

# Usable Sexurity

Studying People's Concerns and Strategies When Sexting

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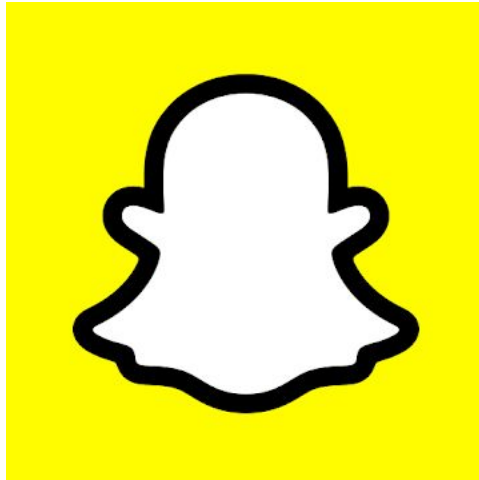
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# Consensual sexting is normal, not deviant

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- About 26% of American adults have sent nude or semi-nude photos of themselves to someone else (Herbenick et al. 2017)



# However it can come with risks

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- Coercion to sext in relationships
- Unsolicited sexts
- Revenge Porn

**1 in 25** online Americans have been a victim of or threatened with “revenge porn”

These risks are higher  
for younger women  
and queer individuals.

# How can platforms better support sexual privacy?

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Protecting sexual privacy (as conceptualized by Citron) requires:

- Securing autonomy
- Enabling intimacy
- Protecting equality

# Research Questions

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For adults who have sexted, what are their:



**Experiences  
With  
Sexting**



**Concerns**



**Mitigation  
Strategies**

# Methods

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- Mixed-methods anonymous online survey (N=247)
- Recruited adults who sext or have sexted before
- IRB approved

# Results



We describe sexting  
frequency, platform usage,  
sharing, storage, concerns,  
and strategies.

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sharing, storage, **concerns,**  
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# Concerns



# Top Concerns About Sexting (out of 20)

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1. Sexts get around to other people
2. Sexts used as blackmail
3. Receiving unsolicited content
4. Receiver's devices will get hacked and the content will get out
5. Shoulder surfing



# Top Concerns About Sexting (out of 20)

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**Women and non-binary people significantly more likely to receive unsolicited sexts and be concerned about this than men.**

# Strategies



Technical and Non-technical

# Technical Management Strategies

- Disappearing messages, password-protecting stored sexts, etc.





# Non-Technical Strategies

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- Getting to know the person first, communicating rules and boundaries, etc.



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*“I sext with my partner whom I trust and we had several conversations about sexting before we started (when to delete photos, if we were at risk of revenge porning each other (we’re not)), from there we talked about several different platforms and ultimately chose an encrypted platform. It’s not completely safe but it’s a calculated risk.”* **-Female, bi/pan, 25-34**

# Discussion

# How can platforms support sexual privacy?

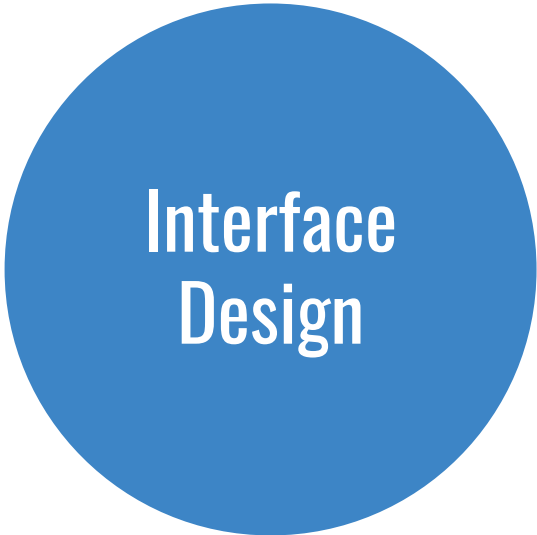
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**Policy**



**Community  
Moderation**



**Interface  
Design**

# Policy

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Community guidelines can:

- Encourage asking for consent before saving images
- Not allow harassment such as unsolicited sexts

# Community Moderation

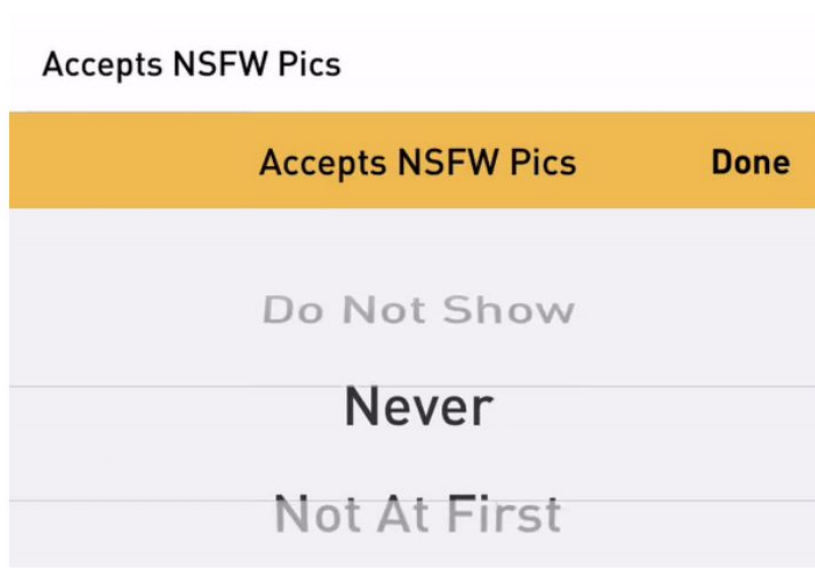
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- Enforcing policy
- Automatically detect and blur unsolicited nudes
  - <https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2019/sep/19/its-a-violation-the-war-on-unwanted-dick-pics-has-begun>

# Interface Design

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- Not allowing photos to be sent unless both people in a conversation enable the feature.
- Or profile disclosure like Grindr:



# Conclusion



Our results cover sexting  
frequency, platform usage,  
sharing, storage, concerns,  
and strategies.

Platforms can support sexual privacy by considering consent through policy, moderation, and design.

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