2016

Turbulence, Turmoil, and Termination: The Dark Side of Social Networking Sites for Romantic Relationships

Courtney Anderegg
George Fox University, canderegg@georgefox.edu

Recommended Citation

Turbulence, Turmoil, and Termination: The Dark Side of Social Networking Sites for Romantic Relationships

Jesse Fox and Courtney Anderegg

Social networking websites (SNSs) have become an integral medium for communicating within and about interpersonal relationships (boyd & Ellison, 2008; Stafford & Hillyer, 2012). SNSs have been lauded for their ability to unite distal friends, maintain relational ties, facilitate relationship development, and promote social capital (e.g., Ellison, Vitak, Gray, & Lampe, 2014; Fox, Warber, & Makstaller, 2013; McEwan, 2013). Although considerable research has elected to focus on the benefits of using SNSs, it is also important to examine the dark side of computer-mediated communication (DeAndrea, Tong, & Walther, 2011). For example, SNS use has been tied to decreases in psychological well-being (Chen & Lee, 2013), and scholars have noted negative psychological outcomes when users experience rejection on SNSs (e.g., Bevan, Ang, & Fearns, 2014; Tokunaga, 2011a, 2014).

One area where the dark side of SNSs may be most prevalent is that of romantic relationships. Research has begun to acknowledge the role that SNSs play in the initiation, escalation, maintenance, and dissolution of romantic relationships (e.g., Carpenter & Spottswood, 2013; Fox, Jones, & Lookadoo, 2013; Fox & Warber, 2013; Marshall, 2012; Papp, Danielewicz, & Cayemberg, 2012). SNSs provide evidence of online and offline activities, which allows a romantic partner to covertly engage in information seeking and uncertainty reduction (Fox & Anderegg, 2014; Tokunaga, 2011b). It also introduces new sources of potential conflict, may create undesirable uncertainty, and gives other social network members greater access to information about the couple (Fox, Osborn, & Warber, 2014).

In this chapter, we examine the affordances of SNSs in terms of how they initiate, promote, or intensify destructive romantic relationship communication. We elaborate various dark side behaviors and experiences on SNSs related to romantic relationships, including social comparison, negative relational maintenance, romantic jealousy, and partner monitoring. Additionally, we discuss

relational issues exacerbated by SNSs, including technological incompatibility, destructive secret tests, and cyberstalking.

Affordances of SNSs

SNSs have specific social affordances that enable the actions one can take within the site (Fox & Moreland, 2015; Treem & Leonardi, 2012). *Affordances* are the perceived properties of a technology that enable specific actions (Norman, 1988). These affordances determine how social information is conveyed and transmitted throughout the network, which influences how users receive, interpret, and are affected by this information. Thus, affordances have important implications for how dark side behaviors manifest differently on SNSs compared to other communication channels.

One draw of SNSs is their ability to link individuals in one common virtual space. The affordance of *connectivity* or *association* enables network members, no matter how disparate or geographically distant, to recognize each other's presence and view each other's content through a common node or "friend." *Visibility* means that information that was not easily accessible or publicized previously is now shared among the network (Treem & Leonardi, 2012). Connectivity and visibility enable individuals to view information about their romantic partners that they may not have regular access to, such as seeing pictures and posts from previous relationships, which may foster relational uncertainty, jealousy, or suspicions. Further, given that social network members often have a significant influence on an individual's romantic relationships (Hogerbrugge, Komter, & Scheepers, 2013; Sprecher, 2011), these two affordances may maximize the network's influence on—or meddling in—a romantic relationship, as there is more fodder for gossip and speculation about the nature or health of the relationship.

Persistence, editability, and *replicability* are tied to the digital nature of text, pictures, videos, and other content. Information shared online may be accessible long after the initial post and difficult to remove permanently (Treem & Leonardi, 2012). Persistence and replicability also make it difficult to hide transgressions, relational indiscretions, or otherwise suspicious behaviors if they are posted online. Even if content is removed, others may have stored it or shared it among other networks. Furthermore, several editing tools enable digital information to be manipulated, from simple cropping to intensive reconfiguration. In this way, artificial or deceptive material could be created to cause turmoil in a relationship.

Individual sites also have specific affordances that may foster negative experiences. One particular Facebook feature, the ability to go "Facebook official" or "FBO" (i.e., link to one's partner in the relationship status), affords partner-specific connectivity (Fox & Warber, 2013; Papp et al., 2012). Although this opportunity may seem like a way to promote togetherness, partners often have differing perceptions of the meaning and timing of this relationship status (Fox & Warber, 2013), which can lead to tension, uncertainty, and conflict (Fox et al., 2014). Other SNSs like Whisper, Secret, and Yik Yak are designed to afford *anonymity* (Wang, Wang, Wang, Nika, Zheng, & Zhao, 2014). In these environments, posters feel confident they will not be identified, which may facilitate cyberaggression (Wright, 2014). Thus, it is important to consider that the same affordances that allow us to share experiences and memories also have the potential to challenge, complicate, or damage romantic relationships.

Technological Incompatibility

Although similar attitudes and behaviors regarding technology use can facilitate relationships (Ledbetter, 2014), relationship difficulties can also emerge as a result of *technological incompatibility*, or any problematic discrepancy in technology use between partners. This incompatibility may be based on the amount or timing of use, type of connections maintained, or content shared on a site (Fox et al., 2014; Fox & Moreland, 2015). For example, Bailey may feel uncomfortable with Thomas's insistence on posting all of their intimate honeymoon pictures publicly on Instagram, because Bailey prefers to keep his social media presence professional.

Any such discrepancies in SNS use may create discord or conflict in romantic relationships. Indeed, negative perceptions of how a romantic partner uses social media can diminish feelings of relational intimacy (Hand, Thomas, Buboltz, Deemer, & Buyanjargal, 2013). Some couples have divergent expectations for romantic relationship maintenance via SNSs, and different practices by partners can create conflict (Fox & Moreland, 2015). Some romantic partners struggle to establish boundaries for privacy on SNSs and argue about what is acceptable to publicize to the network; in extreme cases, this can lead to relationship termination (Fox et al., 2014).

One possible explanation for these discrepancies is differences in romantic partners' attachment style. Attachment Theory suggests that our tendencies to be anxious or avoidant toward others has significant implications for how individuals experience, enact, and communicate within romantic relationships (Hazan & Shaver, 1987; Simpson, 1990). Several studies have found that attachment styles predict various negative relational behaviors on SNSs (e.g., Fox, Peterson, & Warber, 2013; Fox & Warber, 2014; Marshall, 2012; Marshall, Benjanyan, Di Castro, & Lee, 2013). In general, those who are high in anxious attachment rely more on SNSs, put significant stock in their content, and experience more negative emotions as a result. Avoidant individuals typically prefer not to communicate with their partners via SNSs unless they can be used to create distance from the partner. Differences in attachment style may lend themselves to technological incompatibility and lead to conflict. Thus, it is important that couples assess their behaviors and relational expectations and negotiate acceptable SNS practices within the relationship. Although technological incompatibility could incite conflict on SNSs, users also need to be mindful of negative maintenance behaviors enacted online.

Negative Relationship Maintenance

Relationship maintenance refers to the behaviors that an individual engages in to keep a romantic relationship in its current state (Canary & Stafford, 1994; Dindia, 2003). Relationship maintenance behaviors, such as displaying positivity to one's partner, disclosing personal information, and attempting to integrate friends and family into the relationship, are largely seen as positive behaviors (Stafford & Canary, 1991). Several behaviors, however, qualify as negative relational maintenance, such as jealousy induction (Dainton & Gross, 2008) and interpersonal electronic surveillance (Tokunga, 2011b). Importantly, the use of negative maintenance behaviors has been found to decrease levels of relationship satisfaction (Dainton & Gross, 2008).

Relationship maintenance behaviors—both positive and negative—are often enacted online via SNSs (McEwan, 2013). Indeed, relationship maintenance is one of the most important

reasons for why individuals use Facebook; however, it is not the *amount* of Facebook use, but the *type* of Facebook use that has the greatest impact on romantic relationships online. Dainton and Berksoski (2013) found that tests of infidelity (a negative maintenance behavior), assurances (a positive maintenance behavior), and levels of jealousy on Facebook predicted almost 50% of the variance explained in relational satisfaction. Thus, negative relational maintenance behaviors on SNSs may take a significant toll on romantic relationships.

Several researchers claim that whether or not individuals engage in negative maintenance behaviors may depend on the initial state of the relationship (e.g., Dainton & Gross, 2008; Goodboy & Bolkan, 2011). For instance, if Rhonda is fearful that her partner Cedric is interested in other women, she may monitor Cedric's interactions on Facebook. However, if Rhonda uncovers suspicious posts on Cedric's profile or if Cedric finds out about Rhonda's monitoring, the relationship may become even more dysfunctional than before. As such, negative maintenance behaviors are often not successful in maintaining relationships, but instead propel them toward dissolution. Similar to negative maintenance behaviors, negative social comparisons can also take place on SNSs and be detrimental to a relationship.

Social Comparison

Upward social comparison occurs when an individual identifies someone of higher status or other desirable traits and then reflects on one's own shortcomings in contrast. Several studies have found that SNSs are a common context for detrimental social comparisons, and they lead to diminished self-perceptions, negative emotions, and depressive symptoms (Feinstein, Hershenberg, Bhatia, Latack, Meuwly, & Davila, 2013; Fox & Moreland, 2015; Haferkamp & Krämer, 2011; Lee, 2014).

SNSs are also a context in which relational comparisons may be made. According to Interdependence Theory (Kelley & Thibaut, 1978), there are two types of comparisons that an individual makes in the context of relationships: comparing the existing relationship to others' relationships, or comparing the choice to remain in the relationship with other opportunities. An individual may consider the comparison level (CL) for the relationship (Kelley & Thibaut, 1978) by comparing it to other couples' relationships as portrayed on SNSs. SNSs also enable individuals to explore their comparison level for alternatives (CLalt), or other options besides remaining in the current relationship (Kelley & Thibaut, 1978).

Another form of social comparison is judging the self against a partner's perceived alternatives. Because of the affordances of connectivity and visibility, considerably more information about a partner's romantic alternatives is made available on SNSs. Rebecca might use Facebook to see how attractive or successful her boyfriend's ex-girlfriends are, or she might scope out his single female friends and compare herself to them. Given the number of bases for comparison typically available on SNSs, it is likely that at least one of these will evoke negative reactions. Another example of using SNSs in a negative manner in relationships is employing destructive secret tests.

Destructive Secret Tests

Throughout the various stages of a relationship (i.e., initiation, maintenance, and termination),[1] individuals may need to reduce or reconcile uncertainty that they may have about their partner or the future of the relationship (Berger & Calabrese, 1975). Different strategies may be used to reduce uncertainty, but often the goal is the same: to acquire information about a romantic relational partner. These strategies, or *secret tests*, allow individuals to gain insight and reduce uncertainty about the relationship (Baxter & Wilmot, 1984).

SNSs provide a unique platform in which individuals are able to conduct secret tests. Tests can range from positive and hopeful (e.g., trying to determine the seriousness of a relationship) to detrimental and damaging (e.g., trying to catch a partner engaging in inappropriate behavior). Fox, Peterson, and Warber (2013) found that secret tests are executed both positively and negatively via SNSs. Partners often took advantage of the affordances of SNSs (e.g., the ability to make comments to one's partner visible to the network or the visibility of one's connections and communication with other network members) to test the definition and boundaries of their relationship and the intentions, commitment, and fidelity of their partners.

One commonly used test is the separation test, in which the individual attempts to disconnect from or avoid the partner (Fox, Peterson, & Warber, 2013). On SNSs, this test is executed by deliberately ignoring messages, tags, and posts from the partner to see how he or she will react. If the partner also avoids contact, the individual might take this as a sign that the partner is uninterested in the relationship. Perhaps the most frequently used negative test is one that attempts to invoke partner jealousy by openly flirting with another person through posts or "liking" an ex-partner's content. Because SNSs make these interactions visible to the network, these actions are used to bait the partner and evoke a reaction. A third, relatively infrequent type is the triangle test, where a third party would be asked to help test a relational partner's fidelity (Fox, Peterson, & Warber, 2013). For example, if Louise doesn't trust her girlfriend Amy, she may ask another friend to post something flirtatious on Amy's page to see if Amy flirts back. Although secret tests can be used to benefit a relationship, relational partners often use SNSs to tempt their partners with opportunities for infidelity or create relational turmoil. As we can see, secret tests often stem from or invoke romantic jealousy, which has been a common focus of research on SNSs in romantic relationships.

Romantic Jealousy

Due to the amount of information available on SNSs, it is possible that they may stir up jealousy in relationships (Bevan, 2013), particularly if those individuals are anxiously attached (Marshall et al., 2013). Previous studies have found that higher levels of Facebook use or involvement with Facebook predict greater relational jealousy (Elphinston & Noller, 2011; Muise, Christofedes, & Desmarais, 2009) and dissatisfaction (Elphinston & Noller, 2011). Other studies have shown that certain content on a partner's SNS profile has the potential to trigger jealous or angry reactions (Muise, Christofedes, & Desmarais, 2014; Muscanell, Guadagno, Rice, & Murphy, 2013).

Experiences of jealousy and uncertainty in relationships may be a vicious cycle when both partners use SNSs (Fox & Warber, 2014; Muise et al., 2009). Individuals may seek out their partner's profile to alleviate relational concerns, but the content they find may trigger greater

uncertainty or jealousy. As a result, the individual may then engage in ongoing surveillance, which may exacerbate feelings of uncertainty or jealousy. Thus, particularly for individuals high in trait jealousy (Utz & Beukeboom, 2011), SNSs may be a consistent trigger if the partner's romantic history or current interactions are visible, which could encourage partner monitoring on these sites.

Partner Monitoring

Social networking sites provide a novel way for partners to gather information about each other (Fox & Anderegg, 2014). Indeed, monitoring another person is one of the most common reasons people use SNSs (Joinson, 2008). Tokunaga (2011b) identified four characteristics of SNSs that promote *interpersonal electronic surveillance* (IES) of one's romantic partner. First, information is readily accessible through these sites. It is easy to join an SNS and access the profiles of your connections or your connections' connections. Second, information on SNSs is often comprised of various media such as textual messages, photographs, links, and audio or video clips. Given that pictures are considered more credible than words on SNS profiles (Van Der Heide, D'Angelo, & Schumaker, 2012), this capability may be particularly relevant to partners with suspicions. Third, SNSs allow the archiving of profile information (i.e., they afford persistence; Treem & Leonardi, 2012). Partners may conduct IES of the target's past posts, photos, or interactions with others to gather more data. Fourth, given that neither geographical proximity nor social interaction is necessary to obtain this information, data may be gathered more surreptitiously. Many SNSs, including Facebook and Twitter, do not provide feedback regarding which network members have accessed one's profile. Thus, the target may never know that he or she is under surveillance by the partner.

In addition to Tokunaga's (2011b) characteristics, a fifth characteristic also makes SNSs optimal for partner surveillance: the multiplicity of sources available. It is not only the target who is contributing to his or her profile page, but also other network members. According to Warranting Theory, information that comes from sources other than the self is seen as more credible (Walther & Parks, 2002). Also, information that comes from multiple sources (e.g., several network members, or both comments and pictures) would also be perceived as more credible (Flanagin & Metzger, 2007). Facebook in particular makes this "friendsourcing" easy: not only can friends mention the target or upload media about the target, but they can also tag the target in posts, check-ins, or photos and have that information appear on the target's page as well.

Given these affordances, it is unsurprising that several studies have shown that Facebook is commonly used to monitor one's romantic partner or ex-partner (e.g., Elphinston & Noller, 2011; Fox & Warber, 2014; Lyndon, Bonds-Raacke, & Cratty, 2011; Marshall, 2012; Marshall et al., 2013; Tokunaga, 2011b; Tong, 2013). Because Facebook allows both self-generated and other-generated information to be tied to one's profile, there are multiple sources of information conveniently amalgamated in one easily accessible location. Perhaps the greatest source of information is photographs, which may reveal considerable detail about where a partner is, who the partner is with, and what the partner is doing. Thus, Facebook often serves as an indirect source for knowledge about romantic partners and may inform feelings or decisions about the relationship at every stage, even after dissolution.

Research indicates that potential relationship threats often arise on SNSs: attractive new friends may emerge, questionable photographs from a weekend event may be shared, or flirty comments from an enviable other may appear on the partner's page (Fox, Warber, & Makstaller, 2013; Marshall et al., 2013). Without SNSs, many of these behaviors would still occur, but they would remain hidden from the partner. It is the expression enabled through SNSs, as well as the act of distributing this information online versus offline, that creates distress that may have otherwise been avoided. Interestingly, despite knowledge of the potential relational consequences, many individuals acknowledge that they "creep" (i.e., inspect a person's page without his or her knowledge in order to gain information) on their partner's and others' profiles to obtain information the partner might otherwise try to conceal (Fox, Warber, & Makstaller, 2013; Muise et al., 2014). This behavior, however, can escalate from minimally invasive to far more threatening.

Cyberstalking and Obsessive Relational Intrusion

Although the terms "creeping" and "Facebook stalking" already indicate that there is something discomforting about having someone surreptitiously monitoring one's SNS profile, the casual social monitoring promoted by SNSs can escalate to a problematic or even dangerous level. Continuous surveillance and unwanted pursuit of a romantic interest is known as *obsessive relational intrusion* (ORI; Spitzberg & Cupach, 2003). SNSs are optimally designed to facilitate ORI because (1) targets often share a vast amount of personal information on these sites; (2) perpetrators can monitor this information easily, privately, and as frequently as they like; and (3) SNSs provide many different channels through which the perpetrator can reach the target (Chaulk & Jones, 2011). Some ORI behaviors on SNSs include posting unwanted material to the target's profile; sending unwanted private messages; or tagging the target in posts or pictures.

Recent research suggests that cyberstalking via SNSs is not uncommon (Dreßing, Bailer, Anders, Wagner, & Gallas, 2014). Among users of a German SNS, Dreßing and colleagues found more than 40% had been cyberstalked and 6.3% experienced problematic cyberstalking. Most often, the victim and perpetrator were ex-romantic partners. Despite the fact that these interactions were taking place virtually, there were still significant negative outcomes for victims, including anger, depression, and sleep disturbances. Thus, one of the darkest aspects of SNSs is that they may enable persistent and potentially harmful unwanted attention, interference, or stalking from former romantic partners. These behaviors often occur in the wake of relationship dissolution, perhaps because SNSs are often one of the last lingering connections between ex-partners.

Relationship Dissolution and SNSs

Given both the public nature of the relationship and the integration of the couple's digital presence on SNSs, relationship dissolution in the age of social media is a particularly messy process (Gershon, 2011). If couples have been together for a long period of time, it is likely that they have developed a conjoined presence on the sites they both use (e.g., old posts and pictures may populate the profile). Thus, it is unsurprising that individuals typically report cleaning up

their SNS profile by removing the digital detritus of the relationship (Fox, Jones, & Lookadoo, 2013). Although this may be a painful process, this purging may also serve as a coping ritual.

Because SNSs offer easy access to one's own network as well as the significant other's, they often serve many functions in the wake of a breakup and may allow some dark side behaviors to emerge. Lyndon and colleagues (2011) identified three manners in which individuals use Facebook negatively in the wake of a breakup: *venting* (e.g., directly making negative comments about an ex-partner or relationship), *covert provocation* (e.g., passive aggressive posting on the wall to make the ex jealous or angry), and *public harassment* (e.g., spreading rumors about or posting embarrassing photos of the ex-partner). Another recent study explored the different ways in which individuals react to a breakup on Facebook (Fox, Jones, & Lookadoo, 2013). Most commonly, people felt pressured by their SNS presence to pretend that they were unaffected by the breakup. Often, users exaggerated positive activities after the breakup, trying to prove to their network (and often the ex as well) that they were doing better than ever. Although people may be able to grieve the relationship normally offline, the pressure to maintain face and hide one's true emotional state on SNSs may cause greater distress. Facebook users also were found to publicly bash the ex-partner—or to allow friends to bash the ex-partner—on one's page after a breakup (Fox, Jones, & Lookadoo, 2013). In these cases, Facebook was weaponized in a battle to "win" the breakup publicly, either by hurting the ex's reputation or getting shared network members to take sides. Often, this created more animosity between ex-partners.

After a breakup, uncertainty about the relationship's future may remain. In the wake of termination, it is not uncommon for ex-partners to remain "friends" on Facebook (Fox & Warber, 2014; Marshall, 2012; Marshall et al., 2013; Tokunaga, 2011b). This lingering connection and access to post-breakup experiences may foster feelings of uncertainty after dissolution (Fox, Jones, & Lookadoo, 2013; Tong, 2013). Thus, it is unsurprising that individuals often monitor their exes on SNSs long after the relationship is over (Fox & Warber, 2014; Marshall, 2012; Marshall et al., 2013; Tong, 2013).

Post-breakup SNS monitoring is not without consequence. Marshall (2012) found that individuals who monitor their ex-partner's Facebook page after a breakup reported greater levels of distress and negative feelings, greater longing for the ex-partner, and less emotional recovery from the breakup. Thus, even when the individual is not using an SNS for negative expression or self-disclosure about the breakup, SNSs may still have negative consequences for individuals post-dissolution.

Another recent line of research has examined SNSs as a potential instigator or trigger for relationship termination. According to a survey by the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers (2010), 81% of divorce lawyers reported an increase in the use of SNSs as evidence in divorce proceedings. To address this possible relationship, Valenzuela, Halpern, and Katz (2014) examined SNS use in U.S. married couples over time. After controlling for several social and economic factors, they observed an association between the adoption of Facebook and increasing divorce rates. Further, SNS use was negatively correlated with perceptions of marital quality and happiness, and positively correlated with relationship trouble and contemplating divorce. Although these data are survey based and thus no causal conclusions can be drawn, they indicate that SNSs may introduce or exacerbate the dark side of romantic relationships.

Conclusion

As Stafford and Hillyer (2012) note, our understanding of the role of technologies in personal relationships is nascent. Unfortunately, people tend to adopt technologies and integrate them into their lives without stopping to question whether their impact is mostly beneficial or detrimental in particular contexts. Considerable research indicates that SNSs may have negative effects on relationships in terms of stirring up jealousy and conflict. Romantic partners should critically evaluate how SNSs function in their relationship, as they may need to set boundaries in terms of SNS use to capitalize on its benefits while avoiding or mitigating its downsides. Although SNSs have often been shown to have positive effects in relationships, there is great potential for the dark side to emerge in romantic relationships, and it is up to users to manage that balance.

Notes

1   According to Knapp (1978), relationship initiation is defined as the first interaction between two individuals. Maintenance is defined as the behaviors enacted to keep the relationship in a specified state (Dindia, 2003) and termination is defined as the relationship's end, whether incremental or due to a critical event (Baxter, 1984).

References

American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers. (2010). Big surge in social networking evidence says survey of nation's top divorce lawyers. Retrieved from http://www.aaml.org/about-the-academy/press/press-releases/e-discovery/big-surge-social-networking-evidence-says-survey-

Baxter, L. A. (1984). Trajectories of relationship disengagement. *Journal of Social & Personal Relationships, 1*, 29–48. doi: 10.1177/0265407584011003

Baxter, L. A., & Wilmot, W. W. (1984). "Secret tests": Social strategies for acquiring information about the state of the relationship. *Human Communication Research, 11,* 171–201. doi: 10.1111/j.1468-2958.1984.tb00044.x

Berger, C. R., & Calabrese, R. J. (1975). Some explorations in initial interaction and beyond: Toward a developmental theory of interpersonal communication. *Human Communication Research, 1,* 99–112. doi: 10.1111/j.1468-2958.1975.tb00258.x

Bevan, J. L. (2013). *The communication of jealousy.* New York, NY: Peter Lang.

Bevan, J. L., Ang, P. C., & Fearns, J. B. (2014). Being unfriended on Facebook: An application of expectancy violation theory. *Computers in Human Behavior, 33,* 171–178. doi: 10.1016/j.chb.2014.01.029

boyd, d. m., & Ellison, N. B. (2008). Social network sites: Definition, history, and scholarship. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication, 13,* 210–230. doi: 10.1111/j/1083-6101.2007.00393.x

Canary, D. J., & Stafford, L. (1994). Maintaining relationships through strategic and routine interaction. In D. J. Canary & L. Stafford (Eds.), *Communication and relational maintenance* (pp. 3–22). San Diego, CA: Academic Press.

Carpenter, C. J., & Spottswood, E. L. (2013). Exploring romantic relationships on social networking sites using the self-expansion model. *Computers in Human Behavior, 29,* 1531–1537. doi: 10.1016/j.chb.2013.01.021

Chaulk, K., & Jones, T. (2011). Online obsessive relational intrusion: Further concerns about Facebook. *Journal of Family Violence, 26,* 245–254. doi: 10.1007/s10896-011-9360-x

Chen, W., & Lee, K. H. (2013). Sharing, liking, commenting, and distressed? The pathway between Facebook interaction and psychological distress. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, & Social Networking, 16,* 728–734. doi:10.1089/cyber.2012.0272

Dainton, M., & Berksoski, L. (2013). Positive and negative maintenance behaviors, jealousy, and Facebook: Impacts on college students' romantic relationships. *Pennsylvania Communication Annual, 69,* 35–50.

Dainton, M., & Gross, J. (2008). The use of negative behaviors to maintain relationships. *Communication Research Reports, 25,* 179–191. doi: 10.1080/08824090802237600

Dindia, K. (2003). Definitions and perspectives on relational maintenance communication. In D. J. Canary & M. Dainton (Eds.), *Maintaining relationships through communication: Relational, contextual, and cultural variations* (pp. 1–30). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

DeAndrea, D. C., Tong, S. T., & Walther, J. B. (2011). Dark sides of computer-mediated communication. In W. R. Cupach & B. H. Spitzberg (Eds.), *The dark side of close relationships II* (pp. 95–118). New York, NY: Routledge.

Dreßing, H., Bailer, J., Anders, A., Wagner, H., & Gallas, C. (2014). Cyberstalking in a large sample of social network users: Prevalence, characteristics, and impact upon victims. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, & Social Networking, 17*, 61–67. doi: 10.1089/cyber.2012.0231

Ellison, N. B., Vitak, J., Gray, R., & Lampe, C. (2014). Cultivating social resources on social network sites: Facebook relationship maintenance behaviors and their role in social capital processes. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication, 19*, 855–870. doi: 10.1111/jcc4.12078

Elphinston, R. A., & Noller, P. (2011). Time to face it! Facebook intrusion and the implications for romantic jealousy and relationship satisfaction. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, & Social Networking, 14*, 631–635. doi: 10.1089/cyber.2010.0318

Feinstein, B. A., Hershenberg, R., Bhatia, V., Latack, J. A., Meuwly, N., & Davila, J. (2013). Negative social comparison on Facebook and depressive symptoms: Rumination as a mechanism. *Psychology of Popular Media Culture, 2*, 161–170. doi: 10.1037/a0033111

Flanagin, A. J., & Metzger, M. J. (2007). The role of site features, user attributes, and information verification behaviors on the perceived credibility of Webbased information. *New Media & Society, 9*(2), 319–342.

Fox, J., & Anderegg, C. (2014). Romantic relationship stages and behavior on social networking sites: Uncertainty reduction strategies and perceived norms on Facebook. *CyberPsychology, Behavior, & Social Networking, 17*, 685–691. doi: 10.1089/cyber.2014.0232

Fox, J., Jones, E. B., & Lookadoo, K. (2013, June). Romantic relationship dissolution on social networking sites: Social support, coping, and rituals on Facebook. Paper presented at the 63rd Annual Conference of the International Communication Association, London, UK.

Fox, J., & Moreland, J. J. (2015). The dark side of social networking sites: An exploration of the relational and psychological stressors associated with Facebook use and affordances. *Computers in Human Behavior, 45*, 168–176. doi: 10.1016/j.chb.2014.11.083

Fox, J., Osborn, J. L., & Warber, K. M. (2014). Relational dialectics and social networking sites: The role of Facebook in romantic relationship escalation, maintenance, conflict, and dissolution. *Computers in Human Behavior, 35*, 527–534. doi: 10.1016/j.chb.2014.02.031

Fox, J., Peterson, A., & Warber, K. M. (2013). Attachment style, sex, and the use of secret tests via social networking sites in romantic relationships. Paper presented at the Multi-Level Motivations in Close Relationship Dynamics Conference of the International Association for Relationship Research, Louisville, KY.

Fox, J., & Warber, K. M. (2013). Romantic relationship development in the age of Facebook: An exploratory study of emerging adults' perceptions, motives, and behaviors. *CyberPsychology, Behavior, & Social Networking, 16*, 3–7. doi:10.1089/cyber.2012.0288

Fox, J., & Warber, K. M. (2014). Social networking sites in romantic relationships: Attachment, uncertainty, and partner surveillance on Facebook. *CyberPsychology, Behavior, & Social Networking, 17*, 3–7. doi: 10.1089/cyber.2012.0667

Fox, J., Warber, K. M., & Makstaller, D. C. (2013). The role of Facebook in romantic relationship development: An exploration of Knapp's relational stage model. *Journal of Social & Personal Relationships, 30*, 772–795. doi:10.1177/0265407512246837

Gershon, I. (2011). *The breakup 2.0: Disconnecting over new media*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Goodboy, A. K., & Bolkan, S. (2011). Attachment and the use of negative relational maintenance behaviors in romantic relationships. *Communication Research Reports, 28*, 327–336. doi: 10.1080/08824096.2011.616244

Haferkamp, N., & Krämer, N. C. (2011). Social comparison 2.0: Examining the effects of online profiles on social-networking sites. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, & Social Networking, 14*, 309–314. doi: 10.1089/cyber.2010.0120

Hand, M. M., Thomas, D., Buboltz, W. C., Deemer, E. D., & Buyanjargal, M. (2013). Facebook and romantic relationships: Intimacy and couple satisfaction associated with online social network use. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, & Social Networking, 16*, 8–13. doi: 10.1089/cyber.2012.0038

Hazan, C., & Shaver, P. (1987). Romantic love conceptualized as an attachment process. *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology, 52*, 511–524. doi: 10.1037/0022-3514.52.3.511

Hogerbrugge, M. J., Komter, A. E., & Scheepers, P. (2013). Dissolving long-term romantic relationships: Assessing the role of the social context. *Journal of Social & Personal Relationships, 30*, 320–342. doi: 10.1177/0265407512462167

Joinson, A. N. (2008). Looking at, looking up, or keeping up with people? Motives and use of Facebook. In *Proceedings of the SIGCHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems* (pp. 1027–1036). Florence, Italy: ACM.

Kelley, H. H., & Thibaut, J. (1978). *Interpersonal relations: A theory of interdependence*. New York, NY: Wiley.

Knapp, M. L. (1978). *Social intercourse: From greeting to goodbye.* Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Ledbetter, A. M. (2014). Online communication attitude similarity in romantic dyads: Predicting couples' frequency of e-mail, instant messaging, and social networking site communication. *Communication Quarterly, 62,* 233–252. doi: 10.1080/01463373.2014.890120

Lee, S. Y. (2014). How do people compare themselves with others on social network sites? The case of Facebook. *Computers in Human Behavior, 32,* 253–260. doi: 10.1016/j.chb.2013.12.009

Lyndon, A., Bonds-Raacke, J., & Cratty, A. D. (2011). College students' Facebook stalking of ex-partners. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, & Social Networking, 14,* 711–716. doi: 10.1089/cyber.2010.0588

Marshall, T. C. (2012). Facebook surveillance of former romantic partners: Associations with postbreakup recovery and personal growth. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, & Social Networking, 15,* 521–526. doi: 10.1089/cyber.2012.0125

Marshall, T. C., Bejanyan, K., Di Castro, G., & Lee, R. A. (2013). Attachment styles as predictors of Facebook-related jealousy and surveillance in romantic relationships. *Personal Relationships, 20,* 1–22. doi: 10.1111/j.1475-6811.2011.01393.x

McEwan, B. (2013). Sharing, caring, and surveilling: An actor–partner interdependence model examination of Facebook relational maintenance strategies. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, & Social Networking, 16,* 863–869. doi: 10.1089/cyber.2012.0717

Muise, A., Christofides, E., & Desmarais, S. (2009). More information than you ever wanted: Does Facebook bring out the green-eyed monster of jealousy? *CyberPsychology & Behavior, 12,* 441–444. doi: 10.1089/cpb.2008.0263

Muise, A., Christofedes, E., & Desmaris, S. (2014). "Creeping" or just information seeking? Gender differences in partner monitoring in response to jealousy on Facebook. *Personal Relationships, 21,* 35–50. doi: 10.1111/pere.12014

Muscanell, N. L., Guadagno, R. E., Rice, L., & Murphy, S. (2013). Don't it make my brown eyes green? An analysis of Facebook use and romantic jealousy. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, & Social Networking, 16,* 237–242. doi: 10.1089/cyber.2012.0411

Norman, D. A. (1988). *The psychology of everyday things.* New York, NY: Doubleday.

Papp, L. M., Danielewicz, J., & Cayemberg, C. (2012). "Are we Facebook official?" Implications of dating partners' Facebook use and profiles for intimate relationship satisfaction. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, & Social Networking, 15,* 85–90. doi: 10.1089/cyber.2011.0291

Simpson, J. A. (1990). Influence of attachment styles on romantic relationships. *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology, 59,* 971–980. doi: 10.1037/0022-3514.59.5.971

Spitzberg, B. H., & Cupach, W. R. (2003). What mad pursuit? Obsessive relational intrusion and stalking related phenomena. *Aggression & Violent Behavior, 8,* 345–375. doi: 10.1016/S1359-1789(02)00068-X

Sprecher, S. (2011). The influence of social networks on romantic relationships: Through the lens of the social network. *Personal Relationships, 17,* 1–15. doi: 10.1111/j.1475-6811.2010.01330.x

Stafford, L., & Canary, D. J. (1991). Maintenance strategies and romantic relationship type, gender, and relational characteristics. *Journal of Social & Personal Relationships, 8,* 217–242. doi: 10.1177/0265407591082004

Stafford, L., & Hillyer, J. D. (2012). Information and communication technologies in personal relationships. *Review of Communication, 12,* 290–312. doi: 10.1080/15358593.2012.685951

Tokunaga, R. S. (2011a). Friend me or you'll strain us: understanding negative events that occur over social networking sites. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, & Social Networking, 14,* 425-432. doi: 10.1089/cyber.2010.0140

Tokunaga, R. S. (2011b). Social networking site or social surveillance site? Understanding the use of interpersonal electronic surveillance in romantic relationships. *Computers in Human Behavior, 27,* 705–13. doi: 10.1016/j/chb.2010.08.014

Tokunaga, R. S. (2014). Relational transgressions on social networking sites: Individual, interpersonal, and contextual explanations for dyadic strain and communication rules change. *Computers in Human Behavior, 39,* 287–295. doi: 10.1016/j.chb.2014.07.024

Tong, S. T. (2013). Facebook use during relationship termination: Uncertainty reduction and surveillance. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, & Social Networking, 16,* 788–793. doi: 10.1089/cyber.2012.0549

Treem, J., & Leonardi, P. (2012). Social media use in organizations: Exploring the affordances of visibility, editability, persistence, and association. *Communication Yearbook, 36,* 143-189.

Utz, S., & Beukeboom, C. J. (2011). The role of social network sites in romantic relationships: Effects on jealousy and relationship happiness. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication, 16,* 511–527. doi: 10.1111/j.1083-6101.2011.01552.x

Valenzuela, S., Halpern, D., & Katz, J. E. (2014). Social network sites, marriage well-being and divorce: Survey and state-level evidence from the United States. *Computers in Human Behavior, 36,* 94–101. doi: 10.1016/j.chb.2014.03.034

Van Der Heide, B., D'Angelo, J. D., & Schumaker, E. M. (2012). The effects of verbal versus photographic self-presentation on impression formation in Facebook. *Journal of Communication, 62*, 98–116. doi: 10.1111/j.14602466.2011.01617.x

Walther, J. B., & Parks, M. R. (2002). Cues filtered out, cues filtered in: Computer-mediated communication and relationships. In M. L. Knapp & J. A. Daly (Eds.), *Handbook of interpersonal communication* (3rd ed., pp. 529–563). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Wang, G., Wang, B., Wang, T., Nika, A., Zheng, H., & Zhao, B. Y. (2014). Whispers in the dark: Analysis of an anonymous social network. In *Proceedings of the ACM Internet Measurement Conference* (pp. 1–13). Vancouver, BC: ACM.

Wright, M. F. (2014). Predictors of anonymous cyber aggression: The role of adolescents' beliefs about anonymity, aggression, and the permanency of digital content. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, & Social Networking, 17*, 431–438. doi: 10.1089/cyber.2013.0457