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Technology Crosses the Line with Lulu App

By Youngjoo Ahn



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With the recent boom of technology, the way we buy products has changed. Instead of going to a physical location, we now have the option of ordering everything from clothes to computer products to home furniture online. Websites such as Yelp.com offer invaluable services to compare different restaurants and other businesses for optimal quality. Applications like RedLaser and Price Check from Amazon allow users to compare prices for the cheapest buy.

The prevalent use of social media has increased the potential for success and flop for businesses, museums, and even movies. Technology has enabled us to find the best product in the least amount of time at the lowest price. Why waste time in a terrible restaurant when Yelp.com is telling you that there's a fantastic Italian restaurant down the street? There are websites or apps for book suggestions, clothing and style suggestions, and even dating suggestions.

These websites may be incredibly helpful in everyday life, but when is technology going a step too far? There have been online dating websites like eHarmony or Match.com, where one can create an online persona and meet people through the web. However, the app Lulu goes one alarming step further by labeling men as one would label and rate a business or a movie. The categories for ratings include attractiveness, intelligence, manners, and more - all accompanied by a picture and basic information, like relationship status gathered from Facebook. Scarily enough, any guy who has a Facebook account has automatically been downloaded onto this program without any prior permission.

"I didn't even know my information was a part of this app. I don't understand how they could just access my

Facebook profile like this," one male student commented.

This app has disregarded the fact that people deserve to be treated like people and not objects that can be bought and sold. I understand the usefulness of comparing restaurants and different types of rugs, but comparing people is a form of bullying. Whatever happened to the connection that people get from meeting face to face? This app is creating rumors about people and could possibly ruin relationships and reputations based on statements that may or may not be true.

First impressions are very important and have always been important, until now. Lulu introduces a person based on what other people think about them. With the simple search of a first and last name, the opportunity for a first impression is erased.

"Although I wouldn't base my opinion of an individual on a rating, Lulu takes away the power of the first impression," junior Arianna Tong said. "Because even though we're taught not to judge people we've never talked to or met, we can't help but base our opinions off general opinions. It's human nature."

On blog.onlulu.com, the makers of this app state that finding love is complicated and time consuming. This app would allow women to narrow down their choices quickly and efficiently, like scouring Amazon.com for the best camera case. Love and relationships should be built on personal connections that have nothing to do with ratings. Relationships should take time and effort. This app and apps like this will cause nothing but idle speculation, gossip, and the loss of personal connections.

The Lulu App takes away the element of surprise and the excitement of a first meeting with a male. How far will we allow technology to invade our private spaces before saying no? Humans are not simple products that come with a bar code and a list of features. How reliable is an app that chooses our friends and lovers?

I rarely say this, but to me technology has crossed the line.

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