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Subject: backups peak during the holidays, but others seek new opportunities

Posted by [1stworldview](#) on Thu, 11 Dec 2014 07:41:40 GMT

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To those of you who have significant others, watch out. According to a "Peak Break-Up Times" chart created by David McCandless and Lee Byron, we are entering the year's second highest break-up time, second only to spring break. Their data shows what appears to be the first actual representation of the trend. Using information collected from Facebook, the duo charted the most frequent times of year that relationships end. There are two astonishing peaks, one in March and one during the Christmas holidays. There's even a name for the phenomenon: the "turkey drop" which implies a break up in that period starting just before Thanksgiving.

The weeks before Christmas are a bad time for relationships. To those single ladies and gents out there, the market is about to get a lot meatier. The chart was first posted on David McCandless' Information is Beautiful website, and has since been reposted on several other news sites. McCandless and Byron searched for the frequency of "break up" and "broken up" in Facebook statuses, and also set up a program that logged the dates of changes in relationship status onto a calendar. Does the study rely too heavily on Facebook?

"I think it relates to real life, probably, really closely," said Byron. "Just based on anecdotal evidence, it seems to match up. Anyone who has looked at the chart tends to have a positive reaction. I've also had an expert in relationships look at the graph and tell me that it maps very close to reality

McCandless seconded that opinion. "I wouldn't call it a study," he said. "The intention was not to claim anything is true, it's just an interesting pattern that happens. There are all kinds of biases, Facebook was very much primarily used by young people, I'm just simply saying 'cool.'"

The chart is one piece of a larger project on breakups. The series of information graphics on ending relationships includes topics like breakup methods and "We broke up because," as well as a flow chart on how relationships come together and fall apart.

### But Why Do Couples Break Up Right Before Christmas?

When asked why two weeks before Christmas is a peak breakup time, Byron said, "I think it has something to do with end-of-the-year reflections or thoughts of everyone heading home for the holidays." Perhaps some people realize their significant other is not someone they would want to introduce to their families.

"I can only reflect on my own experience -- would you want stay in a relationship that you felt was over through Christmas and New Year's? You don't want to be dogged by worries or pressure, you don't want to be worrying about the potential ups and downs in your relationship, you just want to clear the space," said McCandless.

"This is the season," said Dr. Dorree Lynn, a psychologist and author of "Sex for Grownups," "to be needy and greedy as opposed to the message that we try to put out. It evokes incredibly high stress and depression, culminating statistically in New Years being the highest suicide date. The reason this happens is that we have the media myth that this is supposed to be a happy, wonderful and joyous time."

"Couples or people who are dating are in a bind," Lynn said. "It's kind of a flight or another step to commitment time. The same thing holds true for Valentine's Day. These are symbolic times where you're making a statement, and if you're not sure, particularly if you haven't been dating for several years, a lot of people have issues about gift giving and how intimate the gift giving is and they get frightened because they don't want to put pressure on the other person, but on the other hand they don't want to feel like a fool giving something and not getting anything back."

"I think the expectation of an expensive gift from a significant other can be the straw that breaks up the camel's relationship," said Brian Moylan of Gawker. "If you're already unhappy and thinking about pulling the trigger on a relationship, why not do it before you have to spend hundreds of dollars on a fancy watch or cufflinks or lingerie you don't even want to see your girlfriend wearing anyway? That way you get freedom and \$100 you can blow at a strip club (or on some reasonably priced \*s)."

Moylan added, "People are thinking about New Year's resolutions and how to improve their lives, and sometimes the best improvement you can make is setting free the good-for-nothing mate."

On the other end of the spectrum, new relationships are on the boom before and during the holidays. Kenneth Agee of A Foreign Affair says, "We see our largest increase in clients during the holidays. People do not want to be alone on the holidays, and with New Year coming, they make resolutions to do whatever it takes to find their soul mate. Even if it means traveling halfway around the world."

A Foreign Affair operates a web site that introduces men to women in Asia, Russia and Latin America. Each week they take groups of men to foreign countries where in just a few short days they can meet hundreds of beautiful foreign women looking for marriage. Kenneth Agee further states, "And if you are worried about a breakup, these relationships have half the divorce rate of domestic marriages."

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