



Premarital Sex in America: How Young Americans Meet, Mate, and Think about Marrying

Mark Regnerus, Jeremy Uecker

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The period of young adulthood, from ages 18 to 23, is popularly considered the most sexualized in life. But is it true? What do we really know about the sexual lives of young people today?

Premarital Sex in America combines illuminating personal stories and comprehensive research surveys to provide the fullest portrait of heterosexuality among young adults ever produced. Mark Regnerus and Jeremy Uecker draw upon a wealth of survey data as well as scores of in-depth interviews with young adults from around the country, both in and out of college. Digging underneath stereotypes and unexamined assumptions, the authors offer compelling--and often surprising--answers to such questions as: How do the emotional aspects of sexual relations differ between young men and women? What role do political orientations play in their sexual relations? How have online dating and social networking sites affected the relationships of emerging adults? Why are young people today waiting so much longer to marry? How prevalent are nontraditional forms of sex, and what do people think of them? To better understand what drives the sexual behaviors of emerging adults, Regnerus and Uecker pay special attention to two important concepts: sexual scripts, the unwritten and often unconscious rules that guide sexual behavior and attitudes; and sexual economics, a theory which suggests that the relative scarcity of men on college campuses contributes to the "hookup" culture by allowing men to diminish their level of commitment and thereby lower the "price" they have to "pay" for sex.

For anyone wishing to understand how sexual relations between young adults have changed and are changing, *Premarital Sex in America* will serve as a touchstone for years to come.

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