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The Kids Are All Right Online: Teen Girls' Experiences With Self-Presentation, Impression Management & Aggression On Facebook

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THE KIDS ARE ALL RIGHT ONLINE:
TEEN GIRLS' EXPERIENCES WITH SELF-PRESENTATION, IMPRESSION
MANAGEMENT & AGGRESSION ON FACEBOOK

by

ALISON M. HILL

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Sociology in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York

2014

2014

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This manuscript has been read and accepted for the
Graduate Faculty in Sociology in satisfaction of the
Dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to the most important people in my life – my mom Roberta, my dad Steven, my husband Jason, and our children Vivienne and Max. Thank you for making everything possible. I love you.

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A very special thank you to Cynthia Fuchs Epstein, Bill Kornblum and Lynn Chancer for their guidance and support over the many years it took me to get to this point. Through my oral exams, proposal and entire dissertation-writing process, they always believed in me and my ideas.

I would also like to thank my friends and colleagues at the Girl Scout Research Institute, who granted me access to the data set for this research. I hope that these findings can in some way help you fulfill your mission to “build girls of courage, confidence and character, who make the world a better place.”

Abstract

THE KIDS ARE ALL RIGHT ONLINE: TEEN GIRLS' EXPERIENCES WITH SELF-PRESENTATION, IMPRESSION MANAGEMENT & AGGRESSION ON FACEBOOK

by

ALISON M. HILL

Adviser: Professor William Kornblum

Online social network participation is widespread among American adolescents. Prolific creators, consumers and curators of content, they write themselves into being (boyd, 2007) on social network sites like Facebook. Drawing on Erving Goffman's study of symbolic interaction in the form of dramaturgical perspective and The Third Person Effect, this research explores how young women ages 14-17 craft their self-presentations, engage in impression management, and experience aggression and bullying on Facebook. I propose that the majority of this age cohort craft online self-presentations that are consistent with their offline selves, yet they believe that other girls their age use their profiles to craft distinct online portrayals. I hypothesize that girls who restrict their privacy settings to "viewable by friends only" have fewer experiences with aggression and bullying than those who don't. I analyze these data from the perspective of youth culture on Facebook and the discourse of digital citizenship.

Data for this research comes from the Girl Scouts Research Institute's "Who's that Girl? Image and Social Media Survey," fielded through online interviews in 2010 to a geographic mix of individuals consistent with U.S. Census figures. Respondents are 1,026 young women (Girl Scouts and non- Girl Scouts) evenly distributed across the ages of 14-17 who have profiles on at least one social network site, including Facebook.

The majority of respondents report that they craft self-presentations on Facebook that reflect their offline self-portrayals, yet they believe most other girls their age do so in ways that make themselves look different and cooler than they really are. Those who restrict the three sections of their Facebook profiles to viewable by friends only experience fewer incidences of aggression than those who don't. These findings suggest strategies for understanding the lives of youth online and how to connect their behavior to the conversation around digital citizenship.

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Chapter I - Introduction and Background

Methods of self-presentation and impression management are influenced by the communication medium through which these actions occur. On social network sites like Facebook, users craft and manage their self-presentations through the content on their own profiles, their postings on others' pages, and the user groups to which they belong on the site. All of this activity on Facebook is part of individuals' digital footprints, the sum total of which defines who they "are" online.

This research explores how adolescent girls ages 14-17 design and administer their self-presentations on Facebook through an analysis of their connections (Friends), privacy-setting choices, actions, reactions, and posting-types on the site. It conceives of the internet as a cultural artifact immersed in a social context (Hine, 2005) and considers how this social network site is used as a means of communication, expression, and content production within an offline social world (Katz & Rice, 2002). The study draws heavily upon Erving Goffman's (1959) work on impression management and self-presentation to frame the analysis, and investigates the impact of respondents' privacy settings choices on their experiences with aggression on the site. The research also includes a discussion of the Third Person Effect and peer culture on Facebook within the discourse of digital citizenship.

My Project

In September 2004, I was hired by the Girl Scouts of the USA to manage their national anti-violence initiative. As an organization dedicated to "building girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place," my role included providing technical

assistance and subject-matter expertise to Girl Scout councils who has received grants from GSUSA to implement anti-violence programming at the local level. It was during my tenure in this role that I began to see patterns of behavior that I felt were important to understand more completely if we were to help girls from becoming victims and/or perpetrators of abuse, yet knew that I did not yet have the tools with which to do so. It was at this point that I decided to pursue my PhD in Sociology, so as to better educate myself and become a resource to organizations working on social challenges.

In 2010, the Girl Scout Research Institute celebrated its 10th anniversary with a study that looked at teen girls' experiences on social media. Given my former role at GSUSA and interest in issues of technology usage, aggression, and digital communities, I requested and was granted access to the data from this study. This dissertation includes my analysis of these data, which I embarked upon with the goals of learning more about respondents' self-presentation and impression management activities, and their experiences with aggression and bullying on Facebook. It contextualizes my analysis within a sociological framework, using social theory to support and help explain my findings.

Dissertation Organization

The core of this dissertation is organized around youth culture, digital community, identity development, and aggression and bullying. The remainder of Chapter One maps out the themes and theoretical support for this research. Chapter Two outlines the methodology for the data analysis, and Chapter Three details my findings. Chapter Four examines Facebook as a digital community in which teens create and produce their own culture, and Chapter Five describes the processes of identity development, including self-esteem, self-efficacy and

representations of femininity in popular culture. Chapter Six explores relational aggression, bullying and drama, and how these manifest both online and offline for teen girls, and Chapter Seven concludes this dissertation with a discussion of peer culture and digital citizenship.

In each of these chapters, I include relevant sociological theories to provide structure to my analysis. Chapter Four builds on Swidler's cultural tool kit (1986), Hochschild's feeling rules and emotion work (1979), and Bourdieu (1984) and Giddens' (1986) discussions of structure and agency. It includes boundaries and behavior rules (Geertz, 1973; Durkheim, 1961; Epstein, 1992) and peer group membership (DiMaggio, 1997; boyd, 2007; Milner, 2005) within an analysis of teen cultural production on Facebook.

Chapter Five discusses how teens engage in identity construction, self-presentation and impression management through their profile pages on Facebook (boyd, 2007, 2010). It incorporates Markus and Nurius' possible selves (1986), and the concepts of self-esteem (Reasoner, 2000), self-efficacy (Bandura, 1994; Gecas, 1989), and self-salience (Rosenfield et al., 2005). It also contains a discussion of how identification with others is a social process that helps form individual (Jenkins, 2004; Perinbanayagam, 2000) and collective (Ashmore, Deaux & McLaughlin-Volpe, 2004) identity. Representations of femininity in the mass media (Brumberg, 1997; Lewis & Finders, 2002) and the challenges these pose to teen girls (Durham, 1999 and 2008; Milkie 1999; Lorber, 1994) are also featured within the chapter.

Chapter Six examines bullying (Levy et al., 2012; Finkelhor et al., 2012; Smith, Mahdavi, Carvalho, Fisher, Russell, & Tippett, 2008; Olweus, 1993; Felix, Sharkey, Green, Furlong, & Tanigawa, 2011; Price & Dodge, 1989; Espelage & Swearer, 2003; Griffin & Gross, 2004) and cyberbullying (Patchin & Hinduja, 2012; Willard, 2006). It discusses bullying as a

trauma experience (Alexander et al., 2004), explores relational aggression (Bjoerkqvist, Lagerspetz, & Kaukianen, 1992; Crick et. al., 1996; Crick, Casas, & Nelson, 2002) and drama (boyd and Marwick, 2011), and how these are portrayed in popular media (Brown, 2005; boyd 2014).

Chapter Seven, the concluding chapter, discusses digital citizenship (Ribble, 2009; Collier, 2011; Willard 2012; Jenkins et al., 2006). It engages with the concepts of social norms and a new humanism being developed in online communities (Brooks, 2012; Collier, 2011; Parsons, 1951; boyd, 2014).

In each chapter, I use the survey data to describe teen girls' activities and experiences on Facebook, and contextualize those data within sociological theory. While each chapter addresses a different body of theories, four foci are woven throughout my entire dissertation: teenagers, digital community, identity development, and aggression and bullying.

The Birth of Social Network Sites in the United States

Although a small number of sites predated it, the online dating site Friendster popularized the features that define social network sites – profiles, public testimonials or comments, and publicly articulated, traversable lists of friends (boyd, 2007). Launched in 2002, Friendster quickly became popular amongst mid 20/30 year old-urbanites. On Friendster, users posted profiles of themselves, wrote public testimonials about other users, and then searched the system for friends. The site was created to compete with online dating sites such as Match.com, but what differentiated the site was that rather than looking through profiles on the site without any connection to those you found, on Friendster you connected through friends of friends.

By the summer of 2003, a number of San Francisco-based music bands realized that they could use the site to connect to their fans and promote their gigs (boyd, 2004). Friendster did not want their site used for these kinds of connections, and began to delete the bands' profile pages. In the fall of 2003, MySpace launched and welcomed bands and their fans to connect and interact on their site. When (young) music fans learned that their favorite bands had profiles on MySpace, they created profiles on the site. These music-lovers then invited their less musically engaged peers to join.

Many individuals began using MySpace as a result of the social voyeurism it enabled. They also appreciated the opportunity to craft a personal representation in an increasingly popular online community, as MySpace gave them the ability to craft online profiles as well as visualize their social world through a networked collection of profiles of their personal connections (boyd, 2007). In 2004, TheFacebook.com was launched at Harvard University as a social network site for the undergraduate college.

A Brief History of Facebook

In the fall of 2002, Mark Zuckerberg began his freshman year at Harvard University. A computer-programmer since middle school, Zuckerberg quickly created a website called Flashmash, which asked Harvard students to rate the attractiveness of fellow students whose pictures he posted online. The University shut down the site, but by then Zuckerberg had moved on to other projects. In the fall of 2003, Zuckerberg was approached by three seniors who asked if he would do the programming for a social networking site they were developing for Harvard students, along the lines of Friendster. This site would be an online version of the "freshman face book," a physical resource that typically contained the name, photo, high school, hometown, potential major, and hobbies of incoming first-year students. On February 4, 2004,

TheFaceBook.com launched. By the end of the month, more than three-quarters of the undergraduates at Harvard had signed up.

TheFaceBook (later renamed simply Facebook) grew quickly, and by June 2004 there were 40 schools who used the site and by September there were 250,000 users. Within a year, Facebook had become the second-fastest-growing major site on the Internet – surpassed only by MySpace, the general-audience social networking site. Facebook was quickly adopted by nearly all four-year colleges and universities in the U.S. In September 2005, Zuckerberg opened the site to high schools – at first, without links to the college version, but later merging the two. In September 2006, Zuckerberg opened Facebook to corporate and regional networks around the world, making the site available to (basically) anyone with an email address.

There are many ways to use Facebook. Users instant message others on the site, share photos - more than 250 million new ones each day (Collier & Magid, 2012) – upload videos, catch up on each other’s lives, play games, plan online and offline meetings and events, send birthday and holiday cards, do homework, conduct business, review books, recommend restaurants, and support charitable causes. Forty-four (43.7%) of respondents in this study have posted links, articles, or other information to raise awareness or funds for a charitable cause or organization which they support.

Every month, users add 30 billion pieces of content (comments, photos, web links, blog posts, videos, etc.) to this user-driven medium (Collier & Magid, 2012). Facebook is a collection of its millions of users’ lives (not just their social lives), updated in real-time around the world (Collier & Magid, 2012). Forty-eight percent (47.7%) of respondents in this study post 1 status update per day, with an average of 2.1 status updates per day for all 1,026 survey participants. They also make an average of 5.5 comments per day on other people’s profiles (status updates,

photos, videos, links, etc.) and have posted an average of 182.7 photos and 3.4 videos. These photos and videos are of themselves (94.3%), their families (73.3%), and/or their friends (88.8%).

Facebook Features

Facebook features fit into three main categories: biographical information, connections with others, and online interactions. The main location for biographical information is the Profile. On the profile page there are two spaces for profile photos and five main tabs. The *Timeline* tab contains all of the content that has been posted to the page and/or the actions taken by the owner of the profile. The *About* tab contains basic information like work and education history, relationship status, places lived, gender, and contact information. Contact information options include screen name, mobile phone number, mailing address, website, and email address. The *Photos* tab houses a gallery of all photos and albums associated with the profile. The *Friends* tab is a list of the friends or connections the user has on the site. The *More* tab contains the user's personal interests and activities, and is location where users indicate preferences in music, books, TV shows, movies, apps and games. This tab also contains all of the events the user has been invited to attend, as well as the groups to which she belongs.

The primary way to build connections on Facebook is to "friend" someone else on the site. This person receives a notification on her profile that a friendship request has been made, and she can then choose to confirm, ignore, decline and/or block the request. The number of friends people have on Facebook typically ranges from a handful to many hundred. A second means of connecting to others on the site is through group membership. Group members do not need to be connected to one another for users in that group to see the content they have posted to the group's page.

Facebook offers four main methods for interacting with a user's connections on the site. The first is a personal message, which works like an email. It is sent asynchronously, and it arrives in the user's Facebook account. It is mostly used for private communication between two people, although some use it for small group communication as well. The second method is posting to a user's timeline, which is visible to everyone included within the privacy category set by the user (friends only, friends of friends, viewable by everyone). The third is instant messaging, which is a real-time conversation between people. The fourth is posting content to a group – some groups are open to anyone, while others are privately owned and users interested in becoming members must send a request to the group's administrator.

The sharing of content on Facebook depends upon the user's privacy settings. These settings range from friends-only to friends of friends, to public, and include the ability to block certain users completely. The majority of respondents in this study have the privacy settings for their profile information (69.9%), contact information (65.5%) and media information (photos, videos, blogs, etc.) (66.5%) set to viewable by friends only. These percentages complement the data from multiple studies that illustrate teens' tendencies to use social network sites to connect with those whom they know offline (boyd, 2007; Lenhart & Madden, 2007; Pempek et al., 2009; Collier & Magid, 2010).

Adolescence and the Teenager

Adolescence is a transitional period between childhood and adulthood. The adolescent years are usually defined as the period between the ages of 13-19, though its physical, psychological and cultural expressions may begin earlier and end later. Adolescence can be defined biologically, as the physical transition marked by the onset of puberty and the termination of physical growth; cognitively, as changes in the ability to think abstractly and

multi-dimensionally; or socially, as a period of with the cultural purpose of preparation for adult roles (Larson and Wilson, 2004). Adolescents go through a normative process of change in both content and structure of their thoughts about the self (Steinberg, 2008), and engage in social perspective-taking in which they can understand how the thoughts or actions of one person can influence those of another person, even if they personally are not involved (Selman, 1980). They also develop the ability to comprehend abstract content and develop moral philosophies (including rights and privileges), and establish and maintain interpersonal relationships. During adolescence, youth begin to separate from their parents and establish individual and group identities that lead to the prioritization of peer approval and the social rewards that result from that approbation (Steinberg, 2010). The thoughts, ideas and concepts developed during this period play a major role in character and personality formation (Pedersen, 1961).

While adolescence undeniably contains many biological and social factors, there are differences in how this life period is conceived by scientists. Some view these years as a developmental stage (Erikson 1959; Piaget and Inhelder, 1969), and others posit that adolescence (as part of childhood) is a social construct (Buckingham 2000; Corsaro 1997; James et al. 1988; Postman 1994), and that age distinctions more adequately mark status than any psychological stage (Chudacoff, 1989). The nineteenth-century psychologist G. Stanley Hall distinguished between the social construct of “adolescence” and the biological period of puberty, yet his work is often used to affirm the notion that adolescence is a unique cognitive stage. Those who view it as a social invention (Hine 1999; Savage 2007) argue that the categories of childhood and teenager emerged for varying social, political, and economic reasons, and were justified through developmental psychology.

During the early twentieth century, mandatory education extended into the teen years in America. One result of compulsory high school was age segregation, which led to an increase in peer-driven social interactions and the creation of a peer society (Chudacoff, 1989). Yet teens struggled to locate themselves within this (new) peer society and society-at-large, and in 1945 the New York Times Magazine published “A Teen-Age Bill of Rights,” which included the rights to: “let childhood be forgotten,” “to make mistakes, to find out for oneself,” “to have rules explained, not imposed,” and “to be at the romantic age” (Savage, 2007). The nature of participation in digital communities has challenged many of these rights, which in the years since have become emblematic of this time period in a young person’s life.

Digital Community and Social Network Sites

In his book, “The Social Construction of Communities,” Gerald Suttles explains that the desire to find a social setting in which one can give rein to an authentic version of oneself and see other people as they really are is not some unanalyzable human need but the most fundamental way in which people are reassured of their own reality as well as that of other people (Suttles, 1972). He argues that communities exist as part of a human search for collectivities which at least have the earmarks of a place for the authentic moral expression of self (Suttles, 1972). Given the era in which he wrote, the communities he envisioned are probably those that are in-person. However, his ideas are as applicable to online communities as they are to those that exist offline. These concepts provide a structure within which to discuss and elaborate upon the power, importance and pervasiveness of virtual community.

Virtual communities affect the minds of individuals, the interpersonal relationships between people, and the social institutions that emerge from human relationships (Rheingold,

2000). The communicative practices members establish set the stage for the forms of expressive communication, identity, relationships, norms (Baym, 1995) and symbols (Cohen, 1985) that enable them to make meaning for themselves. The dynamic nature of these activities define virtual communities as processes, not things (Fernback, 1999) and for many members, are the three essential places in people's lives that Ray Oldenburg describes in his work, "The Great Good Place": the place we live, the place we work, and the place we gather for conviviality (Oldenburg, 1989).

Virtual communities do not exist in a separate reality, but rather create spaces for users to bring to their online interactions their gender, stage in life cycle, cultural milieu, socioeconomic status, and offline connections with others (Wellman & Guila, 1999). The ritual sharing of information binds communities in cyberspace (Jones, 1995) and members of these communities often use them for companionship, social support, and a sense of belonging (Wellman & Guila, 1999). While participating in these communities can sometimes feel like endless, ugly, long-simmering family brawls (Rheingold, 1998), they are all conglomerations of normative codes and values that provide community members with a sense of identity (Fernback, 1999).

Social network sites are web-based virtual communities that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system (boyd and Ellison, 2007). They incorporate features from a wide array of other genres of social media, including blogs, instant messaging, email, bulletin boards, and media-sharing sites. Users can share photos, list their likes and interests and reveal personal information such as their relationship status and close friendships. They are

technologies that have been built within an attention economy to capture and sustain the interest of users (boyd, 2014).

All of this sharing creates opportunities for feedback on one another's postings. On Facebook, those who are connected to one another are labeled "friends" and are granted access to comment on the content created, curated, and consumed by others. Depending on how the user has set her privacy settings, her content may be available to her direct connections (friends), secondary connections (friends of friends), or may be open to anyone who logs onto the site and views her profile. Facebook friends routinely interact with each other's profile content and information, creating a dynamic digital environment that demands constant vigilance. Users shape and re-shape their profiles as they react to their friends' responses to them.

The label of "social network sites" emphasizes what makes them unique (and especially salient to teenage users) -- the way in which they allow people to articulate relations. Its use is intentional and distinct from the more common nomenclature "social networking sites," which prioritizes the ways in which the sites allow people to meet new people online (boyd and Ellison, 2007). Social network sites provide teens with the pragmatic purpose of connection, the symbolic purpose of helping them draw upon cultural resources to identify themselves in their relations with others, and the mythic purpose of creating meaningful stories for an equitable life together (Clark, 2012).

According to danah boyd, there are four affordances that shape social network sites (as examples of one type of the mediated environments that are created by social media), including:

- Persistence: the durability of online expressions and content;
- Visibility: the potential audience who can bear witness;
- Spreadability: the ease with which content can be shared; and

- Searchability: the ability to find content (boyd, 2014).

To teens, these affordances are just an obvious part of life in a networked era (boyd, 2014). Even so, they have specific implications for teens' usage of social media/social network sites as loci of identity development.

Teens and Social Network Sites

Social media, and more specifically, social network sites, have become an important public space where teens can gather and socialize broadly with peers in an informal way (boyd, 2014). On these sites they gossip, share information and hang out within a digital community that allows participants to create and share their own content (boyd, 2014). The “Net Generation” – of which the teenage girls in this study are members – do not distinguish between the online and offline versions of themselves (Palfrey & Gasser, 2008). They see their online profile/self as an extension of their offline, physical self, and as they edit their profiles or add and delete friends or interests, they seem to be editing, adding and deleting aspects of their lives. Adolescents are literally able to write themselves into being by creating or editing an online profile (boyd, 2007) and are the first to experience this dramatic shift in the ways they communicate and display themselves to each other and the world (Tapscott, 1998; Thiel, 2003). Social network sites provide young people opportunities to play an active role in their socialization process and in constructing and/or expressing their own identities (Urista, et al., 2008) through the web 2.0 platform that enables them to create, curate and respond to the content on the site.

Young people experiment with their identities during their teen years. They do so in pursuit of a Romantic-era sense of self -- a wish to feel, to experience life, to express themselves, and specifically a wish to feel loved, accepted, and capable of maintaining both a sense of themselves and a sense of their relationships with others (Campbell, 1987). These experiments

reflect their human desire to experience themselves as self-created beings, which is a key component to how young people come to understand themselves (Clark, 2012).

Many of teens' activities to attain selfhood include and are directed toward adjusting their senses of self and self-presentations to achieve the desired results from their peers – in other words, to receive positive reinforcement from their peers about who they “really” are (Clark, 2012). Teens have added online expression to the long-standing portfolio of their efforts designed to better perform the self they would like to be, and social network sites provide opportunities for young people to accomplish this task, as users pursue what they believe is their right to construct, display and perform their own identity (Clark, 2012).

Ninety-five percent (95%) of all American teenagers ages 12-17 are now online, and 80% of online teens are users of social media sites (Lenhart et al., 2011). Females ages 14-17 are more likely to have a social network profile (92%) than males (85%) of the same age (Lenhart et al., 2011). While teens do not all have equal access to the Internet, nor do they experience social media in the same way, teens' adoption of social network sites has been driven primarily by their desire to connect with people they already know in a semi-public way (boyd, 2007; Lenhart & Madden, 2007; Pempek et al., 2009; Collier & Magid, 2010). Other forms of social media that garnered widespread adoption among youth—email, instant messaging, and text messaging—are predominantly one-to one or small-group oriented. Social network sites allow for large-scale, semi-public interactions (primarily) with teens' preexisting networks. These interactions inform their identities – pieces of themselves that they do or perform in their relationships with others, based on what they believe about themselves and who they wish others would believe them to be (Jenkins, 2004; Butler, 1990).

As teens connect on social network sites with their friends and peers, they engage in emotion work (Hochschild, 1979), reinforce and replicate their unmediated social dynamics and collective identities (Ashmore, Deaux & McLaughlin-Volpe, 2004), earn and spend social capital (Bourdieu, 1986), and reflect their everyday life/peer culture (boyd, 2009). They experience themselves as individuals and as members of peer groups whose identities are co-constructed with and through communication technologies (Clark, 2012), and do all of this within what Bonnie Stewart calls, “Digital Sociality.” According to Stewart, digital sociality includes:

- Constantly trying to ascertain if you’ve understood the context of a conversation enough to enter it.
- Having to re-orient yourself in space and time and relationality each time the context changes, which can be minute-to-minute.
- Patching together disjointed fragments in order to frame a present in which to be.
- The effort to communicate intent and tone and personality with economy and concision, without necessarily being sure who’s listening or how they will hear what you say (Stewart, 2012).

The tools teens use to engage in digital sociality (which includes continuously constructing and reconstructing their self-presentations) are imagery and language. Language defines their possibilities and limitations and plays a central role in developing belief systems, holding the power to create and shape their reality (Eder, 1995). This language is nested in the cultures and communities of which the teens are members, and from this they draw a common language, common ways of speaking, and a good deal of shared understandings (Baym, 1995) that give meaning to their actions (Swidler, 1986).

While on Facebook, teens spin “webs of significance” (Geertz, 1973) within which they create and modify their lives. They publicly, actively and collectively craft cultural meanings with their language while simultaneously managing others’ impressions of them. They also react

and respond to messages in the larger media culture about perceptions of teens' behavior on social media sites.

The Third Person Effect

A great deal of the fear and anxiety that surrounds young people's use of social media takes the form of utopian and/or dystopian rhetoric; both extremes depend upon technological determinism that result in media-hype or myths (boyd, 2014). While these myths may be connected to real incidents and/or rooted in data that are blown out of proportion, they may also be deliberately exaggerated to spark fear; media culture exaggerates this dynamic, magnifying anxieties and reinforcing fears (boyd, 2014).

Reports around young people and their social media usage patterns include those that claim teens' self-presentations online are very different than their offline selves, and that there is something dangerous and/or problematic with this behavior. These reports foster the third person effect, which states that people believe that mass communicated messages influence them differently than they do other people. These individuals overestimate of the effect of a mass communicated message on the generalized other, and/or underestimate the effect of a mass communicated message on themselves (Davison, 1983).

According to Perloff (1999, 2009), two main factors guide the third person effect: judgments of message desirability and perceived social distance. In their meta-analysis of studies of third person perception Sun, Pan, and Shen (2008) found that message desirability is the most important moderator of third person perception. Third person effects are particularly pronounced when the message is perceived as undesirable. Gunther & Thorson (1992) also demonstrated empirically that the social desirability of the message tended to affect whether participants were likely to exhibit third person effects. They found that messages that are not perceived as

desirable tend to produce traditional third person effects. The media firestorm about youth and “inauthentic representations” of themselves online exemplify these undesirable messages.

Another factor that influences the magnitude of the third person effect is perceived social distance between the self and comparison “others”. In the social distance corollary, the disparity of self and other is increased, as perceived distance between self and comparison others is increased (Meirick, 2004, 2005). Although social distance is not a necessary condition for the third person effect to occur, increasing the social distance makes the third person effect larger. In their meta-analysis, Andsager and White (2007) concluded that, “research consistently finds that others who are anchored to self as a point of reference are perceived to be less influenced by persuasive messages than are others who are not defined and, therefore, not anchored to any point of reference at all.” In this dissertation research, respondents are asked about “other girls your age” in questions asking them to compare their behavior, which typifies social distance and thus creates great potential for the third person effect.

In a critical review and synthesis of the third person effect hypothesis, Perloff (1999) noted that of the 45 published articles that had tested the phenomenon by 1999, all had found support for the perceptual component of the hypothesis. One year later, Paul, Salwen and Dupagne conducted a meta-analysis of 32 empirical analyses that tested the perceptual component of the third person effect hypothesis. Their results indicate the perceptual component of the third person effect hypothesis received robust support ($r = .50$), especially compared to meta-analyses of other media effects theories (Paul et al., 2000). They also found that samples obtained from student samples yielded greater third person effect differences than samples obtained from non-student samples. The respondents in this dissertation research are all students, which creates greater potential for the third person effect to exist.

The third person effect can help explain the response patterns in this data set. Whereas respondents consistently describe their online selves as the same as or similar to their offline selves, they perceive other girls their age to be different online and offline. In a digital community like Facebook, where users are connecting with one another through profiles that are self-created, this perception of self-presentation has the capacity to affect interaction on the site, in both productive and destructive ways. For example, if teens feel that social network sites like Facebook exist, in part, to provide opportunities to explore aspects of oneself in ways that are hard(er) to do offline, their response to perceived disparities between offline and online behavior may be met with indifference or even support. However, if they perceive this disparity as inauthenticity or “posing” or “being a wannabe,” this behavior may be met with derision or aggression.

Thus, the third person effect has the capacity to affect teens’ experiences with aggression and bullying on Facebook, as well as how they engage in the projects of identity development and identification with others through their self-presentation and impression management activities.

Identity Development and Identification

Identity is something that is both unique to each individual and also implies a relationship with a broader collective or social group. Much of the literature on identity describes these two aspects from the perspective of “being oneself” and/or “finding one’s true self,” and the multiple identifications one seeks with others on the basis of social, cultural, and biological characteristics, as well as shared values, personal histories, and interests (Buckingham, 2008).

According to the social theorist Zygmunt Bauman, we are now in a fragmented and uncertain world in which the traditional resources for identity formation are no longer so straightforward or so easily available (Bauman, 2004). Social network sites both feed into this uncertainty - especially for adolescents' as they work on their identity projects - and are also the locations where teens can establish these identities, as they engage with other members of the groups or categories to which they feel they belong (e.g., gender).

Richard Jenkins argues that social identity should be seen not so much as a fixed possession, but as a social process, in which the individual and the social are inextricably related (Jenkins, 2004). Viewing identity as a fluid, contingent matter that people accomplish through ongoing interactions and negotiations with other people, it makes sense to label this *identification* rather than *identity*. It dovetails with Anthony Giddens' notion of "self-reflexivity" and the projects individuals must undertake to constantly make decisions about what they should do and whom they should be (Giddens, 1991). On social network sites, Giddens' notion of the self-created "biographical narratives" that individuals create to explain themselves to themselves, are the data on users' profiles.

Yet, there are also aspects of Foucault's argument about identity development that exist on this social network site. He believes that who we are—or who we perceive ourselves to be—is far from a matter of individual choice, but rather a product of powerful and subtle forms of "governmentality" that are characteristic of modern liberal democracies (Foucault, 1979). He asserts that there has been a shift in the ways in which power is exercised in the modern world and that rather than being held (and displayed) by sovereign authorities, power is now diffused through social relationships; rather than being regulated by external agencies (the government or the church), individuals are now encouraged to regulate themselves and to ensure that their own

behavior falls within acceptable norms. What Giddens describes as self-reflexivity is seen by Foucault in much more sinister terms, as a process of self-monitoring and self-surveillance. He recasts Giddens' "project of the self" as a matter of individuals policing themselves (Buckingham, 2008). Whether self-reflexivity, self-surveillance, or a combination of the two, adolescents constantly engage in self-presentation activities and manage others' impressions of them on Facebook.

Self-Presentation and Impression Management

Each time individuals log onto the Internet, they participate in creating a digital trail: one that is visible to many, that is not created exclusively by them, and over which they cannot exert full control. This digital trail is part of who they "are" because it plays a role in how other people and organizations view and interact with them, but it is also neither completely separate from nor completely aligned with their embodied selves (Clark, 2012).

On Facebook, users make themselves known through their connections (Friends), privacy- setting choices, actions, reactions, posting types and frequencies. Thus their (digital) self on the site is defined by their own actions and reactions to others, their connections (Friends, groups to which they belong, organizations they support), and others reactions to them on the site. Users write themselves into being (boyd, 2007) through profiles which they construct, in part, by taking in the information around them and synthesizing that through a kind of "knowing" about their environment that impacts on how they represent themselves. This kind of knowing is much more than having information, but rather involves feelings and intuitions as well as logical analysis (Clark, 2012). They constantly manage, update and alter their self-

presentations within a dynamic sociality that facilitates immediate feedback and demands constant vigilance.

Facebook's dynamic environment both complements and exacerbates young peoples' tendency to live in the present and desire immediate connection with and feedback from their peers (Clark, 2012). It also provides a fertile locus for the exploration of self-presentation and impression management in a computer-mediated environment.

Symbolic interactionism states that the ability to take ourselves as an object is a fundamental social process by which we develop our ideas about the self (Mead, 1934). Mead argues that a thinking, self-conscious individual is logically impossible without a prior social group, as that social group leads to the development of the self-conscious mental states that inform identity development and presentation. According to Mead, the self is the ability to take oneself as an object, which presupposes a social process: communication among humans. The "self" arises from social activity and social arrangements and to have a self, one must be a member of a community and be directed by the attitudes common to the community.

On social network sites, the ability to take one's self as an object is provided by a generalized other comprised of those with whom the user is "friends" – and depending upon how the users set their privacy settings, may also consist of "friends of friends" or anyone who visits their profile page. These connections, privacy-setting choices, actions, reactions, posting types and frequencies form the community of which the users are a part, and are the means through which, according to Mead, enable them to have a self (on Facebook).

Goffman's conception of the self is indebted to Mead's ideas. Goffman argues that in order to maintain a stable self-image, people perform for their social audiences. He uses

dramaturgy to frame his perception of the self as not a possession of the actor, but rather as the product of the dramatic interaction between actor and audience (Goffman, 1959). He writes that when this performance takes place, the actors want to represent a certain sense of self that will be accepted by (others) the audience. He characterizes this central interest as impression management, and locates its activities as front-stage behaviors. He divides the front stage into the setting and the personal fronts, and then further divides the personal front into appearance and manner -- appearance which tells the audience the performer's social status, and manner, which describes what sort of role the performer expects to play in the situation. Goffman's conception of this persona reflects the ancient Greek word "persona-lity," which also has dramatic meaning and is derived from the word for mask. As in Goffman's analysis, the function of this "mask" was not to hide the actor, but rather give information about the character itself.

Goffman also speaks of a back-stage, a location that creates opportunities for the actors to be more honest, where the impressions created while on stage may be directly contradicted, and the team of performers may disagree with each other (Goffman, 1959). In his discussion of the back-stage, he suggests that back-stage behavior is somehow more authentic, or closer to the truth of the individual's real identity, which also appears to imply that front-stage behavior is somehow less sincere or less honest.

Critics have argued that Goffman tends to overstate the importance of rules and to neglect the aspects of improvisation, or indeed sheer habit, that characterizes everyday social interaction. Additionally, like some other researchers in this tradition, Goffman sometimes appears to make a problematic distinction between *personal* identity and *social* identity, as though collective identifications or performances were somehow separate from individual ones, which are necessarily more "truthful" (Buckingham, 2008).

Nevertheless, this approach has several implications for our understanding of young people's uses of social network sites, where questions of rules and etiquette are clearly crucial, especially given the absence of many of the other cues (such as visual ones) we conventionally use to make identity claims in everyday life. The issue of performance is also very relevant to the ways in which young people construct and present their identities on these sites.

While teens' identity work on Facebook is performative (Clark, 2012), the static nature of front-stage and back-stage does not resonate with the nature of their quest for peer approval or likeability. Given the amount of content users create and curate, there are certainly moments when teens are showcasing the "highlight reel" of their lives, thus performing on their front stages as Goffman would expect. However, many teens also feature their personal struggles or actions that may not conform to the ritual practice Goffman posits is front-stage behavior. The nature of social network sites like Facebook and teens' perceptions of authenticity blur the lines created by Goffman in his work.

Additionally, unlike the audience described in Goffman's work, the audience on Facebook is comprised of those who are also actively engaged in self-presentation and impression management. This creates an interaction effect that is (logically) absent from Goffman's analysis, and demonstrates how acts of self-presentation and impression management on social network sites are complex and different from how these acts play out in unmediated environments. Additionally, the processes of social signaling are complicated by technology, altering how teens can gain access to impression-management fundamentals: context, explicit feedback, and implicit reactions. The persistent, searchable, alterable, and networked nature of these environments can make it difficult for teens to manage their performances (boyd, 2008) and may thus impact on their experiences and their friendships on the site.

Adolescent Friendship

Friendships are the most important peer relationship in early adolescence (Sullivan, 1953). As perspective-taking skills improve during this period, friendships are defined increasingly by mutuality and reciprocity (Selman, 1980; Youniss & Smollar, 1985). Through mutual self-disclosure in the context of lengthy conversations, friends support, encourage, and give each other advice (Rubin, Bukowski & Parker, 2006; Youniss & Smollar, 1985).

Social network sites have emerged as hubs of adolescent interpersonal communication (Williams & Merten, 2008) and friendship-maintenance zones. While young people use new media primarily to maintain existing friendships rather than start new ones (Ito et al., 2008; Lenhart & Madden, 2007; Subrahmanyam & Greenfield, 2008), these sites play a central role in maintaining these relationships. There are many ways adolescents communicate with their friends on the sites, including writing short, public messages directly on a friend's timeline (profile page), or sending a longer message through a private messaging system. Both types of messages are used to carry on a conversation with a friend or to make plans for an offline activity (boyd, 2007), and some messages are simply used as "public displays of connection" (Donath & boyd, 2004).

The respondents in this study have an average of 347.1 friends on Facebook, which is consistent with a national average of 300 friends for users ages 12-17 found by the Pew Internet Research Project in 2013. Ranging from close friends and romantic partners to acquaintances and authority figures, these connections create opportunities for users to craft digital extensions of their offline selves that interact with these (mostly offline) friends on a very regular basis. Ninety-nine percent (99.3%) of the respondents in this research are connected to a close friend on Facebook; 32.8% to someone they've never met (either online or in person); 44.2% to

someone they've met online, but not in person, and; 90.4% to an acquaintance (defined on the survey as someone whom they'd met in person, but with whom they are not close friends). Additionally, 65.3% are "friends" on Facebook with a parent and 42.8% with a teacher. While the majority of respondents (56%) report that they only accept friend requests on their social network profile from people they're already friends with in person, those with high self-esteem are more likely to agree with this statement (63%* vs 35%). Thirty-one percent (31.3%) of respondents in this research have between 250-499 friends, and 43% believe social network sites are just a big popularity contest. However, 60% of respondents do not feel it is really important to them to have as many friends as possible on the site.

On social network sites, teens figure out how to develop a digital presence that echoes, or perhaps reshapes, the impressions that are given to others through their flesh-and-blood bodies. They consciously choose how to represent themselves, but they also choose who to add as friends, as this, too, is an exhibition of who they are: it shows who they know and how they relate to other social groups. Representation, then, takes on a whole new level of importance, when people can intentionally construct and perform who they think they are online, and when others can support or contest a person's online identity (Clark, 2012). Friendship too, takes on another level of meaning on these sites, as offline friendships are enhanced by online communication (Valkenburg & Peter, 2007).

Friendships help youth develop emotionally and socially, and provide a training ground for trying out different ways of relating to others. They represent relationships based on mutual respect, appreciation, and liking, as well as provide youth with self-esteem and improved psychological adjustment (Parker & Asher, 1993). Through interacting with friends, youth learn the give and take of social behavior. They learn how to establish rules, weigh alternatives, and

make decisions when faced with dilemmas. They experience fear, anger, aggression, and rejection. In addition to learning what's appropriate and what's not, youth learn how to win and/or lose through their friendships. They learn about social standing and power - who's in and who's out; how to lead and how to follow; what's fair and what's not. They learn that different people and different situations call for different behaviors, and they come to understand the viewpoints of other people. Friends provide companionship and stimulation for each other, and youth learn more about who they are by comparing themselves to other youth (Gurian & Pope, 2011).

These powerful relationships also have the capacity to cause sadness, anger and hurt. Friends gossip about one another, share secrets, police each other's clothing and body size, threaten exclusion or social isolation to those who don't conform, and fight over real or imagined scarcity in potential romantic partners. This kind of emotional violence can take a huge toll on individuals as well as on the relationships themselves. It also now has the capacity to include larger numbers of people and have a wider audience than ever before, given the nature of social network sites like Facebook.

These two sides of the friendship coin – one containing the healthy, productive skills and literacies people need to connect, and the other harboring the tools used to destroy those connections – create opportunities for relational aggression and other kinds of bullying and interpersonal violence to thrive. On sites like Facebook, teens can and do use the intimacy created in friendship to network negativity, perverting the positive attributes of close friendship and trust that characterize many relationships. This behavior can have far-reaching consequences, including incidences of aggression and bullying on the site.

Aggression and Bullying

Bullying has a broadly accepted baseline definition among scholars. An act of bullying is defined as an aggressive act with three hallmark characteristics: a) it is intentional; b) it involves a power imbalance between an aggressor (individual or group) and a victim; c) it is repetitive in nature and occurs over time (Levy et al., 2012). This three-part definition was introduced by Olweus (1994) and to date has not changed significantly in the literature. “Intentional” has been used to distinguish bullying from acts of “mere conflict” or those that cause harm accidentally – for instance, teasing committed in a “friendly or playful way” would not be considered intentional. (Finkelhor et al., 2012; Smith, Mahdavi, Carvalho, Fisher, Russell, & Tippett, 2008). “Imbalance of power” can be broadly defined to include physical differences, social differences, or other differences that make it difficult for the victim to defend herself. Researchers have assessed the imbalance of power in terms of strength, popularity, and smarts (Olweus, 1993; Felix, Sharkey, Green, Furlong, & Tanigawa, 2011). “Repetition” means that intentional harm recurs, usually over a period of time. An early, influential researcher explains the idea of repetition to mean that when peers engage in an occasional argument or conflict, it does not constitute bullying (Olweus, 1994).

Definitions of cyberbullying contain either characteristics or the definition of traditional bullying and an enumeration of devices through which bullying occurs online (Vandebosch & VanCleemput, 2009). These definitions vary and may treat the phenomenon as a type of bullying, an environment, or a communication (Ybarra, boyd, Korchmaros, & Oppenheim, 2012). One example of a definition is “when someone repeatedly harasses, mistreats, or makes fun of another person online or while using cell phones or other electronic devices” (Patchin & Hinduja, 2012). Another example is that, “Cyberbullying is any behavior performed through

electronic or digital media by individuals or groups that repeatedly communicates hostile or aggressive messages intended to inflict harm or discomfort on others” (Levy et al., 2012). This definition has an addendum, which the authors suggest be provided to participants in research studies. “In cyberbullying experiences, the identity of the bully may or may not be known. Cyberbullying can occur through electronically-mediated communication at school; however, cyberbullying behaviors commonly occur outside of school as well” (Tokunaga, 2010).

In adolescence, boys and girls develop more subtle, indirect forms of aggressive behaviors, including social manipulation (Bjoerkqvist, Lagerspetz, & Kaukiainen, 1992), as indirect, relationally aggressive acts are some of the most commonly employed means of getting one’s way (Crick et. al., 1996; Crick, Casas, & Nelson, 2002). The phrase Relational Aggression (R.A.) was developed in the early 1990s by University of Minnesota researcher Nicki Crick. It refers to any act that actively excludes a person from making or maintaining friendships or being integrated into the peer group (Bjoerkqvist, Lagerspetz, & Kaukianen, 1992). Examples of relational aggression include, but are not limited to, spreading rumors, exclusion, social isolation, gossiping, eye-rolling, purposely pitting friends against one another, using sarcasm at another’s expense, revealing secrets of friends, and/or embellishing rumors.

Those who have studied Relational Aggression have found varying levels of this behavior in females and males. While some found that girls use relational aggression more often than boys (Worell and Goodheart, 2005), other studies reveal no gender differences (Linder, Crick & Collins, 2002; Crick and Grotpeter, 1995; Rys & Bear, 1997), and still others find greater relational aggression in boys, partly because they sexually harass girls and because they are aggressive in dating relationships (Hennington, Hughes, Cavell, & Thompson, 1998; McMaster, Connolly, Pepler, & Craig, 2002). While these studies demonstrate there is no one sex that has a

monopoly on this kind of behavior, frequently accepted stereotypes about girls, and the media's combining of the biases in our language with traditional images of women (Benedict, 1992) have resulted in a recreation of R.A. as "girl bullying." Relational aggression is a powerful tool on social network sites, as connections and relationships are the foundation of this online community, whose members are in constant contact with one another with a computer-mediated environment.

Constant, Computer-Mediated Communication

Teenagers today are heavily constrained in their mobility, extremely regulated in terms of their time and activities, and under more pressure than those from previous generations (boyd, 2013). These result in their having fewer opportunities to socialize in unstructured face-to-face settings, and social network sites like Facebook are the primary places where they hang out with their peers. Youth want to be on these sites because the sites are where their friends "are."

When youth are on Facebook and other social media sites, they are doing what it is that people are hardwired to do — connect. They are there to share their lives and interact with others in ways that help them determine the kinds of people they want to be and/or become. Most youth have a perfectly healthy relationship with this technology (boyd, 2013) and they seek to do what is normal human behavior — engaging with others — on social network sites. However, technology-induced challenges can and do occur on these sites when teens forget that there are people on the other side of their screens, and that the things they say and do, can and do hurt those others, even they can't see the hurt. These challenges also most evident when teens engage in computer-mediated communication that might be better suited for direct, synchronous (unmediated) forms of communication.

Written digital interaction (including text messages, instant messages, and posts on sites like Facebook) remove body language, voice tone and facial expression from the communication equation. As such, many of the tools humans use to express ourselves and gauge the feelings of others are disabled by the digital interface. Coupled with the reality of disinhibition – the propensity for people to say and do things online that they would not say or do offline – teenagers can create very difficult situations in their relationships with their friends and loved ones when they interact about deeply emotional topics within mediated environments. There are however, strategies and best practices to mitigate these situations and help teenagers learn how to assess their own communication patterns and choices.

The first strategy is for the user to determine whether or not she would be comfortable speaking what she is about to type to the person who is the intended recipient of her message. If she wouldn't speak it, than she would probably be best suited not to type it either. The second is to stop, think and count to ten before she sends any message at all. While this may seem difficult and almost counter-intuitive behavior for a communication medium that enables and almost requires instant feedback, this pause helps her reflect on what she is about to send, how it may be interpreted (or misinterpreted), and/or how it contributes to her (online) reputation/digital footprint.

Even with these considerations, there are certain types of conversations that are ill-suited for most forms of computer-mediated communication. For example, if their feelings are hurt or they are angry, computer-mediated communication is an extremely difficult way for teenagers to engage with others. There are so many nuances and cues that aren't possible with this sort of communication, and adding the heightened emotion to those deficiencies can result in further damage to already fraught relationships. Between and among friends in the same peer group,

texting, instant messaging and posts are effective for quick check-ins, making plans, or letting someone know they are thinking of them. They are usually not effective for resolving disputes or trying to figure out something emotionally complex. Oftentimes, teenagers' capacity to connect through technology outstrips their capacity to manage the emotional charge it can deliver (Steiner-Adair, 2013).

There are also practical reasons for not sharing problems or disputes using digital tools, as these actions will impact on their digital footprints. When angry, hurt or confused, teens may express thoughts or ideas that don't translate well in text, or that need further clarification through voice tone, body language or facial cues. When they turn to computer-mediated communication to express these emotions, they are then creating a written record of these conversations that may not reflect what they are trying to express. They are also creating opportunities to have their thoughts and ideas shared with a much larger audience than they had ever intended. These have the potential to negatively impact on their relationships as well as their digital footprints, and create a permanent record of hurt and anger that often lives on in the digital realm much longer than the actual feelings.

Teens need help from adults who can guide them on issues of digital footprint and effective computer-mediated communication. The majority of respondents in this research have had conversations with their parents/guardians about safe and unsafe social network behaviors (70.8%), what is and is not appropriate to post on their social network profiles (63.7%), and the amount of time they spend on their social network profile (54.1%). Parents have a key role to play in their teens' roles as exemplary digital citizens.

Digital Citizenship

Issues of ideology, agency, power, ontology, roles and boundaries affect virtual communities just as they do physical communities (Fernbeck, 1999). This, combined with the ways in which digital media/social network sites have introduced persistence to communication, create opportunities and challenges for users on the web. Once uploaded onto the Internet, information can be extremely difficult to remove (Clark, 2012). Contrary to the norms of interpersonal communication, on the Internet the norm is “persistent by default, ephemeral when necessary” (boyd, 2010). This aspect of digital communication combined with the idea that creating a social infrastructure for success in virtual-community building is valuable (Rheingold, 2000) has fostered a discourse on digital citizenship. The core pieces of digital citizenship are:

- Access – full electronic participation in society
- Commerce – electronic buying and selling of goods
- Communication – electronic exchange of information
- Literacy – the process of teaching and learning about technology
- Etiquette – electronic standards of conduct or procedure
- Law – electronic responsibility for actions and deeds
- Rights & Responsibilities – freedoms extended to everyone in a digital world
- Health & Wellness – physical and psychological well-being in a digital world
- Security – electronic precautions to guarantee safety (Ribble, 2009)
- Ethics – moral behavior and how users should act in online communities (Morse, 2011).

While the basic tenets of digital citizenship parallel offline standards of responsible citizenship, the unique features of digital communication and interaction (including searchability, permanency and the interconnectivity of the private and the public) and the concepts of, “you are what you type and whom you know” create opportunities to explore the nuances of citizenship on social network sites like Facebook.

Over the past 100 years, Western society has moved from a society organized by groups in physical co-presence to one in which social and media networks constitute the primary mode of organization (Clark, 2012). These digital networks combine aspects of *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* (Tönnies, 1887) and reflect Simmel's argument that modern society does possess unity, and that it contributes to a more sociologically grounded personal identity that is formed in part by social relationships (Simmel, 1972). For many teens, social network sites like Facebook are the communities in which much of the communication, interaction, and connection activities that inform their identity-construction projects take place. These sites also provide new means for amplifying, recording, and spreading information (boyd, 2010), and thus require them to engage constantly in self-presentation and impression management activities. Analysis of the choices they make, actions they take and experiences they have with aggression on Facebook provide opportunities to explore adolescence within these virtual communities, and engage in a discussion of peer culture within the discourse of digital citizenship on this social network site.

Chapter II - Methodology

This dissertation mines and analyzes data from a quantitative “pulse study” commissioned by Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA) in 2010. Entitled, “Who’s That Girl? Image and Social Media,” the survey was conducted to develop a nationwide snapshot of both Girl Scouts and non-Girl Scouts’ experiences with social media. It was designed to explore girls’ feelings related to emotional safety online and the impact of social media on girls’ relationships. The study was created by the Girl Scout Research Institute (GSRI) and Tru-Insight, a market research company. Respondents received a personal invitation via email to complete the survey, but they had no knowledge as to the topic of the survey prior to taking it, thus negating the issue of self-selection.

The study included a total of 1,026 online interviews among female social network users ages 14-17. Respondents’ were distributed evenly across the four ages, and the surveys were nationally dispersed in ways consistent with U.S. Census figures, so as to ensure a representative geographic mix. When asked which of the following best described their families, 69.7% of respondents answered White or Caucasian; 12.2% Hispanic/Latino; 11.8% Black/African-American; 9.0% Asian or Pacific Islander; 0.8% Alaskan Native or American Islander, and; 2.8% Other. Of the 59.1% of respondents who answered the question about family income, 34.8% had a family income of less than \$50,000/year and 65.2% had a family income greater than \$50,000/year. The respondents include 5.7% who were currently Girl Scouts, 42.1% who used to be Girl Scouts and 52.2% who had never been Girl Scouts. Each interview was approximately 10 minutes in length.

As the former project manager, national spokesperson and lead expert for GSUSA’s anti-violence initiative, I requested and was granted access to the data for my dissertation. I felt there

was much more to be learned from the data than was (analyzed or) shared with the larger community by Girl Scouts of the USA. My research focuses on aspects of the survey that shed light on respondents' self-presentation and impression management activities. It explores their experiences with online aggression on Facebook, and discusses the Third Person Effect and peer culture within a discussion of digital citizenship.

Research Questions

In pursuit of this goal, this research will answer the following questions:

1. Do respondents' self-presentations on Facebook mirror their self-presentations in offline settings?
2. How do respondents' perceive their self-presentation and impression management activities on Facebook compared to other young women?
3. Do privacy settings impact on respondents' experiences with aggression on Facebook?

Given the number of young women on Facebook and the amount of content they produce, consume and curate, I believe this research can further a (sociological) understanding of the behaviors of adolescent female actors within online social network communities. As someone who has studied and worked in "girl world" and online community for over 15 years, I believe I have valuable insight to add to this research.

Hypotheses

1. As teens mostly use social network sites to connect with those whom they know offline (boyd, 2007; Lenhart & Madden, 2007; Pempek et al., 2009; Collier & Magid, 2010), the majority of respondents will craft online self-presentations that are similar to their offline selves.

2. Having met the criteria for the existence of the Third Person Effect (Davison, 1983), respondents will report their self-presentations and impression management activities are different than those of other girls their age on the site.
3. Given the importance of friendships during adolescence (Sullivan, 1953), respondents who set their privacy settings most restrictively (viewable by friends only) experience fewer acts of aggression on Facebook than those who don't.

Operationalizing the Data

Respondents' Self-Assessment of Self-Presentation

To operationalize their self-assessments, answers to Questions #15H (*I use social networking sites to try to make myself look cooler than I really am*) and #20 (*How different do you think the image you portray on your social network is from the image you portray in person?*) were averaged to come up with a single score.

For Question #15H, a recode was necessary, so that 5 was the response choice for strongly disagree and 1 was the choice for strongly agree, in order for the question to align with the self-presentation scoring rubric I created. Each question has a maximum score of 5. A score of 1.0-2.9 represents a variable self-presentation; a score of 3.0-5.0 represents a constant self-presentation online and offline. I created an average score for each question, as well as averaged the scores on the two questions together to come up with a single score for self-assessment of self-presentations.

Respondents' Beliefs about Others' Perceptions of Self-Presentation

To operationalize their beliefs about others' perceptions, I analyzed Questions #16 (*Think about someone you're very close to who knows you well. What words would he/she use to*

describe who you are in person?) and #18 (Now, imagine that someone you don't know very well came across your social network profile. What words would he/she use to describe you, based only on what he/she sees on your profile?).

I then ran all four of these questions (#15H, #20, #16, #18) against a self-esteem variable (created by combining respondents' answers to Questions #15M (*I'm very happy with the person I am today*) and #15N (*Overall, I'm very happy with my life*) to determine if self-esteem level could further explain any of the data. I labeled respondents "high self-esteem" if they chose a strongly agree (5) or somewhat agree (4) on questions #15M and #15N. I labeled respondents "low self-esteem" if they chose neither agree nor disagree (3), somewhat disagree (2) or strongly disagree (1) on questions #15M and #15N. If a respondent answered with a 4 or 5 on one of these questions and a 1-3 on the other, she was considered neither high nor low self-esteem and was not included in the self-esteem analysis.

I used independent t-test for means (equal variances) and independent z-tests for percentages to determine statistical significance. These self-presentation data were used to answer Research Question #1 and accept Hypothesis #1.

Aspects of Impression Management

I segmented the questions on the survey that pertain to impression management into six (6) categories: Privacy (Questions#6, #13); Facebook Friends (Questions #7, #9E, #15B, C, D #24F, #25); Posting Frequency (Questions #9A-D); Posting Types (Questions #8, #15E,F), Content Concerns (Questions #12E, F, G, H; #15K; #22; #25) and; Peer-Group Comparisons (Questions #10; #15G,H; #20; #21). I used these six categories to illustrate the tools and techniques respondents use to manage others' impressions of them on the site.

I also ran all of the questions in the six categories against a self-esteem variable (created by combining respondents' answers to Questions #15M (*I'm very happy with the person I am today*) and #15N (*Overall, I'm very happy with my life*) to determine if self-esteem level could further explain any of the data. I labeled respondents "high self-esteem" if they chose a strongly agree (5) or somewhat agree (4) on questions #15M and #15N. I labeled respondents "low self-esteem" if they chose neither agree nor disagree (3), somewhat disagree (2) or strongly disagree (1) on questions #15M and #15N. If a respondent answered with a 4 or 5 on one of these questions and a 1-3 on the other, she was considered neither high nor low self-esteem and was not included in the self-esteem analysis.

I used independent t-test for means (equal variances) and independent z-tests for percentages to determine statistical significance. These self-presentation data were used to answer Research Question #2 and accept Hypothesis #2.

Experiences with Online Aggression

I used portions of Question #14 to encapsulate users' experiences with online aggression. I separated their experiences into three main categories: (1) Respondent's Actions (#14 A,E,F,G, I, J, R); (2) Others' Actions that Impact on the Respondent (#14 B, C, D, H, K), and; (3) Respondent's Feelings (#14 L, M). Then I analyzed each category by respondents' answers to Question #6 regarding privacy settings.

I used chi-square tests to determine any statistically significant differences in respondents' experiences by privacy-setting type. As the majority of respondents set their privacy settings to "friends only" for each of the three Facebook page sections (profile information – 69.9%; contact information – 65.5%, and; media information – 66.5%), I separated

the respondents into two groups for each of the experience categories – (1) viewable by friends only and (2) viewable by friends of friends and viewable by everyone. These experiences data were used to answer Research Question #3 and accept Hypothesis #3.

Challenges with the Data

As with any research that results from secondary data analysis, there are challenges with the survey that impact on the efficacy of the data. The first challenge is with the data gathered on income level. As the question about annual household income (Q#30) was asked only of the youth in the study (and was not corroborated by their parents/guardians) and 40.9% of respondents answered “Don’t Know” or “Prefer Not To Say,” this data may not be reliable. The second challenge is with the question about race/ethnicity/origin, as it asks the respondents which categories best describe their family (Q#3), but does not ask the respondents how they self-identify. The third challenge is that the survey asks respondents if they have bullied or been bullied on social network sites (Q#14), but does not define what bullying behavior is. Whereas race and income-level do not factor prominently in my discussion, the challenges with these data will not greatly impact on my research. However, I will discuss the challenges with a lack of definition of the term bullying, and the use of the term in and of itself with this age group, in detail in Chapter Six.

Chapter III - Results

As the findings in this chapter will show, the majority of respondents craft online self-presentations that are similar to their offline selves, yet report that they believe this is not the case for other girls their age. These data also illustrate the power of privacy settings on Facebook, as those teens who set all of their privacy settings to “viewable by friends only” experienced fewer incidences of aggression and bullying on the site than those who did not. Finally, self-presentation and impression management activities and experiences with aggression and bullying are correlated to the self-esteem levels of the respondents, as those with high self-esteem have different experiences on Facebook than those with low self-esteem.

Research Question #1 - Do respondents’ self-presentations on Facebook mirror their self-presentations in offline settings?

There are two aspects of the question about respondents’ self-presentation activities on Facebook. The first contains their beliefs about how they see their own behavior, and the second is how they believe others’ see them on the site.

Self-Assessment

Seventy-eight percent (78.4%) of respondents think that the image they portray on their social network profile is similar to the image they portray in person. Twenty-one percent (20.9%) of them feel they are exactly the same; 34.3% very similar, and 23.2% somewhat similar. Those with high self-esteem are more likely to report that their portrayals are very similar (36.9%* vs. 26.1%) and exactly the same (23.9%* vs. 13.7%) than those with low self-esteem.¹

¹ * $p \leq 0.05$ - statistically significant at the 95% level

** $p \leq 0.01$ - statistically significant at the 90% level

On a scale of 1 to 5 with 5 being a constant self-presentation (online and off) and 1 being a variable presentation, all respondents scored an average of 3.51, measuring their self-presentations as more alike than different.

Sixty-four percent (63.5%) of respondents feel their self-presentations are equally as cool online and offline, as 40.7% of them strongly disagree and 22.7% somewhat disagree with the idea that they use social network sites to make themselves look cooler than they really are. Those with high self-esteem are more likely to strongly disagree with this idea than those with low self-esteem (45.8%* vs. 25.5%).

On a scale of 1 to 5 with 5 being a constant self-presentation of “coolness” (online and off) and 1 being a variable presentation of “coolness”, respondents scored an average of 3.85, measuring their self-presentations around “coolness” as more alike than different.

Overall, respondents’ scored an average of 3.68 out of 5 on their self-assessments, thus measuring their self-presentations online and offline as more alike than different.

Beliefs about Others’ Perceptions

Of the 29 characteristics listed in the survey questions, the top five attributes respondents felt that the people who know them well would use to describe who they are in person are smart (82.2%), fun (82%), funny (79.5%), kind (75.7%), and a good influence on others (59.0%). All five of these attributes are more likely to be chosen by respondents with high self-esteem than low self-esteem (smart – 84.7%* vs. 75.8%; fun – 85.4%* vs. 73.3%; funny – 81.0%* vs. 73.3%; kind – 78.2%* vs. 67.1%; a good influence – 64.5%* vs. 41.0%).²

² * $p \leq 0.05$ - statistically significant at the 95% level

** $p \leq 0.01$ - statistically significant at the 90% level

The top five attributes respondents felt that the people who don't know them well and came across their social network profiles would use to describe them based solely on what they saw on those profiles are fun (54.0%), funny (52.1%), social (48.0%), kind (43.4%), and smart (43.1%). Of these five attributes, three of them were more likely to be chosen by respondents with high self-esteem than low self-esteem (fun – 56.9%* vs. 47.8%; funny – 54.0%** vs. 46.0%; kind – 46.9%* vs. 37.3%).

Eighty percent (80%) of the words chosen are the same for online and offline (smart, fun, funny and kind), however the priorities these attributes are given in these two spaces are not the same, nor are the percentage of respondents choosing these words. Respondents feel they will be perceived as fun and funny as a result of what they post on their profiles more often than smart. They also feel that being kind does not appear as prominently in their profiles as it does in their offline behavior. Additionally, these top five characteristics seem less prominent overall in their online profiles, as is evidenced by the lower percentages across all five words. Finally, while the young women choose being a good influence on others as one of their top five attributes in person, they choose being social when it comes to perceptions of them from their online profile content.

Overall however, the data above prove Hypothesis #1 which states that as teens mostly use social network sites to connect with those whom they know offline (boyd, 2007; Lenhart & Madden, 2007; Pempek et al., 2009; Collier & Magid, 2010), the majority of respondents will craft online self-presentations that are similar to their offline selves.

Research Question #2 - How do respondents' perceive their self-presentation and impression management activities on Facebook compared to other young women?

Privacy Choices and Posting Volume

Forty-eight percent (48%) of respondents believe they are more concerned about privacy on social network sites than other girls their age. Fifty-one percent (50.8%) of respondents believe they take more steps to ensure their online safety on social networks than other girls their age. Fifty percent (50.0%) of respondents believe they are as comfortable posting personal information on social network sites as other girls their age.

Forty-nine percent (49.0%) of respondents believe they post less content (photos, videos, blogs, etc.) than most girls their age. Those with low self-esteem feel they post more than other girls their age (7.5%** vs 3.6%).³ Fifty-eight percent (58.4%) of respondents believe they update their statuses less often than other girls their age.

Self-Presentation Comparisons

Sixty-four percent (64.3%) of respondents believe that the images that most girls their age portray on social network sites are different from the images they portray in person. Twenty-three percent (23.0%) feel these portrayals are very different and 41.3% somewhat different. Those with low self-esteem are more likely to believe these portrayals are very different than those with high self-esteem (29.8%* vs 21.2%).

However, 78.4% of respondents think that the image they portray on their (own) social network profile is similar to the image they portray in person. Twenty-one percent (20.9%) of them feel they are exactly the same; 34.3% very similar, and 23.2% somewhat similar. Those with high self-esteem are more likely to believe their portrayals are exactly the same (23.9%* vs. 13.7%) or very similar (36.9%* vs 26.1%) than those with low self-esteem.

³ * $p \leq 0.05$ - statistically significant at the 95% level

** $p \leq 0.01$ - statistically significant at the 90% level

Seventy-four percent (74.4%) of respondents believe most girls their age use social networking sites to try to make themselves look cooler than they really are, and those with high self-esteem are more likely to strongly agree (37.1%* vs. 28.6%) or somewhat agree (40.7%* vs 32.3%) with this statement. However, 63% of respondents feel their (own) self-presentations are equally as cool online and offline, as 41% of them strongly disagree and 22% somewhat disagree with the idea that they use social network sites to make themselves look cooler than they really are; those with high self-esteem are more likely to strongly disagree (45.8%* vs. 25.5%).

The data above prove hypothesis #2 which states that having met the criteria for the Third Person Effect, respondents will report distinct self-presentations and impression management activities from those of other girls their age on the site.

Research Question #3 – Do privacy settings impact on respondents’ experiences with aggression on Facebook?

Privacy Settings

Forty-nine percent (48.9%) of respondents report that they are very careful and have multiple safety/privacy measures in place to protect themselves online; those with high self-esteem are more likely to report this than those with low self-esteem (51.6%* vs. 42.9%).⁴ Fifty percent of respondents report they have good intentions when it comes to online safety/privacy, but they admit they’re not always as careful as they should be; those with low self-esteem are more likely report this than those with high self-esteem (55.9%* vs. 46.9%).

⁴ * $p \leq 0.05$ - statistically significant at the 95% level

** $p \leq 0.01$ - statistically significant at the 90% level

Sixty-six percent (66.5%) of respondents have the privacy settings on the contact information section of their pages (phone number, address, email, etc.) set to viewable by friends only; 4.8% viewable by friends of friends, and; 3.8% viewable by everyone. Respondents with low self-esteem are more likely to have their contact information viewable by everyone than those with high self-esteem (6.2%** vs 2.8%).

Seventy percent (69.9%) of respondents have the privacy settings on the profile information section of their pages (comments, posts, status updates, etc.) set to viewable by friends only; 13.8% viewable by friends of friends, and; 14.2% viewable by everyone. Those with high self-esteem are more likely to have their profile information set to viewable by friends of friends than those with low self-esteem (14.7%* vs. 9.3%).

Sixty-seven percent (66.5%) of respondents have the privacy settings on the media section of their pages (photos, videos, blogs, etc.) set to viewable by friends only; 18.8% viewable by friends of friends, and; 12.1% viewable by everyone.

Experiences with Aggression

Respondents' experiences with aggression are separated into three main categories: (1) Respondents' Actions, (2) Others' Actions that Impact on the Respondent, (3) Respondent's Feelings.

Respondents' Actions

Eight percent (7.9%) of respondents have bullied someone over a social network site, and those with low self-esteem are more likely to have done so than those with high self-esteem

(13.7* vs. 6.6%).⁵ Thirty-four percent (33.6%) have changed the privacy settings on their social network profile due to a bad experience, and those with low self-esteem are more likely to have done so than those with high self-esteem (45.3%* vs. 30.0%).⁶ Twenty-six percent (25.9%) have considered deleting their social network profile due to a bad experience, and those with low self-esteem are more likely to have done so than those with high self-esteem (34.2%* vs. 23.5%). Sixteen percent (15.6%) have actually deleted their social network profile due to a bad experience.

Twenty-one percent (20.5%) have gotten in trouble because of something they posted on a social network site, and those with low self-esteem are more likely to have done so than those with high self-esteem (27.3%* vs. 18.7%). Forty-nine percent (49.2%) have gossiped about someone over a social network site. Thirty percent (29.9%) have said things to their friends on a social network site that they would never say to them in person, and those with low self-esteem are more likely to have done so than those with high self-esteem (37.3%* vs. 27.5%).

Others' Actions that Impact on the Respondent

Twenty percent (19.7%) of respondents have been bullied by someone over a social network site, and those with low self-esteem are more likely to had this happen than those with high self-esteem (31.1%* vs. 17.4%). While 58.9% of respondents agree with the idea that they have complete control over what happens with the photos, videos, and other content they post

⁵* $p \leq 0.05$ - statistically significant at the 95% level

** $p \leq 0.01$ - statistically significant at the 90% level

⁶ * $p \leq 0.05$ - statistically significant at the 95% level

** $p \leq 0.01$ - statistically significant at the 90% level

online, 20.6% have had someone hack into their social network account without their permission. Twenty-eight percent (28.2%) have had someone post photos of them or personal information about them that they didn't want posted on a social network site, and those with low self-esteem are more likely to have experienced this than those with high self-esteem (37.9%* vs. 26.1%).⁷ Thirteen percent (12.8%) have lost a friend because of something posted on a social network site, and those with low self-esteem are more likely to have had this happen than those with high self-esteem (18.0%* vs. 11.4%). Forty-one percent (41.0%) of respondents have had someone gossip about them over a social network site.

Respondents' Feelings

Thirty-six percent (36.0%) of respondents have felt shamed, embarrassed, or emotionally hurt by something posted on a social network site, and those with low self-esteem are more likely to have had this happen than those with high self-esteem (54.7%* vs. 31.2%). Ten percent (9.7%) have felt concerned for their physical safety based on posts on a social network site, as 7.2% have posted their address, 38.4% their contact information, 74.6% the name of their school, and 11.1% their (current) physical location via their social network site or a location-based site, like Go Walla or Four Square. Those with low self-esteem are more likely to have felt concerned for their physical safety based on posts on a social network site than those with high self-esteem (13.7%* vs. 8.6%).

Respondents' Experiences with Aggression by Facebook Page Section and Privacy Setting⁸

⁷ * $p \leq 0.05$ - statistically significant at the 95% level

** $p \leq 0.01$ - statistically significant at the 90% level

⁸ For this section, only those results that are statistically significant are included.

Profile Information (comments, posts, status updates, etc.)

Respondents' Actions

Those who have their profile information set to viewable by friends only are less likely to have bullied someone over a social network site than those who have their profile information set to viewable by friends of friends or viewable by everyone (6.1% vs. 11.5%)**.⁹ They are less likely to have gotten in trouble because of something they posted on a social network site (18.8% vs. 25.0%)* and less likely to have gossiped about someone over a social network site (45.6% vs. 58.7%)*** or said things to their friends on a social network site that they would never say to them in person (27.1% vs. 37.2%)***.

Others' Actions that Impact on the Respondent

Those who have their profile information set to viewable by friends only are less likely to have lost a friend because of something posted on a social network site than those who have their profile information set to viewable by friends of friends or viewable by everyone (10.2% vs. 19.4%)***. They are also less likely to have had someone gossip about them over a social network site (38.1% vs. 48.6%)**.

Respondents' Feelings

There are no statistically significant results for this category.

Contact Information (phone number, address, email, etc.)

Respondents' Actions

⁹ * $p \leq 0.05$ - statistically significant at the 95% level

** $p \leq 0.01$ - statistically significant at the 90% level

*** $p < 0.001$ - statistically significant at the 99% level

Those who have their contact information set to viewable by friends only are less likely to have bullied someone over a social network site than those who have their contact information set to viewable by friends of friends or viewable by everyone (6.7% vs. 15.9%)*.¹⁰ They are less likely to have considered deleting their social network profiles due to a bad experience (25.1% vs. 37.5%)* and/or to have gotten in trouble because of something they posted on a social network site (20.1% vs. 29.5%)*. They are less likely to have gossiped about someone over a social network site (49.0% vs. 60.2%)* or to have said things to their friends on a social network site that they would never say to them in person (30.7% vs. 44.3%)**.

Others' Actions that Impact on the Respondent

Those who have their profile information set to viewable by friends only are less likely to have lost a friend because of something posted on a social network site than those who have their profile information set to viewable by friends of friends or viewable by everyone (12.5% vs. 27.3%***). They are also less likely to have had someone gossip about them over a social network site (39.6% vs. 53.4%)**.

Respondents' Feelings

Those who have their profile information set to viewable by friends only are less likely to have felt concerned for their physical safety based on posts on a social network site than those who have their contact information set to viewable by friends of friends or viewable by everyone (9.1% vs. 15.9%)*.¹¹

¹⁰ * $p \leq 0.05$ - statistically significant at the 95% level
** $p \leq 0.01$ - statistically significant at the 90% level
*** $p < 0.001$ - statistically significant at the 99% level

¹¹ * $p \leq 0.05$ - statistically significant at the 95% level
** $p \leq 0.01$ - statistically significant at the 90% level
*** $p < 0.001$ - statistically significant at the 99% level

Media Information (photos, videos, blogs, etc.)

Respondents' Actions

Those who have their media information set to viewable by friends only are less likely to have bullied someone over a social network site than those who have their media information set to viewable by friends of friends or viewable by everyone (6.7% vs. 10.7%)*. They are less likely to have gotten in trouble because of something they posted on a social network site (18.3% vs. 25.9%)**, to have gossiped about someone over a social network site (46.0% vs. 58.4%*** and/or to have said things to their friends on a social network site that they would never say to them in person (27.4% vs. 36.3)**.

Others' Actions that Impact on the Respondent

Those who have their media information set to viewable by friends only are less likely to have had someone hack into their social network account without their permission than those who have their media information set to viewable by friends of friends or viewable by everyone (18.3% vs. 24.9%)*. They are also likely to have lost a friend because of something posted on a social network site (10.7% vs. 17.7%)** or to have had someone gossip about them over a social network site (39.0% vs. 47.6%)**.

Respondents' Feelings

Those who have their profile information set to viewable by friends only are less likely to have felt shamed, embarrassed, or emotionally hurt by something posted on a social network site than those who have their media information set to viewable by friends of friends or viewable by everyone (34.0% vs. 41.3%)*.¹²

¹² * $p \leq 0.05$ - statistically significant at the 95% level

** $p \leq 0.01$ - statistically significant at the 90% level

The data above prove hypothesis #3 which states that respondents who set their privacy settings most restrictively (viewable by friends only) experience less aggression on Facebook than those who don't.

Summary of Self-Esteem Data

Respondents' self-esteem level affects many aspects of their lives on Facebook.

Self-Presentations

Those with high self-esteem are more likely to report that their portrayals are very similar and/or exactly the same online and offline than those with low self-esteem. They are also more likely to strongly disagree with the idea that they use social network sites to make themselves look cooler than they really are. However, they are also more likely to strongly agree or somewhat agree with the idea that most girls their age use social networking sites to try to make themselves look cooler than they really are.

Those with low self-esteem are more likely to believe that the images most girls their age portray on social network sites are different from the images they portray in person than those with high self-esteem.

Privacy Settings

Those with high self-esteem are more likely to report that they are very careful and have multiple safety/privacy measures in place to protect themselves online. Those with low self-esteem are more likely to feel that while they have good intentions when it comes to online

*** $p < 0.001$ - statistically significant at the 99% level

safety/privacy, they admit they're not always as careful as they should be; they are also more likely to have their contact information set to "viewable by everyone" than those with high self-esteem.

Experiences with Aggression and Bullying

Respondents with low self-esteem are more likely to have bullied someone on a social network site than those with high self-esteem. They are also more likely to have changed the privacy settings on their social network profile due to a bad experience, and to have considered deleting their social network profile due to a bad experience. They are more likely to have gotten in trouble because of something they posted on a social network site, and to have said things to their friends on a social network site that they would never say to them in person.

Those with low self-esteem are also more likely to have been bullied by someone over a social network site, and are more likely to have had someone post photos of them or personal information about them that they didn't want posted on a social network site. They are also more likely to have lost a friend because of something posted on a social network site than those with high self-esteem.

Low self-esteem respondents are more likely to have felt shamed, embarrassed, or emotionally hurt by something posted on a social network site than those with high self-esteem. They are also more likely to have felt concerned for their physical safety based on posts on a social network site.

Chapter IV - (Youth) Culture

The young women in this research are avid social-network site users who have never known a time without the Internet, Google, or mobile phones. Their participation in these virtual communities and the advent of web 2.0 (a technical platform that supports user-generated content) provide them with the power to create and contribute information and content that become part of (youth) culture. On average, respondents make 5.5 comments per day on other people's profiles and have uploaded 182.7 pictures and 3.4 videos to the site. This ability to contribute also obligates them to constantly manage and update those creations based upon other users' feedback and simultaneous cultural productions.

The Internet as Culture and/or Cultural Artifact

When discussing issues of culture and online community, it is critical to distinguish between the Internet as culture and the Internet as a cultural artifact (Hine, 2005). To view the Internet as a culture means to regard it as a social space in its own right, exploring the forms of consumption and content production, and the patterns of online communication and social interaction, expression, and identity formation that are produced within this digital social space, as well as how they are sustained by the resources available within the online setting (Mesch, 2009).

This perspective conceives of online activity as different and/or separate from offline behavior. When studied in this way, online communities are seen as social spaces that exist entirely within the digital realm and create and support opportunities for new rules and ways of being. Youth who inhabit these communities are thus freed from the constraints of their offline character traits and behaviors as well as from those imposed by physical co-presence. In the

Internet as culture model, young people can express their “real” or inner selves and experiment with their identities online. Their bodies are not only regarded as invisible, but as unimportant, as this perspective states that the medium creates new forms of social relationships that are more intimate, richer, and more liberating than offline relationships because they are based on genuine mutual interest rather than the coincidence of physical proximity (Mesch, 2009).

Conceiving of the Internet in this way lends itself to only studying the virtual persona, online communication, and online social norms, rules, and etiquette, without considering the other direction, namely how established social norms and values are being reflected in the online world (Mesch, 2009). An alternative view – which is the perspective espoused throughout this dissertation - is to perceive the Internet as a cultural artifact, an object immersed in a social context, considering how the technology is incorporated in the everyday life of individuals and how it is used as a means of communication, expression, and content production within an offline social world (Katz & Rice, 2002). This perspective rejects the dematerialization of social life that results from adopting a perspective that looks at the Internet as its own culture, and posits that much of what happens in the digital realm is connected to and influenced by offline culture.

Virtual communities do not exist separate from the offline realm, but rather are embedded in the larger societal, cultural, subjective, economic, and imaginary constructions of lived experience and the systems within which people exist and operate (Herring, 2007). This perspective is supported by research that shows the majority of teens connect with people who they know offline on social network sites like Facebook (boyd, 2007; Lenhart & Madden, 2007; Pempek et al., 2009; Collier & Magid, 2010), and reinforces this view of the integration of online and offline lived experience.

Teen Cultural Production on Facebook

Social network sites allow users to present information about themselves (such as age, gender, location, education, and interests); encourage users to link to known and likeminded others whose profiles exist on the site, or to invite known and likeminded individuals to join the site, and; enable users to establish and maintain contact with other users, to post content, create personal blogs, and participate in online groups (Mesch, 2009). They enable the updating of others about their activities and whereabouts, the sum total of whom are important in that their numbers are often used as an indication of social standing and the extent of being socially involved with others (Ellison et al., 2007). They facilitate social interaction with peers and provide a forum for learning and refining the socio-emotional skills needed for enduring relationships. Through these interactions with peers, adolescents learn how to cooperate, to take different perspectives, and to satisfy growing needs for intimacy (Rubin et al., 2006).

Adolescents use social network sites to build a web of connections that they can display as a list of friends. On average, respondents have 347.1 “friends” on Facebook, which is slightly higher than the (mean of) 300 “friends” of the typical teen Facebook user (Madden et al., 2013). Most of them are connected to their close friends (99.3%) and acquaintances (90.4%), and 44.2% of them are connected to people who they’ve met online but not in person (those with low self-esteem are more likely to do so – 52.8%* vs. 40.5%). Some are connected to a person they have never met either online or in person (32.8%).

Teens use the site to give them greater access to others who may share their interests and ideas, regardless of geographic location. There is also the potential for them to access novel information and opportunities through the site, and to use the technology to conduct the same

activities and developmental tasks that youth have always carried on (Herring, 2007), such as identity formation, social interaction, the development of autonomy, and relationship creation and maintenance. On this site they are reproducing and expanding the peer culture they exist within offline.

Culture is a “tool kit” of symbols, stories, rituals, and world views, which people may use in varying configurations to solve different kinds of problems, and through which they experience and express meaning (Swidler, 1986). This “tool kit” helps individuals construct strategies of action (Swidler, 1986), which include decisions about appropriate and acceptable emotions, both to have and to express. It is a resource that can be used by individuals to aid their understanding and exploration of social relations, but is one that is contained within the feeling rules (Hochschild, 1979) that exist within their social environment. These feeling rules reflect patterns of social membership, and the deep acting that is often required to embody dominant cultural norms becomes the emotion work (Hochschild, 1979) of culturally sanctioned exchanges. Teens enact feeling rules and engage in emotion work as they (re)create the culture and navigate the dynamic sociality and social structure of social network sites.

The Facebook Community as Social Structure

The concept of social structure was extensively developed throughout much of the 20th century, providing a range of theories and perspectives on the study of institutions, culture and agency, social interaction, and history. Social structures are patterned social arrangements in society that emerge from and are determined by the actions of the individuals. On the meso scale, the term can refer to the structure of social network ties between individuals or organizations. On

the micro scale, it can refer to the way norms shape the behavior of actors within the social system. Facebook then, can be seen as a social structure on both the meso and micro scales.

Issues of structure and agency are closely tied to the discussions of social structure, and the debate surrounding the influence of structure and agency on human thought and behavior is one of the central issues in Sociology. In this context, agency refers to the capacity of individual humans to act independently and to make their own free choices; structure refers to those factors such as social class, religion, gender, ethnicity, and customs which seem to limit or influence the opportunities that individuals have. The debate over the primacy of structure or agency relates to an issue at the heart of both classical and contemporary sociological theory - the question of social ontology. What is the social world made of? What is a cause and what is an effect? Do social structures determine an individual's behavior or does human agency rule supreme? Many modern social theorists attempt to find a point of balance between the two and see structure and agency as complementary forces, as structure influences human behavior and humans are capable of changing the social structures they inhabit.

Anthony Giddens' theory of structuration and Pierre Bourdieu's concept of habitus (as a representation of a principle of practice theory) combine the concepts of social structure with agency. Giddens sees agency and structure as a duality – that is, that they cannot be separated from one another, and that agency is implicated in structure and structure is involved in agency. He does not see structure as simply constraining (like Durkheim) but instead sees structure as a set of rules and competencies on which actors draw, and which, in the aggregate, they reproduce. He prioritizes neither the experience of the individual actor, nor the existence of any form of social totality, but rather social practices ordered across time and space. This theory is focused on social practices and is a theory of the relationship between agency and structure. It permits

him to argue that structures are neither independent of actors nor determining of their behavior (Giddens, 1986).

Giddens posits that agency and structure are inextricably interwoven in ongoing human activity. Structure is what gives form and shape to social life, but it is not itself that form and shape. He accords the agent with much power, and thus agents have the ability to make a difference in the social world. These agents are perpetrators of action – they have at least some choice to act differently than they do. They have power and make a difference in their worlds. They constitute and are constituted by structures.

Giddens argues that in expressing themselves as actors, people are engaging in practice, and it is through that practice that both consciousness and structure are produced. He is concerned with the dialectical process in which practice, structure, and consciousness are produced. Thus, Giddens deals with the agency-structure issue in a historical, processual, and dynamic way.

Bourdieu perceives social structure as embedded in, rather than determinative of, individual behavior. He translates the agency-structure debate into a commentary on the relationship between habitus and field. Habitus is an internalized mental, or cognitive structure through which people deal with the social world. The habitus both produces, and is produced by, the society; it is the product of internalization of the structures of the social world. A habitus is acquired as a result of long-term occupation of positions within the social world. Thus, habitus varies depending on the nature of one's position in that world; not everyone has the same habitus.

Although habitus is an internalized structure that constrains thought and choice of action, it does not determine them. The habitus provides the principles by which people make choices and choose the strategies that they will employ in the social world. Habitus is not an unchanging, fixed structure, but rather is adopted by individuals who are constantly changing in the face of contradictory situations in which they find themselves. The habitus functions below the level of consciousness and language, beyond the reach of introspective scrutiny and control by the will.

While habitus exists in the minds of actors, fields exist outside their minds. The structure of the field serves to constrain agents, whether they are individuals or collectivities. It is a type of competitive marketplace in which various kinds of capital (economic, cultural, social, symbolic) are employed and deployed. Bourdieu discusses four types of capital – economic capital, cultural capital (involving various kinds of legitimate knowledge), social capital (consisting of valued social relations between people), and symbolic capital (stemming from one's honor and prestige) (Bourdieu, 1984). He argues that it is capital that allows one to control her own fate and that of others. The positions of various agents in the field are determined by the amount and relative weight of the capital they possess and their strategies depend upon their position in the field.

Bourdieu treats his agents as individual actors, which are mechanical and dominated by habitus. His rejection of the idea of an actor with the free and willful power to constitute pulls his theory more strongly in the direction of structure.

Both Giddens and Bourdieu have a primary interest in what is done rather than what is said, when it comes to the behavior of individual agents. Giddens separates actions from intentions as he argues that what happens is often different than what was intended. Bourdieu discusses dispositions, which are public declarations of where one stands, what one's allegiances

are, and are performances of preference. For both theorists, what happens in practice is the outcome of the dialectical relationship between structure and agency.

While many scholars have criticized these theories on numerous levels, both structuration and practice theory have important explanatory power for a social network site like Facebook. As a web 2.0 platform, the vast majority of the content on the site comes from the users themselves. As such, the structure of it cannot be conceived without considering the agency of its members (Giddens) as they provide the community with the information that is its currency and lifeblood. Equally as important is the ephemeral nature of any social network site, regardless of its current membership numbers or presence in the lives of its users. If at any time user sentiment shifts and the community determines there is a better platform for their needs, they will leave the site – or log on less frequently – and find another virtual location for their needs.

By the end of 2013, Facebook saw a decrease in the number of daily users, partly among younger teens (ages 13-17) who were using other social sites like Snapchat, Twitter and Instagram (Wagner, 2013). Snapchat is a photo-sharing service that only displays the photos among users for a few seconds. Moments after a user opens the “snap” that has been shared with her, she can no longer access it and the image is deleted from the company's servers. Twitter is an online social networking and microblogging site that enables users to send and read short 140-character text messages, called "tweets." Instagram is an online mobile photo-sharing, video-sharing and social networking site that enables its users to take pictures and videos, apply digital filters to them, and share them, on both the Instagram platform and a variety of other social network sites (like Facebook). These younger teens are also creating their own social networks with chat apps like Kik and WhatsApp or using networks like Pheed that allow for status updates, but also quick video clips and photo filters similar to Instagram (Stern, 2013).

The nature of the social network site lends itself toward considerable agency for its members. Along those lines, the structure of Facebook is embedded in the way in which individuals behave on the site, but does not define how they behave. For example, teens have accepted the “like” button and have incorporated it into the way in which they communicate their support for their friends’ postings. The “like” button has almost become synonymous with the concept of interaction, and the quick and easy nature of clicking the button has turned into an integral tool for participation in this digital community. In this way the structure of the site has become part of how the users engage with one another on it. However, the structure of Facebook does not proscribe how users act on the site. What appears to be more important to the choices users make about what to post or how to connect on the site is their desire to display, earn and spend social and cultural capital.

Facebook as Status System

The theory of status explains many of the key features on Facebook -- the pressures toward conformity, a preoccupation with fashion and styles, the significance of sexual partners, and the central role of gossip (Milner, 2005). Users understand that their social life is often inextricably linked with the perception of their status online, and they can become involved with others on the site in ways that demonstrate the breadth of their social sphere but also the depth of their inner circle of friends.

In his book, *Distinction*, Pierre Bourdieu examined the aesthetic preference of different groups throughout society and demonstrated how he saw culture as a kind of economy, or marketplace. Of the four types of capital he discusses (economic, cultural, social, and symbolic) the three types that are most applicable to Facebook are cultural capital (forms of knowledge,

skills, education, and advantages that a person has, which give them a higher status in society), social capital (resources based on group membership, relationships, networks of influence and support), and symbolic capital (resources available to an individual on the basis of honor, prestige or recognition) (Bourdieu, 1984). Teens use these three forms of capital in their evaluations of one another and trade in specific types of social currency (sometimes employing gossip and rumors) to elevate their standing in the status system. Forty-nine (49.2%) of respondents have gossiped about someone else over a social network site, and 41.0% have been gossiped about by others.

Ironically (or perhaps intentionally?), there is a field at the top of each user's profile on Facebook called "status." This status field is where the user can share updates, ideas, thoughts, links to articles, etc. On average, respondents from this research post 2.1 status updates per day, or around 766.5 status updates per year. So while the word status is used for the space on a Facebook profile page where she can describe her current situation or state of affairs, it also contains within it the opportunity to showcase her social standing within the community – online and off.

Mutual Self-Disclosure and Social Control

One of the means through which to increase social standing and capital on Facebook is to engage in the process of self-disclosure. The reciprocal nature of this action among friends is supported by the opportunities social network sites provide for immediate, continuous, and concurrent communication. By sharing details about their lives, users create opportunities to connect with others who have similar experiences and/or to engage with those who have had different ones. These interactions have the potential to promote adolescents' perspective-taking

abilities, which is one of the ways teens use their friendships to overcome the ego-centrism of adolescence.

However, users need to be mindful of what they post, as there can be consequences to sharing too much or exposing parts of oneself that are unacceptable to others. A user has to choose her words and actions wisely, as any of these may be met with censure and disapproval just as easily as with support and affirmation. This ritual of self-disclosure on social network sites complicates Goffman's theory of front stage/back stage behavior in human interaction. Yet it also creates opportunities for a nuance of Goffman's theory, through the practice of social steganography.

Social steganography is the act of hiding information in plain sight, creating a message that can be read in one way by those who aren't in the know and read differently by those who are (boyd, 2010). This practice enables users on Facebook to communicate with distinct audiences simultaneously, relying on specific cultural awareness to provide the right interpretive lens (boyd, 2010). Social stenography is a privacy tactic some teens utilize when they are engaging in semi-public forums like Facebook, where there can be a much larger "audience" than they would like to be engaging with on certain topics. It is a way for them to bring their backstage behavior on to the front stage, without most of those viewing their performance understanding exactly what they are seeing.

While it is unknown whether their confidence stems from successful usage of social steganography or other choices they make regarding what they post, the majority of teen girls in this research feel confident in what they are disclosing about themselves through their postings on the site. Sixty-one percent (61.4%) are not concerned that their friends or family will lose

respect for them, based on their social network posts or photos (those with high self-esteem are more likely to be not at all concerned – 37.5%* vs. 28.0%). Sixty percent (60.0%) of them are not concerned that their social network posts or photos will get them in trouble with parents, teachers, or other adults (those with high self-esteem are more likely to be not at all concerned – 34.7%* vs. 24.8%). Sixty percent (59.8%) are not concerned that they may lose their job or be turned down for a job in the future based on the content posted on their social network profile (those with high self-esteem are more likely to be not at all concerned – 39.0%** vs. 31.7%).

Fifty-eight percent (58.1%) are not concerned that their ability to get into the college of their choice may be jeopardized based on the content posted on their social network profile (those with high self-esteem are more likely to be not very concerned – 26.4%** vs. 19.9%). The majority of them (58.9%) also agree that they have complete control over what happens with the photos, videos, and other content they post online (those with high self-esteem are more likely to strongly agree with this idea – 30.4%* vs. 27.6%).

Most of the respondents (67.5%) would not be embarrassed if others viewed their social network profiles, including their photos, videos, and posts. Eight-four percent (83.8%) would not be embarrassed if their parents/ guardians did so; 98.2% their close friends; 97.3% their peers; 94.9% their boyfriend or someone they are interested in dating; 81.5% their teachers; 86.3% their best friends' parents; 82.6% their boyfriends' parents or the parents of someone they are interested in dating; 82.1% a college admissions office, and; 81.8% their current or future employer. However, for each of these people, those with low self-esteem were more likely to be embarrassed than those with high self-esteem (parents/guardians – 47.8%* vs. 27.1%; close friends – 4.3%* vs. 0.9%; peers – 5.6%* vs. 1.9%; boyfriend/dating interest – 8.7%* vs. 4.0%); teachers – 26.7%* vs. 15.9%); best friend's parents – 22.4% vs. 10.9%); boyfriend/dating

interest's parents – 26.7%* vs. 14.3%); a college admissions officer (29.2%* vs. 14.5%); current or future employer (27.3%* vs. 14.9%).

This mutual self-disclosure through online communication can do more to enhance than harm the quality of adolescent friendships (Valkenburg and Peter, 2007; Blais, Craig, Pepler, & Connolly, 2008). Youth who are socially successful offline use online communications to enhance an already rich social life, and socially anxious adolescents take advantage of the distance and anonymity of online communication to form friendships they would otherwise lack the courage to initiate (Valkenburg and Peter, 2007). With respect to socially-anxious teens, Subrahmanyam and Greenfield (2008) suggest that the flexibility of new media tools on these sites may make it easier for adolescents to communicate with those who they want to befriend. It may feel less intimidating to approach one or more individuals electronically than face to face at school or in another social setting. Additionally, adding a person to one's friend list may seem like a smaller risk than inviting that person to meet somewhere offline. However, these connections may also contribute to social control within groups of friends – on and off the site.

In *Mind, Self, and Society*, George Herbert Mead argues that the development of the self takes place only in a social group, for selves exist only in relation to other selves (Mead, 1934). For users on Facebook, this social group is made up of their “friends” who become the generalized other Mead describes as necessary for the construction of their “selves.” Thus, Facebook can be a powerful mechanism for defining selfhood that contains within it opportunities to exert social control.

Patterns of creation and curation of online content on Facebook exemplify the friendship-love-affection method of social control (Goode, 1978) in that they have the power to exert a type of socio-mental regulation that prioritizes what is important or what should be given any

attention at all (Zerubavel, 1997). At any moment friends may attempt to control what others' think and feel, so as to create categories of acceptable attributes, actions and ideas, which they believe will ensure the stability of their relationships and their groups.

This type of social control may partially explain how survey respondents answer questions regarding their self-presentations on social network sites. Twenty-one percent (20.9%) of teens in this study feel the image they portray on social network sites is exactly the same as the image they portray in person, 34% feel it is very similar and 23% feel it is somewhat similar, for a total of 78% of all respondents reporting they are more similar than different. When asked how much they agreed with the statement that they use social network sites to make themselves look cooler than they really are, 41% strongly disagreed and 23% somewhat disagreed with this idea, for a total of 64% of respondents in disagreement with this idea. On a scale of 1-5, with 1 being a variable self-presentation (online and offline) and 5 being a constant self-presentation, respondents scored an average of 3.68, demonstrating their belief that they are more similar than different in their self-presentations.

From this data it appears that the type of social control exerted among the members of these social groups is tied to the notion of authenticity – as defined by a consistent online and offline presentation. However, the data also provide details about the differences in their offline and online self-presentations, which grant some insight into ways of being that contain acceptable departures from complete consistency in online and offline self-presentation.

Of the 29 characteristics listed in the survey questions, the top five attributes respondents felt that the people who know them well would use to describe who they are in person are smart (82.2%), fun (81.8%), funny (79.5%), kind (75.7%), and a good influence on others (59.0%).

The top five attributes respondents felt that the people who don't know them well and came across their social network profiles would use to describe them based solely on what they saw on those profiles are fun (54.0%), funny (52.1%), social (48.0%), kind (43.4%), and smart (43.1%).

From this data we learn that while 80% of the words chosen are the same for online and offline (smart, fun, funny and kind), the priorities these attributes are given in these two spaces are not the same, nor are the number of respondents choosing these words. Respondents feel they will be perceived as fun and funny as a result of what they post on their profiles more often than smart. In fact, slightly more respondents (5.1% versus 4.6%) believe that those viewing their online profile will describe them as stupid. They also feel that being kind does not appear as prominently in their profiles as it does in their offline behavior. Additionally, these top five characteristics seem less prominent overall in their online profiles.

These differences may be the result of individual and/or group dynamics. On the individual level, of the 22% of respondents who believe their online and offline self-presentations are different, 33% have low self-esteem. This unhappiness with themselves and with life may factor into their desire to alter their self-presentations and thus "who they are" on social network sites. These differences may also be a reflection of the cultural mores created and reinforced by the respondents' peer groups, as they desire to conform to whatever they perceive is the acceptable means of self-presentation on the site.

The fifth of the top five descriptors (above) chosen by respondents furthers this idea. While the young women choose being a good influence on others as one of their top five attributes in person, they choose being social when it comes to perceptions of them from their online profile content. This may be the result of the culture their peers have created on the site, as

the nature of Facebook - a “social” network – values that trait more highly, whereas being a good influence on others may be more highly valued in their in person communities, as a result of local mores or behavioral expectations. Similarly, respondents indicated they believe they would be perceived as popular more often by someone looking at their online profile than someone who knows them well in person (26% versus 22%, respectively). The importance of this attribute is evident by the variety of ways teens use Facebook to assert their position in the popularity hierarchy, including the number of friends listed on their profiles (boyd, 2007; Tong et al., 2007).

These survey responses also illustrate the potential of social control, in that if presenting an image that is smart or kind is not valued by the Facebook community as much as being fun or funny, respondents will not prioritize these attributes in their profile content. This type of social control demonstrates how users on Facebook experience their world on the site not only personally, through their own senses, but also impersonally, through their (mental) membership in this social community. Their ideas and thoughts are affected by their belonging to this particular thought community (Zerubavel, 1997) and the results of this socio-mental control may include what they even consider relevant, or on a more global scale, what thoughts cross their minds (Zerubavel, 1997). These attitudes, behaviors, and ways of thinking that become common sense – a set of assumptions as unselfconscious as to seem a natural, transparent, undeniable part of the structure of the world (Geertz, 1973). Facebook friendships then, can play an important role in defining users’ “optical” predispositions (Zerubavel, 1997), as well as in defining the rules of individual and group comportment in their (youth) culture.

Boundaries and Behavior Rules

Cultural expectations form the boundaries of the social network site that contain within them everything a user has to know or believe in order to operate in a manner acceptable to the other members (Geertz, 1973), which may be exterior to her mind, but can still constrain her (Durkheim, 1961). On Facebook, teens are engaging with the rules of their offline social groups and the expectations of behavior on the site itself through their self-presentations and impression management activities, as they connect with a group of others with whom they feel they share similar aspirations, values, beliefs, and interests. Many users grow into the expectations their peers have of them, and their adherence to these expectations becomes as much personal, individual, and self-related as they are cultural (Amsterdam and Bruner, 2000).

On Facebook, adolescents express themselves and visibly define their social circles (Urista, et al., 2008) in ways that can be used to bolster those people/relationships they wish to showcase and purposefully ignore those they do not. They may also use this site to police one another's behavior, including gender scripting attitudes, behaviors, emotions, and language that cause users to yield to and perpetuate gender identity stereotypes (Cerulo, 1997).

Gary Fine labels this small group culture "idioculture," and defines it as a, "system of knowledge, beliefs, behaviors, and customs shared by members of an interacting group to which members can refer and that serve as the basis of further interaction; members recognize that they share experiences, and these experiences can be referred to with the expectation that they quickly be understood by other members, thus being used to construct a social reality for the participants" (Fine, 1996).

This idioculture is a type of social ordering that is created and maintained by both conceptual and structural means (Epstein, 1992). Since online communities are unbounded in

any tangible structural way - unlike offline communities that contain physical markers of human relations - there is increased emphasis on the conceptual nature of social territories that signal who ought to be related and who excluded (Gerson and Peiss, 1985).

Better capitalized individuals have the symbolic power to define the social order, and while there are instances of clear coercion in their words and actions, more often than not their power is subtle -- an “invisible power” abstracted from the relations between connections (Haller, 2003). Their status within the group endow them with the authority to define any given situation in which they all find themselves, and how to resolve any problems that may result from it. These individuals are also bestowed with the privilege of erecting boundaries that signal who ought to be admitted or excluded from the group (Epstein, 1992), and thus manage to continually cement their role within it. They make it clear to the group that individuals should conform to the class to which they belong, and different classes of things should not be confused (Douglas, 1966). Their power is such that they are able to shape the life circumstances of others in the group, and thus have an impact on the culture on the site.

Many of the users within this group on Facebook may become invested in these boundaries – even if they are sometimes frustrated by them or feel they are unfair – because their sense of self, their security, and their dignity are tied to the boundary distinctions and they are personally invested in the authority and hierarchy of the group (Epstein, 1992).

Peer Group Membership

The majority of teens’ friends on Facebook are also their friends offline, and these friendships are often experienced in the context of larger peer groups. Teen’s peer groups help them expand their perspective beyond their individual viewpoints and/or those of their families,

teach them how to negotiate relationships with others, and offer them relationships with others who may become important social referents for educating them about social norms and customs as they transition into adulthood (Sherif , 1964). They have the capacity to influence individual members' attitudes and behaviors on many cultural and social issues (Espelage et al., 2003) and provide a staging ground for the practice of social behaviors.

Peer groups also help with identity formation and the acquisition of a sense of self. They provide their members with opportunities to experiment with roles and uncover aspects of their selves. However, there are limits to these opportunities, as role expectations (Parsons, 1951) quickly and definitively lead to normative codes that can become very rigid. Members' deviation from the forms of acceptable behavior can lead to rejection from the group (Gavin and Furman, 1989) and as such, have an impact on users' self-presentations on sites like Facebook as they seek to maintain an image that fits within the perception of their social group. In this way, the information contained on one's social network profile is more than a form of self-expression, but is also a "place-marker" that signals group membership (Livingstone, 2008). Additionally, as group-level cultures tend to adopt public positions more extreme than the preferences of their members (DiMaggio, 1997), teens also carefully manage others' impressions of them so as to solidify their membership in the group.

These peer groups are also situated within a popularity hierarchy, and group status offline is also present online (boyd, 2007). Whether done mindfully or without thought, users' patterns of behavior on Facebook may sanction their groups' existence and legitimate it by engaging in the replication of its boundaries. Thus the status of the group becomes relatively inalienable as it is replicated online and offline, and the ranking of the group within the social structure becomes institutionalized within (youth) culture (Milner, 2005).

The advent of web 2.0 technology has enabled (teen) online users to contribute to culture in unprecedented ways. These cultural productions are tied to users' group memberships, as well as reflect the mores and ideas of the larger (offline) cultures within which they live. The actions they take and decisions they make on this social network site also provide opportunities to explore the formation of their identities on Facebook, a discussion of which is the focus of the next chapter.

Chapter V - Identity and Identification

As the sociologist Anthony Giddens has asserted, we are now all communicatively interdependent (Giddens, 1991). This reality manifests itself on social network sites by reshaping teens' experiences of identity development and creating challenges in their desire to be recognized and accepted for who they really are and/or who they believe themselves to be (Clark 2012). Young people want to engage with one another on Facebook and belong to this community, yet they have to weigh revealing enough information about themselves to participate in the reciprocal self-disclosure that is required to belong, with the potential of revealing too much and being perceived by others as needy or insecure. They also have to decide who it is they want to "be" on the site – which personal attributes they want to highlight or downplay and/or which they want to assert in ways online that they do not feel they can offline. All of these have an impact on their identity development processes, and are also bound up with their self-presentation and impression management activities on the site.

There are a number of places on Facebook where teens engage in identity construction, self-presentation and impression management. Profiles are both a representation of the individual on the site and the place where interaction with others takes place. Profile generation is an explicit act of writing oneself into being in a digital environment (boyd, 2007) and participants must determine how they want to present themselves to those who may view their self-presentations or those who they wish might (boyd, 2010). Conversations take place on users' "walls" on their profile pages, which reflect their engagement with (others on) the site. Although features may allow participants to restrict others' contributions to their profile, most participants welcome the contribution of images and comments. These contributions are made by a select group of people who the users have invited to see their profiles through how they have set their

privacy settings. However, these semi-public profiles are still typically available to a broad audience, comprised of friends, acquaintances, peers, and interesting peripheral ties (boyd, 2010).

A user's Friends List is visible to anyone who has permission to view that person's profile. As such, this demonstration of connections or "friends" on the site is much more than an act of social accounting (boyd, 2010). In choosing her connections, a teen is making important choices about her social sphere and those with whom she wants to be linked. In choosing who to include as Friends, teens more frequently consider the implications of excluding or explicitly rejecting a person as opposed to the benefits of including them, as the majority of users simply include all who they consider a part of their social world, e.g., current and past friends and acquaintances, as well as peripheral ties, or people who the participant barely know but feels compelled to include (boyd, 2010).

On social network sites, users' imagined – or at least intended – audience is the list of friends that they have chosen to connect with on the site. These are users who they expect to be accessing their content and interacting with them. And these are the people to whom a teen is directing her self-presentations, as the value of imagining the audience or public is to adjust one's behavior and self-presentation to fit the intended norms of that collective (boyd, 2010).

Users communicate with friends on the site in myriad ways. The most commonly used group feature is the commenting option that displays conversations on a person's "wall." These comments are visible to anyone who has access to that person's profile and users contribute in this way with individuals and with groups of other users. Teens check-in with one another by communicating on each other's walls, and also use this space to demonstrate social connections

in front of the broader social audience of which their friends are members. While individual updates are arguably mundane, the running stream of content gives users a general sense of those around them and gives them a sense of the social landscape constructed by those with whom they connect (boyd, 2010).

Through these connections with friends, teens often communicate their feelings as they are feeling them, and thus build their self-awareness through the act of sharing, much like extroverts who need to hear themselves speak to know what they think (Steiner-Adair, 2013). They also connect via instant message and private communication that most closely mirrors email messages. Using all of these tools on Facebook, teens constantly establish and redesign their identities and self-presentations on the site.

Adolescent Identity

Identity is a very broad and ambiguous concept, yet it focuses attention on critical questions about personal development and social relationships—questions that are crucial for our understanding of young people’s growth into adulthood and the nature of their social and cultural experiences (Buckingham, 2008). Viewing teens as individuals entails conceiving of them as significant social actors in their own right, as “beings,” and not simply as “becomings,” and incorporating use of digital media like social network sites in discussions of the formation of adolescent identities is integral to understanding many aspects of their individual and social development.

Adolescent identity is defined as a feeling of distinctiveness from others and feelings of belonging and self-worth (Rogers, 1962). Identity development is the prominent developmental task adolescents face as they are pushed by both psychological and social factors to define the

self (McLean & Breen 2009). Within this developmental process, adolescents contend with two forms of adolescent ego-centrism (Elkind, 1967). The first is the “imaginary audience” in their minds that makes them feel as if everyone is watching and judging their every move, because they assume that their preoccupations are shared by others. The second is the “personal fable” which is the result of their belief in their personal uniqueness. They construct a narrative, or “fable,” about themselves in which their thoughts and experiences are special and distinct from others’ thoughts and experiences (Davis et al., 2009).

Some scholars of adolescent development suggest that peer interaction can help adolescents to overcome their ego-centrism (Pugh & Hart, 1999; Youniss & Smollar, 1985). By sharing their thoughts, feelings, and experiences with their peers, adolescents may come to realize that they are neither as unique as they had imagined, nor are they the focus of everyone’s attention (Davis et al., 2009). The nature of social network sites engages in new and interesting ways with these theories and ideas. On Facebook, the audience is not imaginary – there are, in fact, hundreds (on average) of others who are watching and judging a teen’s every move, and their beliefs about their preoccupations being shared by others are often validated by the posts and behaviors of their peer connections on the site. At the same time, the personal fable may be less compelling, in that they are witness to the thoughts and experiences of so many of their peers, they might not be as inclined to feel that they are alone or unique in their thoughts and experiences. Of course, this all depends upon the people with whom they are connected. For example, if there is a teen who is questioning her religious faith in connection to her sexual orientation and is mostly connected to those whom she knows offline, she might feel unique in her struggles and thus more prone to ego-centrism as a result of her participation on the site. On

the hand, if she is able to connect with those who live outside her community who demonstrate that she is not alone in her experiences, it may lead her away from this ego-centrism.

As a whole, social network sites like Facebook may be considered a vehicle for teens to expand their ego-centric activities, given the requirements of self-disclosure and content curation and contribution. Yet, there is also the communal aspect of the site that simultaneously brings individuals out of their own thoughts and experiences, as they construct their identities through constantly engaging with others within the digital community.

Identity construction is comprised of the interconnected activities of self-recognition and recognition by others. External recognition is integral to self-reflection and helps one define the person she would like to become. The identities she creates may be individualistic and/or be coterminous with dyads, triads, or a whole group (Perinbanayagam, 2000) and they incorporate what Markus and Nurius call “possible selves.” Possible selves are important because they provide an evaluative and interpretive context for the current view of the self and function as incentives for future behavior (Markus & Nurius, 1986). A teen’s possible selves include the good selves, the bad selves, the hoped-for selves, the feared selves, the not-me selves, the ideal selves, and the ought selves (Markus & Nurius, 1986). She uses these selves to help her determine her social strategy, and listens to them carefully as the activation of a negative possible self can have a negative impact on her social life – online and off.

The construction of possible selves is shaped by an individual’s social context and the possibilities for being she perceives therein (Davis et al., 2009). Online contexts provide individuals with the opportunity to interact with more people of varying ages, expertise, and life experiences (Ito et al., 2008). In this way, social network sites may provide adolescents with

greater variety with which to formulate their possible selves, which can have an impact on how they develop their identities, construct their self-presentations, and manage others' impressions of them, as they work to build their status within the dynamic Facebook community.

Seventy-eight percent (78.4%) of teen girls in this research think that the image they portray on their social network profile is similar to the image they portray in person, and 63.5% of respondents feel their self-presentations are equally as cool online and offline. From these data it appears that most respondents value a constant self-presentation, or what might be considered an authentic self-presentation, as it is consistent online and off. Yet, they still may be engaging with their possible selves even though it appears they are representing their actual selves for the most part. These possible selves manifest in the opportunities the site provides for them to post content to their profiles that is aspirational (such a quotes from people whom they admire), articles about groups or organizations whose missions they support, profiles of public figures who are doing work in areas they would like to pursue, and/or activities they are currently involved in that reflect their hopes and dreams for themselves. A social network site like Facebook is a digital community of actual and possible selves, interacting with one another's self-concepts.

Self-Concept

One key component of a teen's identity is her self-concept. Self-concept reflects the potential for growth and change, and all the values that are attached to these possible future states (Markus & Nurius, 1986). It is a way of behaving that develops in social interaction, and takes shape in the course of participating in cooperative activities (Shibutani, 1961). The self-concept can take various forms and is constantly in flux. Structural change in a teen's self-concept occurs when she adds or discards identities; level change involves change in the

importance of a role identity or in the level of an attribute, without a change in its ranking, and; ipsative change refers to a change in the ranking of one's role identities and may entail developing some identities or traits at the expense of others (Kiekolt, 2000). While self-concepts are extremely resilient, they are also vulnerable (Bruner and Kalmar, 1998), especially for adolescents.

All of the abovementioned changes can manifest themselves as teens navigate the dynamic sociality of Facebook, and affect their self-presentation on the site. Respondents' behavior on the site illustrate ipsative changes to their self-concepts, in that there are changes in the ranking of their role identities and the development of some identities or traits at the expense of others. For example, respondents felt that people who know them well would describe their offline personae as smart (82.2%), fun (81.8%), funny (79.5%), kind (75.7%), and a good influence on others (59.0%). However, they felt that people who don't know them well and came across their social network profiles would use to describe them based solely on what they saw on those profiles are fun (54.0%), funny (52.1%), social (48.0%), kind (43.4%), and smart (43.1%).

Eighty percent of the words chosen are the same for online and offline (smart, fun, funny and kind), however the priorities these attributes are given in these two spaces are not the same, nor are the percentage of respondents choosing these words. Respondents feel they will be perceived as fun and funny as a result of what they post on their profiles more often than smart. They also feel that being kind does not appear as prominently in their profiles as it does in their offline behavior. Additionally, these characteristics seem less prominent overall in their online profiles, as is evidenced by the lower percentages across all five words.

While the young women choose being a good influence on others as one of their top five attributes in person, they choose being social when it comes to perceptions of them from their online profile content. Respondents also indicated they believe they would be perceived as popular more often by someone looking at their online profile than someone who knows them well in person. It may be that prioritizing looking social and popular are the result of their engaging their possible selves and/or their reflecting their beliefs about what is of highest value on a social network site.

Yet, the majority of these same young women are not concerned that their social network posts or photos will get them in trouble with parents, teachers, or other authority figures (60.1%), that their friends or family will lose respect for them, based on their social network posts or photos (61.4%), or that they may lose their job or be turned down for a job in the future based on the content posted on their social network profile (59.9%). Nor are they concerned that their ability to get into the college of their choice may be jeopardized based on the content posted on their social network profile (58.0%). The majority do not make comments online or other public posts that include curse words (59.9%), and most disagree with the idea that they often try to shock people with what they post online (75.3%) and/or that they often post comments, status updates, and other online posts that are not true, just to get people's attention (81.8%). Overall (67.5%), they would not be embarrassed if anyone in their lives viewed their social network profile, including their photos, videos, or other posts.

As such, these behaviors are examples of teens' explorations of a range of being (Cerulo, 1997) rather than evidence of their engaging in harmful, disingenuous or malicious acts. Their choices also reflect their self-esteem levels and sense of self-efficacy, as respondents' answers to these questions about online and offline attributes have distinct patterns by level of self-esteem.

While this self-esteem is not necessarily a stable overall estimation of their worth as an individual, but rather a variable value that is a function of the valences of their working self-concept at a given time (Markus & Nurius, 1986), in many ways it significantly affects their activities and experiences on the site.

Self-Esteem and Self-Efficacy

Self-esteem develops as a result of the experiences people have and how they feel about themselves in relation to those experiences. While this is no single universally accepted definition of self-esteem, the National Association for Self-Esteem - an organization dedicated to providing vision, leadership and advocacy for improving the human condition through the enhancement of healthy self-esteem - defines it as, “the experience of being capable of meeting life's challenges and being worthy of happiness” (Reasoner, 2000).

There are many (statistically significant) differences in respondents’ self-presentations and impression management activities by self-esteem levels. The first difference is in their connections on Facebook. Those with high self-esteem are more likely to connect with parents (68.7%* vs. 59.0%) on the site, and those with low self-esteem are more likely to connect with others who they have met online but not in person (52.8%* vs 40.5%). Additionally, those with low self-esteem are more likely to be embarrassed by anyone viewing their online profiles than those with high self-esteem (47.8%* vs. 27.1%). They are also more likely to be somewhat concerned that their social network posts or photos will get them in trouble with parents, teachers, etc. (29.2%* vs. 17.9%); that their friends or family will lose respect for them, based on their social network posts (26.1%* vs. 16.4%), and; that their ability to get into the college of

their choice may be jeopardized based on the content posted on their social network profile (23.6%* vs 13.7%).

The fact that respondents with low self-esteem are more likely to use Facebook to connect with people they've met online but not in person may be the result of their looking for "friends" with whom they share more in common than those they have found offline. They are also much more likely than those with high self-esteem to say that they would give up their best friend to keep all of their other friends on their social network profile (13.0%* vs. 6.9%), further illustrating the importance of their online friends to them.

Respondents with low self-esteem also report that they are more concerned about being embarrassed or jeopardizing their present and/or future opportunities with what they post (see data in preceding paragraph), which may be the case for a number of reasons, the first of which being the result of their not having enough guidance about safe and productive behavior online. While the majority of respondents have had conversations with their parents/guardian about safe and unsafe social network behaviors (70.8%), what is and is not appropriate to post on social network profiles (63.7%), and the amount of time they spend on social network profile (54.1%), those with high self-esteem were more likely to have done so for each of these three categories, and those with low self-esteem were more likely not to have had conversations about any of topics in these three categories with their parents/guardians (21.7%* vs. 13.1%).

The second reason for their feelings of embarrassment or concern may be linked to their perception of the words people who don't know them well would use to describe them after viewing their social network profile. Respondents with low self-esteem are more likely to believe their self-presentations on Facebook would lead others to describe them as sexy (21.7%* vs.

13.7%), rebellious (14.3%* vs 8.0%), anti-social (11.8%* vs 3.8%), aggressive (9.3%* vs 4.5%), stupid (8.1%** vs 4.1%), slutty (8.7%* vs 3.3%), crazy (34.8%** vs 28.0%), and that they are a bad influence on others (8.1%** vs 4.1%) than their high self-esteem counterparts.

The third difference is the type of content they post, as those with low self-esteem are more likely to make online comments or other public posts that include curse words (56.5%* vs 35.4%), are sexual in nature (18.6%* vs 10.3%), and/or share photos, videos, or other online posts that include cigarettes, alcohol, or drugs (14.9% vs 7.8%). They are also more likely to post their physical location (16.1%** vs 10.2%) and their contact information (48.4% vs 35.4%) which could be the cause of their concerns about getting in trouble with authority figures.

There are also (statistically significant) differences in respondents' levels of self-efficacy by self-esteem. Self-efficacy is one's belief in one's ability to succeed in specific situations (Bandura, 1994). These beliefs determine how people feel, think, motivate themselves and behave. From the perspective of social learning theory, when a teen's efficacy expectations increase, she reveals a self that is empowered and confident in her abilities. As her self-efficacy amplifies through childhood and early adulthood, it becomes part of a self-fulfilling prophecy that encourages risk-taking and gives her the confidence to take on new and challenging tasks (Gecas, 1989).

From a cognitive theory perspective, a teen's self-efficacy can be conceptualized in terms of expectancies and perceptions of control (Gecas, 1989). Those with high levels of self-efficacy quickly recover after failures or setbacks and approach hostile situations with the confidence that they can control them. Respondents with high self-esteem also appear to have high levels of self-efficacy from the perspective of confidence in their ability to control hostile situations, in that

they are more likely to strongly agree (30.4%* vs 16.1%) and less likely to somewhat disagree (13.8% vs. 19.9%*) that they have complete control over what happens with the photos, videos, and other content they post online.

Those with high self-esteem also have higher levels of self-efficacy around protecting themselves online. They are more likely to report they are very careful and have multiple safety/privacy measures in place to protect themselves online (51.6%* vs 42.9%) and less likely to state that they have good intentions when it comes to online safety/privacy, but admit they're not always as careful as they should be (46.9% vs 55.9%*). Their confidence in their ability to protect themselves and their privacy demonstrates their high levels of self-efficacy, which also has implications for their identity projects, including their identification with others.

Identification

Identity is a contingent matter—it is something people accomplish practically through their ongoing interactions and negotiations with other people (Buckingham, 2008). In this respect, it might be more appropriate to talk about identification rather than identity (Buckingham, 2008). Richard Jenkins argues that social identity should be seen not so much as a fixed possession, but as a social process, in which the individual and the social are inextricably related (Jenkins, 2004).

Grego Stone takes this concept one step further by clarifying the relationship between self and identity in the processes involved in identification – identification with and identification of (Perinbanayagam, 2000). He surmises that identifications with one another cannot be made without identifications of one another, and that identification of one another precedes all interpersonal communication processes and is initially accomplished silently or

nonverbally (Perinbanayagam, 2000). As many of the connections teens have on Facebook are those who they know offline, it is possible that they have made these “identifications of” one another prior to connecting online. However, the dynamic sociality of social network sites requires constant verbal interaction - which includes vocabularies of identity (Perinbanayagam, 2000) – and can result in the dual projects of identification with and identification of taking a less linear path when it comes to identity processes on Facebook, as these two are happening simultaneously and are constantly in flux. These interactions also contain within them standards, expectations and often conflicting messages about who these teens should be and how they should act.

Representations of Femininity and Identity Development

Teenage girls often have a difficult relationship with the mass media, resulting from the ideals of perfection and beauty that dominate the pages of magazines, television and movie screens and online sources (Brumberg, 1997; Lewis & Finders, 2002). These images offer unrealistic expectations of femininity, which can make such performances impossible for young women to enact fully or well (Durham, 1999 and 2008; Milkie 1999). However, given the power and prolific nature of media, many girls still attempt to successfully navigate and emulate these social constructions by portraying any number of archetypes, including the “perfect teen” (Brown & Gilligan, 1992), the “mean” teen (Talbot, 2002; Simmons, 2002; Behm-Morawitz & Mastro, 2008), or the teen who uses her sexuality to get what she wants (Durham, 2008). The media’s manipulation of the social institution of gender and the established patterns of expectations and social processes that surround it (Lorber, 1994) thus affect teenage girls’ identity construction activities, self-presentations and identifications with others on Facebook.

In their pursuit of an ideal femininity (to which girls will never measure up fully) (Driscoll, 2002; Phillips, 1998), some girls post pictures of themselves in which they are very deliberately posing — in some cases vamping — for the camera: hair swept back, hand on hip, dressed just so; oftentimes, they look as if they are auditioning for a Sports Illustrated swimsuit issue, clad in bikinis that leave little to the imagination, or other oversexualized images of pouting lips, lots of cleavage, short-shorts, and crop tops that showcase a bare midriff (Hoder, 2012). These girls pose in these ways, in part, because they may believe that looking sexy or even slutty will get their photos more “likes,” the Facebook measure of popularity and validation.

While the preoccupation with popularity has always existed in adolescence, it is now quantifiable and visible for everyone to see through the “like” button on the Facebook. And because these “likes” are so incredibly important to them, girls are not only looking for this type of affirmation from their close (girl) friends, but also from (older) boys and others who they think are popular themselves. This desire for widespread affirmation of who they “are” affects their choice of poses, as being sexy or looking “hot” may draw more interest and responses than other types of photos.

Interestingly however, the nature of the web 2.0 platform also provides opportunities for girls to push back against the power of (sexualized) media portrayals of them, in ways that did not exist in the past. As cultural producers through this new media (Mazzarella, 2005; Kearney, 2011), they are in a more powerful position than ever before to resist mass culture’s constructions of commercialized femininity and sexuality by crafting their self-presentations in ways that feel more authentic and realistic to them. They write the selves of this period of their lives (Bruner and Kalmar, 1998) in ways that reflect that identification is a matter of crucial

importance in human life (Shibutani, 1961), but that do not surrender their self-presentations to the decisions made by the media. Girls showcase fashion trends, body types, hairstyles and/or engage in activities that do not mirror what they see in popular culture. Very few of the young women in this study have posted revealing, naked, or sexual photos or videos of themselves (2.3%), photos, videos, or other online posts that include cigarettes, alcohol, or drugs (9.6%) or posted online comments or other public posts that are sexual in nature (11.7%). These respondents have chosen to represent themselves differently than the imagery they see in the media, as they identify with and make identifications of their peers on Facebook.

Peer relationships serve an important function throughout the lifecycle (Davis et al., 2009). Through their interactions with peers, individuals develop their ideas about the self (Mead, 1934) as well as who they are in relation to others (Youniss & Smollar, 1985). These peer relationships often become friendships that then become increasingly stable during childhood, as the emphasis moves from shared activities and physical attributes to shared values (Davis et al., 2009). Close friendships, or “chumships,” become the most important peer relationship in early adolescence (Sullivan, 1953). As perspective-taking skills improve during this period, friendships are defined increasingly by mutuality and reciprocity (Selman, 1981; Youniss & Smollar, 1985). Through mutual self-disclosure in the context of lengthy conversations, friends support, encourage, and give each other advice (Rubin et al., 2006; Youniss & Smollar, 1985). Girls’ friendships tend to be particularly intimate and supportive (Berndt, 1996; Collins & Steinberg, 2007).

Social network sites like Facebook play a central role in youth friendships (Ito et al., 2008), as they have emerged as hubs of adolescent interpersonal communication (Williams & Merten, 2008) and have multiplied the opportunities for reciprocal self-disclosure among friends

by providing instantaneous, constant, and simultaneous communication (Davis et al., 2009). This increase in the number of interactions also elevates the number of situations in which these teens engage with their sense of self-salience, which can then influence their determination of how relationships should be and what role they should inhabit within these relationships. The schemas they produce during this process shape the information they selectively attend to, the attributions they make, and their mental representations of current situations (Dodge 1993; Menaghan 1999).

Self-salience is a set of relational schemas ranging from high levels that privilege the self over others, to low levels that privilege others above the self (Rosenfield et al., 2005). At its extremes, self-salience shapes people's tendencies towards internalizing or externalizing problems. It also involves the primacy of the self relative to others in worth, boundaries, and ranking; thus self-salience combines cognitive, emotional, and moral components (Rosenfield et al., 2005). If the ideas and the resulting expectations are more geared towards confidence, independence and dominance, and are less focused on connectedness and/or accommodation in relationships, the adolescent comes to think of herself as more important than others. On the other hand, if the messages constantly privilege the collective over the individual, she will learn to place others about herself (Rosenfield et al., 2005).

The power of these ideas stems from teens' desire for positive appraisals, and the fact that they will modify their behavior to meet others' expectations of them -- expectations which are shaped by social divisions, including division by gender (Rosenfield et al., 2000). The nature of social network sites like Facebook is to showcase relationships and social standing within them. The potential for immediate feedback – positive or negative – has incredible power to affect teens' personality systems, as they are mostly a product of the socialization (Parsons, 1951) that exists on the site. Teens adjust their self-salience levels as they receive responses to the decisions

they make and actions they take on the site. In this way, teens' understandings of their selves and their identities incorporate their personal understandings of themselves as individuals and as members of a group on the site, through their perception of their collective identity.

Collective identification is a place in the social world -- an identity that is shared with a group of others that have some characteristics in common (Ashmore, Deaux & McLaughlin-Volpe, 2004). It also refers to a set of beliefs attached to the category, such as stereotypic traits thought to be shared by its members. In the case of the young women described in this analysis, their group membership places them within the macro social category of female/women, and the micro social category of their individual social groups. Each of these collective identities plays a role in the creation and reconciliation of their identities, and the feedback that is an essential part of their developmental process. The foundation of communication on social network sites like Facebook provide them with real-time reactions and responses to their identity-formation decisions and self-presentation choices.

Adolescents report that receiving positive feedback online provides validation of their identities and personalities, and influences their ideas of their own self-worth (Stern, 2004). They feel that positive feedback about profile content confirmed the information they had placed on their profiles and added to their positive self-image (Yurchisin, 2005) and negative comments or feedback adversely affected their self-esteem and perceived self-worth (Palfrey & Gasser 2008).

There are multiple elements of collective identity that factor into young women's connection to their macro and micro social categories. The first element of collective identity gauges their attachment and/or sense of interdependence with the group, and is defined as their emotional involvement felt with others in it. Interdependence and mutual fate is a subgroup of this element, and is defined as being developed when people are aware that they are treated as a

group member rather than as an individual, that their fates and outcomes are similar (despite individualistic preferences), and that individual mobility depends, in part, on group membership (Gurin and Townsend, 1986). On Facebook, profile pages create opportunities to create unique self-presentations and highlight individual character traits. However, as a social network site, one of the main goals of Facebook is to showcase connections to others and demonstrate status and in-group membership. Comments, “likes,” photos and other posts are constant references to that group membership. This reality solidifies users’ sense of interdependence with their groups, as there are subtle and overt expectations and behavior and choices based upon interdependence and emotional attachment within these social circles.

A second element of collective identity is social embeddedness, as defined by the degree to which a particular collective identity is embedded in the person’s everyday ongoing social relationships (Ashmore, Deaux & McLaughlin-Volpe, 2004). A high level of social embeddedness exists when it would be painful to discard a specific collective identity because much of a person’s social life and relationships reinforce this identity. As a social network site is a visual representation of ongoing social relationships, and the interactions on the site are dependent on these connections, many of the teens on this site are deeply embedded with their collectivities by the nature of their actual existence on the site.

A third element of collective identity is behavioral involvement, which is the degree to which a person engages in actions that directly implicate the collective identity category in question (Ashmore, Deaux & McLaughlin-Volpe, 2004). On Facebook, teens post content that illustrates and solidifies their place in the social hierarchy. As one young woman stated as she updated her status on Facebook, “I am stating my location and who I am with right now purely for bragging rights” (personal communication, 2014).

Yet while the young women in this research may exist in gender and age cohorts that have the potential to breed familiarity and a cohesive in-group perspective or collective identity, the respondents often feel that their behavior on Facebook is quite different than other girls their age on the site. Fifty-one percent (50.8%) think that they take greater steps to ensure their online safety on social networks than other girls their age. Fifty-eight percent (58.4%) feel they post fewer status updates each day, and 49% feel they post less content (photos, videos, blogs, etc.) than other girls their age.

Seventy-four percent (74.4%) agree that most girls their age use social network sites to try to make themselves look cooler than they really are, whereas 63.5% disagree that they themselves use social network sites to make themselves look cooler than they really are. Sixty-four percent (64.3%) believe that the images portrayed on social networks by most girls their age are different from the images these girls portray in person, whereas 78.4% believe that the images they themselves portray on social networks are similar to the images they portray in person, with 20.9% stating their online and offline images are exactly the same.

Social network sites then, are digital loci for up-to-the-minute collective identification activities and in-group/out-group distinctions. These categorizations often involve a process of stereotyping or “cognitive simplification” that allows people to distinguish easily between self and other, and to define themselves and their group in positive ways (Buckingham, 2008). These distinctions can foster a sense of group belonging or community, but they also create opportunities for discrimination against outsiders. The categories teens use to label themselves and others contain within them behavioral expectations within social roles. If/when these boundaries are breached, aggression and bullying can and do occur.

Chapter VI - (Relational) Aggression, Bullying and Drama

Within teens' friendship groups there are attitudes, behaviors and ways of thinking that become shared in the group as "common sense" – a set of assumptions about who we are and what we like, as unselfconscious as to seem a natural, transparent, undeniable part of the structure of the world (Geertz, 1973). Since adolescents rely on the clear delineation of group boundaries to help them define the boundaries of their personal identities, these complex systems of norms and rituals can result in the constraining of individualism through the requirement to conform.

When the norms of the peer group are threatened, they can also lead to the perpetration of aggression and bullying against those within the group, as well as outsiders. In order to restore a sense of group structure, some adolescents may turn to peer victimization. This abuse takes many forms, including bullying, and is used by teens to attain social goals, including that of social dominance, which is defined as a differential ability to control resources such as a desired object or position in the social hierarchy (Hawley, 1999).

Bullying

Bullying has a broadly accepted baseline definition among scholars. An act of bullying is defined as an aggressive act with three hallmark characteristics: a) it is intentional; b) it involves a power imbalance between an aggressor (individual or group) and a victim; c) it is repetitive in nature and occurs over time (Levy et al., 2012). This three-part definition was introduced by Olweus (1994) and to date has not changed significantly in the literature.

"Intentional" has been used to distinguish bullying from acts of "mere conflict" or those that cause harm accidentally – for instance, teasing committed in a "friendly or playful way"

would not be considered intentional. (Finkelhor et al., 2012; Smith, Mahdavi, Carvalho, Fisher, Russell, & Tippett, 2008). “Imbalance of power” can be broadly defined to include physical differences, social differences, or other differences that make it difficult for the victim to defend herself. Researchers have assessed the imbalance of power in terms of strength, popularity, and smarts (Olweus, 1993; Felix, Sharkey, Green, Furlong, & Tanigawa, 2011). “Repetition” means that intentional harm recurs, usually over a period of time. An early, influential researcher explains the idea of repetition to mean that when peers engage in an occasional argument or conflict, it does not constitute bullying (Olweus, 1994).

The baseline definition of traditional bullying accounts for multiple types of aggression that can be present in bullying situations:

- Physical contact, words, or faces or obscene gestures may be means of bullying (Olweus, 1994).
- “Proactive” aggression is usually unprovoked, instrumental, and goal-directed – for instance, a bully may want to gain power, property, or a certain affiliation or relationship status (Price & Dodge, 1989; Espelage & Swearer, 2003; Griffin & Gross, 2004).
- “Reactive” aggression can be a defensive or angry response to a threatening, angering, or frustrating event (Price & Dodge, 1989; Espelage & Swearer, 2003; Griffin & Gross, 2004).
- “Indirect” or “relational” aggression uses rumors, gossip, secrets, and social exclusion as means of harming (often humiliating) the victim. (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995; Espelage & Swearer, 2003; Griffin & Gross, 2004; Low, Frey, & Brockman, 2010; Mishna, Cook, Saini, Wu, & MacFadden, 2010).
- “Bias-based” bullying (also referred to as aggression or harassment) refers to bullying that co-occurs with discriminatory prejudice such as racism, sexism, and homophobic teasing. The term also reflects the understanding that bullying and such forms of discrimination often converge (Russell, Sinclair, Poteat, & Koenig, 2012).

Lawmakers have begun to implement anti-bullying laws, and as of 2012, 48 states and the federal government have implemented statutes to address bullying, many of which include provisions specifically addressing online interactions (boyd, 2014).

Researchers of online bullying often use the baseline definition for offline bullying by adopting one or more of its components, with an additional explanation that it involves information and communication technologies (ICTs) or other types of Internet technologies (Levy et al., 2012). However, there is currently neither research-based consensus on the precise definition of online bullying nor scholarly agreement on how the three well-identified components of the offline definition should map onto such a definition (Levy et al., 2012).

Definitions of cyberbullying contain either characteristics or the definition of traditional bullying, and an enumeration of devices through which bullying occurs online (Vandebosch & VanCleemput, 2009). These definitions vary, and may treat the phenomenon as a type of bullying, an environment, or a communication (Ybarra, boyd, Korchmaros, & Oppenheim, 2012). One example of a definition is “when someone repeatedly harasses, mistreats, or makes fun of another person online or while using cell phones or other electronic devices” (Patchin & Hinduja, 2012). Another example is that, “Cyberbullying is any behavior performed through electronic or digital media by individuals or groups that repeatedly communicates hostile or aggressive messages intended to inflict harm or discomfort on others (Levy et al., 2012).” This definition has an addendum, which the authors suggest providing to participants in research studies. “In cyberbullying experiences, the identity of the bully may or may not be known. Cyberbullying can occur through electronically-mediated communication at school; however, cyberbullying behaviors commonly occur outside of school as well.” (Tokunaga, 2010).

When bullying occurs through new digital media like social network sites, its effects can be magnified. For example, whereas gossip, rumors and mean-spirited comments used to rely on verbal repetition for their continuance, the ability to digitally broadcast these sentiments to an enormous number of people with a few keystrokes increases the reach of this type of violence

and its power to live longer in the minds of those who consume it. In fact, to maximize attention, Facebook designs algorithms to perfect the gossip machine (boyd, 2014). Additionally, the copy-and-paste functionality of instant messages or private messages on Facebook make it possible for anything that is written and intended for a small audience to be shared with a very large one. Finally, it is sometimes difficult for users to be certain they are communicating with the person who they think is on the other side of their screen. If a user forgets to log out of her profile and has been on a shared computer, someone else may use her account to communicate with her friends as if it were she, and in doing so create a series of abusive interactions.

While there are many factors that influence a person's involvement in online abuse, one aspect of this behavior results from the nature of computer-mediated communication. Users access Facebook through a digital device that removes facial expression, body language, and voice tone from the communication equation. The screen acts as a barrier to social cues like these (that are integral to offline communication), and can create a feeling of emotional distance or "othering" of the person on the opposite end of the screen. This distance is at the foundation of the concept of disinhibition -- people's willingness to do or say things online that they would be much less likely to do or say offline (Willard, 2006). While disinhibition is a neutral aspect of online behavior that can have negative or positive outcomes, users often become disinhibited in ways that enable them to more easily create rationalizations for abusive online behavior.

Disinhibition is perpetuated in online social interactions by the reduction of or complete lack of tangible feedback that actions have caused harm, social disapproval, or any negative consequence imposed by a person of authority (Willard, 2006). There are some who have likened their own behavior while IMing (instant messaging) to their being drunk, in that they do not think before they type (speak), and that they are not at all careful of their word choice or

thoughtful about how their communication will be experienced by the other (or others) within their discussion (personal communication, 2007). These same people have explained that they have almost delayed reactions to their own contributions, in that they quickly type something and then read it afterwards and aren't even sure that what they have expressed is even what they meant or what they were thinking. Thirty percent (29.9%) of respondents in this study have said things to their friends on social network sites that they would never say to them in person.

Disinhibition complicates the dual projects of self-presentation and impression management. It challenges users' vigilance and can help explain why there is a gap in individuals' plans and actions online. It can even affect their safety choices, as 49.6% of the respondents in this study report that they have good intentions when it comes to online safety/privacy, but they admit they're not always as careful as they should be. These choices can have serious consequences, including bullying, and potentially lead to trauma for all involved.

Bullying as Trauma Experience

Human beings need security, order, love, and connection. According to the lay perspective, the trauma experience occurs when the traumatizing event interacts with human nature and sharply undermines these needs (Alexander et al., 2004). In the case of a bullying situation on a site like Facebook, the friendship group that has offered all of the above-mentioned human needs may also simultaneously become an unsafe environment where girls cannot trust one another. The trauma that results reverberates throughout the entire group, regardless of which girl has been the actual target of the abuse. As a result, girls may feel the need to protect themselves from being the next to be judged, criticized, or shunned. This need can result in girls being silent about what they have witnessed, or even taking part in the interaction in the hope of finding safety by going along with the abusive behavior.

This “emotion work” (Hochschild, 1979) dovetails with the understanding among these girls that they should not overreact to the abuse, as this may cause unwanted attention (from adults or other girls). They do not want to be chastised for being overly sensitive or possibly labeled a “tattletale,” so they often (outwardly) shrug it off or move on from it without comment or reaction. Sometimes, the experiences are so anxiety-producing that they change their privacy settings, consider deleting their profiles, or actually do so. Thirty-four percent (33.6%) of girls in this study have changed the privacy settings on their profiles as a result of a bad experience. Twenty-six percent (25.9%) have considered deleting their profiles as a result of a bad experience, and 15.6% have actually done so. The majority of the girls do maintain their profiles on the site however, which may lead to their repressing their uneasy feelings and thus straining the relationships of the girls within the group.

Yet another outcome of this repression is that in denying the suffering of the target of bullying, the girls not only diffuse their own responsibility for the suffering, but often project the responsibility for their own suffering on these others (Alexander et al., 2004). In this case, girls begin to look for the reasons why the target was treated as she was, and begin to pick apart her behavior in such a way as to possibly find a viable justification for her mistreatment. In the process of searching for this supposedly egregious act or speech, the girls slowly lose their connection to the target, and move from a potentially empathetic sentiment, to a possibly sympathetic reaction, to one which may ultimately lay blame on the target for her own behavior. As the role of the target can be played by multiple girls on any given day, these constant ruptures, justifications, and emotionally difficult events can take their toll on the girls’ friendships, levels of trust, and confidence in their relationships with one another. This trauma then, is not only the result of the group experiencing pain, but is also the result of this acute

discomfort entering into the core of the collectivity's sense of its own identity (Alexander et al., 2004).

There are also times when the target's supposed error in speech or action is more quickly forgiven. The girl learns within a short period of time that she has somehow sufficiently repented for a misdeed she is not even sure she committed, and she is allowed back into the good graces of the others within the group. Since there has often not been a dialogue about the event – including how it happened or how it was forgiven – in the target's heart and psyche, the situation cannot always be left behind so suddenly, as the breach in her mind's encounter is experienced too soon, and the abruptness prevents the mind from fully cognizing the event (Alexander et al., 2004). However, while the betrayal she had felt lingers somewhere in her being, she is often so relieved to be accepted again that she ignores her confusion and perhaps, convinces herself that the entire event was not as important as she had originally thought. This may be one aspect of why so few respondents actually deleted their profiles after a bad experience.

Bullying and the “Outgroup”

When bullying is perpetrated by one girl or group of girls against a girl or group of girls who are not part of their group, there is yet another social dynamic at work. In this case, there may be fewer feelings of betrayal and less intra-group stress, but there are still emotional reactions to the event, ranging from sadness and guilt to pleasure and/or indifference. The girls who are part of the bullying crowd may not feel any responsibility to the other girl(s), as a result of their being outsiders who do not merit their friendship or their respect. It may not even occur to them that they have done anything really wrong, as they have already objectified the other girls and thus denied them their humanity. However, the reality remains that as distinct as these

two groups may be from one another, they are still part of the same social system and may be “friends” on Facebook, and depending upon the relative ranking of each group, there may be pressure on the part of the targets to just ignore those acting like bullies, as they do not believe they have the social capital to rectify the situation or require an apology.

In a status system that rewards those at the top with the ability to move freely through the social system and to stretch some of the boundaries erected by it, there is a tendency to completely disregard those in the middle and the bottom, as if they do not matter. While this situation is certainly not unique to adolescent girl groups, this period in girls’ physical and cognitive development is particularly vulnerable to this behavior, as establishing a separate identity is a primary goal in adolescence (Rosenfield et al., 2000). By “othering” these targets, the bullies have created a strong distinction between “us and them,” which can be a harmful consequence of this desire to build separate identities. Without an intervention conducted by adults or other respected peers that focuses on empathy and reminds the bullies of the humanity of the targets, and to make clear the type of violence they have perpetrated against them, this relationally aggressive behavior will continue to occur both within and outside friendship circles.

Relational Aggression

Until about age five, children use overt aggressive tactics - such as verbal threats and physical assault (Wright, Zakriski, & Fisher, 1996) - to gain social dominance, and these tactics are quite effective; not only are the children successful in gaining objects and attention, those who use them are often well liked by their peers (Hawley, 1999). Around age eight children get the message that such human emotions and reactions are wrong or forbidden, and that these overt aggressions are no longer favorably viewed by the peer group. They then shift their aggressive strategies, and both boys and girls move their strong feelings underground and use relationally

aggressive acts to achieve dominance (Bjoerkqvist et al., 1992). As children move into adolescence, boys and girls develop more subtle, indirect forms of aggressive behaviors, including social manipulation (Bjoerkqvist, Lagerspetz, & Kaukiainen, 1992), as indirect, relationally aggressive acts are some of the most commonly employed means of getting one's way (Crick et al., 1996; Crick, Casas, & Nelson, 2002).

The phrase Relational Aggression (R.A.) was developed in the early 1990s by the University of Minnesota researcher Nicki Crick. It refers to any act that actively excludes a person from making or maintaining friendships or being integrated into the peer group (Bjoerkqvist, Lagerspetz, & Kaukiainen, 1992). Examples of relational aggression include, but are not limited to, spreading rumors, exclusion, social isolation, gossiping, eye-rolling, purposely pitting friends against one another, using sarcasm at another's expense, revealing secrets of friends, and/or embellishing rumors.

Relational Aggression utilizes social skills to network negativity. It is a form of emotional and psychological violence that many youth use to manage the treacherous topography of conflict and competition. Those who utilize relational aggression are socially cruel and manipulative, and pervert the positive attributes of close friendship, connection, trust, and intimacy by poisoning relationships and communities from the inside. The insidiousness of relational aggression results, in part, from the fact that it is often perpetrated by friends – those with whom people have shared their deepest secrets and told of their most intimate fears and dreams. Unlike other forms of bullying that are often the result of somewhat understood imbalances of power between acquaintances or schoolmates, these ruptures often occur within close-knit friendships, without warning, and can grow into chasms into which relationships disappear, oftentimes along with self-esteem and confidence.

Relational aggression gets its power from the reality that relationships with others are crucial to all human development and well-being (Tong, 1998). It contains within it the politics of “frenemies” - friends who are sometimes enemies when faced with competition, jealousy and mistrust (boyd, 2014). It has been tied to increased depression, lower academic performance, increased suicidal ideation, increased risky sexual behavior increased anxiety, anger, and sadness, substance abuse, eating disorders, and loneliness (Nixon and Cook, 2007). Those who have studied R.A. have found varying levels of this behavior in females and males. While some found that girls use relational aggression more often than boys (Worell and Goodheart, 2006), other studies reveal no gender differences (Crick & Collins, 2002;Crick and Grotpeter, 1995; Rys & Bear, 1997), and still others find greater relational aggression in boys, partly because they sexually harass girls and because they are aggressive in dating relationships (Hennington, Hughes, Cavell, & Thompson, 1998; McMaster, Connolly, Pepler, & Craig, 2002, in Morash, 2006). Relational Aggression is associated with significant social and psychological maladjustment among both boys and girls (Ittel, Werner & Kuhl, 2005).

While these studies demonstrate there is no one sex that has a monopoly on this kind of behavior, frequently accepted stereotypes about girls, and the media’s combining of the biases in our language with traditional images of women (Benedict, 1992) have resulted in a recreation of R.A. as “girl bullying.” These powerful (media) messages tap into the human desire for positive appraisal from others in their communities, and have the capacity to cause girls to modify their behavior to meet others’ expectations of them -- expectations which are shaped by social divisions, including division by gender (Rosenfield et al., 2000). Even though most of these gender differences are socially constructed, elaborated in the culture through myths, law, and folkways, and kept in place by the way each sex is positioned in the social structure (Epstein,

1988), girls internalize them and act in ways that prioritize the socially constructed truths of gender roles over their own individual judgment or aspirations. In the case of perpetuating relationally aggressive behavior, they may choose to do so as a result of social pressure to mirror the social construction of girls as docile, sweet, caring, comfortable with being with others (Epstein, 1988), and avoiders of conflict (Brownmiller, 1984). They have learned to communicate anger, hostility, or jealousy indirectly so as to maintain the appearance of social harmony, which has an impact on their behavior and experiences on Facebook. Gossip is one such form of indirect communication and relational aggression, which has been perpetrated by 49.2% of respondents on a social network site and against 41.0% of them.

Popular culture's (re)creation of R.A. as girl bullying hands girls an "acceptable" methods through which to express anger, assert feelings, resolve conflict and keep other girls in line in acceptably quiet, appropriately feminine ways (Brown, 2003). Yet they really aren't acceptable at all, and do affect girls' experiences on the site, as 79.3% of respondents have deleted someone as a friend on the site, 36.0% felt shamed, embarrassed, or emotionally hurt by something posted, and 12.8% lost a friend because of something posted on a social network site. Additionally, 20.6% had someone hack into their social network account without their permission and 28.2% had someone post photos of them or personal information about them that they didn't want posted on a social network site. All of these covert and overt relationally aggressive actions have consequences for girls' feelings of emotional safety – online and off.

Data from The Girl Scout Research Institute's 2003 report, "Feeling Safe: What Girls Say" illustrate that when asked about what worries them most, the most popular answer for girls (32%) is being made fun of or being teased (Schoenberg et al., 2003). In fact, girls ages 8-17 worry more about being teased or made fun of than they do about threats to physical safety, such

as getting into a car accident, getting a disease, or experiencing a natural disaster (Schoenberg et al., 2003). Emotional harm appears to take a greater toll because it is more difficult to figure out how to recover from these types of wounds. As one 12-year-old girl relates, “A broken arm can heal, but what about a broken heart? Words hurt a lot” (Schoenberg et al., 2003). For these girls, safety is about how they feel on the inside and the outside – it means feeling both emotionally and physically safe. Seventy-two percent of their girls define safety as not having their body hurt, and 46% define safety as not having their feelings hurt (Schoenberg et al., 2003).

Over one-third of girls ages 13-17 in their study expressed concern about being teased, bullied or threatened. Thirty-eight percent worried about their emotional safety when spending time with people their own age or participating in groups. According to one 11-year-old, hanging out with friends and people you think you can trust has hidden dangers: “It’s how long you’ve known them or how well you know them; like, if they’re a back-stabber; sometimes you try to trust them and realize they are untrustworthy” (Schoenberg et al., 2003).

Only a small fraction of respondents in this dissertation study reported that they have bullied others (7.9%), and a larger yet similarly small percentage reported they have been bullied (19.7%). These seem very low, given the public interest in and outcry about cyberbullying, and the observations of researchers around the perpetration of peer abuse online. I believe these findings are the result of two main challenges with the survey questions themselves. The first is that while the question asks about bullying, it does not define what is meant by bullying behavior. This creates challenges for the respondents, as they are then using their own definitions of bullying to assess their potential actions as either bullies or targets. This lack of clarity and uniformity results in responses that are somewhat unhelpful in illuminating the phenomena which the survey designers sought to uncover.

The second challenge is the use of the term bullying itself. Many teenagers who are bullied can't emotionally afford to identify as victims, and young people who bully others rarely see themselves as perpetrators (boyd and Marwick, 2011). For a teenager to recognize herself in the adult language of bullying carries social and psychological costs; it requires acknowledging oneself as either powerless or abusive (boyd and Marwick, 2011). Many youth engage in practices that adults label bullying, but do not name them as such. Teenagers want to see themselves as in control of their own lives, and their reputations are important. Admitting that they're being bullied, or worse, that they are bullies, slots them into a narrative that's disempowering and makes them feel weak and childish (boyd and Marwick, 2011). The term that teenagers - especially girls - do use to describe a host of interpersonal conflicts playing out in their lives is "drama" (boyd and Marwick, 2011).

Drama

Drama is performative, interpersonal conflict that takes place in front of an active, engaged audience, often on social media (boyd, 2014). It is a set of actions distinct from bullying, gossip, and relational aggression, incorporating elements of them but also operating quite distinctly. Drama does not automatically position anyone as either a target or an abuser, and those involved in it do not have a sense of themselves as aggressive or weak, but simply as part of a broader - and, often, normative - social process (boyd, 2014). Drama is a (female) gendered process that perpetuates conventional gender norms and reflects discourses of celebrity and media (boyd and Marwick, 2011). As teens perform for audiences on Facebook through their self-presentations, they engage in and deal with "drama" as part of their impression management repertoire.

The Urban Dictionary is a website that uses user-generated content and voting mechanisms to define colloquial terms. It describes drama as, “Something women and especially [sic] teenage girls thrive on. consisting of any number of situations that have an easy solution, wich [sic] would bring a fairly good outcome, but these girls choose another, shitty, bad way to deal with it, again consisting of backstabbing, blackmailing/gossiping/betraying their friends, or the all-too-common ‘I want to break up with him but i still love him!’ it drives men and what i like to call ‘normal’ girls nuts.” (Urban Dictionary, 2005). Another, simpler definition offered by Urban Dictionary is, “making a big deal over something unnecessarily.” However, colloquial definitions of drama most often focus on highly fraught social interactions between known interlocutors who are, predominantly, women and girls (boyd and Marwick, 2011).

For some teens, inciting drama is a source of entertainment and a practice to relieve boredom (boyd, 2014). For others, it is a way of testing out friendships and understanding the dynamics of popularity and status; it can be a way of achieving attention, working out sexual interests, and redirecting anger or frustration (boyd, 2014).

Drama is social and interpersonal, involving other people and relationships. It involves conflict, ranging from strong moral evaluation of other people’s behavior, to a minor disagreement between friends that blows up and forces mutual friends to take sides (boyd and Marwick, 2011). It is also reciprocal. The participation of bystanders and onlookers distinguishes drama from bullying, where power is often unidirectional. Fighting is one thing, but fighting back creates drama (boyd and Marwick, 2011).

Drama is gendered. It is seen as traditionally feminine subjects like dating, gossip, and friendships, which tend to be viewed publicly as frivolous or insignificant (Hoffman, 2009), and

is thus dismissed in kind (boyd and Marwick, 2011). Boys are often the cause of drama, following the script of high school popularity, which pins a girl's popularity on her relationships and desirability (Brown, 2005). It also can provide the bearer of drama with a boost in status and popularity, and serve as a mechanism to obtain social capital. Finally, drama is interwoven with teens' engagement with social media and social network sites like Facebook. While it can exist without it, and may start online or begin in offline settings before moving online, these sites play a critical role in how drama is constructed in contemporary teen life (boyd and Marwick, 2011).

The public nature of social network sites provides opportunities for drama to grow and spread almost indefinitely. Some drama is immensely public, and is visible to massive audiences; other drama is behind-the-scenes or confined to a small group, but still involves an audience (boyd and Marwick, 2011). It is not the size of the audience that determines drama, but its existence, combined with mechanisms to marshal allegiance (boyd and Marwick, 2011). These audience members engage in the drama as both observers and directly-related participants. Just as gossip is embedded in conversation, and so constitutes a performance with an audience, the audience's presence and reactions shape and directs the gossip (Fine, 1996), thus shaping, spreading, directing, and escalating drama.

Drama often resembles bullying, relational aggression, and gossip, but by using the word drama to encapsulate this aspect of their lives, teens lessen the importance of conflict in their daily experiences, blur the lines between serious and non-serious actions, acknowledge the intrinsic performativity of teen life on networked publics, and – most importantly – “save face” (boyd and Marwick, 2011). Erving Goffman (1967) suggests that people engage in “face-work” to give the impression that whatever they're doing or feeling is consistent with the image that they seek to present about themselves. Thus, by using the term “drama” in lieu of “bullying,”

teens side-step adult-defined subjectivities of “bully” and “victim” in order to position themselves and their practices as normal, and protect themselves from the social and psychological harm involved in accounting both for the pain they feel and the pain they cause others (boyd and Marwick, 2011).

Drama simultaneously perpetuates a value system in which traditionally feminine, interpersonal subjects are seen as trivial and unimportant, and frames information as valuable social capital (boyd and Marwick, 2011). It also mimics reality television and/or tabloid magazines that contain celebrity narratives marketed to young women, where minor and mundane interpersonal conflict is exaggerated for effect.

Gender, Conflict and Media

The norms of celebrity culture, including the politics of attention and drama, seep into everyday life; teens see gossip, drama and attention games all around them and not surprisingly, they mirror what they see (boyd, 2014). The popular language the media use to describe anger or frustration exhibited by girls and young women is often laced with condescension, as there is a collective consciousness within the larger community that girls’ antagonism is somehow less serious than boys’, and that “cattiness” is a natural biological aspect of being female that is also funny and fun to watch.

Additionally, the hypersexualization of girls contributes to this cultural bias; for example, when girls physically fight with one another, the situation is often perceived by boys as a sign of girls’ passion and/or sexual prowess. In the case of physical altercations, the girls’ experience is judged and minimized in two ways – first, in that they are outside the realm of docile female behavior and is an aberration that can be blamed on some individual character defect (or a defect

within any community in which girls use physical violence), and second, that whatever that defect may be, it is ultimately referenced within the context of what it may mean about her behavior in relation to sexual interaction with boys. While the girls know that their anger is very real, and that their actions are not about sexually gratifying the boys who may watch and/or hear about the fight, the cultural lens through which it is viewed is often one that degrades them and diminishes their dealings with one another.

When a trauma process such as bullying and/or relational aggression enters the mass media, it gains opportunities to be recognized and evaluated (Alexander et al., 2004). At times, these assessments reduce the behavior to singular events or actions, instead of viewing it as representative of a much larger and more complicated set of feeling rules and cultural mores. The popular media and psychological press then subtly or blatantly scapegoat girls as the human embodiment of relational aggression through movies, books and articles that include phrases such as “mean girls,” “odd girl out,” “queen bees and wannabes,” “girl wars,” and “mean chicks, cliques and dirty tricks.”

As the press both reflects and shapes public opinion (Benedict, 1992), these labels perpetuate the idea of R.A. as the sole behavior of girls and women. While scientists have also been active agents perpetuating distinctions based on mainstream cultural viewpoints (Epstein, 1988), at its worst the popular media celebrate, glorify, and reward girlfighting behavior.

On February 24, 2002 a cover story of The New York Times Magazine asserted that, “Girls Just Want to be Mean.” While this story - featuring Rosalind Wiseman and her book, Queen Bees and Wannabees: Helping Your Daughter Survive Cliques, Gossip, Boyfriends, and Other Realities of Adolescence - was written prior to launch of the book, the content of the article referenced relational aggression as if it were synonymous with girl bullying. Then in

2004, the movie *Mean Girls* debuted across the country, the basis of which was this same book by Wiseman. The protagonist of the movie is a young woman who has been homeschooled her entire life and enters high school as a very naïve 16 year old. She immediately encounters a group of popular girls called “The Plastics,” and soon after, lying, gossiping, fighting (over young men) ensue in a display of female aggression.

While *Mean Girls* is not extremely different from other movies like *Heathers*, *Jawbreakers* or *Election* that also stereotype and vilify young women in similar (relationally aggressive) ways, this movie was extremely popular, and has resulted in the prolific use of the term “Mean Girls” to describe the complexities of girls’ social and emotional lives. While the ending of the movie ostensibly includes a cautionary tale for those girls who perpetrate this type of behavior against other girls, the entire screenplay also provides a veritable “How To” of destructive, obnoxious, misogynistic behavior for viewers to follow. Tina Fey, the writer of the screen play (also known for her contributions on and off camera to *Saturday Night Live*), was even quoted on www.meangirls.com as saying, “The way girls mess with each other is so clever and intricate, and probably very instinctive,” which brings the issue directly back to this notion of R.A. as biologically determined behavior in girls and women. Additionally, while there has been some backlash against the film, there are those who felt that it was not violent enough. One such reviewer writes that,

“I would have liked *Mean Girls* more if it had followed the *Heathers/Election* mold and not gone into compromise mode during the final fifteen minutes. Somewhere in the closing half-hour, *Mean Girls* gives up on being a comedy and decides to morph into a traditional teen movie, complete with a moral about the value of true friendship and the need to be oneself. The limp climax doesn't undo the solid humor, wicked social commentary, and delicious satire that precedes it, but it leaves an unpleasant aftertaste. In the end, *Mean Girls* isn't mean enough.” (http://www.reelviews.net/movies/m/mean_girls.html)

TV shows also reflect the impossible pressure on girls to perform niceness and perfection in public, and because there is no real critique of the oppressive nature of ideal femininity or the heterosexual script, use girls' justified, often covert anger against each other, "proving" just how untrustworthy and deceitful girls really are (Brown, 2003). These messages and mandates for girls to be "good" invite their intended recipients to compare their behavior against that of other girls and compete with them to attain this goal of "goodness," which can lead to relationally aggressive behavior and what Paulo Freire (1970/1993) calls "horizontal violence," a primary characteristic of what's been called internalized oppression (Brown, 2003), or what Mark Tappan terms "appropriated oppression." (Tappan, 2002). When girls fail to meet these standards, they take out their anger and frustrations on other girls because they don't have the power to take them out on others. All girls lose in this scenario, as jealousy directed toward those who are close to perfectly reflecting these messages is as divisive and damaging as the rejection of those who do not conform to this ideal (Brown, 2003).

Talk shows, soap operas, and sitcoms have consistently showcased women and girls who fight over boys or most-popular girl status. Reality shows like "Who Wants to Marry a Millionaire" and "The Bachelor" have as their focus a competition among women for the ideal man. These caricatures are especially dangerous because they claim to be "reality TV," and thus a true reflection of female behavior, which conform to stereotypes of women as deceitful, complaining, manipulative, and jealous. These programs provide massive audiences with familiar accounts of the "essential nature of femininity" and that girls will be girls (naturally and indirectly mean) or that, "it's a phase girls go through; this too shall pass," both of which trivialize female anger and aggression.

Yet another example of a popular television show is Gossip Girls, which aired on the CW Television Network. The premise of this television sitcom is that,

“Keeping track of the shifting friendships, jealousies and turmoil in this wealthy and complex world isn't easy, but it's what Gossip Girl does best. The privileged prep school teens on Manhattan's Upper East Side first learn that Serena van der Woodsen is back in town the way they learn all the important news in their lives -- from the blog of the all-knowing albeit ultra-secretive Gossip Girl. No one knows Gossip Girl's identity, but everyone in this exclusive and complicated vicious circle relies on her website and text messages for the latest scoop” (<http://www.cwtv.com/shows/gossip-girl>).

While there are both male and female characters on this show who engage in relationally aggressive behavior, it is the female namesake of the show that is the center of the web of deceit. The combination of wealth, power, and prestige serve to include viewers in a world of glamour, malice and spite, shamelessly glorified within a view of the rich teen (girl).

The Power of Web 2.0

However, while print, radio, online, television, and movie outlets often perpetuate pop-cultural notions of these issues, when bullying and/or relationally aggressive behavior is depicted within the mass media, it gains opportunities to be recognized and evaluated (Alexander et al., 2004). Social network sites like Facebook, and other social media sites like Twitter, Tumblr and Instagram, provide individuals with a forum to openly discuss these issues. They provide a platform upon which users can create and share imagery and messages that defy these representations of girls, and give their community members (including the girls themselves) a potential audience and a level of agency they did not and could not have had prior to the advent of this technology. The proliferation of media developed, curated and shared on these sites have the capacity to push back against these stereotypical representations of girls and girl aggression, as well as provide girls with the skills and strategies they need to keep them from becoming perpetrators and/or targets of this type of interpersonal violence.

According to Robert K. Merton, what everyone knows to be true often turns out not to be true at all (Merton, 1984). In the case of relational aggression, this “incorrect” truth that is repeated constantly in the media is that girls are always more relationally aggressive than boys, and as such, that this type of behavior is somehow biologically determined within females. While essentialism is an analytical dead end and a political danger (Tong, 1998), in this case it also serves to doubly victimize girls, as it robs them of their individual agency and/or their ability to choose whether or not they will act in this way by representing this behavior in females as a type of biological imperative. It fails to give credence to the cultural hand behind girls’ “natural” (relationally aggressive) behavior (Brown, 2003) and characterizes this type of violence as a forgone (emotional) conclusion for girls, which simultaneously ensures its repetition and the subsequent villainization of these young people.

If girls are to be productive, “good” digital citizens on social networks like Facebook, they need the possibility of freedom, as defined by having the power of self-definition (Tong, 1998). It is this power to represent themselves and act as they see fit that will liberate them from the kind of oppression that reinforces stereotypes and misinforms girls about their roles and responsibilities in their peer culture and their online communities. The topics of peer culture and digital citizenship are the focus of the next and final chapter of this research.

Chapter VII - Conclusion: Peer Culture and Digital Citizenship

According to Henry Jenkins, we live today in a convergence culture - an age when changes in communications, storytelling and information technologies are reshaping almost every aspect of contemporary life - including how we create, consume, learn and interact with each other (Jenkins, 2006). The online communities that exist as a result of these new communication technologies have deconstructed physical boundaries and the exclusive need for co-presence in relationships, and have thus reshaped social activity (for youth). Contemporary teenagers are prolific in their contributions to these communities and are active creators, curators and consumers of the online worlds in which they live. They are growing up in a cultural setting in which many aspects of their lives will be mediated by technology, and many of their experiences and opportunities shaped by their engagement with it (boyd, 2014).

Currently, to exist in digital space is to exist in peer culture, especially for teens (Clark, 2012), and this existence is directly tied to the quality and quantity of users' contributions to and connections within it. Their participation is a form of cultural production, which can be a powerful force in both their offline and online worlds, including providing them with a different set of agency than those who are merely consumers of a culture created for them by others. Their connections with close friends, romantic partners, authority figures, and broader peer groups provide opportunities to express and explore their identities and learn how to manage others' impressions of them.

These connections also affect their experiences with aggression in digital communities like Facebook. Respondents who limit their profile information to viewable by friends only are less likely to have bullied someone over a social network site (6.1% vs. 11.5%)** , gotten in

trouble because of something they posted on a social network site (18.8% vs 25%)*, gossiped about someone on a social network site (45.6% vs 58.7%)***, or say things to their friends on a social network site that they would never say to them in person (27.1% vs 37.2%)***, than those who had their profile information viewable by friends of friends or viewable by everyone. They are also less likely to have lost a friend because of something posted on a social network site (10.2% vs 19.4%)*** or had someone else gossip about them over a social network site (38.1% vs 48.6%)***.

Respondents who limit their contact information to viewable by friends only are less likely to have bullied someone over a social network site (6.7% vs. 15.9%)*, considered deleting their social network profile due to a bad experience (25.1% vs 37.5%)*, gotten in trouble because of something they posted on a social network site (20.1% vs 29.5%)*, gossiped about someone on a social network site (49.0% vs 60.2%)*, or say things to their friends on a social network site that they would never say to them in person (30.7% vs 44.3%)***, than those who had their contact information viewable by friends of friends or viewable by everyone. They are less likely to have lost a friend because of something posted on a social network site (12.5% vs 27.3%)***, had someone else gossip about them over a social network site (39.6% vs 53.4%)***, or felt concerned for their physical safety based on posts on a social network site (9.1% vs 15.9%)*.

Finally, respondents who limit their media information (photos, videos, blogs, etc.) to viewable by friends only are less likely to have bullied someone over a social network site (6.7% vs. 10.7%)*, gotten in trouble because of something they posted on a social network site (18.3% vs 25.9%)*, gossiped about someone on a social network site (46.0% vs 58.4%)***, or say things to their friends on a social network site that they would never say to them in person

(27.4% vs 36.3%)**, than those who had their profile information viewable by friends of friends or viewable by everyone. They are less likely to have had someone hack into their social network account without their permission (18.3% vs 24.9%)*, lost a friend because of something posted on a social network site (10.7% vs 17.7%)**, had someone else gossip about them over a social network site (39.0% vs 47.6%)** or felt shamed, embarrassed, or emotionally hurt by something posted on a social network site (34.0% vs 41.3%)*.

These data support the idea that teenagers highly value their friends and their friendships, and when they restrict the information they post and share to be seen only by those friends, there are fewer incidences of anti-social behavior and aggression. Respondents' choices reflect Voltaire' famous saying - "With great power comes great responsibility" – and they wield that power much more carefully when they are interacting solely with those whom they have chosen to connect with directly on a social network sites like Facebook. The behaviors individuals exhibit when they engage with others online are the crux of the discourse on digital citizenship.

Digital Citizenship

Digital citizenship is a phrase that encapsulates users' rights, responsibilities and duties when using the Internet, cell phones, and other digital media. It speaks to the importance of thinking critically and making ethical choices about what is seen, posted and produced with new communication technologies, and describes ways of using an online presence to grow and shape a digital world in safe, creative ways that also inspire others to do the same. Digital citizenship is an awareness and set of behaviors that help users in virtual communities understand and communicate to others that they are there to support them, and that they care what these others think and about who they are (Collier, 2011).

The digital citizenship movement was created in order to buttress pro-social interaction online. Mike Ribble, a former faculty member at Kansas State University, has done extensive work towards developing a list of digital citizenship elements. Ribble's nine elements of Digital Citizenship include:

- Access – full electronic participation in society
- Commerce – electronic buying and selling of goods
- Communication – electronic exchange of information
- Literacy – the process of teaching and learning about technology
- Etiquette – electronic standards of conduct or procedure
- Law – electronic responsibility for actions and deeds
- Rights & Responsibilities – freedoms extended to everyone in a digital world
- Health & Wellness – physical and psychological well-being in a digital world
- Security – electronic precautions to guarantee safety (Ribble, 2009)

Ribble's Nine Elements represent the core pieces of digital citizenship. However, Dr. Laurie Patton identified another aspect of digital citizenship to add to Ribble's list: ethics. The ethical use of digital technologies includes topics such as creating multiple online identities, forwarding email and purposely generating misinformation (Morse, 2011).

Model digital citizens use social media intelligently, humanely and mindfully (Rheingold, 2012). According to Nancy Willard of the Center for Safe and Responsible Internet Use, they also:

- know how to avoid risk, detect if they are at risk, and respond effectively, including asking for help and/or reporting to Internet service providers or web hosts;
- are responsible and ethical in that they do not harm others, and they respect the privacy and property of others;
- pay attention to the well-being of others and make sure their friends and others are safe
- report concerns to an appropriate adult or site, and they don't pile-on when a kid is being cyberbullied;
- promote online civility and respect even if they disagree;
- understand and value the rights of free speech and assembly (i.e., connecting through social network sites and through other means), and;
- are part of the solution and not the problem (Willard, 2012).

In order to be these model digital citizens on a social network site like Facebook, teens need to learn many of what Project New Media Literacies labels “The New Media Literacies.” These constitute the core cultural competencies and social skills that young people need in our new media landscape. They change the focus of literacy from one of individual expression to one of community involvement, and build on the foundation of traditional literacy, research skills, technical skills, and critical analysis skills (Jenkins et al., 2006). Included in these literacies are competencies for participation in digital communities, which include:

- Judgment – how to learn what they are seeing or reading on the Internet is true or false;
- Negotiation – how to interact with others in the online communities and what the social norms are for those spaces, and;
- Play – how to experiment with their surroundings in ways that increase their ability to problem-solve (Jenkins et al., 2006).

Social Norms and a New Humanism

These digital competencies and definitions of model digital citizens reflect a new humanism, discussed by David Brooks in his book, “The Social Animal: The Hidden Sources of Love, Character and Achievement,” and are tied to a perspective about online youth by Anne Collier on her site, netfamilynews.org. Brooks writes that, compared to other animals, “humans developed moral minds that help them and their groups succeed. Humans build moral communities out of shared norms, habits, emotions and gods, and then will fight and even sometimes die to defend their communities” (Brooks, 2012). Collier argues that, “this is exactly what we humans are in the middle of doing online: creating the social norms we need for the digital part of our world to be a truly viable place of operation (of sociality, commerce, production, etc.) and to integrate well with the offline part of our lives” (Collier, 2011).

This process for creating online social norms and rules for what is considered constructive or destructive is often established by the members of these virtual communities. This shared conception of normativity defines what may be expected of everyone involved, and sanctions those behaviors that may be legitimately pursued, while outlining what failure to perform holds in store for deviants (Bruner and Kalmar, 1998). These norms can impose larger-scale ideological structures on the conduct of everyday life (Amsterdam and Bruner, 2000) online. They can even limit users' mental vision, as they have the power to cause them to ignore or forget something that the others deem unimportant or uncomfortable, as ignoring and forgetting something often presupposes some social pressure, however tacit, to exclude it from attention or memory (Zerubavel, 1997).

Social norms contain within them role expectations that organize the reciprocities and responses to those expectations in the specific interaction systems of ego and one or more alters (Parsons, 1951). On social network sites like Facebook, this process is repeated constantly, as teenage users navigate the social landscape and the turbulent years of adolescence through membership within this community. Their roles within the boundaries of this group provide them with a series of responses and behavioral patterns to exhibit in a multitude of situations, as there are attitudes, behaviors, and ways of thinking that become common sense – a set of assumptions as unselfconscious as to seem a natural, transparent, undeniable part of the structure of the world (Geertz, 1973).

The new humanism Brooks describes in his book is readily apparent in teenagers' use of social network sites like Facebook. As they interact with one another and produce the norms of these communities, they work out solutions to the social challenges that exist in their online communities and often extend into offline settings. As the amount of time they spend on social

media continues to grow, youth will need to learn how to consciously consider the norms they want to create on these sites, so that they feel safe, valued and pro-socially connected on them. This new kind of media literacy can and should take its cues from offline social norms, as the interconnected nature of both these worlds lends itself to a shared sense of model citizenship. By including youth in the creation of these norms, online communities can become sites of positive youth development, a framework to effectively and successfully engage and support youth.

The Butterfly Effect

The butterfly effect is a concept used in chaos theory to represent the idea of an interconnected ecosystem. It explains that a very small difference in the initial state of a physical system can make a significant difference to the state at some later time [from the theory that a butterfly flapping its wings in one part of the world might ultimately cause a hurricane in another part of the world]. The digital world has its own "butterfly effect" in that users' individual, local actions can have collective, global impact. Every time they post or share information on social network sites, the content of that communication takes on a life of its own, traveling through cyberspace in ways that are nearly impossible to contain or control. As the four key characteristics of digital media are persistence, constant mutability, scalability and searchability (boyd, 2007), young people need to be particularly careful with the identity work they perform online, and learn how to manage the materials they make available about themselves to other online, but also the materials that others make available about them. Because this digital trail persists and remains visible to others, they also are continually viewing their digital trail through differing lenses as they go through new life experiences. It is possible that any new visitor to one's profile or new life situation will trigger a need to re-create one's self-representation (Clark,

2012). And any of these contributions has the potential to “go viral,” creating opportunities for connection and/or destruction.

When users participate on Facebook in ways that are abusive, the site becomes a locus of cruelty and inhumanity among its community members. Similarly, when they engage in pro-social activities, the site transforms into a marketplace for exciting ideas, helpful products and services, charitable campaigns, and general types of support and guidance. The power of Facebook, and the web in general, is that the Internet mirrors, magnifies, and makes more visible the good, bad, and ugly of everyday life (boyd, 2014), and the boundaries between offline and online, public and private, are constantly being blurred, mutually affecting each other in various ways (Steiner-Adair, 2013).

Conclusion

The majority of teens in this study are confident in the online selves they have created on the site, and feel that they mirror who they are offline. They take care to manage others’ impressions of them through the kinds of things they post and share, and do not feel that they use the site to make themselves look cooler than they really are. These young women are careful about who they to connect on the site, as most have their profile settings restricted to “viewable by friends only.” Their experiences with aggression and bullying on Facebook have affected them, but have not kept them from participating in this digital space. While respondents with high self-esteem have fewer anti-social interactions on the site than those with low self-esteem, these data illustrate that the majority of them are “all right” on this site.

The Facebook community, like all online and offline communities, contains within it a set of norms and mores that members learn and understand through their participation in it. On

Facebook however, users do more than just learn and understand these norms, they create and recreate them on a regular basis. As a result, the need for practices that model digital citizenship are ever-present. These behavioral standards help community members create (digital) spaces where people feel safe, respected and valued. They enable users to “be” their best selves, and provide endless opportunities to present aspects of those selves to greater audiences. These opportunities are particularly important to young people, who may not have other avenues or settings within which to explore and present these selves.

Facebook and other social network sites are digital spaces where teens can exercise the powerful potential they have to be good (digital) citizens. The respondents in this study demonstrate that contrary to many of the messages transmitted in other forms of media, teens are managing themselves well on these sites, and using technology as a platform to connect and share in healthy, pro-social ways.

During her April 2014 book talk for, *“It’s Complicated: The Social Lives of Networked Teens,”* danah boyd joked that she wanted to call the book, “Duh,” in reference to the reaction she got from the teens she spoke with about the issues that were coming up for them online. What for them were mundane and accepted aspects of this part of their lives was for her, and other adults, incredible knowledge about and insight into the often ill-understood realities of teens’ online lives. Their conversations with her led to important discoveries around the dynamic sociality that exists on these sites, and how youth navigate this reality in their everyday interactions with others.

This dissertation explores how respondents craft their self-presentations, manage others’ impressions of them, and experience aggression and bullying on Facebook. It provides a

snapshot of teens actions, reactions and connections on the site, and demonstrates how these teens lived their (emotional) lives on Facebook in 2010. Future research in the areas of teens and social media will undoubtedly uncover other aspects of adolescent behavior and experiences on Facebook and other social network sites that can further explain the data in this research.

As Sociologists, we map the social landscape and make visible those phenomena that are often invisible to others within society. We immerse ourselves in the habits and taken-for-granted as we study and analyze what others see as common sense or “just the way life is.” My hope is that this sociological research uncovers, explains and demystifies some of the experiences teen girls have on social network sites like Facebook, and provides a greater understanding of the lives of youth online.

Appendices

Tables

Table 1. Summary of responses related to self-presentation			
Self-Assessment			
Question #20 - How different do you think the image you portray on your social network is from the image you portray in person?	Total	High Self-Esteem	Low Self-Esteem
Very Different (1)	31	17	7
	3.0%	2.3%	4.3%
Somewhat Different (2)	191	115	46
	18.6%	15.3%	21.8%
TOTAL DIFFERENT	21.6%	17.6%	26.1%
Somewhat similar (3)	238	164	44
	23.2%	22.0%	27.3%
Very similar (4)	352	278	42
	34.3%	36.9%*	26.1%
No difference - Exactly the same (5)	214	180	22
	20.9%	23.9%*	13.7%
TOTAL SIMILAR	78.4%		
AVERAGE SCORE (range of 1-5)	3.51		
* $p \leq 0.05$ - statistically significant at the 95% level			
** $p \leq 0.01$ - statistically significant at the 90% level			

Question #15H - I use social networking sites to make myself look cooler than I really am.	Total	High Self-Esteem	Low Self-Esteem
Strongly agree (1)	28	22	4
	2.7%	2.9%	2.5%
Somewhat agree (2)	134	84	24
	13.1%	11.1%	14.9%
TOTAL AGREE	15.8%		
Neither agree nor disagree (3)	213	133	54
	20.8%	17.6%	33.5%*
Somewhat disagree (4)	233	170	38
	22.7%	22.5%	23.6%
Strongly disagree (5)	418	345	41
	40.7%	45.8%*	25.5%
TOTAL DISAGREE	63.5%		
AVERAGE SCORE (range of 1-5)	3.85		
AVERAGE SCORE Q 20 +15H (range of 1-5)	3.68		
* $p \leq 0.05$ - statistically significant at the 95% level			
** $p \leq 0.01$ - statistically significant at the 90% level			
Beliefs about Others' Perceptions			
Question #16 - Think about someone you're very close to who knows you well. What words would he/she use to describe who you are in person?	Total	High Self-Esteem	Low Self-Esteem
Smart	843	639	122
	82.2%	84.7%*	75.8%

Fun	839	644	118
	81.8%	85.4%*	73.3%
Funny	816	611	118
	79.5%	81.0%*	73.3%
Kind	777	590	108
	75.7%	78.2%*	67.1%
A good influence on others	605	486	66
	59.0%	64.5%*	41.0%
Outgoing	560	430	73
	54.6%	57.0%*	45.3%
Social	527	412	69
	51.4%	54.6%*	42.9%
Cool	559	429	80
	54.5%	57%**	50%
Slutty	27	15	7
	2.6%	2.0%	4.3%
Sexy	193	145	27
	18.8%	19.2%	16.8%
Flirtatious	280	215	41
	27.3%	28.5%	25.5%
A risk-taker	196	134	36
	19.1%	17.8%	22.4%
Crazy	490	343	85

	47.8%	45.5%	52.8%* *
Nerdy	328	224	58
	32.0%	29.7%	36.0%
Boring	46	25	10
	4.5%	3.3%	6.2%
Mean	76	41	21
	7.4%	5.4%	13.0%*
Snobby	37	24	10
	3.6%	3.2%	6.2%
Shy	412	279	84
	40.2%	37.0%	52.2%*
Popular	227	187	22
	22.1%	24.8%*	13.7%
Rebellious	153	101	31
	14.9%	13.4%	19.3%* *
A bad influence on others	37	17	11
	3.6%	2.3%	6.8%*
A social activist	116	84	20
	11.3%	11%	12.4%
Busy	330	256	41
	32.2%	34.0%*	25.5%
Anti-social	62	26	28
	6.0%	3.4%	17.4%*

Stupid	47	21	19
	4.6%	2.8%	11.8%*
Arrogant	41	26	10
	4.0%	3.4%	6.2%
Daring	212	151	35
	20.7%	20.0%	21.7%
Confident	521	422	55
	50.8%	56.0%*	34.2%
Aggressive	115	69	30
	11.2%	9.2%	18.6%*
None of these	2	(-)	2
	0.2%	(-)	1.2%
* $p \leq 0.05$ - statistically significant at the 95% level			
** $p \leq 0.01$ - statistically significant at the 90% level			
Q#18 - Now imagine that someone you don't know very well came across your social network profile. What words would he/she use to describe you, based only on what he/she sees on your profile?	Total	High Self-Esteem	Low Self-Esteem
Fun	554	429	77
	54.0%	56.9%*	47.8%
Funny	535	407	74
	52.1%	54.0%**	46.0%
Social	492	372	71
	48.0%	49.3%	44.1%

Kind	445	354	60
	43.4%	46.9%*	37.3%
Smart	442	337	65
	43.1%	44.7%	40.4%
A good influence on others	292	230	35
	28.5%	30.5%*	21.7%
Outgoing	437	328	60
	42.6%	43.5%	37.3%
Cool	419	322	57
	40.8%	42.7%**	35.4%
Slutty	42	25	14
	4.1%	3.3%	8.7%*
Sexy	153	103	35
	14.9%	13.7%	21.7%*
Flirtatious	185	132	35
	18.0%	17.5%	21.7%
A risk-taker	102	71	19
	9.9%	9.4%	11.8%
Crazy	302	211	56
	29.4%	28.0%	34.8%* *
Nerdy	196	147	25
	19.1%	19.5%	15.5%
Boring	151	103	28

	14.7%	13.7%	17.4%
Mean	58	35	13
	5.7%	4.6%	8.1%
Snobby	71	55	9
	6.9%	7.3%	5.6%
Shy	164	118	26
	16.0%	15.6%	16.1%
Popular	265	194	44
	25.8%	25.7%	27.3%
Rebellious	95	60	23
	9.3%	8.0%	14.3%*
A bad influence on others	39	18	13
	3.8%	2.4%	8.1%*
A social activist	86	65	13
	8.4%	8.6%	8.1%
Busy	266	207	36
	25.9%	27.5%	22.4%
Anti-Social	56	29	19
	5.5%	3.8%	11.8%*
Stupid	52	31	13
	5.1%	4.1%	8.1%**
Arrogant	61	39	14
	5.9%	5.2%	8.7%
Daring	122	85	25

	11.9%	11.3%	15.5%
Confident	439	335	58
	42.8%	44.4%*	36.0%
Aggressive	55	34	15
	5.4%	4.5%	9.3%*
None of these	23	13	6
	2.2%	1.7%	3.7%
* $p \leq 0.05$ - statistically significant at the 95% level			
** $p \leq 0.01$ - statistically significant at the 90% level			
Percentage Gap Analysis (Questions #16 minus Q#18)			
	Q#16 (in person)	Q#18 (online)	Differen ce
Smart	843	442	
	82.2%	43.1%	39.1%
Fun	839	554	
	81.8%	54.0%	27.8%
Funny	816	535	
	79.5%	52.1%	27.4%
Kind	777	445	
	75.7%	43.4%	32.4%
A good influence on others	605	292	
	59.0%	28.5%	30.5%
Outgoing	560	437	

	54.6%	42.6%	12.0%
Social	527	492	
	51.4%	48.0%	3.4%
Cool	559	419	
	54.5%	40.8%	13.6%
Slutty	27	42	
	2.6%	4.1%	-1.5%
Sexy	193	153	
	18.8%	14.9%	3.9%
Flirtatious	280	185	
	27.3%	18.0%	9.3%
A risk-taker	196	102	
	19.1%	9.9%	9.2%
Crazy	490	302	
	47.8%	29.4%	18.3%
Nerdy	328	196	
	32.0%	19.1%	12.9%
Boring	46	151	
	4.5%	14.7%	-10.2%
Mean	76	58	
	7.4%	5.7%	1.8%
Snobby	37	71	
	3.6%	6.9%	-3.3%
Shy	412	164	

	40.2%	16.0%	24.2%
Popular	227	265	
	22.1%	25.8%	-3.7%
Rebellious	153	95	
	14.9%	9.3%	5.7%
A bad influence on others	37	39	
	3.6%	3.8%	-0.2%
A social activist	116	86	
	11.3%	8.4%	2.9%
Busy	330	266	
	32.2%	25.9%	6.2%
Anti-social	62	56	
	6.0%	5.5%	0.6%
Stupid	47	52	
	4.6%	5.1%	-0.5%
Arrogant	41	61	
	4.0%	5.9%	-1.9%
Daring	212	122	
	20.7%	11.9%	8.8%
Confident	521	439	
	50.8%	42.8%	8.0%
Aggressive	115	55	
	11.2%	5.4%	5.8%
None of these	2	23	

	0.2%	2.2%	
* $p \leq 0.05$ - statistically significant at the 95% level			
** $p \leq 0.01$ - statistically significant at the 90% level			

Table 2. Summary of responses related to impression management			
<i>Category I - Privacy</i>			
Question #13: Thinking about your behavior on social network sites, which ONE of the following statements best describes you?	Total	High Self-Esteem	Low Self-Esteem
I am very careful and have multiple safety/privacy measures in place to protect myself online	502	389	69
	48.9%	51.6%*	42.9%
I have good intentions when it comes to online safety/privacy, but I admit I'm not always as careful as I should be	509	354	90
	49.6%	46.9%	55.9%*
I give very little, if any, consideration to online safety/privacy	15	11	2
	1.5%	1.5%	1.2%

Question #6: Which of the following describe the privacy settings on your social network profile?									
	Profile Info - Total	High Self-Esteem	Low Self-Esteem	Contact Info - Total	High Self-Esteem	Low Self-Esteem	Photos, Videos, Blogs, Etc. - Total	High Self-Esteem	Low Self-Esteem
Viewable by everyone	146	106	21	39	21	10	124	86	19
	14.2%	14.1%	13.0%	3.8%	2.8%	6.2%**	12.1%	11.4%	11.8%
Viewable by friends of friends	142	111	15	49	39	5	193	146	32
	13.8%	14.7%*	9.3%	4.8%	5.2%	3.1%	18.8%	19.4%	19.9%
Viewable by friends only	717	522	121	672	484	109	682	504	102
	69.9%	69.2%	75.2%	65.5%	64.2%	67.7%	66.5%	66.8%	63.4%

* $p \leq 0.05$ - statistically significant at the 95% level

** $p \leq 0.01$ - statistically significant at the 90% level

Category II - Facebook Friends			
Question #7: Who, if any, of the following are you friends with on a social networking site?	Total	High Self-Esteem	Low Self-Esteem
A Close Friend	1019	748	160
	99.3%	99.2%	99.4%
A Parent	670	518	95
	65.3%	68.7%*	59.0%
A Teacher	439	321	69
	42.8%	42.6%	42.9%
Someone you've never met (either online or in person)	337	237	60
	32.8%	31.4%	37.3%
Someone you've met online, but not in person	453	305	85
	44.2%	40.5%	52.8%*
An acquaintance; that is, someone you've met in person, but are not close friends with	928	678	149
	90.4%	89.9%	92.5%
None of these	2	1	1
	0.2%	0.1%	0.6%
* $p \leq 0.05$ - statistically significant at the 95% level			
** $p \leq 0.01$ - statistically significant at the 90% level			
Question #9E: Thinking about your social network profile or other online account, about how many...?	Total	High Self-Esteem	Low Self-Esteem
Social network friends you have in total			

0 friends	10	6	3
	1.0%	0.8%	1.9%
1 friend - 99 friends	193	152	27
	18.8%	20.2%	16.8%
100 friends - 249 friends	232	169	34
	22.6%	22.4%	21.1%
250 friends - 499 friends	321	241	50
	31.3%	32.0%	31.1%
500 friends - 999 friends	230	158	41
	22.4%	21.0%	25.5%
1000+ friends	40	28	6
	3.9%	3.7%	3.7%
Mean	347.1	339.6	370.3
Category III - Posting Frequency			
Question #9A,B,C,D: Thinking about your social network profile or other online account, about how many....?	Total	High Self-Esteem	Low Self-Esteem
Status updates do you post a day			
0 status updates	158	111	24
	15.4%	14.7%	14.9%
1 status update	489	364	80
	47.7%	48.3%	49.7%
2 status updates	174	133	26
	17.0%	17.6%	16.1%

3 status updates	79	55	10
	7.7%	7.3%	6.2%
4 status updates	27	16	4
	2.6%	2.1%	2.5%
5 status updates	54	46	5
	5.3%	6.1%**	3.1%
6-10 status updates	31	20	8
	3.0%	2.7%	5.0%
11+ status updates	14	9	4
	1.4%	1.2%	2.5%
Mean	2.1	2.0	2.4
Comments do you make on other people's profiles (status updates, photos, videos, links, etc.) a day	Total	High Self-Esteem	Low Self-Esteem
0 comments	67	39	19
	6.5%	5.2%	11.8%*
1 comment	160	110	26
	5.6%	14.6%	16.1%
2 comments	167	121	28
	16.3%	16.0%	17.4%
3 comments	150	111	22
	14.60%	14.70%	13.70%
4 comments	67	56	6
	6.5%	7.4%*	3.7%

5 comments	163	131	16
	15.9%	17.4%*	9.9%
6-10 comments	165	120	31
	6.1%	15.9%	19.3%
11-20 comments	60	42	12
	5.8%	5.6%	7.5%
21+ comments	27	24	1
	2.6%	3.2%*	0.6%
Mean	5.5	5.7	4.8
Photos have you posted in total	Total	High Self-Esteem	Low Self-Esteem
0 photos	32	20	7
	3.1%	2.7%	4.3%
1-10 photos	164	120	23
	16%	16%	14%
11-20 photos	106	71	23
	10.3%	9.40%	14.3%*
21-50 photos	163	125	24
	15.9%	16.6%	14.9%
51-100 photos	162	119	25
	15.8%	15.8%	15.5%
101-200 photos	134	109	13
	13.1%	14.5%*	8.1%
201-500 photos	179	129	30

	17.4%	17.1%	18.6%
501+ photos	86	61	16
	8.4%	8.1%	9.9%
Mean	182.7		
Videos have you posted in total	Total	High Self-Esteem	Low Self-Esteem
0 videos	415	310	60
	40.4%	41.1%	37.3%
1 video	149	108	26
	14.5%	14.3%	16.1%
2 videos	118	89	16
	11.5%	11.8%	9.9%
3 videos	81	58	14
	7.9%	7.7%	8.7%
4 videos	45	34	4
	4.4%	4.5%	2.5%
5 videos	78	59	14
	7.6%	7.8%	8.7%
6-10 videos	85	54	16
	8.3%	7.2%	9.9%
11-20 videos	30	22	7
	2.9%	2.9%	4.3%
21+ videos	25	20	4
	2.4%	2.7%	2.5%

Mean	3.4		
* $p \leq 0.05$ - statistically significant at the 95% level			
** $p \leq 0.01$ - statistically significant at the 90% level			
Category IV - Posting Types	Total	High Self-Esteem	Low Self-Esteem
Question #8: Which, if any of the following have you ever posted online?			
Your address	74	45	14
	7.2%	6.0%	8.7%
Your contact information	394	267	78
	38.4%	35.4%	48.4%*
Name of your school	765	554	125
	74.6%	73.5%	77.6%
Photos or videos of yourself	968	714	154
	94.3%	94.7%	95.7%
Photos or videos of your family	752	554	112
	73.3%	73.5%	69.6%
Photos or video of your friends	911	675	139
	88.8%	89.5%	86.3%
Links, articles, or other info to raise awareness or funds for a cause or organization you care about	448	336	66
	43.7%	44.6%	41.0%
Photos, videos, or other online posts that include cigarettes, alcohol, or drugs	99	59	24

	9.6%	7.8%	14.9%*
Revealing, naked, or sexual photos or videos of yourself	24	13	7
	2.3%	1.70%	4.30%
Online comments or other public posts that are sexual in nature	120	78	30
	11.7%	10.3%	18.6%*
Online comments or other public posts that include curse words	411	267	91
	40.1%	35.4%	56.5%*
Your physical location via your social network site or a location-based site, like Go Walla or Four Square	114	77	26
	11.1%	10.2%	16.1%**
None of these	17	14	1
	1.7%	1.9%	0.6%
* $p \leq 0.05$ - statistically significant at the 95% level			
** $p \leq 0.01$ - statistically significant at the 90% level			
Question #15E: How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following? I often try to shock people with what I post online.	Total	High Self-Esteem	Low Self-Esteem
Strongly Agree	23	17	3
	2.2%	2.3%	1.9%
Somewhat Agree	72	48	15
	7.0%	6.4%	9.3%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	158	84	44
	15.4%	11.1%	27.3%*

Somewhat Disagree	219	159	34
	21.3%	21.1%	21.1%
Strongly Disagree	554	446	65
	54.0%	59.2%*	40.4%
* $p \leq 0.05$ - statistically significant at the 95% level			
** $p \leq 0.01$ - statistically significant at the 90% level			
Question #15F I often post comments, status updates, and other online posts that are not true, just to get people's attention.	Total	High Self-Esteem	Low Self-Esteem
Strongly Agree	19	13	3
	1.9%	1.70%	1.9%
Somewhat Agree	60	32	13
	5.8%	4.2%	8.1%**
Neither Agree nor Disagree	108	51	39
	10.5%	6.8%	24.2%*
Somewhat Disagree	166	125	23
	16.2%	16.6%	14.3%
Strongly Disagree	673	533	83
	65.6%	70.7%*	51.6%
* $p \leq 0.05$ - statistically significant at the 95% level			
** $p \leq 0.01$ - statistically significant at the 90% level			

<i>Category V - Content Concerns</i>	Not at all Concerned	High Self-Esteem	Low Self-Esteem	Not very Concerned	High Self-Esteem	Low Self-Esteem	Somewhat Concerned	High Self-Esteem	Low Self-Esteem	Very Concerned	High Self-Esteem	Low Self-Esteem	Extremely Concerned	High Self-Esteem	Low Self-Esteem
Question #12E,F,G,H: How concerned are you, if at all, about each of the following?	325	262	40	291	215	37	209	135	47	100	68	22	101	74	15
That your social network posts or photos will get you in trouble with parents, teachers, etc.	31.7%	34.7%*	24.8%	28.4%	28.5%	23.0%	20.4%	17.9%	29.2%*	9.7%	9.0%	13.7%	9.8%	9.8%	9.3%
That your friends or family will lose respect for you, based on your social network posts or photos.	361	283	45	269	196	46	189	124	42	112	80	16	95	71	12
	35.2%	37.5%*	28.0%	26.2%	26.0%	28.6%	18.4%	16.4%	26.1%*	10.9%	10.6%	9.9%	9.3%	9.4%	7.5%

significant at the 90% level															
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Question #15K: How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following? I have complete control over what happens with the photos, videos, and other content I post online.	Total	High Self-Esteem	Low Self-Esteem
Strongly Agree	283	229	26
	27.6%	30.4%*	16.1%
Somewhat Agree	321	242	43
	31.3%	32.1%	26.7%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	218	142	53
	21.2%	18.8%	32.9%*
Somewhat Disagree	153	104	32
	14.9%	13.8%	19.9%*
Strongly Disagree	51	37	7
	5.0%	4.9%	4.3%
* $p \leq 0.05$ - statistically significant at the 95% level			
** $p \leq 0.01$ - statistically significant at the 90% level			
Question #22: Would you be embarrassed if any of the following people viewed your social network profile right now, including your photos, videos, posts, etc.? Yes/No	Yes	High Self-Esteem	Low Self-Esteem
Anyone (total)	333	204	77
	32.5%	27.1%	47.8%*
Your parents/guardians	166	102	37
	16.2%	13.5%	23.0%*
Your close friends	18	7	7

	1.8%	0.9%	4.3%*
Your peers	28	14	9
	2.7%	1.9%	5.6%*
Your boyfriend or someone you are interested in dating	52	30	14
	5.1%	4.0%	8.7%*
Your teachers	190	120	43
	18.5%	15.9%	26.7%*
Your best friend's parents	141	82	36
	13.7%	10.9%	22.4%*
Your boyfriend's parents or the parents of someone you are interested in dating	179	108	43
	17.4%	14.3%	26.7%*
A college admissions officer	184	109	47
	17.9%	14.5%	29.2%*
Your current or future employer	187	112	44
	18.2%	14.9%	27.3%*
* $p \leq 0.05$ - statistically significant at the 95% level			
** $p \leq 0.01$ - statistically significant at the 90% level			
Question #25: Which, if any, of the following have you ever had a conversation about with your parent/guardian? Please mark all that apply.	Yes	High Self-Esteem	Low Self-Esteem
Safe and unsafe social network behaviors	726	557	101
	70.8%	73.9%*	62.7%
What is and is not appropriate to post on your social network profile	654	498	95

	63.7%	66.0%* *	59.0%
The amount of time you spend on your social network profile	555	421	68
	54.1%	55.8%*	42.2%
None of these	151	99	35
	14.7%	13.1%	21.7%*
* $p \leq 0.05$ - statistically significant at the 95% level			
** $p \leq 0.01$ - statistically significant at the 90% level			

Question#15G: How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following? Most girls my age use social networking sites to try to make themselves look cooler than they really are.	Total	High Self-Esteem	Low Self-Esteem
Strongly Agree	368	280	46
	35.9%	37.1%*	28.6%
Somewhat Agree	395	307	52
	38.5%	40.7%*	32.3%
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	180	106	51
	17.5%	14.1%	31.7%*
Somewhat Disagree	60	42	9
	5.8%	5.6%	5.6%
Strongly Disagree	23	19	3
	2.2%	2.5%	1.9%
* $p \leq 0.05$ - statistically significant at the 95% level			
** $p \leq 0.01$ - statistically significant at the 90% level			
Question #21: How different do you think the images portrayed on social networks by <u>most girls your age</u> are from the images they portray in person?	Total	High Self-Esteem	Low Self-Esteem
Very Different	236	160	48
	23.0%	21.2%	29.8%*
Somewhat Different	424	320	63
	41.3%	42.4%	39.1%
Somewhat Similar	254	183	41

	24.8%	24.3%	25.5%
Very Similar	82	68	4
	8.0%	9.0%*	2.5%
No difference - exactly the same	30	23	5
	2.9%	3.1%	3.1%
* $p \leq 0.05$ - statistically significant at the 95% level			
** $p \leq 0.01$ - statistically significant at the 90% level			
Question #15H: How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following? I use social networking sites to make myself look cooler than I really am.	Total	High Self-Esteem	Low Self-Esteem
Strongly agree	28	22	4
	2.7%	2.9%	2.5%
Somewhat agree	134	84	24
	13.1%	11.1%	14.9%
Neither agree nor disagree	213	133	54
	20.8%	17.6%	33.5%*
Somewhat disagree	233	170	38
	22.7%	22.5%	23.6%
Strongly disagree	418	345	41
	40.7%	45.8%*	25.5%
* $p \leq 0.05$ - statistically significant at the 95% level			
** $p \leq 0.01$ - statistically significant at the 90% level			

Question #20 - How different do you think the image you portray on your social network is from the image you portray in person?	Total	High Self-Esteem	Low Self-Esteem
Very Different	31	17	7
	3.0%	2.3%	4.3%
Somewhat Different	191	115	46
	18.6%	15.3%	21.8%
Somewhat similar	238	164	44
	23.2%	22.0%	27.3%
Very similar	352	278	42
	34.3%	36.9%*	26.1%
No difference - Exactly the same	214	180	22
	20.9%	23.9%*	13.7%
* $p \leq 0.05$ - statistically significant at the 95% level			
** $p \leq 0.01$ - statistically significant at the 90% level			

Table 3. Summary of responses related to privacy settings and experiences with aggression									
Question #6: Which of the following describe the privacy settings on your social network profile?									
	Profile Info - Total	High Self-Esteem	Low Self-Esteem	Contact Info - Total	High Self-Esteem	Low Self-Esteem	Media Info. - Total	High Self-Esteem	Low Self-Esteem
Viewable by everyone	146	106	21	39	21	10	124	86	19
	14.2%	14.1%	13.0%	3.8%	2.8%	6.2%**	12.1%	11.4%	11.8%
Viewable by friends of friends	142	111	15	49	39	5	193	146	32
	13.8%	14.7%*	9.3%	4.8%	5.2%	3.1%	18.8%	19.4%	19.9%
Viewable by friends only	717	522	121	672	484	109	682	504	102
	69.9%	69.2%	75.2%	65.5%	64.2%	67.7%	66.5%	66.8%	63.4%
* $p \leq 0.05$ - statistically significant at the 95% level									
** $p \leq 0.01$ - statistically significant at the 90% level									

Question #14. Have you ever....Yes/No			
Respondents' Actions	Yes	High Self-Esteem	Low Self-Esteem
A. Bullied someone over a social network site	81	50	22
	7.9%	6.6%	13.7%*
E. Changed the privacy settings on your social network profile due to a bad experience	345	226	73
	33.6%	30.0%	45.3%*
F. Considered deleting your social network profile due to a bad experience	266	177	55
	25.9%	23.5%	34.2%*
G. Actually deleted your social network profile due to a bad experience	160	107	30
	15.6%	14.2%	18.6%
I. Gotten in trouble because of something you posted on a social network site	210	141	44
	20.5%	18.7%	27.3%*
J. Gossiped about someone over a social network site	505	367	82
	49.2%	48.7%	50.9%
N. Stood up for someone who was being threatened, harassed, or bullied via a social network site	419	301	71
	40.8%	39.9%	44.1%
R. Said things to your friends on a social network site that you would never say to them in person	307	207	60
	29.9%	27.5%	37.3%*
Others' Actions that Impact on the Respondent			

B. Been bullied by someone over a social network site	202	131	50
	19.7%	17.4%	31.1%*
C. Had someone hack into your social network account without your permission	211	152	39
	20.6%	20.2%	24.2%
D. Had someone post photos of you or personal information about you that you didn't want posted on a social network site	289	197	61
	28.2%	26.1%	37.9%*
H. Lost a friend because of something posted on a social network site	131	86	29
	12.8%	11.4%	18.0%*
K. Had someone gossip about you over a social network site	421	307	70
	41.0%	40.7%	43.5%
Respondents' Feelings			
L. Felt shamed, embarrassed, or emotionally hurt by something posted on a social network site	369	235	88
	36.0%	31.2%	54.7%*
M. Felt concerned for your physical safety based on posts on a social network site	100	65	22
	9.7%	8.6%	13.7%*
* $p \leq 0.05$ - statistically significant at the 95% level			
** $p \leq 0.01$ - statistically significant at the 90% level			

Crosstab Analysis		Q6A Profile Info					Q6B Contact Info					6C Media Info (photos, videos, blogs, etc.)				
		Total	Viewable by friends only	Viewable by friends of friends or everyone	Sig.		Total	Viewable by friends only	Viewable by friends of friends or everyone	Sig.		Total	Viewable by friends only	Viewable by friends of friends or everyone	Sig.	
Table 4. Crosstab Analysis – respondents’ actions by privacy setting																
A. Bullied someone over a social network site	Yes	77	44	33	0.004	**	59	45	14	0.050	*	80	46	34	0.023	*
		7.7%	6.1%	11.5%			7.8%	6.7%	15.9%			8.0%	6.7%	10.7%		
E.Changed the privacy settings on your social network profile due to a bad experience	Yes	338	238	100	0.347		253	220	33	0.219		337	226	111	0.303	
		33.6%	33.2%	34.7%			33.3%	32.7%	37.5%			33.7%	33.1%	35.0%		
F.Considered deleting your social network profile due to a bad experience	Yes	260	186	74	0.502		202	169	33	0.011	*	257	174	83	0.440	
		25.9%	25.9%	25.7%			26.6%	25.1%	37.5%			25.7%	25.5%	26.2%		

G.Actually deleted your social network profile due to a bad experience	Yes	158	116	42	0.300		119	100	19	0.074		157	113	44	0.160	
		15.7%	16.2%	14.6%			15.7%	14.9%	21.6%			15.7%	16.6%	13.9%		
I.Gotten in trouble because of something you posted on a social network site	Yes	207	135	72	0.019	*	161	135	26	0.032	*	207	125	82	0.040	**
		20.6%	18.8%	25.0%			21.2%	20.1%	29.5%			20.7%	18.3%	25.9%		
J.Gossiped about someone over a social network site	Yes	496	327	169	0.000	***	382	329	53	0.030	*	499	314	185	0.000	***
		49.4%	45.6%	58.7%			50.3%	49.0%	60.2%			49.9%	46.0%	58.4%		
R.Said things to your friends on a social network site that you would never say to them in person	Yes	301	194	107	0.001	***	245	206	39	0.008	**	302	187	115	0.003	**
		30.0%	27.1%	37.2%			32.2%	30.7%	44.3%			30.2%	27.4%	36.3%		

* $p \leq 0.05$ - statistically significant at the 95% level																
** $p \leq 0.01$ - statistically significant at the 90% level																
*** $p < 0.001$ - statistically significant at the 99% level																

Crosstab Analysis			Q6A Profile Info					Q6B Contact Info					6C Media Info (photos, videos, blogs, etc.)			
			Total	Viewable by friends only	Viewable by friends of friends OR EVERYONE	Sig.		Total	Viewable by friends only	Viewable by friends of friends or everyone	Sig.		Total	Viewable by friends only	Viewable by friends of friends or everyone	
Table 5. Crosstab Analysis – others’ actions on respondents by privacy setting			Total	Viewable by friends only	Viewable by friends of friends OR EVERYONE	Sig.	Total	Viewable by friends only	Viewable by friends of friends or everyone	Sig.	Total	Viewable by friends only	Viewable by friends of friends or everyone	Sig.		
B. Been bullied by someone over a social network site	Yes	198	145	53	0.287	151	132	19	0.379	200	132	68	0.245			
		19.7%	20.2%	18.4%		19.9%	19.6%	21.6%		20.0%	19.4%	21.5%				
C. Had someone hack into your social network account without your permission	Yes	205	131	74	0.006	153	130	23	0.910	204	125	79	0.011	*		

		20.4%	18.3%	25.7%			20.1%	19.3%	26.1%			20.4%	18.3%	24.9%		
D.Had someone post photos of you or personal information about you that you didn't want posted on a social network site	Yes	282	197	85	0.282		230	202	28	0.411		283	191	92	0.397	
		28.1%	27.5%	29.5%			30.3%	30.1%	31.8%			100.0%	28.0%	29.0%		
H.Lost a friend because of something posted on a social network site	Yes	129	73	56	0.000	**	108	84	24	0.000	**	129	73	56	0.002	**
		100.0%	10.2%	19.4%			14.2%	12.5%	27.3%			12.9%	10.7%	17.7%		
K.Had someone gossip about you over a social	Yes	413	273	140	0.001	**	313	266	47	0.009	**	417	266	151	0.006	**

significant at the 95% level															
** $p \leq 0.01$ - statistically significant at the 90% level															
*** $p < 0.001$ - statistically significant at the 99% level															

Table 7. Demographic Data	Total
Age - 14	255
	24.90%
15	256
	25.00%
16	257
	25.00%
17	258
	25.10%
Geographic Location - South	320
	31.20%
West	312
	30.40%
East	215
	21.00%
Midwest	179
	17.40%
Best Describes Family - White or Caucasian	715
	69.70%
Hispanic/Latino	125
	12.20%
Black/African-American	121
	11.80%
Asian or Pacific Islander	92
	9.00%
Alaskan Native or American Islander	8
	0.80%
Other	29

	2.80%
Annual Household Income - < \$25,000	55
	5.40%
\$25,000 - \$49,999	156
	15.20%
\$50,000-\$99,999	242
	23.60%
\$100,000 or more	153
	14.90%
Don't Know	300
	29.20%
Prefer Not To Say	120
	11.70%
Girl Scout Status - Current	58
	5.70%
Former	432
	42.10%
Never	536
	52.20%

Survey Instrument

215723 Girl Scouts Social Media Research

1. Are you male or female?

Male {TERM}	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
Female	<input type="checkbox"/>	2

2. What is your age? _____ {TERM IF NOT 14-17}

3. Which of the following best describes your family? {ALLOW MULTIPLE RESPONSES}

Alaskan Native or American Islander	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	Hispanic / Latino	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
Asian or Pacific Islander	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	White or Caucasian	<input type="checkbox"/>	5
Black / African-American	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	6

4. Which, if any, of the following do you have? *Please mark all that apply.*

A personal email address	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
A cell phone or other device that you use for text messaging	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
A profile on a social networking site, like MySpace, Facebook, etc. {MUST SELECT TO CONTINUE}	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
An account on a micro-blogging site, like Twitter	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
None of these	<input type="checkbox"/>	5

5. Which of the following social networks do you have a profile on, and which do you use regularly?

		Have profile	Use regularly
A	Facebook	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂
B	MySpace	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂
C	Other, please specify _____	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂

**{FOR EACH ITEM, 2
CANNOT BE CHECKED
UNLESS 1 IS**

6. Which of the following describe the privacy settings on your social network profile?

		Viewable by everyone	Viewable by friends of friends	Viewable by friends only	None of these	Don't know
A	Profile info (comments, posts, status updates, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅
B	Contact info (phone number, address, email, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅
C	Photos, videos, blogs, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅

7. Who, if any, of the following are you friends with on a social networking site? *Please mark all that apply.*

- A close friend ₁
- A parent ₂
- A teacher ₃
- Someone you've never met (either online or in person) ₄
- Someone you've met online, but not in person ₅
- An acquaintance; that is, someone you've met in person, but are not close friends with ₆
- None of these ₇

8. Which, if any, of the following have you ever posted online?

Your address	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
Your contact information	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
Name of your school	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Photos or videos of yourself	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
Photos or videos of your family	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Photos or videos of friends	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
Links, articles, or other info to raise awareness or funds for a cause or organization you care about	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
Photos, videos, or other online posts that include cigarettes, alcohol, or drugs	<input type="checkbox"/> 8
Revealing, naked, or sexual photos or videos of yourself	<input type="checkbox"/> 9
Online comments or other public posts that are sexual in nature	<input type="checkbox"/> 10
Online comments or other public posts that include curse words	<input type="checkbox"/> 11
Your physical location via your social network site or a location-based site, like GoWalla or FourSquare	<input type="checkbox"/> 12

9. Thinking about your social network profile or other online account, about how many...?

...Status updates do you post a day	___ {0-999}
...Comments do you make on other people's profiles (status updates, photos, videos, links, etc.) a day	___ {0-999}
...Photos have you posted in total	___ {0-999}
...Videos have you posted in total	___ {0-999}
...Social network friends you have in total	___ {0-5000}
{SHOW ONLY FOR TWITTER USERS (4 AT Q.4)} ...Tweets do you post a day	___ {0-999}

10. Thinking about your behavior on social network sites, how would you compare yourself to **other girls your age** when it comes to each of the following?

	More than other girls your age	About the same as other girls your age	Less than other girls your age
A The amount of content you post (photos, videos, blogs, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
B The number of status updates you post a day	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
C Your level of concern about privacy on social network sites	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
D Your comfort level with posting personal info on social network sites	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
E The steps you take to ensure your online safety on social networks	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1

11. How safe do you think it is to have personal information or photos on a social networking site?

Very safe	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Somewhat safe	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
In the middle	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Somewhat unsafe	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
Very unsafe	<input type="checkbox"/> 1

12. How concerned are you, if at all, about each of the following?

	Extremely concerned	Very concerned	Somewhat concerned	Not very concerned	Not at all concerned
{RANDOMIZE}					
A	That someone will hack into your social network without your permission				
	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
B	That someone will post photos of you or personal information about you that you don't want posted on a social network				
	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
C	That someone will use information or photos that you posted on your social network in a way that you don't want them to				
	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
D	That someone will cause you physical harm, follow you, or break-in to your home as a result of posting your physical location on your social network				
	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
E	That your social network posts or photos will get you in trouble with parents, teachers, etc.				
	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
F	That your friends or family will lose respect for you, based on your social network posts or photos				
	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
G	That you may lose your job or be turned down for a job in the future based on the content posted on your social network profile				
	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
H	That your ability to get into the college of your choice may be jeopardized based on the content posted on your social network profile				
	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1

13. Thinking about your behavior on social network sites, which ONE of the following statements *best* describes you?

- I am very careful and have multiple safety/privacy measures in place to protect myself online 1
- I have good intentions when it comes to online safety/privacy, but I admit I'm not always as careful as I should be 2
- I give very little, if any, consideration to online safety/privacy 3

14. Have you ever ...

	YES	NO
{RANDOMIZE}		
A	Bullied someone over a social network site	
	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
B	Been bullied by someone over a social network site	
	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
C	Had someone hack into your social network account without your permission	
	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2

- | | | | |
|----------|---|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| D | Had someone post photos of you or personal information about you that you didn't want posted on a social network site | <input type="checkbox"/> ₁ | <input type="checkbox"/> ₂ |
| E | Changed the privacy settings on your social network profile due to a bad experience | <input type="checkbox"/> ₁ | <input type="checkbox"/> ₂ |
| F | Considered deleting your social network profile due to a bad experience | <input type="checkbox"/> ₁ | <input type="checkbox"/> ₂ |
| G | Actually deleted your social network profile due to a bad experience | <input type="checkbox"/> ₁ | <input type="checkbox"/> ₂ |
| H | Lost a friend because of something posted on a social network site | <input type="checkbox"/> ₁ | <input type="checkbox"/> ₂ |
| I | Gotten in trouble because of something you posted on a social network site | <input type="checkbox"/> ₁ | <input type="checkbox"/> ₂ |
| J | Gossiped about someone over a social network site | <input type="checkbox"/> ₁ | <input type="checkbox"/> ₂ |
| K | Had someone gossip about you over a social network site | <input type="checkbox"/> ₁ | <input type="checkbox"/> ₂ |
| L | Felt shamed, embarrassed, or emotionally hurt by something posted on a social network site | <input type="checkbox"/> ₁ | <input type="checkbox"/> ₂ |
| M | Felt concerned for your physical safety based on posts on a social network site | <input type="checkbox"/> ₁ | <input type="checkbox"/> ₂ |
| N | Stood up for someone who was being threatened, harassed, or bullied via a social network site | <input type="checkbox"/> ₁ | <input type="checkbox"/> ₂ |
| O | Gotten involved in a cause you care about via a social network site | <input type="checkbox"/> ₁ | <input type="checkbox"/> ₂ |
| P | Deleted someone as your friend on a social network site | <input type="checkbox"/> ₁ | <input type="checkbox"/> ₂ |
| Q | Broken up with someone you were in a romantic relationship with over a social network site | <input type="checkbox"/> ₁ | <input type="checkbox"/> ₂ |
| R | Said things to your friends on a social network site that you would never say to them in person | <input type="checkbox"/> ₁ | <input type="checkbox"/> ₂ |

15. How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following?

		Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
{RANDOMIZE}						
A	I have many “friends” on my social network profile that I’ve never even met	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁
B	It’s really important to me to have as many friends as possible on my social network profile	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁
C	I only accept friend requests on my social network profile from people I’m already friends with in person	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁
D	Social network sites are just a big popularity contest	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁
E	I often try to shock people with what I post online	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁
F	I often post comments, status updates, and other online posts that are not true, just to get people’s attention	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁
G	Most girls my age use social networking sites to try to make themselves look cooler than they really are	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁
H	I use social networking sites to try to make myself look cooler than I really am	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁
I	I would feel a major sense of loss if social network sites went away	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁
J	I tend to be more of an observer than an active participant on social networks	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁
K	I have complete control over what happens with the photos, videos, and other content I post online	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁
L	I often go several days without logging into my social network profile	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁
M	I’m very happy with the person I am today	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁
N	Overall, I’m very happy with my life	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁
O	I often reach out to others on social networking sites when I feel sad or when something bad happens to me	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁

16. Think about someone you're very close to who **knows you well**. What words would he/she use to describe who you are **in person**? Please mark all that apply. {RANDOMIZE}

Smart	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	Crazy	<input type="checkbox"/> 11	Busy	<input type="checkbox"/> 21
Funny	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	Nerdy	<input type="checkbox"/> 12	Social	<input type="checkbox"/> 22
Cool	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	Boring	<input type="checkbox"/> 13	Anti-social	<input type="checkbox"/> 23
Outgoing	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	Mean	<input type="checkbox"/> 14	Kind	<input type="checkbox"/> 24
Fun	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	Snobby	<input type="checkbox"/> 15	Stupid	<input type="checkbox"/> 25
Slutty	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	Shy	<input type="checkbox"/> 16	Arrogant	<input type="checkbox"/> 26
Sexy	<input type="checkbox"/> 7	Popular	<input type="checkbox"/> 17	Daring	<input type="checkbox"/> 27
Flirtatious	<input type="checkbox"/> 8	Rebellious	<input type="checkbox"/> 18	Confident	<input type="checkbox"/> 28
A good influence on others	<input type="checkbox"/> 9	A bad influence on others	<input type="checkbox"/> 19	Aggressive	<input type="checkbox"/> 29
A risk-taker	<input type="checkbox"/> 10	A social activist	<input type="checkbox"/> 20	None of these	<input type="checkbox"/> 30

17. {ASK IF SELECTED MORE THAN 5 ITEMS IN Q.16} Of this list, which are the **top 5 words** this person who **knows you well** would use to describe who you are **in person**? Please check 5. {SHOW ONLY ITEMS SELECTED IN Q.16 IN SAME ORDER}

Smart	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	Crazy	<input type="checkbox"/> 11	Busy	<input type="checkbox"/> 21
Funny	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	Nerdy	<input type="checkbox"/> 12	Social	<input type="checkbox"/> 22
Cool	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	Boring	<input type="checkbox"/> 13	Anti-social	<input type="checkbox"/> 23
Outgoing	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	Mean	<input type="checkbox"/> 14	Kind	<input type="checkbox"/> 24
Fun	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	Snobby	<input type="checkbox"/> 15	Stupid	<input type="checkbox"/> 25
Slutty	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	Shy	<input type="checkbox"/> 16	Arrogant	<input type="checkbox"/> 26
Sexy	<input type="checkbox"/> 7	Popular	<input type="checkbox"/> 17	Daring	<input type="checkbox"/> 27
Flirtatious	<input type="checkbox"/> 8	Rebellious	<input type="checkbox"/> 18	Confident	<input type="checkbox"/> 28
A good influence on others	<input type="checkbox"/> 9	A bad influence on others	<input type="checkbox"/> 19	Aggressive	<input type="checkbox"/> 29
A risk-taker	<input type="checkbox"/> 10	A social activist	<input type="checkbox"/> 20	None of these	<input type="checkbox"/> 30

18. Now, imagine that someone **you don't know very well** came across your **social network profile**. What words would he/she use to describe you, based only on what he/she sees **on your profile**? Please mark all that apply. {SHOW IN SAME ORDER AS Q.16}

Smart	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	Crazy	<input type="checkbox"/> 11	Busy	<input type="checkbox"/> 21
Funny	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	Nerdy	<input type="checkbox"/> 12	Social	<input type="checkbox"/> 22
Cool	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	Boring	<input type="checkbox"/> 13	Anti-social	<input type="checkbox"/> 23
Outgoing	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	Mean	<input type="checkbox"/> 14	Kind	<input type="checkbox"/> 24
Fun	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	Snobby	<input type="checkbox"/> 15	Stupid	<input type="checkbox"/> 25
Slutty	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	Shy	<input type="checkbox"/> 16	Arrogant	<input type="checkbox"/> 26

Sexy	<input type="checkbox"/> 7	Popular	<input type="checkbox"/> 17	Daring	<input type="checkbox"/> 27
Flirtatious	<input type="checkbox"/> 8	Rebellious	<input type="checkbox"/> 18	Confident	<input type="checkbox"/> 28
A good influence on others	<input type="checkbox"/> 9	A bad influence on others	<input type="checkbox"/> 19	Aggressive	<input type="checkbox"/> 29
A risk-taker	<input type="checkbox"/> 10	A social activist	<input type="checkbox"/> 20	None of these	<input type="checkbox"/> 30

19. {ASK IF SELECTED MORE THAN 5 ITEMS IN Q.18} Of this list, which are the **top 5 words** this person who **you don't know very well** would use to describe you, based on what he/she sees on **your social network profile**? Please check 5. {SHOW ONLY ITEMS SELECTED IN Q.18 IN SAME ORDER}

Smart	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	Crazy	<input type="checkbox"/> 11	Busy	<input type="checkbox"/> 21
Funny	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	Nerdy	<input type="checkbox"/> 12	Social	<input type="checkbox"/> 22
Cool	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	Boring	<input type="checkbox"/> 13	Anti-social	<input type="checkbox"/> 23
Outgoing	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	Mean	<input type="checkbox"/> 14	Kind	<input type="checkbox"/> 24
Fun	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	Snobby	<input type="checkbox"/> 15	Stupid	<input type="checkbox"/> 25
Slutty	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	Shy	<input type="checkbox"/> 16	Arrogant	<input type="checkbox"/> 26
Sexy	<input type="checkbox"/> 7	Popular	<input type="checkbox"/> 17	Daring	<input type="checkbox"/> 27
Flirtatious	<input type="checkbox"/> 8	Rebellious	<input type="checkbox"/> 18	Confident	<input type="checkbox"/> 28
A good influence on others	<input type="checkbox"/> 9	A bad influence on others	<input type="checkbox"/> 19	Aggressive	<input type="checkbox"/> 29
A risk-taker	<input type="checkbox"/> 10	A social activist	<input type="checkbox"/> 20	None of these	<input type="checkbox"/> 30

20. How different do you think the image you portray on your **social network** is from the image you portray **in person**?

Very different	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
Somewhat different	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
Somewhat similar	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Very similar	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
No difference - Exactly the same	<input type="checkbox"/> 5

21. How different do you think the images portrayed on **social networks** by **most girls your age** are from the images they portray **in person**?

Very different	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
Somewhat different	<input type="checkbox"/> 2

Somewhat similar	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Very similar	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
No difference - Exactly the same	<input type="checkbox"/> 5

22. Would you be embarrassed if any of the following people viewed your social network profile right now, including your photos, videos, posts, etc.?

	YES	NO
A Your parents/guardians	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂
B Your close friends	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂
C Your peers	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂
D Your boyfriend or someone you are interested in dating	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂
E Your teachers	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂
F Your best friend's parents	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂
G Your boyfriend's parents or the parents of someone you are interested in dating	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂
H A college admissions officer	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂
I Your current or future employer	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂

23. How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following?

		Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
	{RANDOMIZE}					
A	Social network sites help me feel closer and more connected to my friends	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁
B	Social network sites cause more problems and drama with friendships than bringing friends closer together	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁
C	It's much easier to be honest with someone via a social network site than in person	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁
D	I often lose respect for friends because of what they post on their social network site	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁
E	If I have news to share, I usually alert my close friends first before posting it publicly on my social network site	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁
F	If I have news to share, I usually alert all of my friends at once over my social network site	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁
G	I have less to talk about with my friends in person, because we communicate regularly on social network sites	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁
H	Social network sites often create jealousy between friends	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁
I	It hurts my feelings when I find out something important about a close friend via a public post on a social network site	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁
J	Social networks are a good way to get to know someone I'm interested in dating	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁
K	Social network sites have increased the quality of my friendships	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁
L	Social network sites have increased the quantity of my friendships	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁
M	I communicate with my close friends more via social network than via text	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁

24. If you had to choose between each of the following, would you rather...? {RANDOMIZE ORDER OF A-H, BUT KEEP PAIRS TOGETHER}

A	Communicate with your friends via text message when you're at home	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	or	Communicate with your friends via social network when you're at home	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂
B	Communicate with your friends over the phone	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	or	Communicate with your friends via social	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂

	when you're at home			network when you're at home	
C	Spend an hour watching your favorite TV show	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	or	Spend an hour on your social network site	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂
D	Start a conversation with someone you're interested in dating in person	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	or	Start a conversation with someone you're interested in dating via a social network	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂
E	Start a conversation with someone you're interested in dating via text	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	or	Start a conversation with someone you're interested in dating via a social network	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂
F	Give up all of your friends on your social network profile to keep your best friend	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	or	Give up your best friend to keep all of your other friends on your social network profile	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂
G	Go a full week without logging into your social network profile	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	or	Go a full week without seeing your friends in person	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂
H	Spend an hour socializing over your social network	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	or	Spend an hour socializing with your friends in person	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂

25. Which, if any, of the following have you ever had a conversation about with your parent/guardian? *Please mark all that apply.*

Safe and unsafe social network behaviors	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁
What is and is not appropriate to post on your social network profile	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂
The amount of time you spend on your social network profile	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃
None of these	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄

26. Are you currently, or have you ever been a Girl Scout?

Yes, I am currently a Girl Scout	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁
Yes, I used to be a Girl Scout but am not currently	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂
No	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃

27. What state do you live in? {PULL-DOWN MENU}

28. What is your zip code at home? _ _ _ _ _

29. Which of the following best describes where you live?

Urban, city environment	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁
Suburban or town/village environment near a city	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂
Rural or small town environment	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃

30. Which of the following best describes your annual household income?

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------------|
| Less than \$25,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 |
| \$25,000 to \$49,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 |
| \$50,000 to \$99,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 |
| \$100,000 or more | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 |
| Don't know | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| Prefer not to say | <input type="checkbox"/> 6 |

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