**ENG 092**

**DIAGNOSTIC**

**Practice CATW Essay**

“It’s a Gift and a Curse”

by [Demetria L. Lucas](http://www.abelleinbrooklyn.com/)

Facebook is the dating world’s greatest gift and its greatest curse. For those seeking companionship, it opens up vast opportunities. It speeds up possible love connections by showcasing the bonds that tend to strengthen relationships: mutual friends, interests and points of view. Because so many users offer an intimate look into their lives through their status updates and photo albums, it’s possible to remove a bit of the “blind” aspect that comes with dating a new person. Of course, this works best when the online persona and the actual person are one in the same, which is not always the case. Most importantly, Facebook is a great place to meet potential partners, but not to date. After a few online exchanges, I think it’s best to meet in person, or at minimum, on Skype.

Facebook can be tricky for couples. It either encourages them to stalk each other or over share, both of which can really kill the mood. I actually encourage partners not to befriend one another because of the numerous issues that can arise. [Twenty percent of divorces involve Facebook](http://abcnews.go.com/Technology/facebook-infidelity-cheating-spouses-online/story?id=12272421#.UNsx34WhB7t) and 80 percent of divorce lawyers have reported a spike in the number of cases that use social media for evidence, according to a survey by the [American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers](http://www.aaml.org/).

There have been countless stories that cite Facebook as the cause of an affair. There is certainly a wide swath of potential partners available to married users who want to relive their glory days. But here, Facebook gets a bad rap; it didn’t cause the cheating. It just made it more convenient to do (and perhaps easier to catch).

Even for the faithful, Facebook can exaggerate relationship problems. Some partners over share in their status updates, allowing their “friends” glimpses into what should be private business. In other instances, there are “friends” who cross boundaries by leaving inappropriate comments on status updates and photos, which unsurprisingly can cause conflict in a relationship.

Finally, there’s the issue of social media burnout between couples. If partners are intimately involved in each other’s online lives, they don’t get much opportunity to allow, if you will, absence to make the heart grow fonder. Occasionally, the over-familiarity, even if it’s just online, can breed contempt…and that’s just after two months of dating.

Excerpted from “It’s a Gift and a Curse,” part of the series titled: “Has Facebook Ruined Love.’ December 30, 2012 in *The New York Times*

*Read the passage above and write an essay responding to the ideas it presents. In your essay, be sure to summarize the passage in your own words, stating the author’s most important ideas. Develop your essay by identifying one idea in the passage that you feel is especially significant and explain its significance. Support your claims with evidence or examples drawn from what you have read, learned in school, and/or personally experienced. Remember to review your essay and make any changes or corrections that will help your reader follow your thinking. You will have 90 minutes to complete your essay.*