'I do like girls, I promise': Young bisexual women's experiences of using Tinder

Article · November 2017

2 authors:

Tara Pond
Auckland University of Technology

1 PUBLICATION **0** CITATIONS

SEE PROFILE

Panteá Farvid
Auckland University of Technology

19 PUBLICATIONS **172** CITATIONS

SEE PROFILE

Some of the authors of this publication are also working on these related projects:

Bisexual Women & Tinder View project

Doctoral thesis: bisexual, pansexual and queer women's intimate relationships View project

'I do like girls, I promise': Young bisexual women's experiences of using Tinder

Tara Pond & Panteá Farvid

Mobile phone dating applications (dating apps) are a pervasive means of finding intimate partners, with Tinder as the most popular interface globally. Although this app is largely marketed towards heterosexuals, members of the queer community also utilise it. Since its inception, the internet has been very useful for non-heterosexuals seeking contact with others from their community, due to the safety and anonymity it affords them. When it comes to the internet and intimacy-seeking within the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and queer community, bisexual women have received very limited scholarly attention. Tinder, too, has not yet received a great deal of psychological examination. To address these omissions, in this paper we examine the experiences of eight bisexual women who were interviewed in-depth about their Tinder use in New Zealand. The interview data were thematically analysed and three themes identified: Tinder as not (queer) woman friendly; the (un)safety of Tinder; and virtual (un)reality. We discuss these themes and conclude that within this domain of technologically mediated intimacies, an intersection of heteronormative, biphobic, and gendered power relations profoundly shape bisexual women's experiences of using Tinder.

Keywords: *Technology; mediated intimacies; bisexuality; intersectionality; mobile dating; dating apps.*

Introduction

SINCE ITS LAUNCH IN 2012, Tinder has become the most popular dating application (dating app) globally (Smith, 2016). Tinder has over 50 million users worldwide, 10 million active daily users, makes 26 million matches per day, and is used across 196 countries (Smith, 2016). Most of the users are digital natives or digitally savvy, with 85 per cent of them now under the age of 35 years (Gatter & Hodkinson, 2016), up from 75 per cent one year before (Lella, 2015). In a very short time, Tinder has become firmly rooted in popular culture, appearing on television shows, music videos, books, and many media articles. Although there has been a plethora of media coverage about the popularity and features of Tinder (e.g. Roof, 2016), the risks associated with its use (e.g. Hume, 2015), and debates about its place within society (e.g. Sales, 2015), we know very little about the first-hand experiences of Tinder users. Within this paper, we seek to address this gap by examining young bisexual women's experiences of using Tinder in New Zealand.

How Tinder works

Tinder is downloaded to smartphones at no cost (although a paid version with increased functionality is also available), and profiles can be set up within minutes by linking to a pre-existing Facebook account. The app then automatically retrieves the personal information of a user (such as name, age, occupation and friends). Users can choose up to six photos to display on their profile and have the option of writing a brief (500-character maximum) biography (bio) about themselves. When browsing the main interface, individual users are presented with others' profiles which are displayed like a virtual deck of cards for assessment. If a user decides they are not interested in the person suggested by Tinder, they 'swipe left' to discard this profile. Alternatively, if a user decides they are interested, they 'swipe right' to accept.

Through this process, Tinder has introduced the 'double opt-in' feature to mobile dating, where users must both 'swipe right' on each other to 'unlock' the ability to chat within the interface (Roof, 2016). During subsequent conversations, users can share personal contact details, other social networking profiles and if all goes smoothly, ultimately set up a face-to-face meeting or date.

The internet and sexually marginalised identities

The internet has been widely used by people who do not identify as heterosexual since the beginning of the World Wide Web (Clarke et al. 2010), as it allows socially marginalised people to connect without offline barriers such as geography, disability and the possibility of persecution (Birnholtz et al., 2014; Clarke et al., 2010). The online world can offer a safer space for queer[1] people to find a community that helps them 'come to terms' with their identity and aid in their 'coming out' (McKie, Lachowsky & Milhausen, 2015). Lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB[2]) people are more likely to meet intimate partners through the internet than heterosexual people, and much more likely to meet online than in any other situation (Birnholtz et al., 2014). While research has indicated that mobile dating is prevalent among queer men (e.g. Davis et al., 2016), research has not examined whether the same can be said for queer women. Further, research has noted that the internet may be more important for bisexual people than lesbians and gay men because of bi-erasure and the connectivity internet offers (e.g. to be 'out' and meet others) (Lever et al., 2008).

Bisexual people face a unique 'double discrimination', because they are often perceived negatively by both heterosexuals and those from the queer community, due to the stereotypes surrounding bisexuality. These misconceptions include: bisexual people pass as straight, are hypersexual, are less likely to value commitment, and are denying their authentic gay or lesbian sexuality (Israel & Mohr, 2004). Although bisexual people have experiences unique from lesbians and gay men, they are often conflated with, and studied alongside, other marginalised sexualities (Barker et al., 2012). Such amalgamation can contribute to 'bi-erasure' where the diversity of individual identities within the LGBTQ+ community are not recognised (Barker et al., 2012). To date, there have been no studies of Internet-use, online dating, or mobile dating with women who identify as bisexual.

Mobile dating research

Mobile dating is a relatively new addition to the field of online dating (Finkel et al., 2016) and 'technologically mediated intimacies' (Farvid & Aisher, 2016). The lack of research into mobile dating is particularly pronounced when it comes to LGB women's use of dating apps. Most dating app research on LGB users has been limited to examining Grindr, an app designed for men who have sex with men (MSM) (e.g. Birnholtz et al., 2014). Most of this research has focused on the risks of HIV/STI transmission (e.g. Rice et al., 2012) and users' experiences (e.g. Corriero & Tong, 2016). Research on Grindr indicates that mobile dating has fundamentally shifted gay sociability, moving cruising out of bars and public areas, into the private and domestic sphere (Race, 2015). Motivations for use are much more complex than popular media's portrayal of Grindr as only for casual sex (Van De Wiele & Tong, 2014). Instead, men tend to utilise the app for multiple reasons: such as socialising and entertainment, as well as seeking relation-

---

[1] Queer' is a complex term with many meanings but in this paper we are using the word queer as a broad umbrella term for non-heterosexual people. However, some participants also used it as its own sexual identity category to describe themselves.

[2] While the rainbow community has expanded its name to LGBTQIA+ to be inclusive of sexual/gender diversity, in this paper we use either 'queer' or 'LGB' as shorthand because we are focussing only on relevant sexual identities rather than the entire LGBTQIA+ community.

ships and sex (Van De Wiele & Tong, 2014).

In comparison to the slow uptake of desktop-based online dating (which was introduced in the mid-1990s), mobile dating quickly soared in popularity (Bilton, 2014). Tinder was swiftly embraced by many across the demographic spectrum, particularly by a younger demographic (Smith, 2016). Scholarly work on the app is only recently emerging and has largely examined motivations for using Tinder (Gatter & Hodkinson, 2016; Sevi, Aral & Eskenazi, 2017; Sumter, Vandenbosch & Ligtenberg, 2017; Timmermans & De Caluwé, 2017a, 2017b) and self-representation or impression management (Mason, 2016; Richey, 2016; Ward, 2016a, 2016b). Others have looked at relationship initiation (LeFebvre, 2017), 'trolling' (March et al., 2017), harassment (Richey, 2016), privacy (Lutz & Ranzini, 2017), body image (Strubel & Petrie, 2017), and intimacy (David & Cambre, 2016; Hobbs, Owen & Gerber, 2016).

Tinder is reported to be a multipurpose tool used for fun, an ego-boost, getting over a breakup, easing boredom, passing time, as well as seeking casual sex, friendships, dates, or romantic and committed relationships (e.g. Carpenter & McEwan, 2016; Cohen, 2015; Farvid & Aisher, 2016; Hobbs et al., 2016; Timmermans & De Caluwé, 2017b; Ward, 2016b). Recently developed and validated, the *Tinder Motives Scale* has confirmed these uses of Tinder and added extra attributes: to gain social approval; as a result of peer pressure; to gain sexual experience; to meet people while travelling; to achieve a sense of belonging; for socialising; and out of curiosity (Timmermans & De Caluwé, 2017b).

Some gendered or sexist aspects of Tinder have also been examined, for example, women on Tinder feel more pressure than men to present an ideal and 'beautified' version of themselves (Ranzini, Lutz & Gouderjaan, 2016). Displays of misogyny by some Tinder users has also been discussed through the examination of the popular Instagram account *Tinder Nightmares* (Hess &

Flores, 2016). On *Tinder Nightmares* women submit screenshots of their troubling, abusive or offensive interactions with men on Tinder to 'name and shame' them (Hess & Flores, 2016). Consistent with media discussions of Tinder (e.g. Dewey, 2014; Lydon, 2015), scholarly literature has noted that some men objectify women on Tinder, sending them sexually offensive messages or commenting on their appearance (Hess & Flores, 2016).

Farvid and Aisher's (2016) examination of young heterosexual women's use of Tinder also noted how heteronormative and gendered discourses shaped the women's experiences. Traditional norms such as men as sexual and romantic initiators and women as 'passive and responsive' to such advances was evident. However, Farvid and Aisher (2016) also identified the ways in which the women challenged and re-worked these norms to use Tinder as a multipurpose tool for fun, entertainment, to ease boredom and to explore their sexuality. Nevertheless, Tinder was also seen as a domain fraught with danger and risks, requiring their hypervigilance.

Building on the literature described above, and situated within a critical realist epistemology, this paper presents research on young bisexual women's use of Tinder in New Zealand from an exploratory qualitative perspective. Critical realism asserts that while an objective reality may exist, our understanding of it, and our everyday experiences, are shaped by certain mechanisms that generate particular psychologies or events (Al-Amoudi & Willmott, 2011; Houston, 2001). These generative mechanisms include social, cultural, or economic structures, which can be distinguished by their effects (Willig, 1999). In the context of a social world, critical realism maintains that people's actions are influenced by psychological mechanisms as well as wider social structures (Bhaskar, 1998; Houston, 2001); however, people are not at the mercy of these mechanisms but rather can actively transform and in turn be transformed by them (Houston, 2001).

The analysis also overlays a critical

feminist (See Farvid, 2014; Farvid & Braun, 2013) and intersectional lens (see Fotopoulou, 2012) to make sense of the women's Tinder use. Critical feminism draws on postmodern theories (such as poststructuralism), and has a fundamental interested in promoting gender equality, making visible the hidden operations of (gendered) power relations, as well as fostering social and political change (Gavey, 1989). Furthermore, critical feminism shaped the methodological progression of the project, including an emphasis on analysing language and representation, the inclusion of diverse women's voices and a commitment to ethical and egalitarian research (see Farvid, 2011). An intersectional approach allows a multi-dimensional analysis to take place, where all the social categories the participants belong to is seen as contributing to their experience. Of interest for this paper is an analysis of the intersecting axes of gender (women), sexuality (female sexuality) and sexual identity (bisexuality).

Method
Participants and recruitment
Eight bisexual women were recruited via advertising and word of mouth to take part in interviews about their Tinder use. While the study was targeted at women who identified as bisexual, many of the women identified with multiple sexual identities (see Table 1). The participants were aged 20–23 (*M*=21.6), most identified as Pākehā,[3] with varying levels of time spent on Tinder. Ethics approval was gained from the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee, before data collection commenced.

Data collection
The women were interviewed about their experiences of using Tinder in Auckland, New Zealand during the latter part of 2016. All interviews were conducted in an office at Auckland University of Technology, by the first author (a bisexual Pākehā woman of a similar age to the participants). The data were collected using semi-structured interviews and ranged from 30 to 90 minutes in length. The questions asked about the women's sexuality, experiences of dating, using Tinder and other mobile dating apps, and using online dating sites. The interviews were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim, totalling 216 pages of data). Pseudonyms were provided for the participants and all identifying information was changed or removed for publication.

Table 1. Demographic details of participants.

Pseudonym	Age	Ethnicity	Time on Tinder	Sexual Identity
Sharn	20	Māori	3 years	Bisexual
Amy	21	Pākehā	2 years	Bisexual/Queer
Nika	21	Filipino	3 months	Bisexual
Star	21	Pākehā	8 months	Bisexual/Panromantic Asexual
Quinn	22	Pākehā	7 months	Bisexual/Pansexual
Naomi	22	English	2 years	Bisexual/Polyamorous
Ivy	23	Pākehā	6 months	Bisexual/Polysexual/Queer
Tori	23	Pākehā	2 years	Bisexual

[3] Indicates non-Māori New Zealanders of European decent.

Data analysis

Situated within critical realism, and guided by critical feminism and intersectionality (as noted above), a semantic inductive thematic analysis (TA) was used to identify, analyse, and report themes across the full dataset (Braun & Clarke, 2006). An inductive approach means that the themes aligned strongly to the data without any attempt to fit them into a pre-existing coding framework (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The recursive process of TA followed six phases of analysis: familiarisation with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the report. The process of coding and analysis was conducted by the first author, in full consultation with the second author. When presenting data below, basic punctuation is used, short and long pauses are indicated, as well as laughter. The insertion of […] denoted the removal of unrelated data.

Results and discussion

The women's experiences of using Tinder were complex, fraught and contradictory. Despite media depictions of Tinder as a 'hook up' app (e.g. Sales, 2015), almost all participants reported using Tinder with the intention of finding dates which could lead to a romantic relationship (see also Hobbs et al., 2016). Two participants did not meet anyone in person, and those who went on dates or engaged in casual sex did so with both men and women. Generally, participants dated more men than women, which was not because of their sexual or romantic preferences, but due to the disproportionate ratio of men-seeking-women to women-seeking-women on Tinder:

> Sharn: I'd say just finding girls in general on Tinder is just really, really hard […] there's just not as many girls on there, I mean I could go on and there would be multiple guys, there'd be hundreds of guys on there but girls, there's hardly any. I have to keep swiping and swiping and I'll run out.

Overall, three main themes were identified through the analysis: *Tinder as not (queer) woman friendly*; *The (un)safety of Tinder*; and *virtual (un)reality*. These are discussed below.

Tinder as not (queer) woman friendly

As bisexual women who were attracted to men as well as people of other genders, many participants noted that they preferred dating people who were not heterosexual. Hence, many of the interactions they described, and the issues raised below, related to their search for other queer women on Tinder.

The majority of the women talked about not having a digital space to call their own as bisexual women looking for other queer women. This was initially expressed through frustration that a Grindr-like application did not exist for them:

> Ivy: You know how there is Grindr for guys like there really needs to be something like that just for lesbians.

Although apps like *Her* are available and designed specifically for women who seek women, many did not talk about this app, and others noted that the range of users on such apps were too limited in New Zealand. The women adopted Tinder due to the perceived higher number of users, as well as the access to both men and women on the same interface. However, Tinder was often deemed as not queer friendly due to its marketing style, design features, and the behaviour of other users on the app. Many noted they did not initially realise that Tinder was an app that queer people could even use:

> Int: Um how did you hear about Tinder?
>
> Star: To be frank, everyone knows about Tinder (laughs) […] I didn't really ah realise that you could um use it for other than meeting – other than heterosexual relationships
>
> Int: Um why do you think it was only heterosexual?

Star: That's all I've ever heard about, I've never heard of anyone using to um, like girls finding other girls or guys finding other guys.

Tinder's heteronormative marketing style (Duguay, 2016) is one reason many of the participants did not initially realise queer women could use the app. Tinder's design also marginalises non-heterosexuals during the installing process. The automatic import of information from Facebook to Tinder includes the user's gender and 'sexual orientation' (if stated on Facebook). Despite the app analysing and categorising your gender identity from Facebook, it does not do this for your 'sexual orientation' and instead defaults to heterosexual. Those identifying as women were automatically directed to men's profiles and vice-versa.

Until recently, only binary gender options were available on Tinder. An update released in November 2016 incorporated a broad range of possible gender expressions (but only for those in the US, UK and Canada). Although this feature did not directly apply to any of the women, they saw it as a positive and inclusive move by Tinder:

Star: I know that they've just recently um an option for non-binary as far as gender goes as well like you can go other than male or female which is good (laughs) it's a step forward so yeah that was interesting and that's really the only reason I've continued to use it.

Another way in which the app was described as not queer friendly was the plethora of (mixed-gender) couples seeking women for a threesome in the women-seeking-women section. The participants noted that this was frustrating because such couples became unavoidable, despite the participants being largely interested in contacting single women:

Ivy: I just feel like that should be a third option y'know […] it wasn't like too

distressing or like disgusting for me or whatever, but I know that I have female friends especially like my friends who are gay who just really don't want to see [men] y'know, they're just not interested at all (pause) and they shouldn't have to see that if they don't want to um 'cause it's kind of what the site is supposed to be about, like tailoring it to your interests and only seeing those people. But then maybe Tinder could have it as an extra y'know part so you could have couple as your like gender and you can choose […] to turn on like lesbian couple, gay couple, straight couple y'know.

Like Ivy, many participants identified 'design flaws' in how the app works, and offered suggestions for improvements. One of the participants, who was in a polyamorous relationship, found the absence of a section dedicated to single women looking for polyamorous contact frustrating. This was because she would come across women who were in non-polyamorous relationships with men, looking for threesomes.

Naomi: If you have someone who is an interested party in this kind of thing, typically they're in a similar relationship […] so it's quite frustrating if I like speak with a girl and its going well and she's like 'yeah me and my boyfriend would love to'.

Participants discussed that a frustrating aspect of using Tinder was when users did not make it clear in their bio, or via their pictures, that they were a (heterosexual) couple seeking women for threesomes. This meant that many participants often did not know this information until they were deep in conversation, and were thus quite disappointed.

Encountering couples on Tinder was not the only issue identified by the participants in the women-seeking-women section. Some participants noted that they would also match with straight women. This was deemed problematic for users who were

exclusively seeking women to date. Hence, women devised a strategy to only swipe right (yes) on women who presented themselves visually in a way that they deemed 'gay enough':

> Amy: I'll say no to a lot of girls who I mean it's kind of unfair but they seem straight. Like they'll have club photos […] honestly like it's such like when I match with women sometimes I'm like there's just, there's still an assumption that they're straight.

Lesbian visual identities are stereotyped to be masculine, but research has suggested that there is no obvious visually identifying code for bisexual women (Hayfield et al., 2013). Further, in nightclubs, (straight) women often perform highly heterogendered modes of femininity through their make-up, clothing and behaviour (Grazian, 2009). As a result, Amy's understanding of how gay/queer women look is not congruent with how women look at clubs due to the heightened femininity of their appearance, and she therefore deems women who have photos of themselves in clubs heterosexual (although, she notes this is an unfair generalisation). Participants were uneasy about interacting with straight women on the app. This created tensions for other women if they looked too feminine in their Tinder photos:

> Ivy: I think most girls assumed I was straight from my first photo so I changed that quite quickly, um because I wasn't matching with many girls and just like *tonnes* of guys, though I never quite got the balance with girls right like I was trying to make it look a bit queerer […] I'd try to have a couple messy haired in my t-shirt ones to be like (laughs) 'I do like girls, I promise!'.

When deciding who to swipe right on, women would decode photos for 'clues' on the sexual identity or personality of users, to decide if they were worthwhile saying yes to or chatting with. The women had to rely on limited cues or 'reduced cues' (Ward, 2016b) to make assumptions about users' sexual identity and personalities. While this could be problematic due to the level of generalisations that could take place, it was deemed preferable to accidentally matching with straight women and disrupting the queer space they sought on Tinder. In the above excerpt, we see Ivy marketing herself in very specific ways, based on who she wants to attract (queer women). In this way, Ivy is 'relationshopping' (Heino, Ellison & Gibbs, 2010), by selling the self and buying the other, under the rhetoric of choice and consumption.

Another way participants would ascertain information about users was through their bios. The women noted that many would use emojis in their bio (i.e. small stylised images, available on smartphones, that express an idea, object or emotion), which would help them to discern user's sexual identity. Many queer women used the emoji of two women holding hands (sometimes beside the emoji of a man and woman holding hands) to indicate their sexual identity was lesbian, bisexual or queer. Such emojis were often used as a shortcut to communicating gender preferences in terms of a sexual partner:

> Int: So why would you, or why wouldn't you put bisexual in your bio, do you think it would benefit you?
>
> Amy: I think that emoji use, I think that's enough of a statement. It's kind of a sly way to be like 'hey by the way'. Um I think it is beneficial, it's beneficial for me when I swipe right to a girl and I see that they're bi, I'm like 'ah okay', they're not just a straight girl who happens to, who happened to swipe right to a lot of people and then happened to swipe right to me […] I don't want to swipe right with this straight girl and we like 'hi how are you?' and for her to freak out so yeah if I have bi [emojis] and they have bi or queer [emojis] or whatever (yeah) it's clear.

Many participants noted that they believed this code went unnoticed by heterosexual users. Its use was thought to be a special queer language in a non-queer friendly environment.

Another unsatisfying aspect of Tinder identified by the participants was the regular encounters with men in the women-seeking-women section:

> Ivy: Most of my friends are queer females and they kind of don't really like it because […] if you put it only females, guys would still show up and I was like '*how* are they showing up'? *Why* are you still here? […] so like it's kind of a little bit disappointing in that regard.

Seeing men was a source of frustration for the participants as many of them had turned off the option to view men, and this contributed greatly to the feeling that Tinder was not queer woman friendly. Relatedly, Tinder was also viewed as not queer friendly because of flagrant displays of biphobia, mostly by heterosexual men. Tinder exists in a cultural context where women's bisexuality is often exploited for male consumption and bisexual women are objectified or depicted as hypersexual (Boyer & Galupo, 2015). Participants reported often receiving straight men's titillated and inappropriate responses to learning of their sexual identity:

> Tori: Guys get weird about it if you say you're bi they just imagine girls hooking up in front of them […] it just doesn't help
>
> Int: Have you had any issues with that?
>
> Tori: I get when people have just assumed that I'm– well guys have just assumed that I'm straight and if I do bother to correct them um yes, they can get a bit excited about it and I'm like well, no it's not for your benefit, I'm just pointing out that I'm not straight um sometimes they're

like 'oh that's cool but I don't care'. But a lot of the time, though, they are just really excited about it.

Some women directly employed strategies to avoid such biphobia. For example, some participants explicitly stated their sexual identity in their bio, so that those uncomfortable with bisexuality would not swipe right on them. Many also shifted from looking at both men and women to exclusively looking at women, as many men would either sexualise them or shame bisexuality:

> Nika: I told it to some guys but they took it the wrong way like 'oh can I join' or something like that, they were inappropriate about it but from then on I just don't tell them.
>
> Naomi: I get people who are very slut shamey or like judgey about 'why would you want that anyway that's gross'.

The women-seeking-women section was reportedly not immune from biphobia either:

> Int: So you don't put [bisexual] on um your bio on Tinder?
>
> Sharn: No. Only because for girls, like for lesbians I know they're not big fans of bisexuals because they automatically think that you like guys more and so I don't like telling anyone on Tinder like the females about it.
>
> Amy: If I match with someone who, a woman who expresses as gay then I'm worried that they won't want to match with me or like because there's biphobia I'm going to run away with a man, that sort of thing.

Participants were aware of stereotypical understandings of bisexuality, particularly as invoked by lesbians to justify their biphobia (Bostwick & Hequembourg, 2014).

Both Sharn and Amy, in the extracts above, identified the common myth that bisexuals are 'really' straight or 'really' gay and their identity as bisexual was deemed transient. Similar strategies that were adopted to avoid biphobic men on Tinder, were also employed to avoid biphobia in the queer community:

> Int: Do you state your sexuality in your bio?
>
> Star: Yes, yeah
>
> Int: Yes, why's that?
>
> Star: I (pause) I suppose it's a way of avoiding any potential aggression um I know that there can be people um that identify as um lesbian or homosexual that can be very aggressive about um bisexual or pansexual individuals um I have yet to experience it myself, I know other people that have experienced so it's sort of (pause) it's just sort of a way of avoiding that before it can ever happen.

Star (and other participants) would state their sexuality upfront instead of employing 'straight passing' tactics or discovering people's anti-bisexual biases later. The participants' concerns are echoed in other research which has found that bisexual-identified people are less likely to be considered as potential intimate partners for both heterosexual and homosexual people, due to biphobia, stigma, and 'anti-bi' myths (Klesse, 2011). Because of the intersecting prevalence of sexism and biphobia on Tinder, many of the women also reported being hypervigilant about their online and offline safety.

The (un)safety of Tinder
Participants reported that Tinder both offered a sense of safety for exploring one's sexual identity as well as an inherent sense of risk or danger. The risk and danger of Tinder were discussed in two ways. Firstly, the women discussed Tinder-use as though they were always at possible risk of danger or victimisation and that this was a ubiquitous, unavoid-

able, and unchanging part of (mobile) dating. As noted in other work (e.g. Farvid & Aisher, 2016; Farvid & Braun, 2013), such perceptions are indicative of a social and cultural system where women experience pleasures (e.g. excitement, intimacy) within the dating world, while facing some serious dangers (e.g. sexual assault) (Vance, 1984). Secondly, many gave accounts of experiencing, first-hand, instances of stalking, catfishing (defined below) and sexual coercion. Such incidences only occurred when interacting with heterosexual men, and resulted in some women ceasing to interact with men on Tinder:

> Int: What was wrong with the men?
>
> Nika: They were more dodgy
>
> Int: In what way?
>
> Nika: In like a sexual way, so I just stopped talking to them.

In line with media portrayals of mobile dating, fears over people misrepresenting themselves online prevailed in discussions. The women often talked about doing 'detective work' to confirm Tinder users' identities:

> Amy: I would quickly try find their Facebook profile, it would be much easier if they had at least one mutual friend in common even before you start talking to someone like if you just match with them and go 'oooh' they show quite a bit of potential, oh one mutual friend go onto their friends list and look up the first name, most probably will get it, look at their profile a bit more, see what they're like.

Social 'media multiplexity' (Haythornthwaite, 2005) has been defined as the multiple social media platforms that people use to connect with one another. In this context, Tinder users connect with their 'matches' on sites that are connected (or 'linked') to Tinder (such as Instagram or Facebook), and other social media apps (such as Snapchat). This

is either through consensually shared profile information, or by 'digging' or 'stalking' the users across platforms. This is a common practice for mobile dating users, to verify a user's 'authentic' identity, or learn more about them, and leads to a greater intimacy (Ward, 2016a). Sometimes, the women found themselves at the receiving end of such social media identification:

> Ivy: I had a photo from sitting on, in one of the motorway things like [for a] protest […] the guy had somehow figured out my last name even though we had no mutual friends which was creepy […] um, but yeah he had figured out who I was and looked at me [on Facebook] and my cover photo was a collage I had done for a collective I'm a part of […] and he had Facebook stalked me seen that and decided to bring it up in conversation with me.

While the information Ivy had on Facebook was publicly available, she classified the man's identification behaviour as elaborate and 'creepy'. While the women's detective work on social media was depicted as legitimate, when carried out by *others,* it was seen as invasive and a form of intimate encroachment.

Another way Tinder was constructed as unsafe was through the phenomenon of 'catfishing'. Catfishing is a serious act of online deception where people use fake photos or bios to take on a completely false persona. The fear of being catfished was salient for participants and it was seen as 'quite risky' but also 'common' when it came to online and mobile dating (Nika). Due to being aware of such a risk, Nika only ever met face-to-face with one person after verifying her identity through a video call. Others were less fearful of deception because they were confident they could detect catfishing:

> Tori: I feel like a lot of the time the catfish profiles are the ridiculously unattainable model profiles that I don't go for, regardless, I don't worry whether

they are catfish or not because I wouldn't swipe with them whether they were real or not.

Another technique participants used to safeguard against catfishing was moving the conversations with users off Tinder and on to other social media apps such as Snapchat, Instagram or Facebook. Because social networking apps like Instagram and Snapchat are largely visual, with text kept to a minimum, authenticity of offline identity is easier to assess and deception is believed to be less common (Ward, 2016a). Related to concerns around catfishing was the possibility that people may to some extent misrepresent themselves on Tinder, which could lead to disappointment once individuals met in person. For example, Ivy matched with a 29-year-old man on Tinder who later admitted to being 34 when they met in person. He noted that this lie was so he would only match with younger women (rather than women his own age). Many of the participants were also aware of the possibility that people may misrepresent themselves through selectively choosing photos that depicted a flattering or idealised version of themselves:

> Sharn: There was this one guy I met up with and we'd been snapchatting and he'd been sending me photos and I thought it was good but I'd never really asked for any photos of his body and it's probably really shallow but when we met up he just didn't look the same as I was expecting him to […] yeah you don't really get to see the whole person as they are now, it's kind of just what they want to show you.

This concern regarding misrepresentation was also something that the women sometimes took on when it came to their own profiles:

> Amy: I'm afraid of meeting up with someone and them being disappointed

Int: In what way disappointed?

Amy: Um like 'oh she's a little bit short and round' (laughs) like 'she's not as petite as she looked in one of her photos' or something like that.

On Tinder, like other modes of techno-logically mediated intimacies (e.g. online dating), there is a requirement for users to carefully balance presenting an ideal and attractive self (to increase their matches), as well as presenting an authentic self and not going beyond the realms of reality (in rela-tion to what they look like offline) (Ellison, Heino & Gibbs, 2006; Ward, 2016a). This carefully curated depiction of the self on Tinder was something that the participants were very much aware of when selecting their profile photos:

Ivy: [In] my photos […] you always got to have your main one as your nice one 'cause I always think if people have a bad first one, all the rest aren't going to be very good, so you gotta have a nice first one and then I try to have some more true reflections of what I look like every day (laughing) rather than just what I look like on a y'know one night out.

As noted above, dating apps are a reduced cue environment and the information you present is two-dimensional and static (commu-nicated via brief bio and photos). This is very different to three-dimensional and dynamic physical co-presence, when meeting someone in person. The information presented on Tinder is minimal but carefully constructed to present a specific portrayal of the self. With an awareness of such potentials for deception, the women often saw it as their own personal responsibility to identify misrepresentations on Tinder.

This notion of keeping themselves safe from risk was also reflected when the participants spoke about the precautions they took when meeting with someone in person for the first time (most participants

noted that this was only when meeting men, as documented in previous research). Women were typically acutely aware of the dangers they face as women in the dating world, particularly when this involved online or mobile dating (Farvid & Aisher, 2016).

To mitigate such (ubiquitous) risks, participants would meet Tinder matches with their friends, or in public places. Another strategy was to let friends know who they were meeting, when and where, and have an 'escape plan' in case something went wrong:

Quinn: I would always tell my flatmate um make sure yeah, she knew where I was going how long I was gonna be […] We would always meet in a public place and yeah, I'm, I was always very careful especially about inviting them like going to their place or like them coming to my place. I was really careful about that not letting that happening until I was comfortable with them.

When discussing sexual assault, studies have noted that women often position themselves as responsible for managing the risks of victimisation, often by having a 'safety check-list' – which we identified in the current study (Frazier & Falmagne, 2014). Although many women spoke of taking such protective measures, two participants reported having experienced coercive sex with men they met on Tinder, and one reported being raped by a man she had met via traditional online dating. When such encounters occurred, the women were quick to position them-selves as responsible for not taking enough precautions to protect themselves, rather than positioning the fault with the men who assaulted them:

Ivy: I didn't prepare enough I don't think, in terms of [safety] um (pause) yeah no I didn't, I didn't prepare enough (laughs)

Int: Why do you think that?

Ivy: Aw I just think that I definitely could have been safer and people aren't as normal as they seem and just like, I didn't have (pause) like I wouldn't say that there was ever like rape situations with a capital R but I would say that there was a bit of non-consensual sex where it was like I ended up in people's houses through being passive and not good at ending dates and would then like be trying to like trying to show all these physical signals of I'm not interested and like round guys who were like, it was never women this but guys who'd be like refusing to pick up on it […] and then I would kind of be too concerned with someone's rejection reaction especially within their own home to kind of say like proper no's even though I would be like kind of like not into having sex with them I would sometimes have sex just to kind of make it easier to leave.

Ivy's account depicts a typical scenario relayed by a few women. While Ivy doesn't position her experience as rape, she does acknowledge that she was coerced into sex. However, when she notes that she 'didn't prepare enough' and 'could have been safer', she is not only relaying a victim-blaming discourse, she is also displaying rape myth acceptance (Burt, 1980), where it is seen as women's responsibility take elaborate precautions in order to avoid rape, rather than positioning the blame on the men who perpetrate such criminal actions (Frazier & Falmagne, 2014).

While Tinder is seen as a risky domain for (bisexual) women, some found it a safer and more discrete environment to meet other women:

Naomi: Others I know have used it to sort of like explore their sexuality which is cool. Um even if things didn't like lead any one place it at least gave them like a safe avenue to try um rather than having to feel like 'ah I've got to go like walk into

a gay bar now and I've never done this before and I don't know if this is who I am'. You can sorta like just experiment in your room or in your bed with your phone and like if you don't like it you can stop.

Gay bars can be daunting, highly sexualised and exposing to frequent for those exploring or questioning their sexuality (Stempfhuber & Liegl, 2016). Many young people use the internet to explore their sexual identity and experiment with same-sex attractions because it is deemed safer and easier than doing so offline (DeHaan et al., 2013).

Tinder was also seen as a safer environment to meet women than bars and clubs because of the reduced ambiguity around people's relationship status, their sexual identity, or the reciprocation of attraction:

Naomi: Being on Tinder was really like an easier way to like interact with women than in public 'cause quite often in public I'm like, there is that moment of well if they're straight this is going to be really fuckin' weird for them (laughs) so I'm not gonna like engage. Whereas on Tinder they are swiping and looking at women and they haven't said 'I'm just looking for a friend'.

On Tinder, people's sexuality is either stated explicitly in people's biography or assumed, because they use the app and swipe right on those of the same gender. The fear of accidentally asking out a straight woman can be immense for queer women as the consequences could range from feelings of embarrassment to being assaulted. Tinder, then, makes users' sexuality more obvious and so reduces both the possibility and the consequences of a rejection from a straight woman. Overall, Tinder was seen as both a safe and unsafe place for bisexual women due to the behaviour of other users and the nature of the app as a digital medium. The complication and contradiction created by Tinder's online status when it comes to nego-

tiating and locating intimacy is explored in the next theme.

Virtual (un)reality

The theme of *virtual (un)reality* relates to the women's articulation of the differences between online and offline dating, as well as some of their subjective responses and reported internal negotiation when it came to using Tinder. Here, participant reflections related to mobile dating as a medium for finding dates and relationships are teased out.

Many attributed Tinder's success to how instantaneous and hassle-free it was:

> Int: What do you think the benefits of using Tinder are?
>
> Amy: I guess if you have a busy life and you don't go out much you can cut the crap and like, you don't need to go to a bar and go to a club and start talking to strangers, you can just sift through, find someone that you like, if you want to date them, if you want to have sex with them casually, you can sort it out.

Finding dates offline was depicted as a laborious process. With Tinder, hundreds of potential matches may be close by, and decisions on who to swipe 'yes' to can happen in the privacy of your own home. So, although some participants still classified computer-based online dating as a 'chore', Tinder and mobile dating were seen as much simpler and more enjoyable, as well as offering more choice.

Participants constructed dating offline as a place fraught with many obstacles, particularly if they did not describe themselves as an outgoing person. Identifying as introverted was typically one of the main reasons given for why the participants preferred mobile dating. While approaching people offline was unnerving and complicated, online interactions were much easier, albeit not trouble-free:

> Int: So you don't feel confident talking to people, is that different online than offline? Is it easier?
>
> Star: No (laughs) it can be a bit easier online but only if they're sort of willing to step forward and make an effort as […] offline I am 100 times worse at talking to people um it's one of the reasons I did start using Tinder was because it was another way of getting in touch with people and […] meeting people offline proves to be very very difficult […] um just my inability to talk with strangers or people I don't know very well.

Many found approaching people in the digital landscape much easier than offline, particularly when people had information about themselves in their description that could facilitate a conversation. When Tinder is downloaded, the first piece of information you are offered is the declaration that any 'liking' or 'passing' is anonymous. This emphasis on the anonymity Tinder affords is accentuated in positive media narratives of the app because of the reduced embarrassment this feature affords. This anonymity safeguard was identified as useful by the participants, particularly for 'breaking the ice' in a way that is much more difficult offline:

> Sharn: Say if you're in a bar there might be a guy who's busy talking to his friends so […] I wouldn't approach them whereas on Tinder there's none of that pressure – you just kind of just swipe [right] who you find attractive, swipe [right] who you like um yeah and it cuts out all that 'do they like me, do they not?' um and the initial having to talk to someone. Whereas [on] Tinder there's really no pressure.

While indicating your interest, or initiating contact with someone offline is depicted as fraught, the anonymous 'swiping' on Tinder reduces or removes the element of embarrassment or social risk. On Tinder, matching

with someone is understood to be an agreement that you are both attracted to or interested in each other. In this way, Tinder offers a site where anonymisation of indicated interest creates a dating environment where there is less pressure and less at stake than offline, when it comes to rejection.

However, due to Tinder's requirement for relatively quick assessments of people's profiles, based mainly on their appearances, some participants critiqued Tinder as 'shallow' and superficial:

> Naomi: We made a profile and swiped through and like um, they were like 'oh yeah he's cute he's cute he's not' lah dah dah dah it was very much like a game of voting back and forth, so I didn't really like it at that stage. I felt like it was a little bit shallow but I was with my friends and just having a laugh but um then like the more time that the app sat on my phone the more I felt myself going into it in my own time and wanting to use it.

Despite Naomi and other participants' concerns about Tinder's design promoting superficiality, they nevertheless continued to use the app. The justification for this was to position 'offline dating' as also based on physical attraction – albeit while physically co-present, rather than digitally. Many argued that matching was just the beginning and it allowed them to then engage in conversation with someone and hence allow for deeper engagement.

The words 'connection' and 'chemistry' was often used by participants to explain the intangible feeling people have when they are attracted to someone. However, any attraction to other users that led to 'matches' had to be vetted offline; only then was it deemed legitimate or 'real'. Online pictures and chatting were not seen as providing enough information about a person, and the goal was always to ultimately meet offline before deciding if a match had a sexual or relational future:

> Sharn: When you date someone in person you kind of get the whole person all at once, you know, you meet them and you get to see them. You get to see whether you do connect whereas if you talk to someone online you might get along really well but you could meet in person and the connection is just not there so I think that's definitely missing online is that you don't really know what to expect whereas in person you, you kind of feel it straight away or you don't.

The women explained that this connection, described above, was difficult to ascertain when talking to someone online. No matter how attractive someone might appear on Tinder, it was the offline meeting that determined if 'real' chemistry or attraction existed. Online attraction was thus 'unreal' until confirmed via an offline meeting. In this way, not only was there a splitting of the offline/physical and online/virtual, but a privileging of the former when it came to determining the legitimacy of intimate connections.

Tinder is designed to be a fast-paced game-like tool for screening potential partners based on self-selected images, rather by other criteria such as shared interests, hobbies or personality, as with online dating. This creates a level of superficiality that some argue promotes 'looks over mind' (Yeo & Fung, 2016, p.4), making dating apps ostensibly more compatible for seeking casual sex rather than romantic connections. Although most of the participants interviewed for the current project were open to and sought friendships, romantic relationships and casual sex, one participant used it exclusively for 'hooking-up':

> Sharn: I think I'd usually meet people in real life through friends […] I do I think Tinder is just for hook-ups primarily and so when I meet someone I'm not expecting anything else and even if they

say that they like me I'll just think no this is just about sex.

Because Tinder had a reputation for being a 'hook-up app', it was sometimes stigmatised as less of a socially acceptable means for finding dating or romantic partners. As a result, some participants would lie about meeting their partner on Tinder:

Int: So would you be less likely to tell people that you've met people online?

Tori: Ha! Yes, definitely made up lies um normally go 'okay how did we meet?' anything from we met at the library to we met at town

Int: So why do you make up lies?

Tori: Um just to make it seem legit I guess, I think the whole stigma around people are just looking for anything, or it's a joke, I guess if you said that you met somewhere else, it might seem more real to other people.

The layering of the offline and online worlds is complex when it comes to mobile dating. As demonstrated within our data, online interactions did not replace offline meetings, which were always deemed as more authentic, legitimate, and special. Within this domain of technologically mediated intimacies, the offline meeting was the final frontier in determining the future potential of any online match.

Conclusion

In this paper, we have demonstrated how these bisexual women's use of Tinder was a complex, contradictory, and contested site of 'digitally meditated intimacies' (Farvid & Aisher, 2016). Drawing on critical feminism and intersectionality we were able to demonstrate how the categories of women, female sexuality and bisexuality converged to create specific Tinder experiences in the contemporary context of New Zealand. Tinder's

quick, easy to use, and simplified design offered these women immediate access to an extended array of individuals they would not have typically met offline. Yet, the interface also worked to position them as 'outsiders' in a heteronormative and biphobic domain. Participants were at times exotified and eroticised in a way that was directly linked to their bisexual identity. The participants encountered unwanted profiles in the women-seeking-women section (from men, heterosexual women and (heterosexual) couples looking for threesomes), and were subjected to negative interactions because of their sexual identity (from both heterosexual and queer users). In this way, bisexual women were subjected to a 'double discrimination', where they experienced prejudice from both the heterosexual and queer community. We argue for more research on bisexual women's daily experiences (including their sexual and intimate lives), and continued awareness and educational efforts that addresses ongoing biphobia and monosexism found here. On an individual user-level, to address (or avoid) biphobia, some women devised creative modes of displaying (or not displaying) their sexual identity. In this way, Tinder reflected broader power relations evident in offline spaces: heterosexually dominated and queer friendly spaces were an afterthought, with the potential for creating great tensions for bisexual women.

Like the experiences of heterosexual women who use Tinder (Farvid & Aisher, 2016), and heterosexual women's dating lives in general (Vance, 1984) , Tinder was a domain imbued with elements of both pleasure and danger for bisexual women. As queer women, participants found navigating Tinder safer than offline interactions with strangers they had not met. However, Tinder also created some new(er) risks (catfishing, online deception, and online stalking), while reifying some pre-existing and well-known ones (sexual coercion and rape). Many of the women saw it as their duty to 'keep safe' from any possible negative outcomes of using Tinder. The men who were perpetrators of

inappropriate, deceptive, abusive or criminal behaviour, were rarely positioned as solely responsible or held to account. More research, education, and public awareness is still needed when it comes to dismantling such victim-blaming and rape myth discourses.

Tinder occupies a unique hybrid status – blurring the lines between what is virtual and what is deemed 'real'. Within these interviews, the women almost always privileged and prioritised the physically co-present over the virtually co-present. Although Tinder was seen as an easier way to meet potential intimate partners, it was also deemed 'shallow' and less favourable than meeting someone offline. There was both an idealisation of offline 'chance' meetings and a privileging of the offline as more real and authentic when it came to assessing desire and attraction. When it came to finding partners through Tinder, it was the offline encounter than determined the authenticity of attraction and connection made online. In this way, Tinder was a vital (virtual) intermediary (Hobbs et al., 2016), which did not replace traditional modes of dating; rather, it facilitates in making the initial (online) contact that is then taken offline to evaluate longevity. This is an important finding that needs further exploration to examine how intimacy, connection, and authenticity are understood in the online/offline world of technologically mediated intimacies. The separation and distinction between online and offline and the differences participants discussed in relation to chemistry and attraction highlights a unique area of future study.

As a digital platform designed for making social and intimate connections, Tinder offered an ambiguous and reduced-cue environment which invited specific modes of tactful interaction. The participants engaged in the careful curation of their own profiles, as well as engaging in the savvy and intricate decoding of others. Future research needs to investigate the evolving modes of communication and representational motifs that users engage in while mobile dating, in order to relay various messages about themselves and their sexual identity. More research is also needed to investigate, in depth and breadth, the first-hand experiences of using dating apps by those who are straight and queer, to add to the MSM literature. In addition, given the finding that there are a large number of couples on Tinder looking for people to join their relationship, or for a threesome, it would be important to investigate the experiences of this cohort.

Finally, we confirm previous work on heterosexual women's use of Tinder (Farvid & Aisher, 2016), in asserting that the outcomes identified here in relation to bisexual women's use of Tinder do not happen in a cultural vacuum. In particular, the experiences of pleasures, dangers, and contradictions reflect the intersectional and social and cultural context where sexism, heteronormativity, and biphobia are part of backdrop where bisexual women not only negotiate their daily lives, but experiences of mobile dating.

The authors

Tara Pond is a PhD Candidate in the Department of Psychology at Auckland University of Technology, Auckland, New Zealand.
Email: tara.pond@aut.ac.nz

Panteá Farvid, PhD, is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Psychology at Auckland University of Technology, Auckland, New Zealand.
Email: pani.farvid@aut.ac.nz

References

Al-Amoudi, I. & Willmott, H. (2011). Where constructionism and critical realism converge: Interrogating the domain of epistemological relativism. *Organization Studies, 32*(1), 27–46. doi:10.1177/0170840610394293

Barker, M., Yockney, J., Richards, C. et al. (2012). Guidelines for researching and writing about bisexuality. *Journal of Bisexuality, 12*(3), 376–392. doi:10.1080/15299716.2012.702618

Bilton, N. (2014). Tinder, the fast-growing dating app, taps an age-old truth. Retrieved 30 April 2016 from http://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/30/fashion/tinder-the-fast-growing-dating-app-taps-an-age-old-truth.html

Birnholtz, J., Fitzpatrick, C., Handel, M. & Brubaker, J.R. (2014). *Identity, identification and identifiability: The language of self-presentation on a location-based mobile dating app.* Paper presented at the Proceedings of the 16th international conference on Human-computer interaction with mobile devices and services, Toronto, ON, Canada.

Bostwick, W. & Hequembourg, A. (2014). 'Just a little hint': Bisexual-specific microaggressions and their connection to epistemic injustices. *Culture, Health & Sexuality, 16*(5), 488–503. doi:10.1080/13691058.2014.889754

Boyer, C.R. & Galupo, M.P. (2015). 'Prove it!' Same-sex performativity among sexual minority women and men. *Psychology & Sexuality, 6*(4), 357–368. doi:10.1080/19419899.2015.1021372

Braun, V. & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3*(2), 77–101. doi:10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

Bulman, M. (2016, 8 March). Ten ways to avoid falling victim to online dating predators. Retrieved 5 May 2016 from http://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/10-ways-to-avoid-falling-victim-to-online-dating-predators-dangers-safety-a6915301.html

Burt, M.R. (1980). Cultural myths and supports for rape. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 38*(2), 217–230. doi:10.1037/0022-3514.38.2.217

Carpenter, C.J. & McEwan, B. (2016). The players of micro-dating: Individual and gender differences in goal orientations toward micro-dating apps. *First Monday, 21*(5). doi:10.5210/fm.v21i5.6187

Clarke, V., Ellis, S., Peel, E. & Riggs, D. (2010). *Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Queer Psychology.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Cohen, L. (2015). World attending in interaction: Multitasking, spatializing, narrativizing with mobile devices and Tinder. *Discourse, Context & Media, 9,* 46–54. doi:10.1016/j.dcm.2015.08.001

Corriero, E.F. & Tong, S.T. (2016). Managing uncertainty in mobile dating applications: Goals, concerns of use, and information seeking in Grindr. *Mobile Media & Communication, 4*(1), 121–141. doi:10.1177/2050157915614872

David, G. & Cambre, C. (2016). Screened intimacies: Tinder and the swipe logic. *Social Media & Society, 2*(2). doi:10.1177/2056305116641976

Davis, M., Flowers, P., Lorimer, K. et al. (2016). Location, safety and (non) strangers in gay men's narratives on 'hook-up' apps. *Sexualities, 19*(7), 836–852. doi:10.1177/1363460716629334

DeHaan, S., Kuper, L.E., Magee, J.C. et al. (2013). The interplay between online and offline explorations of identity, relationships, and sex: A mixed-methods study with LGBT youth. *The Journal of Sex Research, 50*(5), 421–434. doi:10.1080/00224499.2012.661489

Dewey, C. (2014, July 2). The myth of the 'female-friendly dating app'. Retrieved 5 May 2016 from https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-intersect/wp/2014/07/02/the-myth-of-the-female-friendly-dating-app/

Duff, H.H. (2015, 14 May). Hilary Duff – Sparks [Video file]. Available from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pW4qU4aWrDg

Duguay, S. (2016). Dressing up Tinderella: Interrogating authenticity claims on the mobile dating app Tinder. *Information, Communication & Society,* 1–17. doi:10.1080/1369118X.2016.1168471

Ellison, N., Heino, R. & Gibbs, J. (2006). Managing impressions online: Self-presentation processes in the online dating environment. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication, 11*(2), 415–441. doi:10.1111/j.1083-6101.2006.00020.x

Farvid, P. (2011). *The social construction of heterosexual casual sex.* (Doctor of Philosophy in Psychology Doctoral thesis), The University of Auckland, Auckland, New Zealand. Retrieved 30 April 2016 from https://researchspace.auckland.ac.nz/handle/2292/6581

Farvid, P. (2014). 'Oh it was good sex!': Heterosexual women's (counter)narratives of desire and pleasure in casual sex. In S. McKenzie-Mohr & M. Lefrance (Eds.), *Women voicing resistance: Discursive and narrative explorations* (pp.121–140). New York: Routledge.

Farvid, P. & Aisher, K. (2016). 'It's just a lot more casual': Young heterosexual women's experiences of using Tinder in New Zealand. *Ada: A Journal of Gender, New Media, and Technology, 10.*

Farvid, P. & Braun, V. (2013). Casual sex as 'not a natural act' and other regimes of truth about heterosexuality. *Feminism & Psychology, 23*(3), 359–378. doi:10.1177/0959353513480018

Finkel, E., Eastwick, P., Karney, B. et al. (2016). Dating in a digital world. *Scientific American, 25,* 104–111.

Fotopoulou, A. (2012). Intersectionality queer studies and hybridity: Methodological frameworks for social research. *Journal of International Women's Studies, 13*(2), 19–32.

Frazier, K.E. & Falmagne, R.J. (2014). Empowered victims? Women's contradictory positions in the discourse of violence prevention. *Feminism & Psychology, 24*(4), 479–499. doi:10.1177/0959353514552036

Gatter, K. & Hodkinson, K. (2016). On the differences between Tinder™ versus online dating agencies: Questioning a myth. An exploratory study. *Cogent Psychology, 3*(1), 1162414. doi:10.1080/23311908.2016.1162414

Gavey, N. (1989). Feminist poststructuralism and discourse analysis: Contributions to feminist psychology. *Psychology of Women Quarterly, 13*(4), 459–475. doi:10.1111/j.1471-6402.1989.tb01014.x

Grazian, D. (2009). Urban nightlife, social capital, and the public life of cities. *Sociological Forum, 24*(4), 908–917. doi:10.1111/j.1573-7861.2009.01143.x

Hayfield, N., Clarke, V., Halliwell, E. & Malson, H. (2013). Visible lesbians and invisible bisexuals: Appearance and visual identities among bisexual women. *Women's Studies International Forum, 40*, 172–182. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2013.07.015

Haythornthwaite, C. (2005). Social networks and internet connectivity effects. *Information, Communication & Society, 8*(2), 125–147. doi:10.1080/1369118050146185

Heino, R., Ellison, N. & Gibbs, J. (2010). Relationshopping: Investigating the market metaphor in online dating. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 27*(4), 427–447. doi:10.1177/0265407510361614

Hess, A. & Flores, C. (2016). Simply more than swiping left: A critical analysis of toxic masculine performances on Tinder Nightmares. *New Media & Society.* doi:10.1177/1461444816681540

Hobbs, M., Owen, S. & Gerber, L. (2016). Liquid love? Dating apps, sex, relationships and the digital transformation of intimacy. *Journal of Sociology.* doi:10.1177/1440783316662718

Houston, S. (2001). Beyond social constructionism: Critical realism and social work. *British Journal of Social Work, 31*(6), 845–861. doi:10.1093/bjsw/31.6.845

Hume, M. (2015, 3 October). Police probe two Tinder date attacks in Christchurch. Retrieved 30 April 2016 from http://www.stuff.co.nz/the-press/news/72625132/police-probe-two-tinder-date-attacks-in-christchurch

Israel, T. & Mohr, J.J. (2004). Attitudes toward bisexual women and men. *Journal of Bisexuality, 4*(1-2), 117–134. doi:10.1300/J159v04n01_09

Klesse, C. (2011). Shady characters, untrustworthy partners, and promiscuous sluts: Creating bisexual intimacies in the face of heteronormativity and biphobia. *Journal of Bisexuality, 11*(2–3), 227–244. doi:10.1080/15299716.2011.571987

LeFebvre, L.E. (2017). Swiping me off my feet. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 0*(0). doi:10.1177/0265407517706419

Lella, A. (2015, 24 September). Venmo, BuzzFeed, Tinder and Snapchat among the top 20 apps with highest concentration of millennials. Retrieved 30 April 2016 from http://www.comscore.com/Insights/Blog/Venmo-BuzzFeed-Tinder-and-Snapchat-Among-The-Top-20-Apps-with-Highest-Concentration-of-Millennials

Lever, J., Grov, C., Royce, T. & Gillespie, B.J. (2008). Searching for love in all the 'write' places: Exploring internet personals use by sexual orientation, gender, and age. *International Journal of Sexual Health, 20*(4), 233–246. doi:10.1080/19317610802411532

Lutz, C. & Ranzini, G. (2017). Where dating meets data: Investigating social and institutional privacy concerns on Tinder. *Social Media & Society, 3*(1). doi:10.1177/2056305117697735

Lydon, C. (2015, 7 July). Female friendly Tinder alternates. Retrieved 4 September 2016 from http://www.gadgette.com/2015/07/07/female-friendly-tinder-alternatives/

March, E., Grieve, R., Marrington, J. & Jonason, P.K. (2017). Trolling on Tinder (and other dating apps): Examining the role of the Dark Tetrad and impulsivity. *Personality and Individual Differences, 110*, 139–143. doi:10.1016/j.paid.2017.01.025

Mason, C.L. (2016). Tinder and humanitarian hook-ups: The erotics of social media racism. *Feminist Media Studies*, 1–16. doi:10.1080/14680777.2015.1137339

McKie, R.M., Lachowsky, N.J. & Milhausen, R.R. (2015). The positive impact of technology on young gay men's dating and sexual relationships in Canada: Results from a focus group study. *Journal of LGBT Youth, 12*(1), 19–38. doi:10.1080/19361653.2014.935552

Race, K. (2015). Speculative pragmatism and intimate arrangements: Online hook-up devices in gay life. *Culture, Health & Sexuality, 17*(4), 496–511. doi:10.1080/13691058.2014.930181

Ranzini, G., Lutz, C. & Gouderjaan, M. (2016). *Swipe right: An exploration of self-presentation and impression management on Tinder.* Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the International Communication Association, Fukuoka. https://www.alexandria.unisg.ch/248333/

Rice, E., Holloway, I., Winetrobe, H. et al. (2012). Sex risk among young men who have sex with men who use Grindr, a smartphone geosocial networking application. *Journal of AIDS & Clinical Research.* doi:10.4172/2155-6113.S4-005

Richey, L.A. (2016). 'Tinder humanitarians'. *Javnost, 23*(4), 398–414.

Roof, K. (2016, 2 February). *Tinder owner match group reports first earnings since separating from IAC*. Retrieved 30 April 2016 from https://techcrunch.com/2016/02/02/1271797/

Sales, N.J. (2015, 5 September). *Tinder and the dawn of the 'dating apocalypse'*. Retrieved 30 April 2016 from http://www.vanityfair.com/culture/2015/08/tinder-hook-up-culture-end-of-dating

Sevi, B., Aral, T. & Eskenazi, T. (2017). Exploring the hook-up app: Low sexual disgust and high sociosexuality predict motivation to use Tinder for casual sex. *Personality and Individual Differences*. doi:10.1016/j.paid.2017.04.053

Smith, A. (2016). *15 per cent of American adults have used online dating sites or mobile dating apps*. Washington, DC: Pew Research Center.

Stempfhuber, M. & Liegl, M. (2016). Intimacy mobilized: Hook-up practices in the location-based social network Grindr. *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Soziologie, 41*(1), 51–70. doi:10.1007/s11614-016-0189-7

Strubel, J. & Petrie, T.A. (2017). Love me Tinder: Body image and psychosocial functioning among men and women. *Body Image, 21*, 34–38. doi:10.1016/j.bodyim.2017.02.006

Sumter, S.R., Vandenbosch, L. & Ligtenberg, L. (2017). Love me Tinder: Untangling emerging adults' motivations for using the dating application Tinder. *Telematics and Informatics, 34*(1), 67–78. doi:10.1016/j.tele.2016.04.009

Timmermans, E. & De Caluwé, E. (2017a). Development and validation of the Tinder Motives Scale (TMS). *Computers in Human Behavior, 70*, 341–350. doi:10.1016/j.chb.2017.01.028

Timmermans, E. & De Caluwé, E. (2017b). To Tinder or not to Tinder, that's the question: An individual differences perspective to Tinder use and motives. *Personality and Individual Differences, 110*, 74–79. doi:10.1016/j.paid.2017.01.026

Van De Wiele, C. & Tong, S.T. (2014). *Breaking boundaries: The uses and gratifications of grindr*. Paper presented at the Proceedings of the 2014 ACM International Joint Conference on Pervasive and Ubiquitous Computing, Seattle, Washington.

Vance, C.S. (1984). *Pleasure and danger: Exploring female sexuality*. Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Ward, J. (2016a). Swiping, matching, chatting: Self-presentation and self-disclosure on mobile dating apps. *Human IT, 13*(2), 81–95.

Ward, J. (2016b). What are you doing on Tinder? Impression management on a matchmaking mobile app. *Information, Communication & Society*, 1–16. doi:10.1080/1369118X.2016.1252412

Yeo, T.E.D. & Fung, T.H. (2016). *Relationships form so quickly that you won't cherish them: Mobile dating apps and the culture of instantaneous relationships*. Paper presented at the Proceedings of the 7th 2016 International Conference on Social Media & Society, London, United Kingdom.