Matchmaking through Social Media in the Middle East

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THURSDAY, MARCH 31, 3:00 PM, IN CRAWFORD HALL 115

In this talk, we will discuss what is known about a new phenomenon in the Middle East—the use of social media in matchmaking and chat rooms. We will begin with a discussion of what social media and computer matchmaking sites are like and how common they have become in the Middle East. We will discuss emerging attitudes about such matchmaking and chatting sites and regional differences in attitudes toward such sites. We will find that although currently men are the primary users of most Middle East marriage sites, increasingly women are becoming interested. We will review what Middle Eastern men and ‘s desire in chat room partners and mates. Next, we will discuss reasons why such sites are gaining in popularity—interestingly, the sites have a particularly Middle Eastern flair—and review the barriers to the use of such sites. We will conclude with a discussion of the effect that the innovation in such sites might be expected to have on Middle Eastern societies.

Dr. Elaine Hatfield is a professor of Psychology at the University of Hawai‘i and past-president of the Society for the Scientific Study of Sexuality (SSSS). In 2012, the Association for Psychological Science (APS) gave Hatfield the William James award for a Lifetime of Scientific Achievement. In recent years she has received Distinguished Scientist Awards (for a lifetime of scientific achievement) from the Society of Experimental Social Psychology (SESP), the Society for the Scientific Study of Sex (SSSS), and the University of Hawai‘i, and the Alfred Kinsey Award from the Western Region of SSSS. Two of her books have won the American Psychological Association's National Media Award.

Recently, Drs. Hatfield and Richard L. Rapson (who are husband and wife) have collaborated on three books: Love, Sex, and Intimacy: Their Psychology, Biology, and History (HarperCollins,) Emotional Contagion (Cambridge University Press,) and Love and Sex: Cross-Cultural Perspectives (Allyn & Bacon.)

For further information, please contact anthprog@hawaii.edu.