

Age Play

Ageplay (or age play) is a form of roleplaying in which an individual acts or treats another as if they were a different age, sexual or non-sexually. Ageplay is roleplaying between adults, and involves consent from all parties. Portraying any age can be the goal of ageplay, from babies, to the elderly. Usually this involves someone pretending to be younger than they actually are, but more rarely can involve assuming an older role.

Ageplay can be sexual or non-sexual. It may be mildly sexual, or very sexual. Within dominant/submissive relationships, ageplay can enhance power dynamics, and allow a partner to feel more comfortable with their dominance or submission. Often, “sissification” of boys is present, in order to add another level of power to the situation.

Sexual variations may include incest play, in which individuals recreate and sexualize roles within a family, and Daddy's girl fetishism in which real or imagined age differences are the basis of the roleplaying and the female is portrayed as the younger partner.

Ageplay is not necessarily pedophilia or related to pedophilia. Sexual ageplay itself does not necessarily involve the sexual attraction to biologically underage people. Rather, when a consenting adult takes on the roleplaying mindset of a young person, it is motivated by re-experiencing emotional states and social interactions of one's youth, which also happen to be pleasurable in a sexual context to the participants. (Wikipedia, 2015)

Recent Ruling

The Supreme Court made an important finding in *D’Ameio v. United States*, No. 14-999, February 13, 2015. They granted certiorari on all issues in the petition involving a conviction related to ageplay. While the circumstances of Mr. D’Ameio were very narrow, look for this case to open the door to further claims of legal ageplay in cases alleging solicitation/luring.

Ageplay / Pseudo Child Pornography & Luring

- Pseudo online luring involves fantasy role-playing between adults in online forums (i.e., Second Life).
- Absence of pubic hair in adults is related to eroticization of youthfulness (Herbenick, Schick, Reese, Sanders, & Fortenberry, 2010)

RESEARCH: Age Deception Online

Internet use and misuse: Preliminary findings from a new assessment.

Rotunda, Robert J., Kass, Steven J., Sutton, Melanie A., Leon, David T. *Behav Modif*, Sept. 2003 vol. 27 no. 4 484-504

Abstract:

The Internet (IT) is an affordable and easily accessible technology that has many potential applications to psychology. Interactive technologies engage users psychologically and may facilitate adaptive and maladaptive behaviors. This research explored the IT-use patterns, psychological characteristics, and negative consequences associated with online activities of 393 college students using the Internet Use Survey (IUS), a self-report instrument designed to administer online. Results indicated that participants spent an average of 3.3 total hrs per day on the IT during the past 12 mo and used the medium for multiple purposes. Although participants reported the occurrence of some potentially negative consequences related to IT use, the prevalence rates for most problematic behaviors were generally low. Exploratory principal component analysis of the IUS subscale that attempts to measure IT-related impairment revealed four factors: absorption, negative consequences, disrupted sleep, and deception. All of these factors were then significantly related to a measure of boredom proneness. This research supports the necessity for multidimensional assessment of IT usage to enhance our understanding of how this new technology interfaces with users psychologically and behaviorally.

Online Deception: Prevalence, Motivation, and Emotion.

Caspi, Avner, Gorsky, Paul. *CyberPsychology & Behavior*, Vol 9(1), Feb, 2006. pp. 54-59.

Abstract:

This research has three goals: first, to find out how prevalent online deception is within a sample of Israeli users, second, to explore the underlying motivations to deceive online, and third, to discover the emotions that accompany online deception. A web-based survey was distributed in 14 discussion groups, and the answers of 257 respondents were analyzed. It was found that, while most of the respondents believe that online deception is very widespread, only about one-third of them reported engaging in online deception. Frequent users deceive online more than infrequent users, young users more than old, and competent users more than non-competent. The most common motivations to deceive online were "play" on the one hand and privacy concerns on the other. Most people felt a sense of enjoyment while engaging in online deception. The results are discussed in light of a possible mechanism for changing personal moral standards.

Personal information of adolescents on the Internet: A quantitative content analysis of MySpace.

Hinduja, Sameer; Patchin, Justin W. *Journal of Adolescence*, Vol 31(1), Feb, 2008. pp. 125-146.

Abstract:

Many youth have recently embraced online social networking sites such as MySpace (myspace.com) to meet their social and relational needs. While manifold benefits stem from participating in such web-based environments, the popular media has been quick to demonize MySpace even though an exponentially small proportion of its users have been victimized due to irresponsible or naïve usage of the technology it affords. Major concerns revolve around the possibility of sexual predators and pedophiles finding and then assaulting adolescents who carelessly or unwittingly reveal identifiable information on their personal profile pages. The current study sought to empirically ascertain the type of information youth are publicly posting through an extensive content analysis of randomly sampled MySpace profile pages. Among other findings, 8.8% revealed their full name, 57% included a picture, 27.8% listed their school, and 0.3% provided their telephone number. When considered in its proper context, these results indicate that the problem of personal information disclosure on MySpace may not be as widespread as many assume, and that the overwhelming majority of adolescents are responsibly using the web site. Implications for Internet safety among adolescents and future research regarding adolescent Internet use are discussed.

Can mate choice strategies explain sex differences?: The deceived persons' feelings in reaction to revealed online deception of sex, age, and appearance.

Stieger, Stefan, Eichinger, Tina, Honeder, Britta

Social Psychology, Vol 40(1), 2009. Special Issue: Social Psychology and New Media. pp. 16-25.

Abstract:

Online deception is a phenomenon on the Internet, facilitated by restrictions on communication channels. As communication on the Internet is largely exchanged in textual form, deception about personal data such as sex, age, and appearance can be difficult to detect. Research on online deception has been focused thus far on what deceivers lie about and what motivates them to do so. Little is known about how persons feel when they are deceived in an online environment and about whether sex differences exist in the intensity of those feelings. Furthermore, research on online deception largely lacks a theoretical basis. In the current studies, differences between the sexes with respect to their reaction to online deception about sex, age, and appearance were analyzed in a framework of sex-specific mating strategies predicted by evolutionary theory. The results of a structured online interview showed that sex-specific differences in reaction to online gender switching and appearance deception can be explained by mating strategies. Gender switching was found to be more disturbing when committed by a chat partner of the same sex than when committed by a chat partner of the opposite sex. Appearance deception was found to be more disturbing when committed by chat partners of the opposite sex. The data on age deception were not in line with the theory of mate-choice strategies. Even a second online questionnaire study could not entirely clarify the issue but did reveal interfering factors (such as online harassment, legal issues, life expectancy) that probably influence the effect driven by evolution.

Trends in online social networking: Adolescent use of MySpace over time.

Patchin, Justin W., Hinduja, Sameer. *New Media & Society*, Vol 12(2), Mar, 2010. pp. 197-216.

Abstract:

MySpace has received a significant amount of negative attention from the media and many concerned adults, who point to several isolated incidents where predators have contacted, become involved with and even assaulted adolescents whom they met through the popular social networking web site. Furthermore, concerned parents have expressed discontent with the amount and type of personal and private information youth seem to reveal on their profile pages. In 2006, the authors performed an extensive content analysis of approximately 2423 randomly sampled adolescent MySpace profiles, and found that the vast majority of youth were making responsible choices with the information they shared online. In this follow-up study, the authors revisited the profiles one year later to examine the extent to which the content had changed. Though exceptions occur, youth are increasingly exercising discretion in posting personal information on MySpace and more youth are limiting access to their profile. Moreover, a significant number of youth appear to be abandoning their profiles or MySpace altogether.

Looks and lies: The role of physical attractiveness in online dating self-presentation and deception.

Toma, Catalina L., Hancock, Jeffrey T. *Communication Research*, Vol 37(3), Jun, 2010. pp. 335-351.

Abstract:

This study examines the role of online daters' physical attractiveness in their profile self-presentation and, in particular, their use of deception. Sixty-nine online daters identified the deceptions in their online dating profiles and had their photograph taken in the lab. Independent judges rated the online daters' physical attractiveness. Results show that the lower online daters' attractiveness, the more likely they were to enhance their profile photographs and lie about their physical descriptors (height, weight, age). The association between attractiveness and deception did not extend to profile elements unrelated to their physical appearance (e.g., income, occupation), suggesting that their deceptions were limited and strategic. Results are discussed in terms of (a) evolutionary theories about the importance of physical attractiveness in the dating realm and (b) the technological affordances that allow online daters to engage in selective self-presentation.

No-one knows you're a dog on the Internet: Implications for proactive police investigation of sexual offenders.

Lincoln, Robyn, Coyle, Ian R. *Psychiatry, Psychology and Law*, Vol 20(2), Apr, 2013. pp. 294-300.

Abstract:

There is a body of literature dealing with the increased capacity for deception in online environments. This corpus of academic work has relevance for the widespread public concern about the anonymity of the Internet with respect to children who may be contacted by sex offenders. The present paper reports findings from a deception condition study where pairs of subjects engaged in computer-mediated interaction and were asked to evaluate the age and sex of their interlocutors. They were generally successful at this and tended to base their decisions on the content of the conversation. It demonstrates that individuals, despite the anonymity theoretically offered by the Internet, can discern the age and sex of those they are conversing with online, which has implications for police training and practice when engaged in online covert operations.

Are crimes by online predators different from crimes by sex offenders who know youth in-person?

Wolak, Janis, Finkelhor, David. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, Vol 53(6), Dec, 2013. pp. 736-741.

Abstract:

Purpose: We examined cases in which sex offenders arrested for Internet-related crimes used the Internet for sexual communications with minors, comparing crimes by offenders who met victims online to those by offenders who knew victims in-person prior to the offense. Methods: We collected data from a national sample of law enforcement agencies (n = 2,653) about arrests in 2009 for Internet-related sex crimes against minors, conducting detailed telephone interviews with investigators about individual cases. This paper examines a subset of arrest cases that included the use of online sexual

communications (online-meeting offenders, n = 143; know-in-person/online offenders, n = 139). Results and Conclusions: Compared with know-in-person/online offenders, online-meeting offenders were less likely to have criminal backgrounds and more likely to use online communications to deceive victims. However, deception was a factor in a minority of cases and was also used by some know-in-person/online offenders. The majority of cases in both groups involved statutory rape (i.e., nonforcible illegal sexual activity with underage youth) or noncontact offenses such as child pornography production or sexual solicitation of a minor. We conclude that crimes by online-meeting offenders should not be treated as different or more dangerous than those by know-in-person/online offenders who use online sexual communications. Rather, prevention efforts should educate about the nature of statutory rape and related noncontact offenses. The primary message should be that it is criminal for adults to make sexual overtures to minors, online or offline, no matter what their relationship to the youth.

The effects of using identity deception and suggesting secrecy on the outcomes of adult-adult and adult-child or -adolescent online sexual interactions.

Bergen, Emilia, Davidson, Julia, Schulz, Anja, Schuhmann, P. Johansson, A. S. Pekka, Jern Patrick
Victims & Offenders, Vol 9(3), Jul, 2014. pp. 276-298.

Abstract:

There is a lack of knowledge about effects of behaviors during online sexual solicitations. Our aims were to explore the prevalence of identity deception and wanting to keep the interaction a secret, and how these behaviors relate to the outcome of sexual interactions online. The participants were adults who self-reported online sexual interactions with a stranger during the last year. We separated them into groups based on the age of their contact: (1) those that interacted sexually with adults (n = 640) and (2) those that interacted sexually with a child or adolescent (n = 136). Neither the prevalence of identity deception, suggesting secrecy, nor the outcomes of the interactions differed between the two groups. Suggesting secrecy increased the likelihood of receiving a sexual picture with an adult contact, whereas using any identity deception increased the likelihood with a child or adolescent. Several deceptions as well as suggesting secrecy increased the likelihood of cybersex within both groups, while using identity deceptions mostly decreased the likelihood of meeting the contact offline in both groups. Suggesting online and offline secrecy increased the likelihood of sexual contact offline with the child or adolescent but not with adult contacts.