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Abstract

While the role of the Internet in dating for sexual reasons has been recognized, the amount of research into partner-seeking activities on sex-oriented contact websites is still limited. This study explores the experiences, thoughts, and strategies related to partner seeking activities on sex-oriented contact websites. A qualitative approach is used to complement and expand upon the existing primarily quantitative literature in this field. An analysis of 17 interviews revealed that sex seekers established various types of sexual contacts, located both in the online and the offline worlds. Although online interactions began with the disclosure of sex-related details, not all sexual contacts established online progressed into offline encounters. Those who had sex with a partner found on a sex-oriented contact website tended to outline the context in advance of the sexual encounter to help keep their behavior sexually disinhibited once offline. The theory of sexual scripts has been used to interpret the extent of sexually disinhibited behavior in online dating for sexual purposes.

Keywords

Internet; Sexuality; Online Dating; Theory of Sexual Scripts

Introduction

Searching for sexual partners online is an interactive activity where Internet users contact each other to have cybersex or offline sex (Couch & Liamputtong, 2008; Daneback, Cooper, & Månsson, 2005; Daneback, Månsson, & Ross, 2007; Davis, Hart, Bolding, Sherr, & Elford, 2006; Döring, 2009). Several studies suggest a close link between cybersex and seeking offline sex. Cybersex may precede meeting sexual partners offline (Daneback et al., 2005; Daneback et al., 2007) acting as a practice ground or verification of sexual compatibility

(Daneback et al., 2007; Tikkanen & Ross, 2003). There is also a connection between engaging in cybersex and having a higher number of offline sexual partners (Daneback et al., 2005).

From a gender perspective, men tend to look for partners online more often than women, for example visiting web contact sites and responding to sex ads (Cooper, Månsson, Daneback, Tikkanen, & Ross, 2003; Daneback & Månsson, 2009; Shaughnessy, Byers, & Walsh, 2010). However, male Internet users are not a homogenous group. Prior research has recognized a group of men who do not consider themselves homosexuals but seek sex with men on the Internet (Ross, Månsson, Daneback, & Tikkanen, 2005; Tikkanen & Ross, 2003). It has been found that homosexuals and bisexuals are more likely than heterosexuals to meet contacts from sex orientated contact websites in the real world (Albright, 2008). Women are more likely than men to meet online sexual partners offline (Bolding, Davis, Hart, Sherr, & Elford, 2006; Daneback et al., 2007). It seems that contacting a possible sexual partner via the Internet may correspond to different underlying psychological themes for men and women, with heterosexual men potentially focused more on virtual sexual contacts.

The Internet provides various arenas or platforms for partner-seeking activities; these include chat rooms, instant messaging tools, community networks, contact websites, and role playing games such as Everquest and Second Life etc. (Daneback, 2006). While the setting is not focused on in most prior research (Bolding et al., 2006; Ross, Rosser, McCurdy, & Feldman, 2007), some studies have concentrated on particular online environments such as chat rooms (Tikkanen & Ross, 2003), or contact sites (Couch & Liamputtong, 2008, Davis et al., 2006). In general, online dating sites are characterized by their filtering processes (Davis et al., 2006; Couch & Liamputtong, 2008; Ross et al., 2007; Whitty, 2008). These evoke a feeling of control over partner selection, while increasing the user's control over self-presentation (Ellison, Heino, & Gibbs, 2006; Davis et al., 2006; Ross et al., 2007; Whitty,

2008 etc.) which creates a unique environment for sexual partner seeking, differing slightly from that of chat rooms, and further removed from the more traditional methods used in offline settings. This study focuses on the use of online sex-oriented contact sites to establish sexual contacts.

Theoretical approach

In order to analyze the particularities of sex-oriented contact website use Gagnon and Simon's (2005) ideas on sexual scripts were used. These provided explanations as to when and how the sexual behavior was engaged in. The term "script" is used as a metaphor to explain how sexual conduct becomes possible. It implies that individuals act according to pre-established socio-culturally constructed scripts, and that these scripts are learned and rehearsed, and may change throughout one's life span. The script defines the appropriate settings, actors, behaviors, and other similar factors. If something is absent or inappropriate then no sexual event will occur.

Sexual scripts have three components: cultural, interpersonal, and intrapsychic (Gagnon & Simon, 2005). Cultural scenarios include the socio-cultural norms and values that influence an individual's sexual behavior. Interpersonal scripts are the individual's interpretations of these cultural scenarios. Intrapsychic scripts capture an individual's thoughts and reasoning about sexuality in relation to both cultural scenarios and their sexual behaviors; these may not always be easily manifested in the physical world. The sexual scripting approach emphasizes the fluidity of sexual scripts and their inter-relation, i.e. changes in cultural scenarios affect intrapsychic scripts and vice versa.

An individual's sexual behavior such as same-sex behavior, sexual techniques, and their responsibility for this are now publicly discussed in the media. However, sex and the contexts for sexual arousal are still mostly kept private, and may be surrounded by shame and

guilt (Gagnon & Simon, 2005). This may make it difficult for some to manifest their intrapsychic scripts in the physical world. The Internet is a specific environment where anonymity can be preserved. It is thus able to fulfill a need for privacy when engaging in sex-related activities. Individuals feel comfortable bringing up sexual matters online because on the Internet there is no conflict with what they have previously learnt. Furthermore, it is easier to gain the acceptance of others on the Internet. The Internet can thus be seen as providing new places to engage in sexual activity. It should also be noted that for this reasoning to hold true individuals must perceive the Internet as anonymous. Online sexual interaction allows users to simultaneously keep and reveal secrets without experiencing any negative sanctions or consequences. This means that it is possible to engage in sexual activities that are guided by individuals' intrapsychic scripts. Thus, a sex-oriented contact website may represent a platform where users disclose their inner sexual thoughts and desires, while simultaneously looking for partners with whom to share sexual fantasies which would otherwise remain undisclosed (see Couch & Liamputtong, 2008; Ross, 2005; Tikkanen & Ross, 2003). Furthermore, these contact sites make it possible to engage in sexual discussions which would be difficult offline, such as asking a complete stranger if they would like to meet and have sex, sometimes in a rather detailed fashion. Although it is also possible to proposition strangers in offline public environments, establishing contacts online is more attractive for those who wish to stay anonymous, to engage in less traditional sexual activity, or who are distanced from any offline public sex environment (see Ross, 2005).

Purpose of the study

Based on prior findings that the anonymous online environment facilitated the sharing of sexual fantasies, this qualitative study aimed to examine whether the online environment of sex-oriented contact sites served to enhance offline sexual meetings. This environment is

characterized by its filtering processes and personal control over self-presentation. The study of sex orientated contact websites focused on how contacts were established, the different kinds of contacts, and how offline sexual encounters were negotiated and transferred (or failed to be) from online interactions into offline encounters. A qualitative approach was chosen to complement and expand upon the existing primarily quantitative literature in this field (Bolding et al., 2006; Cooper et al., 2002; Daneback et al., 2007; Cooper et al., 2003) by exploring the experiences, thoughts, and strategies related to sexual partner-seeking activities on sex-oriented contact websites.

Method

Sampling

This study was conducted from 2007 to 2009 and is based on in-depth interviews with participants who used free and legal sex-oriented contact websites to search for sexual partners. Two methods were used to recruit the participants. Firstly, snowball sampling was used (Charmez, 2008) to recruit nine participants. This was done through the first author's contacts and several sex-oriented contact websites; websites specifically designed for making sexual contacts, sexual partner finding and searching for free sex. Secondly, after analyzing the first round of interviews, eight participants were recruited using theoretical sampling to maximize variability. These participants mainly had no Internet-mediated offline sex experience, and were selectively contacted on sex-oriented contact websites. Ten individuals were interviewed face-to-face in public spaces, and seven were interviewed via instant messengers.

The study included 4 females and 13 males aged 22 to 56. The sample was diverse with regard to marital status, there were singles (N=7), people living with partners (N=4) and divorcees, widowers and married respondents (N=6). The participants predominately defined

themselves as heterosexual, with only one woman considering herself bisexual, and one man considering himself homosexual. Twelve participants reported having had sex offline with someone they had met on a sex-oriented contact website. The remainder had never had sex offline with someone they had met online, but were in the process of searching for a sexual encounter(s). Although the sample included participants with diverse backgrounds, it was homogenous in the sense that all had profiles on sex-oriented contact websites and were looking for sexual contacts. Further, despite age differences, the sample can be considered homogenous in that none of the participants represented the digital generation, those who have grown up with internet access.

Interview

The interviews were conducted by the first author. Less sensitive questions relating to the participants' general internet usage patterns were asked first. These were then followed by questions about the participants' histories of internet use for sexual purposes, and their number of established sexual contacts. Later, the participants were asked their reasons for posting an online ad, the types of sexual contacts that they looked for, and how they constructed their profile to reflect their use of contact websites. They were then asked about their experiences contacting sexual partners. These questions ranged from how they established sexual contacts, to offline sexual encounters (if they had had this experience). The interview was constructed in such way that it examined participants' understanding of sex-oriented contact websites, and their experiences with sex-seeking activity on the Internet. The face-to-face interviews lasted approximately one hour, and were less time-demanding than those conducted online. The online interviews were mostly carried out in several sessions, and thus in several virtual settings. These interruptions affected the length of data gathering on the Internet, as each new session required a short recapitulation of the previous session to enable participants to reorient themselves before further questioning. Various reasons were

given for interrupting the interviews, however, it seemed that participants profited from the ability to log in and out, feeling less obliged to complete the interview in one session.

Further, the length of the online interviews may also have been influenced by the ability of participants to communicate with others while being interviewed (Šmahel, 2003).

Analysis

Data collection and analysis were performed simultaneously (Strauss & Corbin, 1999). Both online and offline interviews were analyzed concurrently. The data underwent a phase of open coding to distinguish several themes. In this step the participants' statements were analyzed line by line, allowing text to be reduced to codes. For example a sentence "We look

for almost all categories - for single women and men under certain conditions, because men are more interested in sex than women" was coded into "no preference in a sexual partner".

Subsequently, focused coding was done to synthesize and explain the data obtained (Charmez, 2008). In this step the most significant or repetitive codes were chosen, enabling

the data to be condensed. For example, online activities such as having sex-themed conversation, asking about the sexual desires of others, and describing one's own sexual wishes were compressed into the "Examining a partner's sexual life alias, exploring one's own tastes" category. Besides code creation, this step also involved exploring codes and

comparing them to pre-existing literature dealing with the characteristics of computer-mediated communication, online disinhibition, and online infidelity etc. (Mileham, 2007;

Suler, 2004; Walther, 1996). Following the focused coding phase, conceptual categories were

established. These included Internet use for establishing only virtual sexual contacts, and engaging in sex-seeking activities for the purposes of finding offline sex partners.

Results

The themes that emerged revolved around the following different patterns of sex-oriented contact website use: A sex-oriented contact website was (1) used only for establishing virtual sexual contacts without the intention of offline realization, or (2) used to find sex partners for offline sexual encounters. The use of a sex-oriented contact website for finding an offline sexual partner took on various forms: (a) a strong focus on the “reality” of the sexual contact, (b) the inclination for both offline and online sexual contacts, and (c) expressing the wish to meet someone offline and have sex.

1. Virtual sexual contacts

Establishing virtual sexual contacts was one of the reasons given for posting ads on sex-oriented contact websites, for two participants this was the sole reason. This included activities such as chatting about sex, sharing sexual experiences and fantasies, or exchanging pictures, in some cases followed by masturbation. A noteworthy fact is that these virtual sexual contacts did not result in any offline sexual meetings and the participants intentionally avoided offline encounters. Participants who focused only on sexual interaction online emphasized the role of disclosing sexual content, i.e. talking about sex openly and without inhibition.

It is exciting. I can ask any intimate question and I receive an answer roughly 90% of the time. Of course I would not ask the same questions to a woman I met at work, on the metro, or on the street. (male, 28 years)

However, a partner’s disclosure of their sexual feelings was also related to a depreciation of their authenticity. The participants mentioned that a contacted person remained an “unreal” person, even though they had revealed their internal sexual desires.

You do not even know who you are writing to, so anyone can make up anything. I know a few people there, but it is still the Internet, it is still communication with someone you do not know. They can still lie to you, and that is how I see it. (male, 22 years)

It seems that intimacy is limited to the online environment, and that the online sharing of only sex related intimate information contributes less to the establishment of a trusting relationship bond, a bond which could help in the progression towards offline encounters. Although the interview excerpts above show communication to be disinhibited and sexually-focused, the participants in such sexually-liberated interaction may become unsure of the reality/truthfulness of the disclosed content. It seems that the greater openness produced by the Internet's anonymity may prevent daters from developing trustworthy relationships that could be transferred into the offline world. This may partly explain the participants' preference for only engaging in online sexual contact.

2. From virtual contacts to offline sex

As mentioned above, sex-oriented contact websites may be used in many ways. Besides establishing virtual sexual contacts, some participants had the intention of turning virtual contacts into actual offline sexual encounters.

2.1 Only interested in offline sexual contacts

For ten participants the analysis revealed a strong emphasis on offline sexual encounters. This strong focus reflected their prior experience with erotic contact sites. These participants had gradually developed strategies and learnt the rules, gaining the experience and the knowledge to navigate and interact on these websites. For example, some participants claimed they did

not know exactly what they were looking for when they first uploaded their ad. They knew they wanted to have physical sex but not how to make it happen. Thus online sexual interactions allowed them to discuss and negotiate possible types of sexual meeting, and to refine their partner search accordingly, such as by rephrasing their ads.

At first, we (he and his life partner) didn't know what we wanted. So the first step was to make this clear. We learnt that basically there are endless numbers of people proposing friendship ... so now we try to formulate specific intentions – no friendship, we have enough friends, enough friendship. We focus only on the sexual side. (male, 49 years)

This excerpt is an example of how sex seekers learn to filter their partners on sex-oriented contact websites. This participant's statement points out the difficulties associated with having sex with an unknown person met online. The participant mentioned that potential sexual partners often wished to develop friendship first, and then to have sex in this newly formed familiar context.

The following extract, with a participant who with his partner sought sex partners, demonstrates that the filtering process enables users to define the contexts for sexual contact. On the Internet or over the telephone the participant discussed the offline sexual encounters with his potential sex partners, negotiating how they would be realized, and outlining the limits.

We agreed to find a couple with a girl who is also bisexual. We want them to become our friends, to have barbecues together, go out and have fun sometimes, simply do more than just have sex. The sex is just a kind of bonus. And as far as it is concerned, we're not interested in

switching partners, that's the rule, the girls can have fun with each other but no partner switching (male, 43 years).

In relation to the aforementioned participant's experience, an important distinction became apparent between those who sought offline sexual contacts, and those who preferred online sexual contacts; the participants created labels for those with no offline sexual encounter experience, such as "virtualists", "word-slingers", and "collectors of pictures",. This labeling reflected participants' experiences that exchanging messages with sexual content or chatting about sex with these individuals did not result in offline sexual encounters. Therefore, part of the learning process was to recognize the preferences of other users: is this person willing to meet offline and have sex or only to engage in virtual sex? This meant that in a specific phase, being online appeared reduced to a filtering activity.

I: Is it important for you that a partner has experience?

P: Well, we like it more when the couple has experience, at least in the sense that they have already met someone and spoken about it with them. The most terrible groups are those who want a first date. Then we cannot speak about sex on the date...So it is the worst group. We can't say no. We try to find out their attitudes and views over the phone: if there is any jealousy, what they want, what their notions are. (female, 47 years)

There is a noticeable emphasis on prospective partners having experience with Internet mediated sex as a guarantee for a successful sexual meeting. This excerpt shows how using the telephone to create a context for the sexual encounter becomes an alternative medium to the website. This gives the phone calls an additional function on top of checking mutual compatibility (Döring, 2009). The phone call serves as a trial, testing whether the participants

can transfer a sexually oriented interaction from the Internet to an offline encounter, and whether their potential partners are capable of talking about sex with strangers rather than just writing sexual scenarios.

2.2 Switching between online and offline sexual contacts

In the study two participants were interested in any type of sexual contact. This inclination towards both online and offline sexual interactions represents their openness to a variety of sexual experiences. They treated the Internet as a space for fantasizing and experimenting with sex in general, as well as for sex dating.

Well, when my relationship with my partner ended, I had no other option than to search alone. I have some experience with this. I mostly just toyed with it, exploring reactions and so on. And I did not stop it if something starting to develop I looked for single men, I tried couples and I tried to contact women sometimes. (female, 36 years)

The continuing importance to users of the Internet as a venue for experimenting with sexual contacts can be seen even in those with experience in meeting sexual partners offline. The online interaction represents play that may precede offline sexual encounters. However, the following excerpts illustrate the variability of explanations given by participants for turning online sexual contacts into offline sexual meetings. Though, the excerpts also show that this transfer may be affected by the impulsivity of online sex-seekers:

I: What do you have to do...so you can meet in real life and have sex?

P: Both must be willing to do it, I don't know what exactly it is. But both must consider it more than only virtual talk about sex. (male, 27 years)

Or another example:

Once I met a doctor, or he pretended to be a doctor. He was priggish but he attracted me. So I did it with him. It was quite rough, he didn't ask me about contraception, and we had unprotected sex...Perhaps it was my fastest date, we were chatting in the evening and then we hooked up. (female, 36 years)

The excerpts show that experience with virtual sex, and talking about sex, connect the virtual world with offline everyday life, shortening the distance between the online and offline worlds. The negotiation process also seemed to be inhibited when compared to that of users seeking only offline sex. While transferring contacts from the Internet to the offline world can be impulsive, sex seekers may be aware that they do not get to know their sexual partners well on the Internet, and that potentially anyone could pretend to be anybody else on a sex-oriented contact website.

2.3 On the border between an online sexual contact and an offline sexual encounter

The following use of sex-oriented contact websites is specific, and seems to be situated between using these sites to establish sexual contacts online and establishing them offline. It has the characteristic of a desire to have sex offline which has not yet been fulfilled. This was the case for three of the participants.

I: *What do you mean by "you are seeking and yet not seeking"?*

P: *First, I wanted to have sex – at that time I didn't have a girlfriend (now he has one). But now that I know more about them (dating sites), what chance is there to find sex there, I*

would say that it is more about the entertainment. I would bet that a man would have a higher probability of finding sex in a bar. But if I actually got the chance to have sex, I still think I would not refuse. (male, 26 years)

Notably, using sexually related contact websites is still attractive despite a perceived lower probability of meeting offline sex partners. The extract shows that although the participant had not yet met an online sex contact in real life, having an ad on a sex-oriented contact site was understood as expressing a desire for sex. In addition, contacting potential partners for offline sex allowed him to feel close to having sex, which could be sexually pleasurable. Furthermore, this participant's experiences suggest that contacting potential sex partners online only may not be perceived as infidelity. In other words, an individual using a sex-oriented contact website is virtually close to an offline sexual encounter, while at the same time far from being unfaithful (see Mileham, 2007; Whitty, 2005).

Discussion

Our results suggest that although interaction on sex orientated contact websites may begin with the disclosure of intimate details such as sexual desires, not all sexual contacts established online progress into offline encounters. Some participants were not able, or did not want, to keep the sexually liberated style of interaction they had expressed online in offline encounters. Moreover, some of those who reported having sex with someone they met online said they developed strategies to recognize partners who would be willing to meet offline. This suggests that sexually related online interactions do not always facilitate offline sexual encounters. Based on Gagnon and Simon's (2005) theory of sexual scripts, our data interpretation is that the scripts related to the intrapsychic dimension may be easy to develop in the anonymous online environment where a feeling of privacy and intimacy is preserved.

Talking about sexuality on the Internet is actually typing about sexuality (see Ross, 2005). This means that Internet users do not verbally articulate any words with sexual content, and are able to communicate things that would be awkward to say out loud. This reveals a large gap between establishing sexual contacts online and offline. On the Internet users can communicate their intrapsychic scripts more easily than in offline life; users' scripts become publicly private on the Internet (see Lange, 2007). This may result in the dominance of intrapsychic scripts over (public) interpersonal and cultural scripts in online sexual encounters. However, while these scripts may be suppressed in anonymous non-physical interactions, they seem to come into play in face to face meetings. Participants who had sex offline with a partner they met online reported several common strategies for bridging the gap between the silence and anonymity of the internet and the face-to-face sexual setting. For example a phone call required them to move on from non-verbal sexual interaction to actively voicing where and how sex would occur.

Developing the argument above based on the theory of scripts, it is also assumed that sex-seekers behave on the Internet according to a script that approves of sexually disinhibited behavior in an anonymous, silent, and non-physical environment. This may clash with the more traditional scripts that have previously guided offline sexually related interaction. This disagreement between sexual scripts may inhibit the progression of online sexual contact into offline encounters.

A noteworthy group of sex seekers were distinguished who had no specific contact preferences, nor did they seem to have any trouble meeting their online sexual partners in the offline world. Experience with online sex may shorten the distance between online and offline sexual contact. Interestingly, sex-related online interaction was still appealing for these participants, even though they could easily cross the borders between online and offline sexual encounters. In relation to the prior research finding that cybersex may precede offline

sexual encounters (Daneback et al., 2005; Daneback et al., 2007) it is assumed that for these individuals cybersex is arousing and may enhance subsequent offline meetings. Furthermore, it was found that the risks related to the accelerated development of intimacy in online interaction were not a problem for these users (Ross, Rosser, & Stanon, 2004). These sex seekers were less likely to become vulnerable to illusionary feelings of closeness and mutual familiarity, feelings which can enhance offline meetings with online sexual partners, potentially leading to unprotected sex. Some sex seekers seemed to switch settings from online to offline quickly and easily. This reduced the time available for negotiating the sexual encounters, where various health related issues such as risks and safety could be discussed. Thus, an eagerness to quickly engage in sexual activity may have a negative impact on health.

The last group of online sex seekers lies between online sexual contacts and offline sexual encounters, and represents a specific use of sex-oriented contact websites. Although they desire real-life sexual encounters, they admit that they are less active in seeking sexual partners online. In the results section it is suggested that this kind of website usage actually includes contact with potential sex partners: This contact, for example replying to messages or chatting, provides pleasure in its own right, sometimes accompanied by masturbation. The use of a sex-oriented contact website can be considered both a form of solitary-arousal (viewing sexually explicit materials) and partnered-arousal (sharing sexual fantasies). Both of these activities are more common among male Internet users than female Internet users (Shaughnessy et al., 2010). Even though it requires further research, it is speculated that this particular use of sex-oriented contact websites might be specific to male Internet users who, as prior research has shown, are more likely to look for sexual partners online, to reply to sex ads (Cooper et al., 2003; Cooper et al., 2002) and also have a lower tendency to have sex offline (Bolding et al., 2006; Daneback et al., 2007).

In summary, the specific characteristics of the Internet produce new sexual scripts that are not in accordance with the sexual behavior scripted for more traditional offline encounters. This incongruity can be profitable for certain sex seekers, such as married or engaged users who establish online sexual contacts and may not consider this behavior as infidelity. This may bring a new level of both sexual experience and misunderstanding into marital or partner relationships.

It seems that engaging in online sex-seeking activities allows users to communicate the content of their intrapsychic scripts, making them more accessible to an audience, and thus open to discussion with others. This may be useful for clinicians in that it provides an explanation as to why some Internet users can become fixed to internet use for sexual purposes. Online sex-seeking activities give users easy access to the contents of their intrapsychic scripts, namely to their sexual desires and fantasies. This ease of access may accelerate their fulfillment during online interactions. Therefore, clinicians working with clients who are preoccupied with the internet as a source of sexual satisfaction could aim to find instruments that would enable clients to communicate the content of their intrapsychic scripts offline, e.g. within an existing partner or marital relationship.

This study has several limitations. Although the data from both online and offline interviews covers a wide range of experiences related to the use of sex-oriented contact websites, the participants interviewed offline emphasized different themes to those interviewed online. This may have induced bias in our study: in face-to-face contact participants may have been less willing to reveal the outcomes of virtual interactions, or may have felt less open to disclose their intimate issues than those interviewed via instant messengers. In addition, it is possible that the individuals who volunteered could have an enhanced/escalated agency in their sexual lives on or off the Internet. The findings might also be typical for the Czech Republic, which has a higher rate of extramarital relations than other

western countries, e.g. Great Britain (Weiss & Zvěřina, 2001), and a higher number of sexual partners per person compared to, for example, the United States (Weiss, Kučera, & Svěráková, 1995; Weiss & Zvěřina, 2001). Although this study met the criteria for theoretical saturation, including more participants could possibly have added to the results. Finally, a mixed methods design would probably have increased the validity of the findings.

Concluding remarks

In conclusion, sex orientated contact web sites expand users opportunities for sexual interaction. Users establish various types of sexual contacts, ranging from those strictly related to the Internet, to those connected to the offline world. This study has shown that some daters find it difficult to transfer intimate online contact into an offline meeting. The importance of predefining the context of offline sexual encounters has been recognized, as it allows individuals to keep their behavior offline sexually disinhibited. However, there are daters who search for sexual contacts, both online and offline, seeming to easily cross the boundaries between sex-oriented contact websites and everyday life. This potentially accelerates their partner-seeking activities. Determining the socio-demographic characteristics of these daters remains a question for future research. In addition, the new scripts present online may also influence offline sexual scripts on a cultural level. How and when this may occur are also questions for future research.

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