Sex drive = testosterone

Romantic attraction = dopamine 
norepinephrine 
serotonin

Attachment = oxytocin 
vasopressin

survival mechanisms

Thirst
Hunger

Romantic love
Middle brain
Attachment

What makes a happy partnership?

Mirror neuron system (inferior frontal gyrus)

Empathy

Brain regions linked with

Controlling stress and your emotions

Brain regions linked with

Positive Illusions
Modern Romance

Where are we headed?

25,000+ people

Representative sample (based on U.S. Census)

Men and Women:
White; Black; Hispanic; Asian
Heterosexual; gay; lesbian; bisexual
Urban; suburban; rural
Ages: 21-71
Never married: Divorced; Separated; Widowed
Children
Employed: full time; part time; not employed; retired
Political and religious affiliation:
Income, Annual
Married (1,095)

By age 49

83% American men
89% American women will marry

Singles are scared

67% of cohabiting couples scared of social, legal, emotional and economic consequences of divorce (Miller et al 2011)

Singles are scared

67% of cohabiting couples scared of social, legal, emotional and economic consequences of divorce as a result: emerging pre-commitment stages of romance

SLOW LOVE

One night stands (SIA 2014)
50% w; 66% m: had past one night stand

Friends with benefits (SIA 2013)
50% w; 58% m: have had a Friends with Benefits relationship

Living together
58% had “lived with” 1-5 partners
Marriage used to be the beginning of a relationship…

Now it’s the finale.

More happy marriages?
(Study of 1,095 Singles in America, 2012)

81% would remarry current spouse
75% still “very much in love”

Is technology changing love?

Changing courtship:
  Emailing
  Texting
  Emojis
  Sexting
Internet is also:

- Expanding dating pool
- Introducing like-minded people
- All ages can participate
- New courtship rules and taboos

Internet “dating” services?

- “Introducing” services

Only true algorithm is your human brain

Internet can not change

brain circuits:

romantic love and attachment
Double income family was the rule: marriages between equals

We are shedding 10,000 yrs of farming life returning to these roots

Vanishing are the beliefs:
virginity at marriage
a woman’s place is in the home
the man is the sole provider

Til death do us part

Internet is changing how we court

Internet is changing how we court

Working women and double income family
that are changing:
who we chose
how we love & marry

ROMANTIC LOVE … an addiction?

Euphoria (mood swings to despair / anhedonia)
Energy (hypomania)
Focused attention (salience)
Obsessive / intrusive thinking
Craving, wanting, seeking, motivation
Personality changes (affect disturbance);
Lifestyle changes
Distortion of reality
Loss of self control
Inappropriate and dangerous behaviors
Emotional and physical dependence (separation anxiety)
Relapse (intense wanting and seeking (frustration attraction)

Tolerance (intensification)
Withdrawals
Relap (External cues trigger memories and wanting)

... a natural addiction
The rejected brain

Natural addiction
“survival mechanism”
evolved
to focus one’s mating energy
on a single individual
to start the breeding process