Love at first swipe: is it wrong or right?

BY COLE KAUFMAN

Since 2008, apps such as Tinder, Match.com and Hitch have grown in popularity among adults trying to find relationships conveniently. However, the unconventional dating method is a source of mixed emotions for many students.

“Meeting someone through a dating app takes away the natural, unforced connections you make with someone,” junior Camille Morar said.

Junior Nathaniel Stoughton agrees with Morar’s negative view of the relatively new technology.

“I think dating apps are really degrading, because you’re dumping a bunch of stuff about yourself online and hoping someone else might like it,” he said. “My mom used Match.com twice, and it didn’t turn out well.”

Some, on the other hand, see dating apps as an advantage that allows people to be proactive in their search for a partner.

“If I’m in an unfamiliar place when I’m older with few social hubs to meet girls, I don’t see why I wouldn’t use a dating app to help me find love,” junior Max Morales said. “It’s a new age with modern technology, why not take advantage of that?”

However, Morales said some people could find less of a romantic connection behind a device screen.

“I think that meeting your significant other in your favorite bookstore or restaurant might have a deeper sentimental value than reading about her on her online profile bio,” he said. “But love is love no matter where it starts, whether it be on Tinder or by the burning tinders of a campfire.”

Dr. Chantal Marie Gagnon, Ph.D., a licensed psychotherapist and dating coach with an office in Plantation, suggests a smart and cautious approach to using dating apps.

“One of the problems with dating websites is that it can make it too easy and too quick to go through the steps needed to build a relationship,” she said. “For people who take the time to build their connection and relationship slowly and thoughtfully, I don’t think there is much difference between a relationship that started online and one that didn’t.”

A mixed dating strategy, according to Dr. Gagnon, may be the most effective in finding the perfect romance. This includes using dating technology as well as being socially active in the real world.

“I recommend reputable dating websites to all my dating coaching clients, such as Match.com and eHarmony, in addition to more traditional ways of meeting people, such as being introduced by friends or meeting through volunteer work,” she said. “The reason is that it’s a good idea to meet people in several different ways, as that can increase the chances of meeting people we are compatible with and attracted to.”

Nonetheless, English teacher Tori Warenik, is wary of dating apps.

“I personally don’t use [dating apps] because I don’t want to run across the profile of one of my students, and also I’d feel more comfortable meeting people in person and being friends first,” Ms. Warenik said.

Although not everybody is comfortable with dating apps, many have welcomed it as they see it can foster healthy relationships.

“I have a lot of friends and family members who have used dating apps with great success, so clearly it’s a good option for some people,” Ms. Warenik said.