

Swiping for something real

Why dating apps still attract young adults

By ANTHONY ANGELILLO
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Look around any college campus, and it's hard to miss the glow of phone screens and the quiet swipe of thumbs. For many students, that motion is more than a way to pass a few minutes. It has become a primary way to meet someone new, flirt or build a serious relationship without leaving the dorm or the library.

Dating apps seem almost impossible to escape because they have become part of everyday life for young adults. The Pew Research Center reports that about 30% of adults in the U.S. have used a dating site or app, and around 53% of those under 30-years-old say they have tried online dating at least once.

A national poll by research firm SSRS in 2024 found that 56% of adults ages 18 to 29 have used online dating, highlighting how common swiping has become among this age group.

On a campus like Quinnipiac, the pool of people you see in person can feel small. You run into the same faces in the dining hall, the student center, at sports games and during club meetings. Dating apps expand that circle.

They draw people from other majors, other colleges and nearby towns, all stacked into a feed you can scroll through in bed or during a quiet shift at work. That glimpse of a bigger world on your phone can feel exciting when campus life starts to feel small.

That is part of why online dating works for many people. A 2025 summary of relationship research estimated that between 10% and nearly

50% of couples in the U.S. now meet online. Hearing that kind of success makes it easier to understand why students keep reinstalling dating apps even after awkward dates.

The reasons people use these platforms often overlap. Pew research on online dating motives shows many users say they are looking for a long-term partner, while a similar share mentions casual dating.

Smaller groups say casual sex or making new friends are their main goals. This mix matches how college students talk about their feeds. One person might hope for a future partner, while another just wants a movie buddy or someone for late-night food runs. The same app holds all those possibilities.

Gender also shapes the experience in subtle ways. Pew data shows men are slightly more likely than women to have tried online dating, at 34% compared to 27%. Desert News reports that women face more safety concerns and unwanted behaviors, leading many to use more filters, share locations with friends or meet in public spaces. For men, the bigger issue can be low match rates and quiet messages afterward, which can wear people down over time.

Convenience also drives much of the appeal. College life stacks classes, jobs, practices and club meetings into long days that leave little energy for traditional dating. Approaching someone in person requires confidence and timing. Opening an app takes just seconds, giving users control over when to swipe, respond to messages and how much

effort to put in. For busy students, that control can feel more realistic than hoping for a perfect meet-up in the dining hall.

Still, even with new matches and playful chats, the emotional toll can linger. A 2024 Forbes Health and OnePoll survey found that 78% of dating app users felt emotionally drained by online dating at times. Many said the cycle of swiping, matching and facing rejection is exhausting but hard to stop. That mix of hope and burnout is something most students quietly understand.

Recent reports suggest that younger users are starting to question how much energy they want to invest in these platforms. A 2025 Newsweek article quoted a Generation Z dating coach who said swiping often feels transactional, tiring and scripted, prompting some young adults to seek more natural ways to meet people offline.

For many students, the appeal of dating apps comes down to a simple trade-off. Apps offer more potential matches than campus life ever could, with flexible options for serious relationships, casual dates and everything in between.

However, they also bring stress, safety worries and emotional fatigue. The same phone that buzzes

with a new match can also deliver silence that feels deafening.

Online dating is not going anywhere. The challenge now is less about whether these apps will last and more about how we choose to use them. Finding balance through swiping, clear boundaries, with occasional breaks, might be the best way to stop the search for something real from turning into total exhaustion.



Netflix series 'Death by Lightning' revisits a slice of history nearly forgotten

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Netflix released its four-episode historical drama "Death by Lightning" on Nov. 6, with early feedback being strong. The series has stayed in Netflix's top 10 TV shows in the U.S. since its debut.

Before I dive into this series, we must understand the life of James A. Garfield, the 20th U.S. president. A former Union general from Ohio, Garfield served in Congress from 1863-1880 before winning the 1880 presidential election.

In July 1881, he was shot at a Washington train station and later died from infection rather than the bullet itself. The series turns Garfield from a barely known figure into someone brought back from the depths of history, 144 years after his death.

Created by Mike Makowsky and directed by Matt Ross, "Death by Lightning" was inspired by Candice Millard's book "Destiny of the Republic." It stars Michael Shannon as President James A. Garfield and Matthew Macfadyen as Garfield's assassin Charles Guiteau, with Nick Offerman, Bradley Whitford and Betty Gilpin also in prominent roles.

The series tells two stories at once. Garfield, a relatively unknown Ohio Union soldier and politician, is suddenly nominated as the Republican candidate for president against his wishes at the 1880 Republican convention. At the same time, Guiteau, a failed lawyer who lived a life as a delusional drifter, full of schemes, moves from "supporting" former President Ulysses S. Grant to obsessing

over Garfield.

Episode one, "The Man from Ohio," lays the foundation for the 1880 presidential election. Garfield tries to avoid the Republican nomination, but the chaos of the convention pushes delegates toward him after a long stalemate. The episode did a good job keeping the political process clear.

It shows how deals are made, displays power shifts and fights between reformers and traditionalists. Considering the current political environment, I feel we have it easy compared to the lengths politicians went to get high ranking positions in Washington, considering that nothing was off limits back in the 19th century.

Guiteau tries to insert himself into any campaign worth any gain to him and his future, hoping someone will notice him.

It is an efficient opening that

shows how two very different men end up on a collision course.

Episode two, "Party Faithful," highlights the pressures leading up to Garfield's victory. Cabinet choices, demands for favors and party loyalty all hit at once.

Guiteau reappears after stalking many key members of the Garfield Campaign earns him a minor campaign speech that makes him believe that he is qualified for a major appointment. His confidence grows even though no one takes him seriously. The episode moves quickly as Garfield tries to push reform while the system continues to resist.

Episode three, "Casus Belli," raises the tension. Garfield refuses to give in to party bosses who want control over federal jobs, setting up a direct clash with Sen. Roscoe Conkling and the New York machine. Corruption was rampant during this time due to everything going through the ports in New York, which I found very interesting.

Meanwhile, Guiteau's expectations twist into something darker.

His need for recognition becomes an obsession. Add in all of the foreshadowing the series projects in relation to Garfield's death, it made an event that was already known suspenseful.

The series does not exaggerate Guiteau, instead leaning towards how entitlement and instability can mix in a way that leads to violence.

Episode four, "Destiny of the Republic," is the hardest to watch. Guiteau shoots Garfield at the Baltimore and Potomac station, but the president survives the initial wound. What follows

is the real tragedy. Doctors ignore basic sanitary practices, probe the wound with unclean hands, and refuse help from others. Infection spreads because of pride and outdated beliefs.

Garfield suffers for weeks while the country waits. Alexander Graham Bell attempts to help with a metal detector, but fails when doctors limit where he can search. The episode ends with Vice President Chester Arthur taking office and moving reform forward in the wake of the crisis.

The series does a great job in its accuracy of events throughout. I really liked how much depth was put into Garfield's assassination and the role Dr. D. Willard Bliss had in Garfield's slow decline and his death.

The fact-checking grounds the drama instead of letting it drift into exaggeration. However even though the accuracy was decent some events were dramatized, like one of the final scenes with Mrs. Garfield and Guiteau talking inside the prison over how history would remember someone.

This was clearly a fictional conversation that foreshadowed events that did not happen.

The series stays clear and easy to follow. Shannon plays Garfield with steady strength. Macfadyen shows Guiteau growing in danger without turning him into a cartoon. Betty Gilpin and Nick Offerman add depth as Lucretia Garfield and Chester Arthur. Every role adds something real to the story.

By the end, "Death by Lightning" is a very well-made political series. It does not try to reinvent history. It lays out how an overlooked president confronted a broken political system, how an unstable man slipped through the cracks and how the nation paid the price. For anyone who wants a series that respects the story and the audience, this one is worth your time.

