrospective review of sexual assault medical forensic examination charts. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 38(9–10), 6298–6322. <https://doi.org/10.1177/08862605221130390>

- Veale, K. (2020). Problematic tools and platform complicity. In *Gaming the dynamics of online harassment* (pp. 107–128). Palgrave Macmillan, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-60410-3_5
- Verma, K., Davis, B., & Milosevic, T. (2023). Examining the effectiveness of artificial intelligence-based cyberbullying moderation on online platforms: Transparency implications. *AoIR Selected Papers of Internet Research*. <https://doi.org/10.5210/spir.v2022i0.13100>
- Vyawahare, H. R., Khandelwal, S., & Rathod, S. B. (2024). Artificial intelligence in detecting and preventing online harassment. In S. Ponnusamy et al. (Eds.), *AI tools and applications for women's safety* (pp. 14–35). IGI Global. <https://doi.org/10.4018/979-8-3693-1435-7.ch002>
- Webster, A. (2021). The concept of vulnerability among black and latina transgender women in the United States. *Advances in Nursing Science*, 44(2), 136–147. <https://doi.org/10.1097/ANS.0000000000000354>
- Wen, Y. (2024). Love in the digital age: Exploring the transformation impact of the internet on romantic relationships. *Highlights in Business, Economics and Management*, 41, 59–66. <https://doi.org/10.54097/tw465p97>
- Wolbers, H., & Boxall, H. (2024). Online dating app facilitated sexual violence victimisation among people with disability. *Trends & Issues in Crime and Criminal Justice*, 695. Canberra: Australian Institute of Criminology. <https://doi.org/10.52922/ti77468>
- Wu, S., & Trottier, D. (2022). Dating apps: A literature review. *Annals of the International Communication Association*, 46(2), 91–115. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23808985.2022.2069046>
- Yadav, V. (2023). Tackling non-consensual dissemination of intimate images in india's contemporary legal framework. *Annales Internationales de Criminologie*. <https://doi.org/10.1017/cri.2023.30>
- Yakushina, O. I. (2023). Contemporary digital communications and their impact on building personal relationships. *Theory and Practice of Social Development*, 7, 97–106. <https://doi.org/10.24158/tipor.2023.7.13>
- Yang, D. (2024). Legal reflections: Optimizing global strategies against cyber sexual violence through comparative perspectives. *Transactions on Social Science, Education and Humanities Research*, 12, 156–164. <https://doi.org/10.62051/zw6md078>
- Zhang, Z. (2023). Research on the role of digital media in promoting #Metoo movements. *Social Sciences*, 12(2). <https://doi.org/10.11648/j.ss.20231202.12>
- Loney-Howes, R. (2022). *The history of activism against sexual violence and the modern #MeToo movement* (pp. 746–755). Routledge eBooks. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003163329-91>
- Zytka, D., Furlo, N., Carlin, B., & Archer, M. (2021). Computer-mediated consent to sex: The context of Tinder. *arXiv: Human-Computer Interaction*. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3449288>