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English 1020

March 03, 2018

Annotated Bibliography Exploring How Social Media Ruins Relationships

**Topic:** Since social media has become a major element of modern society, many scientists and psychologists have conducted research concerning the effects of social media use on relationships. This research will explore the opinions and facts that support the idea that social media negatively impacts relationships between friends, family members, and even intimate relationships. Additionally, this research will also cover the topic of how social media is an open communication platform, which leads to hurtful human behavior in cases of cyber-bullying, which results in unhealthy relationships.

Chambers, Deborah. *Social media and personal relationships: online intimacies and networked*

*friendship*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2013. Accessed 03 March 2018.

Deborah Chambers is a professor of Media and Cultural studies at Newcastle University. She obtained a PhD in sociology of Communication and Culture and focuses her research expertise in Media Technologies and Cultures, and Journalism Studies with a focus on women and local media. In her book *Social Media and Personal Relationships: Online Intimacies and Networked Friendship (Palgrave Macmillan Studies in Family and Intimate Life),* which is my

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anchor text, Chambers explores how digital communication creates a new level of relationships, intimate and friendly. She creates a theory of “mediated intimacies” to present how social media affects our relationships through factors of self and environment. Throughout the book, she explores how people engage with social media networks to build and maintain personal relationships. Chambers begins her argument by stating that the largest change in personal life during late modernity is relying on social media to create personal relationships. She explains that social media networks were created to strengthen ties between family and friends, especially those relationships affected by distance, but later states that social media can actually complicate personal ties. She supports this argument by stating that through social media, genuine bonds are actually being lost. In addition to her thesis, Chambers expresses her feelings towards social media and the idea of one’s self. Chambers explains that solitary individuals who are normally shy, are using social media to expand their social horizons, without using face-to-face contact. She argues that this is particularly unhealthy because people are being “social” without gaining any social skills, which affects future feasible relationships. Chambers also focuses a large part of her book on young people how social media allows them to have no discretion about what they post. Chambers explores the idea that social media is an open platform with no boundaries, so there is no shame in posting inappropriate photos or posts that relate to one’s body or personal life. She later explains that this becomes an issue when young people create shallow relationships based on their inappropriate posts, which later affects a person’s sense of security. In each chapter of *Social Media and Personal Relationships: Online Intimacies and Networked Friendship (Palgrave Macmillan Studies in Family and Intimate Life),* Chambers breaks down and explores each factor of social media and how they affect relationships. She covers

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technologically mediated personal relationships, self-presentation on online, social media and teenage friendships, how social media and news affects the home and families, online dating and romance, and mediated intimacies. Although Chamber’s main argument is that social media is creating a dysfunctional form of communication and drawing communities apart from each other, she also includes research backing up the idea that social media can do good, especially when creating personal relationships.

This book is incorporated with heavy amounts of research and includes almost every aspect of how social media can affect relationships. Chambers thoroughly explains every concept and theory in her book and backs them up with an abundance of factual evidence. This text will be a strong backbone for my research essay and will provide an over-all thorough source of information. Chambers includes many main arguments that can be later in my backed up in my essay by smaller sources such as academic journals and news articles.

Dikeos, Thea. “Teen's death highlights cyber bullying trend.” *ABC News*, 22 July 2009,

[www.abc.net.au/news/2009-07-23/teens-death-highlights-cyber-bullying-](http://www.abc.net.au/news/2009-07-23/teens-death-highlights-cyber-bullying-) trend/1363362. Accessed 03 March 2018.

Thea Dikeos, a journalist, covers the story of a 14-year-old girl who committed suicide after experiencing harassment online and cyber-bullying. In the news story, “Teen’s Death Highlights Cyber Bullying Trend”, Dikeos explores the events leading up to the girl’s death, including quotes from interviews with the girl’s mother, a boy who has also experienced cyber bullying, and Professor Cross, a professor who conducts research on and analyzes social media

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interactions. Cyber bullying is a human behavior with tragic consequences that is made possible by social media. This article depicts a tragic event that is a result of cyber bullying and explores the opinions of victims and the expertise of professionals about the subject. Karen Rae, the mother of the victim, explains that her daughter received a message on the internet that made her want to die. Mrs. Rae says that she had a conversation about the message with her daughter, and it ended fairly happy, but her daughter still proceeded to take her life after the incident. Professor Donna Cross has completed a landmark study on cyber bullying and gave her input on this tragic event. Professor Cross states that cyber bullying is "any bullying behavior that is delivered through technology - through mobile phones or over the internet". Professor Cross also states that, according to her research, about 10 percent of young people reported they were being cyber bullied. Another victim of cyber bullying, Tom Wood, explains his experience with the harsh human behavior of young people online. "I was involved in a lot of forums and websites on the net and one of them had members that wanted to abuse others just to get reactions," he said. Mr. Wood states that he tried to stand up for himself online, but the threats and abuse just got worse. Since his experience with cyber bullying, Mr. Wood has become an activist against online bullying, and a promoter for growing healthy relationships on social media. Towards the end of the news article, Professor Cross is quoted saying, “One of the biggest problems identified by my research is that young people do not think adults take cyber bullying seriously.” She later explains that the most efficient way to stop this behavior is for young people to stand up against the online violence that is rising with social media.

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Thea Dikeos’ news article covering the event of a young girl’s suicide after being cyber bullied is an excellent way to support my idea that social media negatively impacts relationships. The internet can be used to create close personal relationships, but it is also a breeding ground

for unhealthy relationships and aggressive behavior. This article is a real-life example of what can happen when social media is used in the wrong way, and how people can hide behind a screen and create destructive relationships.

Journal, Wall Street. “'Living for Likes' Hurts Human Relationships.” *The Wall Street Journal*, Dow

Jones & Company, 23 Feb. 2017, www.wsj.com/articles/living-for-likes-hurts-human-relationships-1487874661. Accessed 03 March 2018.

Jessica Nowachek, an OP-ED journalist for the Wall Street Journal gives her opinion on how social media damages relationships in her article “‘Living for Likes’ Hurts Human Relationships”. Nowachek discusses how future employers and educators should review their applicant’s social media before making a decision about his or her character. Nowachek believes that a person ultimately reveals his or her true character on social media, because there is no limit to what he or she can post. Nowachek also explains that most people post what is appealing to others, so they can receive more attention from their followers online. She states that many of the posts on Facebook and Twitter have been proven false, which leaves social media to be an unreliable source for media and details about one’s life. Novachek goes on to explain that social media wastes time and ruins relationships by creating a false sense of reality. People can write positive attitude posts about themselves and their relationships to create a healthy image, but this is unhealthy in the long run. These posts allow people to conceal their true feelings and the

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reality of their relationships, rather than facing the truth and using the ability to communicate face-to-face with one another to solve problems.

This OP-ED piece comes from a reliable news journal and includes the opinion of a young girl who has had experience with the social media and the negative effects of it. This article will assist my idea that social media creates false platforms and promotes unhealthy behavior in relationships.

Orben, Amy C., and Robin I.M. Dunbar. “Social media and relationship development: The effect of

valence and intimacy of posts.” *Computers in Human Behavior*, Pergamon, 4 Apr. 2017, www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0747563217302364?via%3Dihub. Accessed 03 March 2018.

Amy Orben is a Social Media psychologist and college lecturer at the University of Oxford. Professor Orben investigates how social media is changing human interaction and relationship formation. Robin I.M. Dunbar is a professor of Evolutionary Psychology and conducts research concerning the behavioral and cognitive mechanisms of social bonding in primates and humans. These two professors worked together to create an article for an academic journal discussing social media and relationship development. In the article “Social Media and Relationship Development: The Effect of Valence and Intimacy of Posts”, Orben and Dunbar discuss how relationship development is affected by online posts, how negative or intimate posts decrease relationship strength, and how a reader’s perception of an online post affects relationships. Orben and Dunbar conducted an investigation of 243 participants and observed

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how reading online posts affects relationship development. They found that posts that included high intimacy or negative comments decreased the social attractiveness of the self-discloser. Orben and Dunbar state that most social media use is passive, meaning one absorbs the information presented to him or her online, without interacting with the person who posted it. This allows people to gain access to personal information about people they follow, without having to interact with them. This decreases the need for human interaction and lowers communication between social media users. Orben and Dunbar found that although positive posts can strengthen a relationship’s intimacy, they can weaken communication levels between partners and friends by taking away the need to converse verbally. Orben and Dunbar conclude that relationships can be negatively impacted by passively using social media when the relationship is weak, and that strong relationships with high intimacy and positive posts were likely to be unaffected.

This academic journal is thoroughly written and includes a highly organized experiment. Professor Orben and Professor Dunbar adequately explain their research and present their investigation step by step. This particular article is an exceptional source to use for my research paper because it depicts a well conducted experiment designed by two highly reputable scientists. Including scientific research in my essay will greatly benefit the reliability of my overall thesis. Their research supports my idea that social media can have a negative impact on relationships when not used correctly.

Punyanunt-Carter, Narissra M., and Jason S. Wrench. *The impact of social media in modern*

*romantic relationships*. Lexington Books, 2017. Accessed 03 March 2018.

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Dr. Punyanut-Carter is a professor in the department of Communication Studies, and Jason S. Wrench is a professor in the Communication and Media department. In their book *The Impact of Social Media in Modern Romantic Relationships (Studies in New Media),* Dr. Punyanut-Carter and Professor Wrench elaborately explore the inner workings of social media and romantic relationship development. *The Impact of Social Media in Modern Romantic Relationships (Studies in New Media)* dives deep into the ideas that surround modern networking and relationship formation. Dr. Punyanut-Carter and Professor wrench start from the beginning and explain how courtship has evolved in the United States over the years. In the beginning of their book, they give a brief but detailed history of online dating and how it all began. As the book continues, they go deeper into description about how dating became intertwined with wireless communication. Dr. Punyanut-Carter and Professor Wrench give detailed facts based upon research concerning the different contexts and variables of social media, how social media is an open door for jealousy, the effects of social media on the development and maintenance of relationships, how people self-present themselves through online dating profiles, the impact of technology on modern dating, and many more elements of social media that contribute to romantic relationships. Throughout the book, several studies and experiments are presented that explain how romantic relationships are impacted by social media use. In chapter 11, a scholar by the name of Jennifer L. Bevan “explores the expressions of romantic jealousy through social networking sites.” In chapter 12, it is discussed how social media, stress, and negative romantic experiences intersect and can become twisted, thus resulting in unhealthy romantic relationships. By the end of the book, the authors offer multiple explanations for the negative correlations between social media and romantic relationships.

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This book is a comprehensive study of social media and romantic relationship development. It includes a complete overview of romantic relationship development incorporating all types of social media. *The Impact of Social Media in Modern Romantic Relationships (Studies in New Media)* has two main authors but also includes an abundance of communication and media scholars who have conducted years of research concerning the ties between social media and romantic relationships. This book is filled with studies and opinions of professionals that will greatly back-up the romantic relationship aspect of my research essay.

Siegel, Alyssa. “How Social Media Affects Our Relationships.” *PsychologyTomorrowMagazine*, 7

Sept. 2015, psychologytomorrowmagazine.com/curfeat-how-social-media-affects-our-relationships/. Accessed 03 March 2018.

Alyssa Siegel is a licensed professional counselor. She has an MS in counseling and a BA in Psychology. She works with individuals and couples and specializes in relationships, sexuality, and women's identity development. Seigel’s article “How Social Media Affects Our Relationships” covers how people communicate on social media, how social media causes a lack of privacy, the way information is perceived on social media, how relationships often begin on social media, infidelity through social media, and how social media can lead to conflict in relationships. Seigel uses examples from her clients and her own personal research to support her ideas. Seigel begins her article by explaining how communication becomes altered through social media. With social media, one cannot read tone or body language, people often say things

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that they would not say in person, and because communication through technology is instant, people are more likely to say things impulsively. Seigel also states that social media has become a dominant form of relationship maintenance, which builds unstable relationships. With the lack of privacy through social media, Seigel believes that social media has become a breeding ground for jealousy, because partners have access to almost every aspect of each other’s personal lives. In addition, Seigel states that sometimes personal news can be broadcasted on social media first, which leaves a significant other feeling less important because he or she was not told beforehand. Seigel writes that although many relationships begin on social media, many affairs begin on social media as well. Seigel blames accessibility for the many affairs that modernly occur on social media platforms. Seigal states that it is “easy” to seek attention from others online and fantasizing over other’s profiles results in confrontation. Concluding her argument, Seigel says that for people who are already in relationships, social media is a constant source of tension, disagreement, and disengagement.

Seigel’s article in Psychology Tomorrow Magazine explores the ideas of all the ways social media negatively impacts relationships. This article will be beneficial to my research paper because Seigel uses examples from her personal clients, which gives real life examples of how social media affects intimate relationships. This piece will support the aspect of how social media affects romantic relationships in my thesis.

“Social media firms 'failing' to tackle cyber-Bullying.” *BBC News*, BBC, 26 Feb. 2018,

www.bbc.com/news/technology-43197937. Accessed 03 March 2018.

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In “Social Media Firms ‘Failing” to Tackle Cyber Bullying”, BBC News discusses the growing problem of cyber bullying and what social media leaders are doing to stop it. The author(s) of this news article begin his or her report by describing an investigation done for the Safety Net report. This report states that almost half of 1,089 11 to 25-year-olds experienced threatening or hateful social media messages. The people who participated in this survey also reported that social media companies are not doing much about these threats, and the bullies have little to no consequences. The investigation also revealed that social media is extremely addictive, and many young people spend time on social media after midnight. This article closes with the idea that people feel “inadequate” if they do not receive enough likes or followers on their account.

BBC’s news report on cyber bullying is another example of how negative relationships and friendships can be formed online, leading to a decrease in one’s mental health and well-being. BBC News is a reliable news source, and this particular article includes reports and studies from outside sources. Although this source does not directly talk about hateful relationships being formed online, this article contributes to my thesis by proving that pessimistic behavior does occur on social media platforms, which ultimately leads to unhealthy relationships and communication.

Zur, Ofer. *Multiple relationships in psychotherapy and counseling: unavoidable, common, and*

*mandatory dual relations in therapy*. Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2017. Accessed 03 March 2018.

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Ofer Zur, a contemporary psychologist, writes and teaches on ethics, critical thinking, boundaries, relationships, therapy in the digital age, and many other psychological subjects. In his book *Multiple Relationships in Psychotherapy and Counseling: Unavoidable, Common, and Mandatory Dual Relationships in Therapy,* he mainly focuses his analysis on the relationships between clients and psychotherapists. Although Dr. Zur explores these specific topics, he also briefly discusses general relationships in society, and how social media platforms intertwine with them. In part V of his book, he reviews multiple relationships in cyberspace. Dr. Zur explains the inner-workings of digital and social media multiple relationships on the internet and demonstrates the “unprecedented and risk-management challenges” of relationships in the digital world. In pages 183-206, Dr. Zur goes into depth about the struggles his client’s face through social media, and how they cope with them. Some of these struggles include insecurity, aggression, jealousy, and obsession. All these factors are caused by the negative aspects of social media that are offered to society.

Despite the fact that Dr. Zur’s book is not centralized around social media and relationships, he still incorporates ideas and concepts around this theme. Part V of his book is thorough in the way he that explains how social media negatively affects society, relationships, and his own clients. This book will be a favorable source for my essay because it is written by an experienced and licensed psychologist who has organized his own research and other’s.