YOUTH AND NEW MEDIA: CONSTRUCTING MEANING AND IDENTITY IN NETWORKED SPACES

by

David R. Zemmels

A dissertation submitted to the faculty of
The University of Utah
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Communication

The University of Utah

August 2011

The University of Utah Graduate School

STATEMENT OF DISSERTATION APPROVAL

The dissertation of **David R. Zemmels**

has been approved by the following supervisory committee members:

James A. Anderson	, Chair	**May 10, 2011** Date Approved
Craig Denton	, Member	**May 10, 2011** Date Approved
Daniel Emery	, Member	Date Approved
Stephen Hess	, Member	**May 10, 2011** Date Approved
Paul (Monty) Paret	, Member	**May 10, 2011** Date Approved

and by **Ann Darling**, Chair of the Department of **Communication**

and by Charles A. Wight, Dean of The Graduate School.

ABSTRACT

This project is an activity–based study of American teens (13-17 years of age) and their material engagement with new media. This study documents the participants' engagement with new media in networked spaces and the everyday practices that surround their participation. Study participants were asked to orally report what they are experiencing as they experience it. Reports and on-screen activities are recorded by a laptop computer.

Theoretical findings emerged from the axial coding across four code categories and suggested a *leitmotiv* pattern of a complex but stable relationship between interpersonal communication channels, the relative immediacy and intimacy of the channel, and the social relationship between participants. This pattern appeared to have a structuring influence on communication practices of youth in networked publics, and led to some tensions, concerns, and strategies relating to controlling the flow of information in those spaces. Overall, 10 code patterns and themes emerged to provide insight into the everyday practices of young people as they negotiate and construct meaning and identity in networked publics. The implications of the findings are discussed in the context of the research questions.

To my wife, Esther, for her love and unwavering support. To my children, who have never known a father who was not in working on a PhD. To my mother and father, who never lost confidence. My family was and is my inspiration.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

Table Page

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure Page

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

For the ongoing support of my degree ambitions, I would like to acknowledge the Department of Communication at the University of Utah, the members of my graduate committee, and especially James A. Anderson, who took over as Chair midstream and led heroically.

I would also like to acknowledge the School of Mass Communication at Loyola University New Orleans and the Director, Dr. Sonya Duhé, for supporting the research this dissertation documents with time, equipment, and software.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This project responds to the following questions: How do youth, particularly teens, use new media technologies in their daily lives? What meanings do they attach to the technologies and their uses of it? And how do the technology, usage, and meanings participate in the constitution of their identities? Answers to these questions are sought in the auto-ethnographic reports of a panel of teen respondents.

The history of media in society coincides with decades of research concerned with media and their influence on society. Each new communication medium brings with it great promise for personal expression and democratic values in society, but also great concerns about the perceived effects on the mass population.

A category of special social and academic concern has always been the child. Young people are assumed vulnerable, passive subjects, thus at great risk of exposure to media and their negative effects. Because of their vulnerability and presumed passivity, youth are typically excluded from the conversations concerning media and their effects, influences, and democratic potential.

With the rising popularity of "new media," the term used here to encompass social media and other Internet-based forms of information and entertainment, this paternalistic tradition of defining the child remains very powerful in popular and

academic discourse, and expands into the social context of home and school, and the communities that exist within, around, and in between these social institutions.

The academic tradition of treating young people as special audiences is being rethought: the child is now being understood as a category of media users who are "socially constructed, historically variable, and contested" (Ito, 2010, p. 6), so perhaps not well understood at all. This project follows the research paradigm of accepting youth as a social and cultural category in order to fully account for the role of new media in their daily lives (Ito, 2010; Livingstone, 2002; Wartella & Jennings, 2000).

Media undoubtedly have an influence on the way youth think, act, and learn, and therefore participate in the social construction and maintenance of youth identity and culture, but the influences are now understood as reciprocal. This is an especially valid approach in new media spaces were youth participation and practices have a significant influence on new media development: youth engagement shapes and defines much of the content of many web sites.

In these reformulations, media and technology are not seen as deterministic, where children are perceived as helpless victims of media influence. Instead, the child is the embodiment of social and cultural relations with media. Further, this embodiment is accommodated within the ongoing field of social action that constitutes the everyday life of the child (Anderson & Meyer, 1988).

This project helps to answer basic questions by documenting an activity–based study of American teens (13-17 years of age) and their material engagement with new media. The design of this study allows me to collect data on their engagement, in the moment of that engagement, for analysis and discussion. My approach embraces the

perspective that youth are an interesting social and cultural group of active, thinking, creative participants in mediated experience. Rather than vulnerable and passive, youth are taken seriously as actors in their own social world. Indeed, as subjects in media research, teenagers tend to be excellent indicators of broader trends (boyd, 2009a). Often early adaptors of new fads and proclivities, especially in media, they are a group that shapes services in the long-term.

Media Influence on Society: Old Concerns, New Problems

In the postindustrial modern age, society is said to lament a loss of innocence and try to recover an imagined time gone by where life contained more certainties (Appadurai, 1996; Shaw & Chase, 1989), and media are often to blame. Paralleling these social anxieties in the United States is academic research that has provided evidence of the potentially negative effects of each new medium, evidence that would seem to support popular fears and concerns (Grimes, Anderson, & Bergen, 2008). Conversely, there are those who argue that each new medium represents great promise and new possibilities for a democratic society. Both perspectives are probably extreme, and the relationship between media and society falls somewhere in between.

Competing Utopian and Dystopian Paradigms

The history of media and their relationship to society represents a range of utopian and dystopian traditions. Proponents of the former see opportunities for participation, self-expression, play, learning, and support of democratic values (Giddens, 1991; Goldman, Booker, & McDermott, 2008; Poster, 1997). The latter see an end of innocence, traditional values, and authority. The result is a long-standing tension between

democratic enlightenment and effects paradigms for media research in the social sciences.

The utopian tradition posits that media represent significant opportunities for democratic participation in the public sphere, and even more so with the advent of the Internet (Dahlberg, 2001). With regard to youth, media education is seen as a central location where society can enhance the role of youth, as critically engaged democratic citizens, most effectively. From this perspective, educators develop students' capacity for reflection and self-expression through engagement with those power structures that limit such acts (Livingstone, 2004). Often referred to as “media literacy,” the democratic promise evolves from the productive tensions that arise from educators' desire to protect and prepare students to live in a media saturated society (Poyntz, 2006).

The opposing paradigm are those who see media in much more sinister terms, exhibiting a long history of ‘moral panics’ and ‘social anxieties’ about the negative effects of media going back to the VCR, television, radio, comic books (Drotner & Livingstone, 2008; Wartella & Reeves, 1985; D. Williams, 2003), and even as far back as the late 1800s and dime novels (Grimes et al., 2008). The lengthy list of physical and psychological social ills attributed to media includes addiction, antisocial behavior, violent behavior, sexual deviancy, obesity, and so on. Issues of children’s exposure to Internet-based media are “magnified by technological potential to digitise all text, images and sound and, hence, to facilitate convergence across hitherto distinct media platforms and services” (Drotner & Livingstone, 2008, p. 2). Paternal oversight becomes even more difficult, which heightens popular fears and anxieties.

Media have typically been deeply implicated in the debates about the larger problems of society and are caught in the tension between the various stakeholders. However, contemporary theorizing and research on the role of media suggests it may have less power to influence than previously assumed: both as the cause of, or solution to, social problems.

The Media are the Problem

In a cultural analysis of media research on violence and aggression in media and society over the last 100 years, Grimes et al. (2008) argue, "we see a body of scientific work whose origin derives less from empirical evidence than it does from political opportunism" (p. 31). Each new form of media is "quickly connected to the ongoing and often intractable problems of that society" (p. 50), and is often used by politicians for political gain. These politicians provide the funding for science to study *the problem*, which then becomes *the media problem,* framed as the effects of the media. To continue the funding, science must address *the media problem*.

When looking at the media problem, research is usually directed towards categories of people considered less educated, vulnerable social groups, thus in need of paternalistic oversight. In the context of this social/scientific construct, Grimes et al. (2008) define the typical object of study as the *Other*, a group whose membership does not include those at the top of the dominate social structure but instead reflects those perceived as "lower on the socio-economic ladder than the population/race/ethnic origin/religion of the dominant population" (p. 50). Children have been typically relegated to this "lower" segment of media audiences, no matter what the station of their parents.

Paradigms that Question the Power of Media

While the popular and academic debates about media influence have raged, academic conceptions of the actual power of that influence have evolved. Disagreement stems from the opposing notions that media have the power to directly influence viewers versus the power of individuals or groups to potentially resist any influence from media messages.

Wartella and Reeves (1985) trace how, from 1900 to 1960, most researchers saw media as having a direct linear impact on all audience members. In the 1970s, researchers began to argue that media had a more indirect, but still had an undifferentiated, impact on audiences.

By the 1980s, conceptions of media influence began to differ sharply from mass media research up to that point, instead reflecting a trend toward concepts of agency and literacy in media reception. This was exemplified by a shift towards a nonlinear way of thinking about media effects which began with Stuart Hall's classic paper on *encoding/decoding* (Hall, 1980). Mass communication was reconceived as two different but closely related overlapping spheres: encoding by media producers, decoding by media audiences; each dependent on shared, intersecting types of cultural knowledge, conventions, and resources.

Anderson and Meyer (1988) expand this conception by arguing, "Meaning emerges in the interaction among content, context, and communicants" (p. 89), making the audience but one of many influences on meaning. The cultural object (content) is at the center of this interactive process. Meaning for audiences (communicants) is not fixed, but instead relies on the cultural conditions of its reception (context). Understanding the

influence of media becomes a circular rather than a linear process of media participation in everyday life: “That daily life represents both the start and the end of this process serves to underline its cyclic nature; technologies both arise from, and find their place within, the conditions, practices, and meanings of ordinary people’s lives” (Livingstone, 2002, p. 47).

Social Constructs of ‘Child’ and ‘Media’

Despite reformulations of media and their influence, assumptions about the effects on children as a social group continued to follow a different logic in academic research and public policy. In media research, children have not been thought of as typical audience members, so were treated as separated and differentiated from the general population (Wartella & Reeves, 1985).

The continuing worries over media effects appear to be more complex than simple concern for the child’s well-being. Research agendas regarding children tended to reflect and be formed by public debate, “rather than research shaping public concerns or policy” (Wartella & Reeves, 1985, p. 120). The central question is whether media are good or bad for young people, but such questions are inevitably framed as an either/or choice, and answers are presented in totalizing terms that do not appear to have a problem generalizing both *child* and *media*.

Child as Nostalgic Fantasy and Political Opportunity

Henry Jenkins (1998) argued that “childhood” is a discursive invention of the last 100 years and can be used as a potent political metaphor in postwar society. Buckingham (2000) points out that the discursive concept of childhood often represents a nostalgic fantasy of the past, one whose traditional certainties have been eroded and undermined at

the end of the 20th Century. In these cultural constructions, children are perceived as becoming more violent, antisocial, and sexually active, thus embodying larger social fears for declining social standards and norms.

From this perspective, social concerns about the child and childhood, "have long been established as discursive sites through which adults can conceptualize and (re)construct the past, present and future aspects of society" (Selwyn, 2003, p. 351). The discursive invention of the child becomes a matter of power, used to exert control over young people, denying them rights as "autonomous and active agents" (Buckingham, 2008b, p. 183), thereby justifying and reinforcing their dependency on adults.

Child as Computer User

Beginning in the 1990s, it may be no surprise to learn that the utopian/dystopian debate continues: "Computer technology has ushered in a new era of mass media, bringing with it great promise and great concerns about the effect on children's development and wellbeing" (Wartella & Jennings, 2000, p. 1). The uncertainty may continue but core dynamics seem to be changing. By the beginning of the 21st Century, the notion of "child computer user" has become one that is perhaps even more paradoxical and complex in political, academic, and popular discourses than past notions of the child consumer of media.

Compelling survey-based evidence suggests that mediated communication technologies occupy an increasingly pivotal role in the lives of young people: 9 out of 10 teens (ages 12-17) are fully wired, compared to 66% of adults (Lenhart, Madden, & Hitlin, 2005); and young people are multitasking by consuming more media in their daily lives, but not spending more time doing it (Roberts, Foehr, & Rideout, 2005). This

generation has been variously described as Generation M (for media) (Roberts et al., 2005), digital kids (Hsi, 2007), millennials (Lenhart et al., 2005), and "digital natives" inhabiting the world along side "digital immigrants" (Prensky, 2001) . They are spending more time with media than any other activity, except sleeping, putting today's children "in the vanguard of a revolution in both technology and culture" (Heim, Brandtzeg, Kaare, Endestad, & Torgersen, 2007, p. 426).

Consumption and connectivity are not all that is changing. Studies indicate that progressively more new media are produced by youth. A Pew study (Lenhart & Madden, 2005) found that "57% of online teens create content for the Internet. That amounts to half of all teens ages 12-17, or about 12 million youth."

Taken together, these numbers represent a fundamental shift in the basic relationship between media and youth: a breakdown in the producer/consumer dialectic that had been relatively consistent throughout the prior history of mass media. This generation is steeped in media *and* understands the fundamentals of digital media production and distribution. Teens with access to digital technology and the Internet probably have a very different understanding of media in their lives than any previous generation. This generation not only consumes media as defined in the traditional mass media sense, but also—with the digital media production tools now available at little cost and requiring little training from digital video cameras to camera cell phones to free video and audio editing software—can produce media and distribute media via the Internet for consumption on mobile phones and many other digital devices. Rather than mass media consumers, they are the "me media" generation shaping and contributing to the media economy with a potentially global audience.

A new conception for the relationship between youth and media has emerged: youth culture is becoming situated within an interactive "participatory environment" (Jenkins, 2006, 2009), with the primary difference being in form, audience, and distribution of media (Sefton-Green, 2006). This conception is discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

Child as expert computer user. From these fundamental shifts comes something new for *the media problem*: the growing "digital generation gap" (Buckingham, 2000; Livingstone, 2003), adding fuel to the uncertainty surrounding the notion of childhood in the late modern era. The result is a deepening conflict, if not an outright paradox: the notion of a generation of children having an innate ability to learn and use new technology and perceived as technically more proficient in its use than adults. At the same time, they continue to be constructed as vulnerable, passive subjects who are not considered competent agents in their use of media. Not only are young people playing a key role in the form and content available through new communication, entertainment, and information technologies, they are seen as the expert in the use of media technology who can explain the complexities of new media technology and practices to their parents. This creates a paradox of seemingly irreconcilable perceptions about youth and media, and represents a constant struggle to fill the "gap between parental strategies and children's tactics for media usage" (Press & Livingstone, 2006, p. 190).

Beyond the child computer user. Social anxieties over potential effects of new media are spreading beyond the influence on the individual child. Adding to ongoing concerns is the transformation of the traditional social constructs of home, school, and community, in which media play an increasingly significant and constitutive role.

Livingstone (2002) identifies the decline of public leisure facilities, after-school activities, and "street corner culture" as some reasons leisure is increasingly focused on the home. The result is the "domestication" of media technology, allowing media use to have a direct impact on "doing things as a family," because family time is increasingly synonymous with media time. The impact of media on home life is discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

Despite the grand claims about the nature of media influence and the perceptions of youth as media consumers, relatively few researchers have tried to answer basic questions about how and why youth engage and make meaning with new media in the context of their everyday lives. The debate needs to be empirically and theoretically informed, rather than driven by the latest forms of academic and popular social anxiety and moral panic about negative influences.

A Reality Check: The Digital Divide

Assumptions about media effects' potential usually fail to recognize that their influence is neither universal nor unified. In new media access, there is a widening "digital divide" (Katz & Aspden, 1997), which is the gap between those who can access computers and the Internet, and those who can not. Concerns about exposure to media in society, especially in its educational institutions, are being replaced by concerns about lack of access: at risk are those who do not have adequate access to new media spaces. The result is a digital divide caused by restrictions to the potential benefits of new media for society.

In the context of this project, the gap is understood in at least two distinct ways: between child and adult, and between youth of different economic, social, race, and

ethnic situations in the world. The divide between child and adult is the paradox discussed above. Youth may be perceived as being on one side and adults on the other, but there is a difference between this "generational gap" (Herring, 2008) and between "the technology rich and the technology poor, both within and between societies" (Buckingham, 2008a, p. 14).

In the United States, a Kaiser Foundation report (*Children, The Digital Divide, and Federal Policy*, 2004) evaluates federal data and shows significant gaps in the quantity and quality of digital access for children in all areas and society's ability to provide the skills and content that are most beneficial for the education experience.

Outside the United States, access to new media technologies on the Internet "is highly stratified, with significant inequalities across and within households in all nations studied" (Livingstone, 2003, p. 154). The divide is not limited to that between affluent and lower-income members of a society, but also disparities across education, ethnicity, gender, family status, geography, and disability on a global scale (Castells, 2001; Chinn & Fairlie, 2007; Lenhart et al., 2005; Livingstone, 2007), and have a continuing impact on contemporary notions of media in society.

Participants in this study are likely biased towards young people with regular access to the Internet through their home or school in a middle-class urban environment, therefore firmly seated on the *have* side of the digital divide.

(Re)conceptualizing Child and New Media in Research

Internet-based new media, like the media that preceded them, undoubtedly have an influence on society and the children within it, but "if media have changed in the past 50 years, so too have the contexts of childhood, whether this is charted in terms of the

social structures of family or community, of consumer and labour market expectations, or of values and identities" (Livingstone, 2002, p. 21). Yet, there is "a serious lack of knowledge in public and academic domains about the social meanings, uses, and consequences of new media" (Livingstone, 2002, p. 2) in the lives of children.

As noted, young people as social beings have not been well served by past scientific research and popular cultural assumptions about the child and media, and there is little direct empirical evidence for how youth construct and maintain self and build communities with others in new media spaces. Most prior research in the field tends to focus on "what the media do to children" as opposed to "what children do with media" (Heim et al., 2007). By reversing the equation, the tradition of treating youth as special audiences is being rethought in scholarly research, allowing a more complex and nuanced understanding of the relationship between media, youth, identity, and community to emerge.

Central to this research project is the reconceptualization of the relationship between the child and Internet-based media. There are some significant changes in media use being identified by the quantitative research discussed above. Research methodologies that uncover the everyday practices behind those changes for young people is a necessary step if we are to understand how youth maintain identity and make meaning in new media public spaces. Quantitative analysis of statistical data help identify cultural trends much faster than qualitative interpretive methods, so this qualitative study builds off of quantitative findings to capture and analyze media practices of youth culture in the contemporary moment, before they become domesticated as "common sense," fade away, or give way to new forms of social constructs. Individually, the findings from this

study may or may not be meaningful as generalizable hypotheses, but collective research in this area could be helpful to document these transient artifacts of youth culture before they are gone, erased, offline.

Along with a reconceptualization of children as media participants and their relationship to media is a need to reconceptualize their engagement with media technology itself. Past research of this kind has generally failed to integrate the study of media practices across multiple media channels. Heim et al. (2007) argue that "one cannot simply examine one technology at a time in order to understand the complex patterns of media use among children." For example, much of the research on youth and individual media technologies focuses on specific technologies such as cellular phones (Kaare, Brandtzeg, Heim, & Endestad, 2007; Lenhart, Ling, Campbell, & Purcell, 2010; Ling & Yttri, 2005), a strategy less useful in an age of "media convergence" (Jenkins, 2006). Youth are multitasking by consuming more media, but not spending less time doing it (Roberts et al., 2005), which strongly suggests that *millennials* probably view media use as integrated, if not interchangeable, across multiple digital devices.

In this context, it is artificial to try and separate various media channels for research, especially when youth do not necessarily make such distinctions in their everyday practices. The results of this study bear this out.

Theoretical Orientation

This research project takes a grounded approach. Theoretical frameworks will remain open to accommodate emerging interpretations. In order to participate in the development of new constructs for media research, this study sets aside traditional

frameworks and *a priori* conceptions about youth audiences and their relationship to the newest of media: Internet-based communication, entertainment, and information.

This theory building approach is informed, but not driven by, traditions in theoretical and philosophical thinking about the cultural construction of identity, rhetorical analysis of digital media communication, principles of visual communication, and current research in audience studies in new media as public and private space, especially as these traditions relate to young audiences.

The review of media research literature in the next chapter demonstrates that theorizing about media and culture has shifted toward the understanding that identity is a complex social process. In this formulation, there are no unifying truths, only negotiated, contested and contextualized processes for the social construction of reality. Socially, biologically, and technologically determinist views of media and technology, especially constructs of the child, are limited by their assumptions when applied to contemporary media users. New conceptual constructs of media reception and social construction of identity in this context must "emphasize its multiplicity, diversity, simultaneity, fluidity, surface, and relational production" (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002).

The umbrella term, "postmodernism," is generally applied when describing this shift in conceptualizing social processes, and as a metatheoretical lens, is particularly useful in the study of the contemporary condition, and sets the stage for theory building in new media social environments in particular. Taking this perspective is appropriate because modernist theories, while providing an important foundation for interpreting data collected in the field, may not adequately account for the fluid, fragmented, and indeterminate aspects of cultural meanings in today's heavily mediated society, nor for

the diversity and complexity of new media interactions. Perhaps most importantly, traditional media studies theories fail to acknowledge the lived experience of childhood and the child's relationship to media (Drotner & Livingstone, 2008; Heim et al., 2007; Ito, 2010; Livingstone, 2002; Selwyn, 2003; Steele & Brown, 1995; Wartella & Jennings, 2000).

Methodological Orientation

To uncover cultural strategies and practices for engaging media, the emphasis of this project is on developing and implementing methods of data collection that allow youth to go about their everyday lives while participating in the study.

This dissertation documents my activity–based study of American teens' engagement with new media in networked spaces and the everyday practices that surround their participation. Study participants were asked to orally report what they are experiencing as they experience it. As a hybrid form of protocol analysis using experience sampling methods, I use the technologies of new media engagement to observe their activities online, allowing for documentation and analysis of patterns and thinking that may lead to better understanding of the ways in which teens make meaning and construct identity in new media electronic spaces.

By listening to youth themselves as they engage communication and entertainment media, I can begin to consider the context, nature, and extent of new media use. Steering a more utopian course, I agree with Drotner (2008b) who argues: "Adults need to recognize the validity of these practices in the spirit of democratic participation, and acknowledge young people's right to have a voice and to be heard" (p. 167). In her review of research on this topic, Sonia Livingstone (2002) calls for new approaches to

understanding this relationship:

> This will require listening to the voices of youth (teens) when talking about the importance of media in their lives. In this way, we can begin to better understand how young people actively appropriate and make meaningful specific media within specific domestic and social contexts. (p. 57)

The methods employed in this study attempt to overcome many distinct theoretical and methodological challenges and potential barriers for new media research. The notion of "text" for analysis has become particularly problematic: new media as texts are difficult to observe, difficult to capture, and difficult to interpret (Livingstone, 2002; Sefton-Green, 2006; Warnick, 2001). To complicate data collection, the characteristics of the new media user seem to be constantly in flux, which can limit qualitative methods' effectiveness. Further, for in-depth understanding of the impact of those practices in cultural meaning making, the researcher must observe those practices over a lengthy period, and ideally, with only casual interactions with participants to minimize interference with the enactment of everyday, taken-for-granted media practices. Lastly, the Internet and mobile devices like the computer, cellular phones, and MP3 music players have made the bedroom the newest site in which to study meaning making (Press & Livingstone, 2006; Steele & Brown, 1995). Data collection becomes even more problematic when people's engagement with media has perhaps become even more personal and intimate than was possible with traditional mass media.

Contribution to the Field

To summarize, the research goal of this project is to begin to understand the specific everyday practices of youth with regard to media use and from the perspective of young people as agents in their media use. To that end, I am asking fundamental

questions about how youth develop new strategies to navigate the complexities of socializing in new media publics, and data analysis may lead this study and future research in a number of directions:

- self-representation and identity construction
- subjective experience of parental monitoring and rules
- changing image and role of home and school
- transformations in formal and informal learning practices

Through this grounded approach to theory building, the results of this project contribute to the development of appropriate conceptual frameworks that lead to a better understanding of youth audiences as they engage new media. New and unique socio-cultural practices may be emerging in these cultural activities, and are best understood when youth are recognized as active, thinking media participants who are knowledgeable and self-educated in the technologies.

Further, Ito (2010) argues, "The development of children's agency in local life worlds of home and peer culture is inextricably linked to their participation as consumer citizens" (p. 9) making them at the forefront of a new "participatory media culture" (Jenkins, 2006), which has commercial as well as cultural implications. Not only is youth consumption driving the content and form of new Internet ventures, but also their active participation and "user-generated content" are requirements for success.

The data and conclusions will contribute to the growing body of research exploring how new media technologies for communication, entertainment, and information are appropriated and used by young people; how cultural meaning is made and enacted in on-line participatory culture; and how this influences their offline

communication practices, peer-group social interaction, family life and the home, and educational pedagogy and curriculum.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Grounded theory scholars recommend no literature review on the topic of study prior to the research project (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss, 1987). In keeping with that tradition, this review instead considers historical theories of identity, rhetorical analysis, and visual communication as they relate to the contemporary moment. This review does not directly address current research in the area of youth practices of making meaning and constructing identity in new media environments. That literature is integrated beginning with Chapter 5, the discussion section of this dissertation, as it intersects with the results of this project.

Several theoretical fields touch on the domain of this interpretive research project. In this chapter, I funnel down through the current thinking about the overlapping nature of identity, technology, persuasion, and literacy, ultimately as they relate to new media environments. Along the way, a break from traditional social scientific approaches is identified, which allows for the creation of new epistemological frameworks for media research.

The review begins with historical theorizing about the subject and cultural construction of identity. Next, contemporary rhetorical analysis of digital media communication and principles of visual communication theory are examined. These fields provide key theoretical foundations for understanding the relationship between new

media and youth. Last, I address a body of research that suggests that young people's engagement with new media is transforming youth culture and requires new conceptualizations for understanding. This sets the stage for the specific methods and research questions that carry this research project forward.

Questioning Modernity

The research project is informed by a reconception of theory and research method over the last 30 years, in social sciences generally and media studies in particular. The current state represents a break from the totalizing and normalizing practices attributed to Modernism in response to the social sciences having run up against the "posts"—postmodernism, poststructuralism, postindustrialism, and so on. The research approaches that have emerged from this break are well suited to building new conceptual frameworks for the study of youth and their relationship to new media communication, entertainment, and information.

The era of Modernism closely parallels the industrialization of Western society. In order to deal with the changes brought about by the transitions into Modernity, such social thinkers as Saint-Simon and Comte appropriated the philosophies of Enlightenment, claiming that progress and industry would make the world a better place for mankind; "Modernism is that moment when man invented himself; when he no longer saw himself as a reflection of God or Nature" (Cooper & Burrell, 1988, p. 94).

In the latter half of the 20th Century, the assumptions of Modernism central to scientific inquiry are questioned, and the social sciences are finding it necessary to rethink long held epistemological assumptions:

> The discourse of modernism…is a metadiscourse which legitimates itself by reference to 'some grand narrative, such as the dialectics of the Spirit,

> the hermeneutics of meaning, the emancipation of the rational or working project, or the creation of wealth' (Lyotard, 1984 as cited in Cooper and Burrell, 1988, p. 94).

Developing this self-legitimating metadiscourse, or "grand narrative," was perhaps necessary for dealing with the increasingly weighty problems of the emerging industrialized society, but it is of this grand narrative, in which modernism essentially puts the answer before the question, that social science research should be most critical (Parker, 1995; Vattimo, 1988). The incredulity toward metanarratives by poststructuralist thinkers, most notably Lyotard (1984), Jacques Derrida (1976), and Michel Foucault (1979, 1991), opened up the possibilities for scholarly research in specific local contexts and recognized the diversity of human experience, allowing for a multiplicity of theoretical standpoints rather than grand, all-encompassing theories.

Postmodernism as Social Science Perspective

A name commonly given to an emerging epistemological position in the latter half of the 20th Century is *postmodernism*, although some argue that this position is more appropriately described as "late-modernism" (see Jameson, 1992). Postmodern analyses challenge the ontological status of modernist claims to totalizing, unified knowledge of the world (Taylor, 2005). As a perspective, it is characterized by "the critical questioning, and often outright rejection, of ethnocentric rationalism championed by Modernism" (Cooper & Burrell, 1988, p. 94). More realistically, postmodernism can only be conceived as a relationship to the opposing possibility, thus in a dialectical relationship with Modernism. One does not follow or negate the other, but instead, modernism and postmodernism exist in a mutually constitutive relationship. As Bryan Taylor (2005) writes, "Each *requires* the continued existence of the other in order to appear—through

opposition—distinct and coherent" (author's emphasis, p. 116).

When applied to social science theory, modernist objective knowledge claims in social scientific discourses are called into question (Haraway, 1988; Hartsock, 1987; Sayer, 2000; J. W. Scott, 1991). In direct opposition to modernist thinking, meaning is not fixed and social researchers are only "an observer-community, which constructs *interpretations* of the world, these interpretations having no absolute or universal status" (Cooper & Burrell, 1988, p. 94). The critical questioning that helps define the postmodern perspective is intertwined with many contemporary theoretical perspectives, such as feminism, neo-Marxism, poststructuralism, postcolonialism, and postfoundationalism, to name a few.

Ultimately, postmodernism is best understood as an umbrella term and "the ambiguity of the term stems partly from the enormous work that we ask it to do" (Taylor, 2005, p. 114). In the end, postmodernism may just be a placeholder for whatever term we, or posterity, choose to describe the immediate present.

This body of theory has generated considerable controversy (Rosenau, 1992). As Martin Parker (1992) notes, "the key problem raised by postmodernists is the impossibility of having certain knowledge about 'the Other' (person, organization, culture, society)" (p. 553). Without the stable foundation modernism provides, how can we be certain of anything. This question is being answered by reconceptualizations of the purpose, goals, and methods for research as discussed next.

Subjectification and the Construction of Identity

Childhood and adolescence are often viewed as a key period in identity formation (Buckingham, 2008b), so notions of identity are central. Survey-based research noted

above offers compelling evidence that new media occupy a pivotal role in the lives of youth, and therefore becomes a potentially critical element in the construction of identity.

The contemporary roots of subjectification are found in the theorizing of Louis Althusser (1984), who provided an important epistemological "break" from the Marxian theories of cultural identity by placing the individual at the center of that process rather than focusing on how ideology manifests itself within capitalist society (Agger, 1998; Hall, 1985, 1996). Althusser endeavored to develop a systematic theory of how a culture perpetuates itself through its people. Based on Althusser's famous example of "hailing" the subject on the street, "interpellation" is the process by which a subject is constituted. It takes place through, and is reproduced by, Ideological State Apparatuses (ISAs): family, religion, education, media, art, etc. These IDAs are responsible for inculcating the subject into the social order. In Althusser's view, the subject is relatively stable and fixed, once interpellated into existence (Althusser, 1978).

Beginning in the 1970s, poststructuralists such as Jacque Derrida (1976, 1978) began to problematize such a strict closure of meaning and argue that there is more ambiguity in the constitution of the subject (McKarrow, 1993; Spivak, 1988). Althusser's vision of the subject was too simplistic (Therborn, 1980) while actually reflecting and essentially reproducing capitalism (Laclau, 1977; Laclau & Mouffe, 1985). His theories could no longer account for the "diasporic" nature of society at the end of the 20th Century (Appadurai, 1996), where the foundations of meaning are much more contingent and contextual. Contrary to Althusserian contention that ideology is ahistorical and fixed, history and cultural context are injected into matters of subjectification (Therborn,

1980). Subjectification is enacted in an environment of competing interpellations, where the failure of one interpellation normally means the success of another.

By historicizing the construction of subject, it follows that, as Edward Said (1983) argues, the foundation of meanings of texts are also contingent and contextual. Like a text, the subject does not exist in isolation, but must interact with others to have meaning. We must take into account the context in which meaning is constituted, and the multiplicity of contexts available.

Judith Butler builds on Althusser's concept of interpellation, but from another direction. She argues that it does not take into account the importance of the language being used to constitute the subject, as in Athusser's act of hailing one into existence. She further argues interpellation is possible by means other than voice: "the subject need not always turn around in order to be constituted as a subject, and the discourse that inaugurates the subject need not take the form of a voice at all (Butler, 1997, p. 31)." Butler claims society constitutes an individual by naming, and that constituted subject could be surprised at the way the "socially constituted self" might look. Indeed, interpellation is possible without the subject being present: the subject need not even know of "being constituted for that constitution to work in an efficacious way" (p. 31). It is from this philosophical perspective that I make the assumption that media have an important active role in the construction of cultural and personal identity.

Traditional media are not as interactive as new media. How does injecting interactivity affect assumptions about media and identity? That remains to be definitively pinned down, but Slavoj Zizek (1989) offers a very different notion of how the subject is formed, which is useful in conceiving identity in new media spaces. Zizek seems to see

the subject as imaginary to the extent that it is only a 'quilting point' or nodal point where many diverse and even competing ideological positions converge (feminism, democracy, etc.). Zizek's idea of multiple ideologies existing simultaneously at interconnected nodal points mirrors the dispersed but overlapping nature of the Internet, tying the technological practices of the Internet to issues of identity.

In summary, theorizing about subjectification has evolved from simply "hailing" on the street to language constructing the subject without his or her presence or knowledge, which in turn creates the opening for theorizing of mass media as no longer just representing reality, but constituting it. In research of new media environments, long standing theoretical perspectives regarding identity can be an important lens for examining users in the new media environments: the formation and maintenance of personal and group identities and how that relates to their analog world subject positions. It remains to be seen if new conceptualization and theoretical frameworks can build on, or must displace, traditional theorizing about the construction of self and other.

Rhetorical Theory

Contemporary rhetorical analysis assumes that all communicative acts have persuasive potential, so it is important to critically evaluate meaning in these acts (Brock & Scott, 1972; Leach, 2000). Rhetorical theory appears to be a useful approach for analyzing data collected on communication practices in new media spaces, but presents distinct challenges to traditional rhetorics. James P. Zappen (2005) speculates on how 2000-year-old traditional rhetorical strategies can function in digital spaces, and summarizes recent rhetorical research in digital spaces as three categories: basic characteristics, affordances, and constraints; opportunities for creating individual

identities; and potential for building social communities. These may prove to be very important characteristics of new media-based communication practices, but there are some challenges for the researcher.

In determining the legitimacy of the message, traditional agent-centered neoclassical rhetorical theory relies in large part on evaluating the experience, education, values, and purpose of the author. From this, the message gains the credibility and authority by which it speaks (Bender & Wellbery, 1990; Farrell, 1999). A central challenge to rhetorical theory is that the identity of the author and authenticity of a text are often indeterminate in new media environments. Barbara Warnick recognizes that "in a hypertext environment, author, audience and text are dispersed" (2001) and has studied how credibility, intertextuality, and interactivity function rhetorically in these contexts (2005). Warnick identifies for rhetoricians four general areas in which the rhetorical study in Internet environments challenges traditional critical rhetorical practice: (re)defining the text for analysis, the changing nature of the audience, the indeterminacy of authorship, and the ambiguity of public discursive space.

Unlike printed texts, texts in hyperspace are rhizomic in nature, to use Deleuze and Guattari's metaphor. The appropriateness of this concept is discussed more thoroughly below. Hypertext environments are an "unstable and rather limitless text" (Warnick, 1998b, p. 75). Hypertext, characterized by the text's ability to link to other texts, becomes pliable and dispersed over time, space, and thought. This raises difficult questions about the starting point of textual analysis, as well as the point of closure.

Web sites often do not have an identifiable author (Warnick, 1998a), anonymous posting can actually inspire and promote trust between participants (Gurak, 1997), and

on-line discussion groups and authors of electronic texts often and routinely disguise their identities; indeed, it is expected and assumed (Turkle, 1995). Mitra and Cohen (1999) provide support for these claims by identifying some of the unique characteristics of the Internet and the analytical challenges posed by it. The characteristics include the inherent intertextuality and nonlinearity of hypertext communication.

The cited research from the late 1990s suggest that participants in Internet communication do not seem to require evidence of authenticity or an identifiable author. As several researchers have found, participants tend "to treat all representations as true" (Mantovani, 1996, p. 126; see also Reeves & Nass, 1996) in on-line communication environments. It appears that aspects of the electronic medium itself seem to confer creditability on a message, which causes rhetoricians to wonder about the very nature of authenticity in online mediated discourses.

Conversely, on-line discussion groups do not handle controversy well, making such discourses even more interesting for rhetoricians. In one of the earliest examples of rhetorical analysis in new media environments, Laura Gurak (1997) found that participants, drawn together by their like-mindedness, tended to penalize anyone who disagreed with the group norms. Group deliberations could degenerate into "flaming," which is very aggressive behavior that seems to be enhanced by the anonymity and physical separation of individuals in cyberspace (Rheingold, 1993).

Voice as Rhetorical Construct in New Media Spaces

Mitra and Watts (2002) suggest "voice" as a new construct for analyzing rhetorical communication and understanding authenticity and authority in on-line space. They argue that to legitimize a "voice" in mediated spaces, authenticity of the voice must

first be questioned. In the off-line world of traditional mass media, authenticity is typically associated with centers of power and cultural capital. In the rhizomatic structure of the Internet, there are no centers and the powerful people or organizations that have traditionally determined the content of mass media are bypassed. Participants who wish to evaluate legitimacy in new media interactions such as social media must find new ways to do it. They define "authenticity" of a voice in networked public spaces as "a multi-dimensional construct that includes the notion of truth, accuracy, eloquence, and an ontic connection with lived experience" (p. 490). Mitra also studies how immigrant Indians living in the West form diasporic discursive communities using the WWW technology (Mitra, 1997). This is an example of communities that exist nowhere and everywhere at the same time: communities whose only physical existence is as "a rhizomatic connection of computers that span all known spatial boundaries" (Mitra & Watts, 2002, p. 485). The rhetorical construct of voice can span cultural as well as geographical boarders, something that must be recognized in rhetorical analysis of online public spaces.

Visual Communication Theories

The primary purpose of this study is to document social practices, but these practices are becoming conflated with the consumption and production of digital visual media, bringing to the fore conceptions of self-expression, self-representation, and aesthetics of communication through the production and distribution of visual UGC in interactive mediated spaces.

With increases in network speed, computer capacity, and the ubiquity of digital cameras and cell phones, new media environments are including increasing visually-

oriented means of communication (Bolter & Grusin, 2000; Manovich, 2001; Messaris & Moriarty, 2005). Prior to digital technology, that was the purview of artists and media professionals only. As previously discussed, people with minimal equipment and training can produce persuasive and meaningful visual content for Internet-based distribution (J. Palfrey & Gasser, 2008).

An analysis of visual data captured in this study may provide conclusions about visual representations of self and the role of visual materials in meaning making in new media environments. I find that representation theory and aesthetic theory are useful perspectives for analyses of visual data.

Visual rhetoric and semiotic theory. Representation theory is generally concerned with how images represent things in the world: people, objects, landscapes, and so on. This project is less concerned with an analysis of how images are perceived psychologically, and more with how meaning is communicated through pictorial representations in new media environments. Two theoretical subdomains of representation inform this stage of the project: theories of visual rhetoric and semiotics.

Visual rhetoric refers to the study of visual imagery through the lens of rhetoric (Foss, 2005; Kenney, 2002). This perspective posits a relationship of visual images to persuasion (L. M. Scott, 1994). Hill and Helmers (2004) argue that the rhetorical study of words (verbal and written) has always been privileged over images, probably because images are not to be trusted, their meaning too slippery. Despite this second-class status of images in traditional rhetorical analysis, we need to recognize the important role they play in cultural economies and "in developing consciousness and the relationship of the self to its surroundings" (Hill & Helmers, 2004, p. 1).

With the ubiquity of images on the Internet, the study of visual media takes on new importance. Kenney (2005b) makes a case for rhetorical criticism being applied to visuals found in new media environments. He demonstrates how rhetorical appeals can be achieved through the structure of visual information, and the analysis of the persuasive value of text layout, color, and choice of images on web sites.

Semiotic Theory

This discussion traces Hill and Helmers' (2004) argument that rhetorical meaning in images can be analyzed from three perspectives: intertextuality, which has already been discussed; Peirce's semiotics; and Barthes' signs. Next, I provide an outline of these theories, which is followed by a discussion of the post-Saussurean understanding of the sign for interpretation.

From the theoretical lenses of rhetoric and semiotics, "Both rhetoricians and semioticians are concerned with how signs 'mediate' between the external world and our internal 'world' or how a sign 'stands for' or 'takes the place of' something from the real world in the mind of a person" (Kenney, 2005a, p. 99). Rhetorical and semiotic perspectives are closely intertwined approaches that can be useful for understanding meaning in *both* words and images (L. M. Scott, 1994). However, a semiotic analysis of verbal or written language in new media practices is not planned in this project. Semiotics does, however, have the potential to be a useful theoretical approach for analysis of meaning in visual media. Central to any analysis of visual representation is the relationship between the sign and the object (Kenney, 2005a; Pink, 2001), but with the caveat that we must recognize that a photograph does not reveal the truth, that photographs are constructed realities: from "the toothy smile as a standard expression in

snapshots" (Kotchemidova, 2005, p. 2) to the context in which an image is created and the context of its viewing.

Semiotics. Contemporary interpretive theories would probably not have been possible without the linguistics of Ferdinand de Saussure. In what is often referred to as "the linguistic turn," semiotics came to play an important role as a structuralist analytical tool (Chandler, 2002).

Saussure (1983) offered a two-part model of the sign, which is composed of a 'signifier' - the form that the sign takes, and the 'signified' - the concept it represents. Saussure's linguistic sign is not a link to the object; the signifier and the signified were purely psychological. As others adopted the model, the signifier came to be interpreted as the material (or physical) form of the sign.

Charles Sanders Peirce coined the term "semiotic," which he defined as the "quasi-necessary, or formal doctrine of signs" (Peirce, 1958, paragraph 227). Peircian semiotics argues that sign systems are much broader than language systems alone, leading to new analytical applications of semiotic theory. Peirce's broader view provides the entry point for representation theories in visual rhetoric as a form of visual communication (Kenney, 2005a; Moriarty, 1994). Specifically, Peirce's tripartite model for analyzing signs defines representation as iconic, indexical, or symbolic, with the difference being the resemblance of the signifier to the signified, but as understood by the interpretant.

Derived from the work of Saussure, Roland Barthes (1977) successfully combined the analytical perspectives of rhetoric and semiotics for the sign-type of the image. Barthes argued that meaning in language is relatively deterministic, whereas

images "say" nothing but do contain cultural codes that determine how they are seen and understood, and define the meaning we take from them. Meaning became arbitrary because it is culturally constructed. Semiotic analysis of imagery became the study of how rhetorical meaning is constituted in visual imagery through the arrangement of the elements as chains of signifiers (Barthes, 2000).

Poststructural Representation

Poststructuralist perspective, like so many of the posts, is a "turn away" from the linguistic turn that followed interpretive theories of structuralists such as Saussure, Peirce, and Barthes: a post-Saussurean *rematerialization* of the sign (Chandler, 2002). From the poststructuralist critique of representation and the referentiality came a new logic of representation, which holds that a relationship exists between a word and an object in which the word stands for the object in some manner. That relationship becomes the focal point for critical analysis of how meaning is made (Hall, 1997; Weber, 1976).

Poststructural criticism questions Saussure's model of the signified as having no direct relationship to the referent (objects in the world.) This "arbitrariness" of the sign is interpreted to mean that language does not reflect reality, but constructs it. From this view, the sign in language would "determine reality, rather than reality our language" (Sturrock, 1979, p. 79), which would be "neglecting entirely the things for which signs stand" (Ogden & Richards, 1923, p. 8).

Of central concern to contemporary poststructuralists like Foucault and Derrida is that by bracketing the referent, the model "severs text from history" (Stam, 2000, p. 122), separating interpretation from the social context of the sign's existence. Foucault (1972) raises the question of whether ideas do in fact represent their objects and, if so, how they

do so. In other words, ideas are no longer taken as the unproblematic vehicles of knowledge; it is now possible to think that knowledge might be (or have roots in) something other than representation (see Gutting, 1989).

Jean Baudrillard's critique of the structuralist theories of semiotics was also on a separation, but of the sign and "the real," the arbitrary nature of the relationship, and the need to "bracket" the referent. He argued that rather than a logic of equivalence, meaning functioned through a differential logic in the relationship between the form and content (Baudrillard, 1981). For Baudrillard, the separation of the two is just a metaphysical illusion or fiction.

Aesthetic theory. An analysis of the relationship between visual representation and identity in new media spaces suggests an approach that includes media aesthetics, since the creator/producer and the consumers of media are seen as merging in new media spaces. I postulate that aesthetics play an important role in representation through digital visual UGC, and in the perception of authenticity in on-line spaces that is problematic for rhetorical analysis as discussed above. Mitra and Watts' (2002) construct of voice in the evaluation of authenticity may also benefit by equating the eloquence of voice with the aesthetic qualities of representation.

Traditional aesthetic theory as studied by the disciplines of philosophy and science would not fit well in this particular analysis. The visual arts perspective offers the best opportunity to analyze aesthetic visual communication for implicit meaning and visual understanding (see Mitchell, 1994). My assumption is that in online spaces, there are many representations through imagery that are created by professional or aspiring artists, but many more participants are not trained in formal and aesthetically informed

creation of visual forms of communication. Much of the content in social media sites appears to have the "lo-fi" qualities of point-and-shoot digital cameras and cell phone quality video and images created by "amateur" producers, but may still exhibit inherent aesthetic qualities that inform an analysis of visual meaning.

Analyzing imagery for social meaning is an accepted approach (Denton, 2005; Schwartz, 1989). Dennis Dake (2005) provides a useful perspective for understanding aesthetic relationships that permeates images created by professional and amateur alike: an interaction between the three components of object, viewer, and maker. This parallels Peirce's triadic model of semiosis making all analyses from this viewpoint both rhetorical and aesthetic.

Toward New Epistemological Frameworks in Social Science

From the postmodern perspective comes an understanding of social discourse and cultural production as contextual, which is an essential point of reference for an analysis of social interaction in new media environments.

Intertextuality

Questions about the influence and meaning making in media reception, beginning in the 1980s, directly paralleled postmodern thinking about the nature of social interaction as "texts" and their relationship to the production of cultural meaning. Analysis originating from this perspective conceptualizes social discourse and cultural production as nonlinear, nonhierarchical, horizontal, and interconnected, with an inherent intertextuality (Frow, 1991).

From this perspective, the metaphor of intertextuality is used to conceptualize social texts as transient entities that are situated within a broader cultural "economy" of

textual interaction. Intertextuality refers to the interplay of texts, or the quality of a text as "all that sets the text in a relationship, whether obvious or concealed, with other texts" (Genette, 1997). The semiotic notion of intertextuality describes how texts and images reference one another, and they are interpreted in the context of other visual images or written texts (Kristeva, 1980). Foucault (1979) argues that social texts should not be critically analytized only from a discursive framework: the dialectical relationship between texts should be examined. This examination of *intertextuality* reveals how texts reconceptualize and incorporate each other as well as reveal what is left out of the discussion. This opens the possibility that discourses surrounding new media are created and maintained parallels the way media are defined and redefined in dialectical relation to each other in a process of remediation, as discussed later (Bolter & Grusin, 2000).

If no textual artifact exists alone or in insulation, it is important to situate research within the context surrounding cultural production of meaning, in a particular *time and space*. This perspective is especially valuable in new media research. From this understanding, theories of *dialectics* emerge (Littlejohn & Foss, 2007; Morson & Emerson, 1990), which are useful to describe unique spatial-temporal relationships facilitated by use of new media. This conception of *time* and *space*, as an approach to analysis, is embodied in Bakhtin's concept of the "chronotope." Bakhtin (1981) defines the *chronotope* (literally, "time-space") as "almost a metaphor" for "the intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships that are artistically expressed in literature" (p. 84). Bakhtin sees the time and space in which a text exists as inseparable from one another, with time being the fourth dimension of space. He recognizes that multiple and even overlapping chronotopes can enter into a relation of dialogic

opposition, mirroring, or mutual transformation. While Bakhtin confines his use of the *chronotope* to "a formally constitutive category of literature," he recognizes that the concept is also "applicable in other areas of culture," opening the door to broader application of the concept by scholars. The conception of *chronotope* and its use to express the situated and connected relationships in culture allows for new ways of thinking about the construction of knowledge.

Practical Logic of Everyday Action

I argue that the examination of media as cultural artifacts of chronotopic, intertextual meaning making is directly connected to everyday practices of media participation, practices that to the individual are often self-evident and taken-for-granted. Pierre Bourdieu (Bourdieu, 1980) brings social theory and the study of specific practices together. Due to what he argues are the limits of theoretical understanding of practice in conventional sociology, he offers the logic of practice, which "aims simply to bring to light the theory of practice which theoretical knowledge implicitly applies and so to make possible a truly scientific knowledge of practice and of the practical mode of knowledge" (Bourdieu, 1980, p. 27). Bourdieu incorporates the logic of practice into what he calls the "habitus," "which is constituted in practice and is always oriented towards practical function" (p. 52). The habitus consists of ingrained practices that exist as, "spontaneity without consciousness or will" (p. 56), in a circular reproductive system that is generative, not fixed. Persons acting on their habitus are what constitute culture, rather than ideology or some other dominant force. Agency manifests itself through these practices, which researchers can study using the dialectical relationship between material

practices and the concept of habitus in the ongoing conduct of everyday life. The habitus guides social practices and is observable from the outside, and thus describable.

The intertextuality and chronotopic notions of analysis, combined with a focus on the scientific study of daily practices, create a firm theoretical foundation for this project. New media practices need to be documented and observed in specific context in which they occur in order to begin to describe patterns in the use of specific technologies in new media environments.

Next, I suggest a conceptual framework well suited for inquiry in new media spaces.

The Rhizomatic Metaphor for Inquiry

The "rhiozome" concept for social practices has come up several times in this document. The metaphor of *rhizomatic inquiry* is particularly useful as a postmodern meta-theory for research, where the object of study is diffused, overlapping, and intersecting new media spaces, comprised of networked multiplicities of connected screens: on computers, cell phones, and other digital devices. This project embraces this metaphor in postmodern era research first proposed by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari (1987), who argue that traditional scientific approaches to the building of knowledge are inappropriate to studying postmodern culture. Rhizomatic analysis distinguishes between totalizing unities of modernist scientific principles and nontotalizing multiplicities that may be more appropriate for social research. Deleuze and Guattari used the term *rhizome* to describe theory and research that allows for multiple, nonhierarchical entry and exit points in data representation and interpretation, a significant philosophical reconception of research for the 21st Century.

Transformations in Youth Culture

The foundational ideas that supported the 'grand narratives' of modernism are crumbling. No longer can it be assumed that the human agent is privileged, at the controlling center of things. A review of the literature marks the transformations society is undergoing and the ways new media technologies are changing our notions of self, family, home, and school.

Identity and Technology

The history of scholarship at the intersection of technology and identity builds from where the previous discussion of subjectification left off. Some of the earliest works focused on the mediated existence of the body and related identity politics; a notable example is Donna Haraway's (1991) "Cyborg Manifesto." More recent perspectives look at identity from different theoretical and methodological perspective: the networked society (Castells, 2010), the digitalization of society (Clippinger, 2007), and Sherry Turkle's (1995) seminal work that examines identity from a psychological perspective, focusing primarily on youth. Each in different ways examines fluidity of identities in mediated digital spaces.

Identity and Youth

A review of scholarship points to the relationship between youth and media as closely intertwined with the concept of identity, yet "identity is an ambiguous and slippery term" (Buckingham, 2008a, p. 1). One reason perhaps is that the conceptualizations of identity continue to evolve and transform, with psychological, social, cultural, and philosophical scholars positing countless definitive theories of identity construction and management.

In a comprehensive survey of the current thinking about youth and identity, Buckingham (2008a) identifies what he sees as the fundamental paradox of identity: the term implies both similarity and difference. Identity is understood as something that is unique about each individual, something that we own. Identity also implies a connection to a broader social group, such as cultural identity, national identity, and other affiliations of shared interests and values. The common denominator is that adolescence is often viewed as a critical period in identity formation by a wide range of disciplines and intellectual paradigms.

Buckingham (2008a) continues by identifying five key approaches to framing identity and the implications for the study of youth and new media. First, he maps out the study of identity as a psychological account of it as a developmental process, citing the work of scholars such as G. Stanley Hall, Erik Erikson, and James Marcia. Second are sociological approaches, which he sees as very similar in that they see young people as "a passive recipient of adult influences, a 'becoming' rather than a 'being' in their own right" (p. 4). He does note a recent trend towards attempts to understand youth cultures in their own terms, rather than from an adult notion of socialization. Buckingham identifies a third more interdisciplinary perspective that is concerned with the relationships between individual and group identities. Here, identity is understood as a "fluid, contingent matter" which is "more appropriate to talk about identification rather than identity" (p. 6). Erving Goffman's work on identity presentation and management is central to this perspective. Fourth is a perspective he terms "identity politics," which refers to activist social movements that explicitly question social power in social identity research, resisting repressive construction of identity by others; the aforementioned work by Butler

(1991, 1997) being an example. Fifth, Buckingham contrasts the modern social theory approaches of Anthony Giddens and Michel Foucault. Giddens sees identity as a "self-reflexive" malleable project that individuals have to work on. Rather than liberating, Foucault would see this as an example of self-monitoring or self-surveillance.

Transformations of Home and Family

Parental and political claims of media effects continue to spread beyond the individual child. Of growing social concern are the transformation of the social constructs of home, school, and community (Cook-Gumperz, 2006; Gergen, 1994). New media play an increasingly significant role in the ongoing changes as media technologies become more mobile and migrate out of the shared family spaces (Drotner, 2008b; Livingstone, 2002). Wireless connectivity enables telephone and Internet access anywhere and on the go.

Livingstone (2002) notes that leisure time became more focused on the home because of media. Many of the cultural changes in the last 50 years revolve around "doing things as a family," which has become synonymous with media time. More recently, the location of "screen-based" media such as TVs, VCRs, and computers began to migrate away from the main family space, and towards more individualized spaces, particularly the bedroom or playroom. The result is homes that are media-rich environments featuring distinct family (shared) and personal (bedroom) "cultures."

This trend in youth and leisure time in the home is coupled with what Livingstone (2002) calls the "social constructions of independence." The conception of children in home is evolving: children are growing up faster, but attaining adult status later, giving rise to the class called "adolescence." She argues, "The dominant narrative of childhood,

and hence the relations between parents and children, concerns the balance between dependence and independence" (p. 172). The new family class of adolescence has emerged and "the media are of growing importance to this group in all domains: *identity, culture, education, and consumption"* (p. 173).

Also directly affecting the home culture is the aforementioned "digital generation gap," the notion of children as having an innate ability to learn and use new technology, playing a key role in acquiring skills of Internet, then explaining to adults. This creates a paradox within the constant struggle between parental strategies and children's tactics for media usage (Buckingham, 2000; Livingstone, 2003; Press & Livingstone, 2006).

Transformations in Learning Practices

If children have agency and power, and become active agents in the meaning making process, then direct challenges to traditional educational practices may follow (Buckingham & Sefton-Green, 2003). Once again, media seem to play a significant role. It is becoming increasingly difficult to "separate assumptions about learning and education from the wider media culture" (Sefton-Green, 2006, p. 283), which leads toward more complex ideas about meaning making by active audiences. More directly, Sefton-Green (2006) makes a direct association between media and learning: If there are no longer assumptions about direct media effects, can there be a valid transmission model of pedagogy?

The discourses that typically surround efforts to integrate technology into the educational environment embody many of the characteristics of *technological determinism* (Bromley, 1997; O'Sullivan, 2000). From this point of view, technology is a neutral good for society but seen to have effects on its users no matter how it is used, nor

in what context; technology is "an autonomous force that is somehow independent of human society and acts upon it from outside" (Buckingham, 2008a, p. 11). He describes such educational discourses in education as "information determinism," where information is seen as neutral good and that somehow by providing access, learning will follow. He argues that success will not be found only in providing better access to information; it is in how that access is integrated into academic thinking and pedagogy, especially as it relates to the every day experiences of today's youth.

Media access across multiple screens allows young people to develop informal learning practices, because they are no longer dependants of educational structures as sources of new information (Drotner, 2008a; Gee, 2008; Wenger, 1998). Sefton-Green (2006) points out that in the everyday experiences of youth in contemporary media culture, there is a blurring of the boundaries between formal and informal learning, as with the public and private. Taking advantage of informal learning practices and other out-of-school daily experiences youth have with new media are where teaching and learning can be enhanced (see Gee, 2004).

Transformations in Media Literacy

Most of the discussion about how to integrate media experiences with learning practices falls under the rubric of "media literacy" (Buckingham, 2003; Lemke, 1998). Questions about media literacy often embody broad concerns about students and their relative preparation for being successful in learning and life (Cook-Gumperz, 2006; Cope & Kalantzis, 2000). As with media influence in general, the concerns defining the media-literate young person resurfaces as each new medium emerges (Anderson, 2008).

Livingstone (2003) summarizes current definitions of media literacy in a four-

component model. A literate student should be able to access, analyze, evaluate, and create messages across a variety of contexts. This last component—creation—is the basis for Voithofer's (2005) definition of new media as combining production as well as reception of educational media. This is a skills-based approach where it is assumed that people can attain a deeper understanding of media and its conventions and possibilities if they experience the creation of symbolic texts first hand. New media texts are increasingly visual, creating a call for increased visual literacy (Bolter, 1998).What was once limited to television production studios is today a skills-based approach advocated across many disciplines that have not historically considered production methods beyond writing.

Livingstone (2002) notes that the transformation in the notion of literacy "involves a shift from a rule-based model of education to the more immersive 'learning by doing'" (p. 229). She argues that literacy does not involve "serious" uses of computer alone, because learning can also come from playing electronic games to generate the skills and competencies that matter most for Internet communication technology (ICT) use (see also Buckingham & Sefton-Green, 2003). Livingstone later notes, "Interestingly, 'learning by doing' is a model in tune with liberal approaches to early childhood education, but this is generally replaced as children get older with the rules-based approach" (p. 233).

Perhaps a better way to conceptualize media literacy in the age of the Internet is as "digital fluency" (Hsi, 2007). She defines the term to include an understanding of digital tools to gather, design, evaluate, critique, own, synthesize, and develop communication messages, but adds another layer. She argues for the importance of also

understanding that the Internet and other forms of electronic expression are not neutral, but implicated is the diffusion of power in society.

New Conceptualizations for Media Research

At the nexus of competing interpellations, overlapping social structures, new literacies, democratic discourses, and social anxieties, is a new logic for media and the participatory practices of new media users that can arise from it. This logic summarizes several key conceptual differences between an approach to the analysis of *new media* and traditional perspectives on *mass media*.

What follow are two perspectives on the newness of media: one technological, one cultural. Despite this distinction, the two are inextricably intertwined in shaping the logic of new media practices.

New Media: A Definition

The terminology surrounding the social phenomena under study is often vague. Defining on-line media practices using terms like "digital," "virtual," and "interactive" tends to delimit the scope of analysis in different ways. "New media" has become something of a catchall term used to describe any and all emerging and evolving digital technologies, mostly the result of the last two decades of innovations in personal computing, the Internet, and cellular telephony (Croteau & Hoynes, 2003; Lievrouw & Livingstone, 2002). To continue with the rhizomatic metaphor, this analysis uses the term "new media" to broadly describe "the intersection of traditional media with digital media" (Ito, 2010) and the "remediation" (Bolter & Grusin, 2000) that inevitably follows the emergence of each new medium. Remediation is the process by which a medium "appropriates the techniques, forms, and social significance of other media and attempts

to rival or refashion them in the name of real" (p. 66). This process of remediation has existed as long as media themselves, but is greatly accelerated by digital media. Therefore, in this project, the "new" in new media is digital communication formats but also old forms of media reconstituted and redistributed as digital media content over the Internet to personal computer, cellular phones, iPods, and so on.

Moreover, by using the term 'new,' we must recognize that media encompassed by this term are currently new, but "always on the verge of growing older" (Ito, 2010). For this analysis, the media under study are new at this historical moment: this is an empirical description of youth interaction with the new technologies for on-line representation, but without a value judgment about their relative "newness." Like the definition of postmodernism, time and posterity may ultimately need to decide how we define and remember the current condition.

The Logic of New Media

The Internet transcends spatial boundaries that structure real life and replaces them with a rhizomatic connection of computers. Therefore, the logic of new media lies in a dialectical relationship between contemporary culture and media technology (Manovich, 2001). The new media culture embodied by this logic, and therefore a significant conceptual framework for research, has two distinct but interrelated characteristics: emerging and evolving media technologies in digital form *and* the social practices (communication, entertainment, information) that have emerged from, evolved around, and been enabled by the specific technologies.

To some extent, the idea that Marshall McLuhan (1994) famously postulated many years ago now—the medium is the message—may be more appropriate than ever

before (Logan, 2010). McLuhan argued that media themselves, not the content they carry, should be the focus of study. In terms of research, common sense might suggest that digital technologies and cultural practices are separate objects of analysis in many ways. Technologies are architectural structures comprised of wires, computers, and human interfaces. Social practices are material manifestations of culturally structured symbolic interaction and representation. One is comprised of "things" in the world; the other is comprised of social practices that construct and are constructed by culture.

Despite that, the two domains are inextricably intertwined. One structures the other in new media environments. This idea is not necessarily new: Raymond Williams (1975) made powerful arguments for a dialectical view of television technology as both shaping and shaped by its use and appropriation in society. The same can be said for new media, but the affordances of new media technologies significantly transform the dialectical relationship into something new and unique to new media participation.

Taking this idea of the architecture of social media defining the act of communication, Lev Manovich (2001) suggests that new media, particularly social media in the context of identity and community formation, are a complex negotiation between our multiple selves (on-line and off-line) and the computer structures and operations through which we represent these selves to others.

In other words, in this contemporary moment, "life takes place on screen" (Mirzoeff, 2002). This is the logic of new media, and perhaps what is new about it, as compared to traditional media. As dana boyd (2009b) claims, "Login to Twitter. Login to Facebook. What you see is a world that you've constructed." Lev Manovich (2001) sums this up by suggesting, "new media follow the logic of the postindustrial or globalized

society whereby every citizen can construct her own custom lifestyle and select her ideology from a large number of choices" (p. 42). This logic explicitly rejects the notion that participants in "networked publics" are passive agents constituted as subjects through their media consumption. Instead, a key characteristic of new media is the recognition of participant as an active agent in new media environments and a producer of content for those spaces.

Howard Rheingold recently affirmed the view that the networked structure matters in analysis because "the technical architecture effects human communication" (Rheingold, 2009). Rheingold continues by arguing that for the researcher, the level of understanding of the architecture of the site and its human interface has a significant impact on questions of power, control, and freedom of expression. As a source of discursive power, the technical structures of the Internet are much more closely tied to the subject's ability to speak and participate, or have a "voice," in networked public spaces. Recall that voice is a metaphorical construct proposed by Mitra and Watts (2002) for the study of power in on-line spaces. This suggests that the technical architectures of new media, especially in the form of social media, allow the subject to construct the media to a greater degree than any communication media before them, even as media may attempt to hail her as subject.

In other words, the relationship between the technical architecture and the participant is where the overall experience of participation in social media is constructed. As outlined above, critical theorists have been concerned about the role of media in constructing, or interpellating, the individual as subject. Each social medium has a technical architecture that affords and constrains the various options for the construction

of self in different ways, while the participants (understood as producers/consumers), in turn, define the site and its aesthetic through their choices and contributions. Foucault argues that the construction of self is a cycle whereby our identity is constituted by culture, but we in turn create that culture through our social practices (Foucault, 1972; 1979), which is a very useful way of thinking about self in social media.

New Participatory Practices

The previous section suggests that new technological innovations are deeply entwined with material social practices. Power is diffused throughout social practices. Social practices construct, and are constructed by, these relationships. It is therefore a circular process, rather than linear or hierarchical. Continuing the rhizomatic metaphor where there are no centers, thus no beginnings, and ends, I argue that the best opportunities new media spaces can offer for inquiry is at the nexus of multiple overlapping social spheres, creating social nodal points that are most commonly thought of as on-line communities.

At the heart of on-line social practices is its participatory nature, where socializing takes on the very character of the Internet itself. Barry Wellman (Rainie & Wellman, 2010) suggests the notion of community is moving from groups to social networks, which are becoming a new social operating system. In this study, I call this new operating system "online social networking" (OSN), which refers to the process or practice of online social networking. The nodal intersections of OSN activities for society are referred to as social network sites (SNS), which is the site or sites. boyd and Ellison (2007) define SNS more thoroughly as,

> web-based services 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. The nature and nomenclature of these connections may vary from site to site. (retrieved from JCMC website on 10/14/2010)

The following is a review of some conceptual frameworks that may help guide preliminary analysis. Most are drawn primarily from Ito (2010), which is a compilation of findings by 28 researchers gathered over 3 years of ethnographic fieldwork. This book provides the most up-to-date and useful frameworks for defining the conceptual structures and boundaries in which to situate analysis.

Participatory Culture

As I already alluded, new media are artifacts of a culture and society undergoing a major transition in the relationship of media to consumers and producers (Kellner, 1995), which has a particular impact on media studies research.

As the rhetorician James P. Zappen (2005) notes, the dichotomy between mass audience and media producer is replaced by a complex negotiation between on-line and real selves, representations of selves, listeners, and readers, and our many selves and the computer structures and operations through which we represent these selves to others. We are moving away from media understood as *consumption* of, and *audiences* interacting with, books, magazines, television, films, and radio. Instead, we begin to understand media as relationships that not only encompasses the intersection of these older media, re-represented as digital media (Bolter & Grusin, 2000), but also widespread "participation in digital media production" (Burgess & Green, 2009; Roberts et al., 2005) versus simple consumption, and "networked publics" rather than audiences (boyd & Ellison, 2007; Russell, Ito, Richmond, & Tuters, 2008).

Social resistance to this rethinking comes down to a matter of parental, educational, and political control (Livingstone, 2003). In offline life, sources of power and control over discourses are often related to factors such as physical location and state ideological apparatuses, to use Althusser's term, such as the military, schools, etc. Because of the physical structure and protocols of the Internet, attempts to control or censure Internet messages are seen as a disruption in the network, and messages are simply rerouted (Castells, 2001). Thus, these sources of power have far less influence over on-line discourses. Since there are no centers on the Internet, the concepts of power centers and cultural capital in media such as broadcast networks in traditional conceptions media are disrupted.

Participatory media culture. Throughout this document, I have used the term *participant* to describe the subjects of this study, and for a reason. An important characteristic of new media, and specifically OSN, that must be acknowledged is the constitutive role of the users, in terms of personal voice and sociability (Jenkins, 2009). Henry Jenkins (2006) describes this as "participatory media culture," which differs sharply from traditional conceptions of audiences as passive media spectatorship, and also conceptually separates these types of social practices from new media contents that are more accurately defined as information gathering via the Internet. Jenkins write:

> A participatory culture is a culture with relatively low barriers to artistic expression and civic engagement, strong support for creating and sharing creations, and some type of informal mentorship whereby experienced participants pass along knowledge to novices. (Jenkins, 2009, p. xi)

Youth are a core user group in these participatory media cultures, and their social interactions in contemporary culture are increasingly accomplished through networked gaming environments and SNS such as MySpace, Facebook, and YouTube (boyd,

2008b).

This project does not consider gaming environments and all that that entails in terms of identity and play except for the chance engagement with such environments by the participants of this study. As one reason, David Myers (2010) argues, "the nature and necessity of computer game play can only be gauged when that play takes place over an extended period of time, in a repetitive and recursive process" (p. 10). This project is a snapshot of current social practices in OSN, so repetitive and recursive practices are difficult to observe.

User-generated content (UGC). These sites have another common characteristic that can be considered a subset of media participation; the production of *user-generated content* (Ochoa & Duval, 2008; Thurman, 2008). UGC is digital media that has many forms and is shared through many channels, both visual and textual. Each SNS has a unique technical architecture that structures, and is structured by, the content produced and/or provided by its participants. UGC is an integral element, indeed a necessity, in the social economy circulating in network public spaces (boyd & Ellison, 2007).

People of all ages participate, but youth tend to dominate: "All new media are generally produced by youth, for youth, in the youth sphere, not within the constraints of an educational institution" (Sefton-Green, 2006, p. 296). Media are no longer merely consumed by an audience; on these sites, it is almost entirely produced by participants, and with little or no formal training in the technologies of production and distribution, one of the characteristics of participatory media cultures in Jenkins' definition above. For these reasons, UGC can be a primary cultural artifact for analysis.

Networked Publics

Participants in OSN can no longer be thought of as mass audiences of consumers, but are now producers of UGC and distributors of digital media in networked spaces. The traditional relationship between cultural production and consumption is disrupted by "changes in how power and information are distributed across society, geography, and technology" (Russell et al., 2008, p. 43). People now live, work and play in a number of fragmented, partial, and overlapping *networked publics*, defined by "the rise of many-to-many distribution, aggregation of information and culture, and the growth of peer-to-peer social organization" (p. 43).

The nature of networked publics is strongly influenced by network technologies, the affordances and limitations in architectures, and how communication is structured as a result: "What distinguishes networked publics from nonmediated or broadcast publics is the underlying structure. New forms of media—broadcast or networked—reorganize how information flows and how people interact with information and each other" (boyd, 2008a, p. 23).

dana boyd (2008a) identifies four technical properties that exist because of digital communication, which play a significant role in configuring networked publics: *persistence, replicability, scalability*, and *searchability*. Because of the four properties, there is a great deal of information online that does not go away, is infinitely reproducible, and in need of structuring and organization, giving rise to new search technologies. These properties are intertwined and codependent, and they help produce three dynamics that shape people's experience with networked publics: *invisible audiences*, *collapsed contexts*, and *the blurring of public and private*. Engaging with this

information is a potentially invisible audience, one not present in the moment of engagement, or present but lurking in the background. Collapsing contexts refers to how "the lack of spatial, social, and temporal boundaries makes it difficult to maintain distinct social contexts" (boyd, 2008a, p. 34). Without control over context, ideas of public and private as two distinct spheres are outdated to today's young people, giving new meaning to the concept of privacy online.

Genres of Participation in Networked Publics

Ito (2010) employs "the notion of genres of participation" (p. 15) to differentiate between two types of social network sites: *friendship-driven* and *interest-driven*. Ito (2010) defines friendship-driven web sites as such because they reflect "the dominant and mainstream practices of youth as they go about their day-to-day negotiations with peers and friends" (p. 15-16). They find that for most youth, the sites MySpace and Facebook are based on local networks. These sites are, "their primary source of affiliation, friendship, and romantic partners, and their lives mirror this local network" (p. 16). In other words, OSN participation and socialization often reflects offline local social networks, especially for youth (boyd, 2008a; Hargittai, 2008; Lenhart & Madden, 2007; Zhao, Grasmuck, & Martin, 2008).

Interest-driven web sites are defined by practices such as "specialized activities, interests, or niche and marginalized identities" (Ito, 2010, p. 16) as the primary purpose of the sites. Unlike friendship-driven social media sites, participants can easily access most of the content generated by people we do not know offline, and who need not accept us as a friend, although access to some content can be limited to a defined subgroup. Using the SNS definition by boyd and Ellison (2007), participants have the option to

construct a public or semipublic profile within a bounded system, but are not required to connect this profile to offline identities. They may articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, but that does not limit the ability of the participant or others within the system to view and traverse the network. This fundamental architectural difference seems to distinguish the sites defined as "interest-driven." The type and goal of the UGC appears to be very different, perhaps because of the technical structure as much as the intended audience.

I suggest a third genre of participation that exists somewhat between the previous two, and shares some characteristics of each, which I call *collaboration-driven* sites. This genre can be thought of as a subset of *interest-driven*, but there are some fundamental differences in the affordances and limitation of the site architectures. The focus is on supporting and maintaining "collective intelligence," a term coined by French cybertheorist Pierre Lévy (1997) and used by Jenkins (2006) to define online participatory culture. In the late 1990s, the "dot.com" bubble was expanding in attempts to commercialize the Internet as a profitable digital economy. Lévy (1997) envisioned an alternative future for the Internet, one with the purpose of learning, playing, and communicating with one another in what amounts to a qualitatively new way of living. Lévy saw a new space of knowledge formed by cyberspace.

Once again referencing boyd and Ellison's SNS definition (2007), participants construct a public or semipublic profile within a bounded system, but identity in this profile can remain ambiguous. Rather than a list of other users with whom they share a connection, the connection is a shared problem, project, or idea on which participants can collaborate, and collaborators can view and traverse the network freely, but with

monitoring by site managers. This genre encompasses communities dedicated to wiki, crowd sourcing, and other such collaborative sites, enabled by new media technologies, which support the construction and contribution of knowledge. Jenkins (2006) described these participants as members of knowledge communities that form around mutual intellectual interests, where no traditional expertise exists, and the pursuit and assessment of knowledge is at once communal and adversarial.

Youth, Privacy, and Technology in Networked Publics

In a return once again to anxieties about media and their effects, traditional concerns focused on protecting youth from the risks and threats to privacy from commercial websites, advertising networks, and online scams (Henke, 1999). The ambiguity of the concept of privacy has made it difficult for scholars to define. Marwick, Diaz, and Palfrey (2010) note that, "Definitions have ranged from the famous conception of the "right to be let alone" (Warren & Brandeis, 1890), to the "right to control information of oneself" (Westin, 1967, p. 6).

Concerns about new media influence have been at least partially replaced by the view that youth are "digital natives" seen as savvy with new technologies, and critically literate in media and marketing practices (J. Palfrey & Gasser, 2008). More recent concerns about privacy are less about "consumer privacy" and more about the risks to youth and privacy brought on by "public living" in participatory media cultures afforded by new media sites like Facebook, YouTube, etc. (Lenhart & Madden, 2007; Schrock & boyd, 2008; Youn, 2009). At the center of these discourses are, as boyd (2008a) notes, the blurring of public and private as an important dynamic for shaping experience in networked publics.

Most research seems to focus on the external threats to youth and privacy; the collection of personal data by marketing firms and other data-mining companies is big business (Moscardelli & Liston-Heyes, 2004; Xie, Teo, & Wan, 2006), and disclosure of personal information to companies and SNS by youth are seen as "risky" behavior leading to violation of privacy (Debatin, Lovejoy, Horn, & Hughes, 2009; Fogela & Nehmad, 2008). There are also significant fears over "online predators" and pedophiles (Palfrey, Sacco, & boyd, 2008; Wolak, Finkelhor, Mitchell, & Ybarra, 2008).

Despite the fears and warning, youth continue to share personal information online. SNS allow young people to connect with close friends, express themselves, and connect with far-away friends (Livingstone, 2008). For young people, the social benefits are so prevalent that "the benefits… outweigh privacy concerns, even when concrete privacy invasion was experienced" (Debatin et al., 2009, p. 100). Once again, there are few studies of the social benefits vs. the risks of OSN for young people, with Livingstone (2008) being a notable exception.

The potential danger is perhaps exaggerated as well. Research suggests that providing personal information online does not, by itself, increase the risks. For example, while some sharing has been linked to increased sexual solicitation (Wolak et al., 2008), most youth are interacting online with people they already know (Subrahmanyam & Greenfield, 2008). Wolak et al. found that 83% of Internet users, ages 10-17, primarily interact with people they know offline in low-risk situations, although the remaining 17% were classified "high-risk unrestricted interactors." There is a difference between sharing personal information with a friend and a stranger (Schrock & boyd, 2008), so the far larger percentage of youth are at little personal risk in OSN.

Further, providing personal information does not necessarily suggest the lack of concern for privacy. Livingstone points out the importance of understanding that children conceive of privacy differently than adults, "Children seek privacy, but as a means to an end, not an end in itself." Privacy in networked publics provides opportunities to be silly, experiment, seek advice, meet new people, but "most of all, to engage in uninterrupted, unobserved immersion in peer communication" (Livingstone, 2006, p. 132). Youth may be more open but still want to control their actions, information, and choices when sharing personal information and socializing online, and this control "includes privacy *from* adults, especially parents and teachers" (Marwick, Diaz, & Palfrey, 2010, p. 11).

The significance of privacy for youth culture in social media needs to remain an important concern for researchers (Grant, 2006; Ito, 2010). In addition to tensions for youth over who sees what information, there is the question of what kind of personal information is deemed private for networked publics. This project hopes to delve more deeply into these questions through the data collection methods outlined in the next chapter.

Conclusion

Participants in networked public spaces engage in social practices that seem to have a particular appeal to youth culture, more so than other generations. This assertion is born out through both empirical methods of research (Heim et al., 2007; Ito, 2010; Livingstone, 2002, 2003, 2007; Sefton-Green, 2006) and statistics of social media use (Lenhart & Madden, 2005; Lenhart et al., 2005; Roberts et al., 2005). My own research focus is on the appropriation and use of new media by young people, and the impact of social media technology in terms of identity, learning, and community formation.

Therefore, the focus of analysis is on how their "communication, friendship, play, and self-expression are reconfigured through their engagement with new media" (Ito, 2010, p. 1). The design of this study is to directly observe the activities of young people in those moments of engagement.

CHAPTER III

METHODS

This study was charged with developing methods that can provide unique insights into youths' engagement with new media, in the context of that engagement, for analysis and discussion. The methods should help answer basic questions about how and why youth engage and make meaning within the affordances and limitations of new media, and in the context of their everyday lives.

This project documented an activity–based study of American teens (13-17 years of age) and their material engagement with new media, their participation in networked publics, and how everyday practices and experiences are influenced by popular forms of online media. Study participants were given a laptop computer and asked to orally report what they were experiencing as they experienced it. As a hybrid form of protocol analysis using experience sampling method (ESM), I used new media technologies themselves to document and record their activities in real-time.

Documenting a Moment in the History of a Rhizomatic System

The Internet itself can be conceptualized as a rhizomatic structure, designed to resist attack, and without having centers, beginnings, or ends (Castells, 2001). The decentralized and fragmented structures of online social practice in Internet spaces makes bounding the object of study problematic for research. Rather than traditional methods of

identifying field, site, and scene for data collection and interpretation, I have suggested that research in new media environments can be perhaps better understood by examining strategies and practices in specific contexts of human experience. Traditional methodologies, such as looking for the roots of these social practices, would not shed much light on the current modes of identity and meaning making because these modes and means are constantly changing as participants experiment with social media technologies in ways often unintended by the creators of the technologies. As dana boyd (2008a) concluded after her 3-year ethnographic study on teens and new media, "New technologies reshape public life, but teens' engagement also reconfigures the technology itself" (p. 2). Participants adapt to the affordances and constraints of Internet architectures while at the same time shaping them through their participation.

This study should be understood as a *snapshot*: an historical moment in an evolving system of social media relations, a system as decentralized, fragmented, transient, and dispersed as the Internet itself. Defining the text for analysis as a snapshot allowed me to document everyday practices in the chronotope of their production and performance, in a unique time and place of social action for a small group of young people as they went about their daily lives.

In taking a snapshot of a moment, a clearer definition of the field of view is needed. The Internet has been conceptualized by some scholars as a "third place," suggesting that it has its own unique culture and practices (Bruckman & Resnick, 1995; Soukup, 2006), while other scholars see Internet-based interactions as a mirror of everyday practices in socializing and community (Haythornthwaite & Wellman, 2002).

An assumption of this study was that *both* conceptions may be applicable depending on the context of the participation, so must be accounted for in analysis. The methodological approach considered socialization in the new media space as *both* different from and similar to traditional social interactions structured by geographic space. In other words, for every screen, as a window into online virtual mediated spaces, there is a person sitting in front of it, a person in the real world. Social interaction is similar because we are perhaps more likely to be influenced by that which is nearest to us in our offline community, family, and friends, as in friendship-driven sites. These sites would tend to mirror offline communities. On the other hand, new media spaces can also be different because social interactions can be based on connections through nodal points defined by shared or common interests, which can have little to do with geographical location, as in interest-driven sites. Such communities may develop unique cultures and practices, creating a "third place" not tied to offline local activities of participants.

To accommodate this conceptualization, scholars have devised different methodological techniques to account for the relationship between online and offline practices in social interactive contexts. Some aggregate data from online and offline sources (Haythornthwaite & Wellman, 2002; Orgad, 2008). Others look at people and practices as they manifest themselves in the connections between online and offline environments (Baym, 2000; Hodkinson, 2002; Ito, 2005; Wilson, 2006).

The procedures in this study accounted for the relationship between online and offline practices, communities, and cultures by following people as they move seamlessly between them. I believe the construction of knowledge can best be served by examining small manageable sections of the system, and perhaps learn something about how each

piece relates to the pieces immediately contiguous to it, whether that piece be online participation and offline interactions in the context of home. Using the idea of a snapshot, I analyzed a bounded field of action within a defined segment of time, which can account for the contiguous and overlapping social actions across multiple genres of participation in online new media spaces, but also in the broader context of offline everyday life of the young people involved.

Methodology

This study took a grounded approach to its analysis. With this approach, fundamental questions were asked about how youth develop new strategies to navigate the complexities of social participation in new media spaces, and how they use networked technologies to engage in social interactions with family, close friends, peers, and "consequential strangers" (Blau & Fingerman, 2009). Through a grounded approach to theory building, I can achieve a better understanding of these everyday social practices, and then inductively develop the best conceptual frameworks for analysis.

Grounded Theory

Originally introduced by Barney G. Glaser and Anselm L. Strauss (1967), grounded theory is a theory-generating methodology for conceptualizing "latent" social patterns and structures. Presented as a challenge to the hypothetico-deductive approach that dominated social science up to the mid 20th Century (Kendall, 1999), this approach discourages the adoption of *a priori* categories, dimensions, and perspectives for data analysis. Grounded theory is derived from the assumptions that human behavior cannot be reduced to a set of normative structures that function within the larger static system of social life, and therefore, researchers should not fit collected data into preexisting codes

and categories. The deductive approach is replaced with an *emergent* process of developing codes and categories "as an essential aspect of transforming raw data into theoretical constructions of social processes" (Kendall, 1999, p. 746). The specifics of protocol and sampling employed in this study are discussed in the next section.

Grounded theory (GT) as method is popular in contemporary social sciences, but remains controversial: first, as a qualitative and emergent approach that challenges positivistic methods (Dey, 1999); but also because of a split between Glaser and Strauss (Melia, 1996). The split largely hinges on disagreements over whether theory can be built in an emergent process that completely disregards prior knowledge, or must grounded scholars recognize the potential value of deductive interpretations, as well. It appears that, "From its beginnings the methodology of Grounded Theory has suffered from an 'inductivist self misunderstanding'…" (Kelle, 2005, p. 24).

In GT's original conception, theoretical findings are grounded in the data and emerge directly from the data through a process of gradual abstraction, and "apparently without the active actions of the scientist" (Reichertz, 2009). It is on this last point where Glaser and Strauss later diverged and where confusion and tension remain. Glaser (1978, 1992) is seen as a proponent of classic grounded theory by stressing the "emergent" nature of the method and argues that the data should not be forced into conceptual categories by the influence of previous theory. With the publication of detailed guidance to grounded theory, Strauss and Corbin (1990) produced a reformulation of the theory (Annells, 1996), which Glaser (1992) claimed was no longer grounded theory.

Kendell (1999) identified the process of *axial coding,* added by Strauss and Corbin (1990), as being at the "crux" of this debate in grounded theory. After the initial

publication of the "Discovery book," Glaser (1978) clarified the coding process with two types of codes, *substantive (open)* and *theoretical*, whereas Strauss and Corbin (1990) offered three in their formulation: *open*, *axial*, and *selective*. Glaser's substantive (open) coding is similar to Strauss and Corbin's open coding, with some differences in their perspectives, but it is generally acknowledged by all that in this step the codes emerge from the process to fit the data, and not the other way around. The final step in the coding process is Strauss and Corbin's selective coding and Glaser's theoretical coding, where the codes and categories are systematically integrated into theoretical constructions. The two processes are similar, but Glaser and Strauss "utilize them differently in their theoretical constructions, and therefore generate different theoretical products" (Kendall, 1999, p. 747).

Glaser (1978, 1992) continues to insist that codes and categories emerge directly form the data using the two types of codes, whereas Strauss and Corbin (Corbin & Strauss, 1987, 2008; Strauss & Corbin, 1990) argue that theoretical preknowledge flows into the data interpretation through the inductive and deductive process of *axial coding*. Theoretical preknowledge cannot be ignored because "observation and the development of theory are necessarily always already theory guided" (Reichertz, 2009, p. 2). Glaser seemed to be aware of the problem of merging GT theory into the body of formal theory (Kelle, 2005), and advised "theoretical sensitivity" (Glaser, 1978) as a means of allowing existing theory to coexist with the idea that theoretical concepts can "emerge" from the data without preconceptions. Urquhart (2001) notes the paradox of GT's aims and its co-existence with formal theory, because, "Other theories pertaining to the same area as the substantive area need to be grappled with as competing analyses" (p. 16).

To reconcile these diverging methodologies for researchers, Kendell (1999) suggests that the differences between these two formulations of grounded theory are neither right nor wrong, but that the differences are clear and researchers should choose the best approach for their particular research goals. Hammersley (1989) claims these ontological and epistemological aspects cited as the source of the divergence are easily resolved, "once we accept that there can be multiple non-contradictory descriptive and explanatory claims about any phenomenon" (p. 135)

This project followed the process proposed by Strauss and Corbin (1990), by acknowledging that previous knowledge and literature should not be entirely bracketed out in the analysis of the data. From this perspective, the literature review in Chapter 2 explicated the foundational theories and conceptual frameworks assumed relevant to this project, but were used to inform interpretation in the axial coding process without explicitly framing the findings and conclusions by fitting them into preexisting categories and hypotheses. A significant amount of the literature search was carried out after the coding was complete, enabling me to find and review *relevant* literature spanning a wide range of fields including cognitive psychology, social ties, media richness, media presence, information systems, and library science. This approach ensured some measure of "theoretical sensitivity to everyday experiences and the power structures that frame these experiences" (Wilson, 2006, p. 323).

Research Questions

My dissertation is structured primarily around answering two broad research questions. The first functioned to situate the cultural context: the construction and maintenance of identity in new media spaces as an important aspect of everyday

existence. The approach and methodology of this study provided a unique opportunity to directly observe mediated activities and the daily practices that surround online socializing, entertainment, and information seeking. The second question then looked to define the specifics of everyday practices, and how they influence, or are influenced by, young peoples' relationships in new media participatory cultures. These were the two most important goals of this dissertation and received the most attention.

RQ1: How is identity constructed and maintained by young people through the practices of new media use?

RQ2: What specific patterns and practices are evident as youth (age 13-17) make meaning and socialize in technology-mediated social environments?

Directly observing the specific acts of engagement, and listening to the oral reports, helped answer these questions about the practices that surround the complex negotiation between multiple selves (online and offline) and the computer structures and operations through which these selves are represented to others. Youth engagement with social media environments can include their often interrelated and overlapping engagement with peers, parents, school, entertainment, information, and the virtual communities that are formed within and between these social networks. As I already argued, the relationship between youth and media is closely intertwined with the concept of identity, even though the term has always been ambiguous and slippery, and made more so by the new logic for media and the participatory practices of new media users that can arise from it. The social construction of identity and community formation for young people in mediated environments is comprised of competing interpellations, overlapping social structures, new literacies, fragmented discourses, and social anxieties

by adults.

Young people are good subjects for new media studies of this type because, as noted, the online activities of young people tend to be excellent indicators of broader trends (boyd, 2009a). While changes in new media technologies seem to be rapid, survey evidence suggests this generation of "wired teens" appears to be at the leading edge. Their practices could be representative of important trends that drive innovation in new media technologies, as well as shape the fabric of teen culture.

Questions three and four were corollary to the first two, but occupy somewhat less importance in the overall study. One related to the technologies themselves and how they may structure the communication practices and processes, and the other interrogated youth assumptions about new media practices.

RQ3: In what ways do young people gain access, participate, and create and/or maintain user-generated content in new media environments, given the affordances and constraints of each technology?

This study provided some opportunities to gather data on new media in their lives across multiple media technologies (e.g., television, computers, cellular phones, iPods), an important issue in an age of "media convergence" (Jenkins, 2006), where youth seem to view different media technologies as interchangeable, and as I have said, appear to move between them seamlessly.

Further, this question helped cast some light on specific uses of technology to gather and share information. Because these so-called digital natives are the next generation of college students, the findings may have particular importance for teaching

and learning pedagogy in higher education. This is an important area of study for scholars and educators alike.

RQ4: Are there assumptions, perceptions, and concerns expressed by young people as they engage new media environments in everyday life?

This provided an opportunity for young people to speak for themselves in terms of dealing with issues of authenticity of information, privacy, anonymity, access, gender, race, sexuality, and other dimensions relating to their engagement with new media technology. Such findings may be informative for future strategies of Internet development and education specifically and general Internet-related policy decisions about new media in the future.

Protocol

New sets of categories and practices may be more likely to emerge from *protocol analysis* methodology, where participants are asked to orally report what they are experiencing as they experience it (Ericsson & Simon, 1993). Protocol analysis remains a rigorous methodology where participants are asked to "verbalize their thoughts in a manner that does not alter the sequence and content of thoughts mediating the completion of a task and therefore should reflect immediately available information during thinking" (Ericsson, 2006, p. 227). A hybrid form was employed by this project because the goal was not analysis of thinking processes related to specific tasks assigned by a researcher, but of the thinking processes in everyday feelings and "thought sequences" of the participants in the moment of their engagement with new media.

Protocol analysis originated as one of the principal methods for studying thinking processes in cognitive, behavior, and psychology research. Csikszentmihalyi and Kubey

(1981) successfully integrated protocol analysis into mass media research. In other approaches to audience research, they argued that "methodological and theoretical limitations make it difficult for social scientists to adequately access the impact or value of any form of leisure or medium of communication" (Kubey & Csikszentmihalyi, 1990, p. xii). This research project drew from their methodological model because "it is designed to provide a picture of the way people feel as they move through everyday life" (Kubey & Csikszentmihalyi, 1990, p. xiii).

This project did not test a particular hypothesis about the communicative practices of teens, so this method was *not* intended to explain social artifacts or objects, but instead was used to understand the mediated experience through the eyes of the subjects. Participants in this study were not asked to report or explain *how* they use new media. Instead, they were asked to remain focused on their typical online activities and give verbal expression to those thoughts that emerge while navigating the WWW, generating content, socializing, and so on. Verisimilitude was assessed by analyzing the information expressed as verbalized thoughts and comparing that to the on-screen activities, providing evidence that the concurrent verbalization reflected the mediated practices in which they were engaged. Card et al. (2001) successfully applied protocol analysis methodology to encounters with web pages in a task-oriented study under controlled conditions. This project extended the methodology to the relatively chaotic context of everyday lived experiences.

Experience Sampling

The protocol analysis used the experience sampling method (ESM). ESM refers to a set of techniques to document human behaviors, thoughts, or feelings as they occur in

real-time. Larson and Csikszentmihalyi (1983) coined the term *experience sampling method* to refer to any assessment of experiences having three characteristics: in natural settings, in real-time, and on repeated occasions. The sample data can include 'naïve' accounts of events because validity comes from repetition, not specific responses (Csikszentmihalyi & Larson, 1987). Subjects are asked to self-report in response to any number of signals or cues, and in this study, participants were asked to report on particular events in naturally occurring new media activities. ESM has the advantage in media research of being less intrusive than other direct observation and data recording techniques that can result in bias from pressures on normal behavior and privacy (Kubey, Larson, & Csikszentmihalyi, 1996).

Instead of making written notes in journals, as is typical of this method, participants in this study were asked to orally report what they were thinking and feeling, in order to assess their condition in the process of analysis. These reports and their activities online were recorded and stored together on a study laptop for analysis. This hybrid implementation of ESM has been referred to as "image-based experience sampling" (Intille, Kukla, & Ma, 2002) and is appropriate when stopping to report disrupts the flow of users' activity.

Study Procedure

Each participant was given a laptop computer with software called *Morae* that records their activities and voice, the Microsoft *Internet Explorer* web browser, and other communication and graphic software. The laptops were Apple MacBook Intel-based computers with built in camera and microphone. *Morae*, by TechSmith, a usability testing and user experience research software package used in this study, requires

Microsoft Windows operating system, so that OS was installed on the laptops, rather than Macintosh OSX. *Morae* has three elements, of which I used two: the *Recorder* and the *Manager*. The *Recorder* captured, processed, and stored data from the user experience on the respondent's study laptop computer. Upon the return of the laptop, data were transferred to a desktop office computer with the *Manager*, which is where the data were analyzed. Discussion of how the *Manager* was used specifically to code and analyze data is in the "Data Analysis" section below.

Working in the background*, Morae Recorder* documented key aspects of the user's experience: the software records video and audio (through the built-in camera and microphone), on-screen activity (screen shots), and keyboard/mouse input. The *Morae* software provides several options for when to start the recording, and in this study, recording began when the participant launched Internet Explorer (IE). From that point on, all online activities were recorded and synchronized with the capture of their orally reported thoughts and feelings as they occurred in real-time. Recording stopped when IE was closed. In this way, the study laptop computer was both the point of access to online computer mediated spaces and the instrument that recorded the new media experiences and activities in the "natural context of their occurrence, among the actors who would naturally be participating in the interaction, and follows the natural stream of everyday life" (Adler & Adler, 1998, p. 81).

Many of the inherent challenges of media audience research were mitigated by the use of this computer setup. The *Morae Recorder* is an excellent tool for protocol analysis using ESM because the software records what the subjects are doing and saying in the act of engagement, with minimal interference with the activity. The collected data therefore

represent contextualized and situated communicative practices as they are negotiated and enacted, because the data collection instrument becomes a part of the study participants' everyday lives. Since the laptops were portable, data about the participants' experiences were captured in the context of difficult-to-observe private domains like the home and the bedroom. Participants in this study did not take the laptop from their homes, but a comparative analysis of both private and public online and offline socializing practices such as peer interactions in school, at coffee shops, and so on, becomes possible, which could help provide insights into youth media culture as it is enacted in more public domains.

Sampling

A form of snowball sampling (Heckathorn, 1997) was employed: existing study participants provided the basis to nominate and recruit future subjects from acquaintances based on the subject's communication practices. They were asked to randomly select two to three people from the list of their Facebook friends as the means of nominating the next round of study participants. The names were printed out, cut into individual slips of paper, and put in a basket for selection by participants. This procedure allowed me to draw the sample from a community in a networked public whose connections were defined through their electronic communicative practices. Members of this unique community were randomly selected in this manner and then invited to participate in the study, first by the nominating participant with whatever means at their disposal, then followed up by me as necessary.

Participants

The study was conducted over a 10-week period between late May 2010 and mid-July 2010. Eleven young people participated in the study, ranging in age from 13 to 17. All live and attend schools in the City of New Orleans. There were 4 young men and 7 young women. Two of the male respondents were African-American, 1 female respondent was Euro-Asian-American and the rest were Euro-American. The study participants attended four different schools, although 8 attended the same school, an arts-intensive public charter school that combined middle and high school grades. One attended a science and math intensive public charter high school, and 2 attended private faith-based middle and high schools, respectively.

Instructions to Participants

When meeting the participants for the first time, the signed consent forms were collected and they were shown how to use the study laptop, to start and stop the *Morae* software, and to confirm that this was done successfully. Initially, they were only told of the software's existence, but not how to start or stop it beyond opening and closing IE. There were some problems early on where sessions were apparently not recorded, so I began showing participants how to confirm that the software was recording properly, and what to do if not. I explained that I did not want to waste their time with oral reporting if the reports were not being captured properly.

Otherwise, participants were given only two instructions. First, they were asked simply to do whatever they would normally do on any computer. I did not mention or suggest any specific web sites, nor encourage or discourage any particular activities on the laptop. Presumably, the recorded activities online are representative of their typical

everyday practices. Second, I provided some advice on oral reporting. They were asked *not* to describe their actions, because those were being recorded, but instead to report on *why* they were doing what they did. This message was reinforced in two ways: by a "sticky note" on the desktop on log-in that reminded them to report on why they were doing what they were doing, and they were reminded again by the default "home" web page that opened in IE, a web page I created for this purpose, where prominently-posed questions asked about the *why* of their activities. The default web page also provided the contact information for the study.

Data Analysis

As an hermeneutic scholar, I understand text to be dynamic: "its meaning depends on the action in progress and the actors who will engage the text in that action…Meaning emerges from the interaction" (Anderson, In Press). Data from the study laptops consist of over 26 hours of recordings that captured what I defined as two different texts for analysis. These texts were often overlapping and interrelated: one text was the World Wide Web (WWW), the study participants were the actors, and the action was engaging the text by opening a web browser. Parallel to this process, the actors created the second text by reporting on their actions. The results were brought together through theoretical level axial coding, which are explicated in the next chapter.

For the analysis of these texts, I developed two multistep processes that differentiated between the *use events* themselves—case, episodes, and actions—and the actors' reports.

In the discussion of the method that follows, I first note an ethical question about data collection when using these methods. Next, I report the process developed for

segmenting data into *use events*: case definition and attributes, and episode definition. The specific attributes of episodes are presented and discussed in the next chapter because the process of assigning attributes is integral to reading the results. Then, I provide a description of the reportage analytical process: cases definitions and thought structures. Last, the development of the codebook and other tools for analyzing the data are discussed.

Challenges to Data Collection in Networked Publics

Data collected in a study such as this present a complex ethical challenge. This methodology bypasses user-defined boundaries around UGC in online environments, giving the researcher access to content produced by both participants and others, but without the others' knowledge.

Researchers using qualitative methods for Internet research must face questions about boundaries between public and private in networked publics, and what collected data are appropriate for interpretative analysis. As danah boyd (2008a) noted in her ethnographic study:

> I had to ask myself two questions: (1) If content is publicly accessible on MySpace, do I have a right to access it?; and (2) When I have access to private content without people's awareness, how should I incorporate this as data? (p. 84)

Young people make UGC available in networked public spaces with an expectation that others will have access, but the degree may not always be clear (Stern, 2004). In many types of SNS, users have little or no expectation of control over the participation of other. Friendship-driven SNS like Facebook and MySpace are different, further exacerbating the issue. In Facebook, the participants define the community through their privacy settings and network choices, and admission is selective. There is

an assumption of more control over the flow of personal information and content (Elm, Buchanan, & Stern, 2008).

I had to decide what data, perhaps with the specific awareness of study participants *but* certainly without that of their online friends, were reasonable and appropriate to incorporate into the analysis and results. boyd (2008a) points out that Elm (2008) provides some guidance to researchers when arguing that it is important to consider both content and context of the data in this decision. None of the acts or reports amounted to what I considered potentially harmful or embarrassing—mostly mundane socializing and web surfing—so there was no reason to question using data for those reasons. I did feel that to exclude certain types of data, say a chat between a participant and a Facebook Friend who had not agreed to participate in the study, was to analyze interpersonal communication and meaning while only observing one side of a conversation.

Aided by boyd's (2008a) advice, I resolved this dilemma by treating all data collected in networked publics as private, sensitive information. I removed all indentifying personal information about users, and discuss or present examples of these types of data only on rare occasions. Any names that appear in this report are fictional.

Use Event Cases and Episodes

For *use event* data, the *case* is the initiation of access to the text, or opening a web browser, and the unit of analysis is the *episode* of visitation to a web site. The actions of the participants, as they engaged the technologies of digital communication, were coded and analyzed.

Defining Cases

The *case* is "a phenomenon of some sort occurring in a bounded context" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 25), and often understood as a means of bounding the object of study by defining the edges. Each one, in a grounded approach, may become "critical," extreme or unique, or "revelatory" (Yin, 1984). In this study, a case was defined as an online event initiated by a study participant: the opening of the IE web browser. When the browser is closed, the case ended. The data were processed and saved to the harddrive of the laptop.

This study coded 106 cases by start time and day, duration, and number of episodes. In addition to general participant information, Table 1 summarizes the frequency and duration of cases sorted by participant. The numbers in Table 1 display the participants' actual minutes online that were useable for coding purposes. Some cases were eliminated because they consisted of the participant being introduced by me to how the recording process worked, and so on. There was evidence that some cases may not have been recorded, which is discussed next, and one of Luke's cases had an unknown error in processing a part of one recording, so its duration reflects the usable portion.

The amount of time the study participants spent online with the study laptops varied widely. Bonnie recorded one 15-minute online session in the week she had the laptop, but reported difficulty with the wireless access. At the other extreme, Allie spent almost 7 hours on the Internet during the week, visited sites in almost every category, and demonstrated the most diversity in her online interests.

Cases not coded. Many cases could not be coded for various reasons. Mobile devices are a limitation to studies using this methodology. Five participants reported

Table 1: Cases by Participant

Pseudonym	Age	#Days	Entry	Exit	Cases	Ttl Time Hr:Mn:Sc	Longest Hr:Mn:Sc	Shortest Hr:Mn:Sc	Avg Mn
Jake	13	8	5/25/10	6/6/10	15	4:30:06	0:43:09	0:04:33	18
Allie	14	8	5/26/10	6/3/10	12[1]	6:49:05	1:25:32	0:01:24	34
Bonnie	15	8	6/8/10	6/15/10	1	0:14:21	0:14:21	0:14:21	14
Tom	15	8	6/9/10	6/23/10	6	2:06:25	0:38:49	0:02:28	21
Amy	16	7	6/15/10	6/21/10	17	0:58:18	0:06:58	0:00:48	3
Luke	14	7	6/22/10	6/28/10	6	2:16:40	0:47:25	4:04:05	22
Sonya	17	8	6/23/10	6/30/10	19	3:09:10	1:07:19	0:00:45	10
Sarah	14	8	6/30/10	7/7/10	23[2]	2:09:07[3]	0:36:08[3]	0:01:01[3]	10[3]
Tina	15	8	7/2/10	7/10/10	1[45]	0:26:45	0:26:45	0:00:36	13
Blake	15	7	7/7/10	7/13/10	3[5]	0:16:50	0:11:15	0:02:36	5
Ann	17	8	7/10/10	7/18/10	3[5]	0:32:98	0:18:32	0:01:43	11
Totals:					106[2]	23:35:04[3]			

1=No audio recorded because of technical issue. No oral reports were analysed, but cases contained useful data for coding.

2=Twenty-three cases were recorded but only 17 contained useful data for coding. Sarah would manually start and stop Morae recording. Once stopped, Morae would launch on its own when new tabs were opened. The 6 uncoded cases were Sarah noticing and stopping Morae again without comment or other action.

3=Useful minutes for coding.

4=Tina closed the lid of the laptop at beginning the second case, and without closing the browser. Nothing recorded after that except a 26 hour case of black screen.

5=Tina, Blake, and Ann appear to have installed and used video chat software: Skype or ooVoo.The video chat software may conflict with the Morae Recorder, possibly explaining why these three have few cases.

accessing Facebook from their mobile phone apps. Examination of their personal posts on Facebook, where all posts list the type of device or software used for making the post, verified that access. Texting on a mobile device was also observed frequently, though difficult to identify confidently. However, I was able to code 109 acts of texting and 13

cellular conversations during study cases.

Further, not all participant cases on the study laptops were recorded for data collection, although they may have been informative in relation to the research objectives of this study. There was evidence, some of it circumstantial, that some of the participants spent more time with the study laptops than was captured in the *Morae* recordings. Sarah would stop and start the recordings when watching YouTube music videos, reporting reasons like (Sarah-0006): *"I really burned out. Not much to say. Maybe I can turn the video off."*

Other potential cases were not recorded because they did not involve IE, which was *Morae*'s trigger to begin recording. Ann left some text documents she created on the harddrive, which appeared to be creative writing. More directly related to online practices, two participants downloaded and used video chat software during the study: Tina used Skype (skype.com), and Blake used ooVoo (ooVoo.com). Participants had administrative rights to the computer, so could download and install software. Unfortunately, video chat episodes were not recorded because they do not require IE, but both participants left screen shots from online chat sessions on the harddrive. The apparent importance of video chat to these participants may portend its importance in the future of youth media culture, which is relevant to the discussion chapter.

Perhaps not coincidentally, the 3 participants just mentioned above—Tina, Ann, and Blake—recorded the fewest cases after Bonnie and were the 3 to leave evidence of using the laptop for purposes that would not have been recorded by *Morae*. This pattern may relate to the research question on the importance of new media in their everyday life, versus other forms of new media use, and is discussed in the last two chapters.

Case Attributes

In the presentation of case and episode data, the letters and numbers in parentheses are the code designations and the number of cases, episodes, or specific codes as they relate to the discussion. Parenthetical numbers beginning with "00" are case ID numbers. Case content codes (TP) show that cases tended to begin in the evenings (TP-Ev), in a family space (TP-PF) versus a bedroom (TP-Bd), and most often midweek. Table 2 summarizes the time, day, and location of cases.

Start time of cases were coded predominately in the afternoons (TP-Mid/37) and evenings (TP-Ev/51). Cases beginning after 11:00 PM were coded the least (TP-Ni/4). The study took place during the summer months, so these statistics are assumed specific to out-of-school practices. If activities were studied during the school year, one of two differences in usage may emerge: more activity may move to the evenings because of the school day and late night because of extracurricular activities and homework, or simply fewer cases because home-based computers would be used less for online socializing: 15 reports from 5 participants were coded as using mobile devices to access networked publics despite having the study laptop available to them. Typical of these reports was Luke (0005); *"I haven't been on the computer for a couple of days because I've been*

Table 2: Cases by Time, Day, and Location

Time	Cases
Morning (5-11a)	14
Mid-day (11a-5p)	37
Evening (5-11p)	51
Night (11p-5a)	4
	106

Day	Cases
Monday	8
Tuesday	20
Wednesday	23
Thursday	24
Friday	15
Saturday	11
Sunday	5
	106

Locations	
Public/Family	57
Bedroom	44
Other	3
Unknown	3
	107[1]

1=Jake changed location during one case.

working. I have been checking Facebook on my phone." The average number of cases per participant is 9.09 and 6 were coded each for both Luke and Tom, who both reported or provided other data to suggest extensive use of mobile devices during the study. Their use of mobile access may account for the below average case numbers.

Locations of cases were predominantly in family spaces (TP-PF/57) over bedrooms (TP-Bd/44). Cases in family spaces were sometimes in conjunction with television viewing (OF/15) and offline conversations with family and friends (TP-Fr, TP-Fa/82 acts coded.) Offline conversations were noted, but the content of them were not coded.

Each participant had the laptop for 7-8 days, so all had it once over a weekend. Heaviest use of the laptops was midweek, with a drop off to the lowest number of cases on Sunday and Monday. They were on summer break so everyday was not a school day, yet the least number of cases were on weekends. This suggests participants' social schedules are still defined by week versus weekend activities, the latter being when they were out with their friends or family, rather than socializing on Facebook or using other sites.

The daily pattern may be a reflection of practical issues: young people presumably still rely on parents for transportation so must coordinate around their work schedules. Also, youth could have weekday summer activities while the parents are at work, such as sports camps, so weekends remained the best opportunity for offline socialization.

Defining Episodes

An *episode* was the basic unit of analysis of use events, and each case contained one or more episodes within it. Two hundred-two (202) episodes, over the 106 cases, were coded by "genre," or type of site, and duration. Results of the coding of actions within episodes are presented in the next chapter.

Episodes were defined as a visit to a unique top-level web domain, or web site home page. Early in the coding process, evidence suggested that the type of site the participant was visiting was the best method for characterizing the practices observed, so the site became the basis for defining episodes in coding of the actions. I speculate that this is because practices are predominately structured by the site architecture, and not by the user's *habitus*, to use Bourdieu's (1980) term for the construction of daily practices. In other words, episodes are *not* coded by an interpretation of the actions or reports within them, but by the genre that defined the actions observed.

Episodes began with actions such as logging into Facebook, opening a search window in Google, and so on. Specific actions within an episode were also the object of coding, such as chatting, posting a status update, visiting a photo album, updating personal profile information, adding a Friend, etc.

The site-based genres and attributes for coding episode content are discussed in the results chapter because the results are predominately framed and structured by the attributes.

Exceptions to episode definition. Defining episodes as a visit to a unique top-level domain was not always as clear-cut as the definition suggests. Each participant had unique practices and strategies for online navigation between and engagement with web

sites that would ultimately make cross-case coding difficult. Several coding strategies were developed throughout the process in order to account for these diverse practices, and maintain consistency between cases for axial coding purposes.

To accomplish this, some exceptions were made to the definition of episodes. Use of search engines and tabs represented widely varying practices between participants for what constituted an episode, so some general rules-based consistency was needed. Two rules were constructed to clarify what constituted an episode for these two specific types of activities.

Episodes and search engines. No one in the study used Google's functions beyond the search engine, such as Google Docs or Gmail, so such activities were not coded. Yet, search engine episodes were challenging to define. When participants opened Google or Bing (IE's default search engine) to search and access a second site for simple information, the activity was coded as one episode, even though two or more sites may have been accessed. The type of info accessed was typically an address or telephone number, or participants may have followed multiple links in Google looking for specific pieces of information. Google and Bing were seen as a path to the desired information on web sites rather than a separate episodic event. In other words, the practices in the act were defined as one type, or genre, of web site.

Conversely, if a participant used Google or Bing to search for sites, for example by typing "youtube" in the search window, the act was counted as two episodes because the participant switched, or moved between, genres of web sites during the act.

In addition to information, Google was twice used to search for images: Sarah (0017) who used Google Images to find and view images of her "future husband," a teen

celebrity, and Sonya (0008) to find and download an image to use as her desktop background. Both activities were counted as one episode each.

Episodes and browser tabs. Episodes were sometimes challenging to define consistently because of opening and closing the same sites multiple times within a case, versus keeping sites open but tabbing between them. An episode always began when the participant accessed a unique site for the first time in a case, but the end and duration needs some clarifying:

- if a particular site was closed, but later reopened within a case, both acts counted as one continuous episode. The duration reflects only the length of time the site was actually open in IE.
- if a site was opened in a tab, then the participant started a new episode on another tab, the first tab was one episode, but the duration reflects the total time the site tab was open, even when the tab was not "in front."

To summarize, episode durations reflect the total time a site was open on any tab in the IE browser, even if not "in front." Episode numbers reflect accessing a particular site like Facebook as one episode in a case even if the window was closed and reopened several times. The reasoning was that I saw little functional difference between tabbing away from and back to a window, and closing then reopening windows to access the same site. Other than some inconvenience of having to type the URL more than once, the experience for the participant in both situations remained essentially the same within a case.

Episodes per Case

The 106 cases generated 202 episodes. Each case contained between one and five episodes: Thirty-five cases had single episodes, 43 contained two episodes, eight contained three episodes, 13 contained four episodes, and one case contained five episodes (Allie-0014). Six cases contained zero episodes because of Sarah turning *Morae* off and on. The mean for episodes per case was 1.8.

While some episodes were an hour or more in duration, participants typically accessed the Internet in shorter bursts. The mean number of episodes per case, combined with the mean duration of cases (14 minutes), suggests that the participants did not travel very widely on the Internet during a case. They tended to open the IE browser for a specific purpose, to check in on Facebook and/or search for information, and then close it again. Facebook was usually the first stop online: in cases of two or more episodes (65), more than two thirds (49) entailed checking in on Facebook first. Typical of usage pattern was Sarah (0004), who reported, *"okay, so I just want to update my status on Facebook...before I have to go and stuff."* The duration for the case, with two episodes, was 13.26 minutes and she visited Facebook, then YouTube. Luke (0002) also reported, *"I don't stay on the computer for more than maybe 10 minutes at a time. I usually just check up to see if I have any, uh, notifications or stuff like that."*

Activity coded as episodes was just one element in the daily social and mediated practices of the participants. Despite the low mean episodes per case, participants demonstrated skills in multitasking that have been identified in quantitative research discussed in Chapter 2. The participants with the most episodes per case (Allie, Sarah, and Sonya) were more likely to open multiple tabs to pursue different objectives online in

a case. While "checking in" on Facebook activities, these participants opened additional tabs to listen to music, visit YouTube, or visit an online shopping site. Further, coded activities included acts beyond just those in browser windows. Many participants received and sent texts from their mobile devices, watched television, talked with friends and family, etc. while online, hence during a case. In other words, episodes per case do not necessarily reflect the level of multitasking by the study participants.

Report Cases and Code Attributes

As noted, the process for coding and analysis differed between the use events—the actions of the study participants in the episodes themselves—and the reports associated with those events.

For reportage data, the report is the case and thought structure is the unit of analysis. In line with the grounded protocol, reportage coding did not begin in earnest until very late in the data collection process and after action coding was fairly fixed.

Using a grounded or emergent approach, also known as the *constant comparative method* (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Lindlof & Taylor, 2002), coding of the oral reports was allowed to emerge from the data. I used the *open coding* method to ground the reporting data. Open coding is the initial coding of raw data (Strauss & Corbin, 1990), which can then be used to identify, name, categorize, and describe phenomena found in the text. The first stage of coding is typically "unrestricted" (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002) because the categories are not yet defined. Categories begin to emerge by comparing each incident to other incidents in an ongoing process to find commonalities. Strauss and Corbin (1990) stress that the process of describing and coding is dynamic and occurring over time in the research setting.

Defining Report Cases

A report was defined as a case if it represented at least one complete verbalized thought that was structured to relate to the observed activities, and 896 cases were identified and coded. Other oral events, such as offline discussions with friends and family or telephone conversations, were noted and coded in the data (OF), but they were not considered reports.

Report Case Attributes

Oral reporting codes (VR) were developed in a much more organic process than action codes and took the longest to organize and conceptualize. Coding of each new participant's data offered new opportunities to expand or rethink existing codes as participants reported on their own worlds from their unique perspectives.

Coding of oral reports presented some challenges to organize. The reports were a rich source of insight into the online practices of the participants, but the reporting *style*, quantity, and quality was very diverse. In some cases, participants reported on their thoughts and feelings on a wide range of topics, which may or may not have been related to the specific activity at the time. In other cases, they reported specifically on their actions at that moment.

As coding progressed, two codes types were developed to make the distinction in report case attributes. VR- level codes identified thought structures that were defined as tangential to the actions, or not directly related to an act. In these cases, codes were created to identify and describe the thoughts conveyed. The case code was followed by a description of the thought structure: for example, VR-Ti was used to code reports on the time the participant spent online.

In cases where study participants described their actions, the appropriate action codes were used, but with VRA- added to designate that the participant talked about the act while doing it. For example, Tom (0003) reported, *"Talking to my friend...Evan!" (answers chat message with one word, "Evan!")*. This report was coded, VRA-TX-Ch, where TX-Ch is the code for a textual engagement with others using the chat feature. By adding VRA-, the code became a report of the action as well as coding the action itself. When searching the data in *Morae* for all incidences of the code TX-Ch, this action would be included.

Some cases contained multiple reporting codes if more than one thought was reported in the case. The 896 cases contained 1,075 report thoughts, 313 of which were participants describing their actions (VRA) and 752 were tangential or not related to actions (VR). For the 752 cases coded as tangential or not related to actions (VR), codes were developed, sorted, and combined to describe the 67 individual thought structures identified in the reports. These were sorted into eight topical groups with multiple related codes in each group, and six ungrouped codes where further segmentation was deemed unnecessary. Report code topic groups are detailed in the next chapter.

Developing the Codebook

A preliminary list of individual emerging codes was developed and then several more weeks were spent applying the codes to the data, re-examining the codes, and then reapplying them to the data as needed. Oral report and action events were coded simultaneously because of their chronotopic relationship between the two texts in the context of using the Internet.

Next, the codes were sorted by similar *concepts* in order to make them more manageable. Throughout this process, new codes continued to emerge as understanding of the practices became clearer and more refined. Conceptual groups of codes were organized, and then placed into broad *categories*. The original seven categories remained fluid in the analysis and were rethought several times as code building progressed. Categories were eventually reduced to four categories in the final codebook, which is Appendix A. Details of these categories, and the codes that constitute them, are discussed in the next chapter in the context of the results of the coding process.

Following the sorting of codes and concepts was integrating categories using *axial* coding, as described by Strauss and Corbin (1990) in their reconfiguration of the grounded approach. This process relates coded categories to each other, using both inductive and deductive thinking processes, to identify relationships that may reshape and refine categories as connections are made between them. The purpose was to identify properties of the categories for further analysis by looking for common characteristics across categories. Future research will serve to clarify and refine the codes, concepts, and categories even further. Ten code patterns and themes emerged in the axial coding, which are described in the next chapter.

Once I felt I had reached some level of saturation and thematic stability, I moved on to constructing interpretive claims. I began the process of "dimensionalization" (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002, p. 222) as the last phase in conceptual development of the data into theoretical constructs. From the categories, patterns and themes began to arise allowing me to move from the data to theory building. The patterns and themes became

the basis for the development of theory as a means of explaining the data and formulating answers to the research questions.

Personal Memos

Throughout this process, I made personal *memos*, short documents written to myself during the analysis of data to "serve to flesh out the thematic qualities of the coding categories, or how the meanings shift across time, social actors, or other dimensions" (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002, p. 220). Once dimensionalizing began, these became a valuable reference.

Visual Analysis

While of secondary importance to this project, a significant amount of visual data is generated by the *Morae* software. To aid in the analysis of that oral data, I applied principles of visual communication for analysis of the screens through which young people view and represent self and other in new media environments. These representations are analyzed in terms of visual presentation: visual media as rhetorical and aesthetic.

Facebook, for example, is a rich visual environment with text and images flowing through the participant's news feed, as well as in sidebar advertisements and additional information about the activities and images of the participant's Friends.

Morae captures the experience in an easy-to-manage interface for comparative analysis. On the right side of the image is the window with video of the participant. The video of the participant was very valuable because I was able to add facial and behavioral clues to the interpretive process. Figure 1 is an example of Sonya's laptop screen and her video image captured by the *Morae* Recorder for visual analysis.

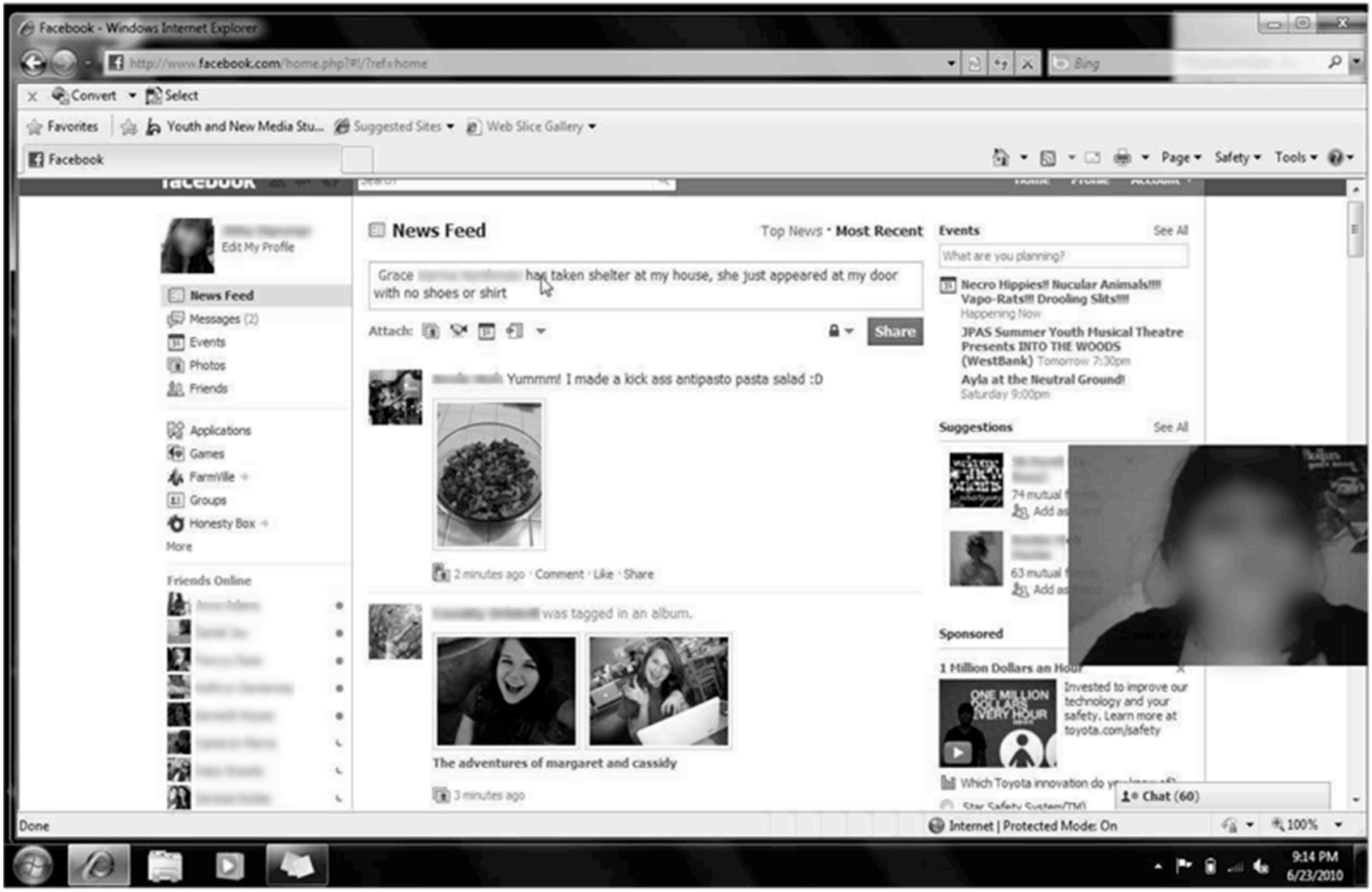

Figure 1: Example of Sonya's Visual Data

Summary

Even as youth practices are structured by the architecture of the networked public spaces, youth are shaping them through their participation. The methodology in this study was designed to account for the relationship between online and offline practices, communities, and youth cultures by following the participants as they moved seamlessly through and between them.

The grounded approach and experience sampling protocol provided the framework for managing and preparing the raw data from oral reports for analysis. The 11 study participants provided the definition, through their actions, to the decentralized and fragmented structures of online social practice in networked publics.

Integrating computer media technology, the *Morae* software, for gathering data provided some advantages for new media research. Collecting data and documenting online activities can present media researchers with many challenges to method because new media as an object of study is without beginnings, centers, nor ends. The methodology employed mitigated many, by providing access to home environments and data collection over a protracted period of time, and accounting for the diversity of use in terms of day and time. It reduced the physical aspects of observation to a minimum, the seeing eye of a small camera and a hidden microphone. The *Morae* software captured key aspects of the user's activities, in real-time, and in the context of their occurrence.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Overview of Results

In the last chapter, I explained the two processes of analysis of the data that differentiated between the *use events* themselves—case, episodes, and actions—and the actors' reports.

This chapter picks up where these processes for coding and analysis evolved into conceptual groups that also differentiated between actions of participants as they engaged the technologies of the Internet, and the thought structures in oral reports. It is organized to explicate how four code categories emerged from axial coding of the data. First, I provide some clarifications of the term "friend," which impacts how the results are presented. Next, I outline how codes constitute the conceptual groups and categories, and how that grouping helps to better understand the results themselves. Last, I provide descriptions of the key code themes and patterns that were identified from the data.

Friend versus friend

Throughout the rest of this document, a capital underlined "F" is used to denote online (mostly Facebook) "Friends," and lower-case "f" when referencing offline friendships. An example is Jake's report upon seeing Friend requests: *"There are no Friends I want to be friends with."*

The differences in the first letter are significant for these results and subsequent discussion, and will perhaps become more significant as social media evolve. The notion of "friend" is being disrupted by the term's adoption by social network sites (SNS) and the outcome is unclear. The seemingly simple binary of being a Friend in online spaces, versus the traditional cultural understanding of "friend," reflects fragmentation of the meaning for the status of "friendship" in and across various SNS studied here, and partially defines some of the specific practices of the study participants as they engaged online social networking (OSN.)

Likewise, "Everyone" with a capital "E" refers to privacy settings or conventions of a web site that allows anyone with Internet access to view the user-generated content (UGC,) rather than limiting access to just specified Friends. Everyone can be a very large group. The binary of Friend versus Everyone also figures largely in the discussion that follows because it does not reflect the structures of offline social relationships.

An exploration of the differences embodied by the binary distinctions begins with the reasoning behind the first of the code categories presented next, and continues through this dissertation. The long-term outcome is to uncover how the understanding of friendship is becoming stratified in ways that may affect both on- and offline social relationships.

Conceptual Categories and Groups

Four code categories emerged to contain the conceptual groups and provided a framework for understanding how the study participants practiced and extended their everyday activities into networked publics as they participated in entertainment, self-representation, and impression management in networked publics.

The first category of codes to emerge contains two closely related conceptual groups of codes describing participants' acts of engagement *with* the technologies of digital communication and structured by the type of site accessed in the episode.

The second category is comprised of four closely related conceptual groups describing the study participants' online interaction *with* others *through* their engagement with the technologies, as well as offline interactions observed during the study.

The third category encompasses content analysis coding of the oral reports, with several conceptual groupings of codes within it. Coding in this category differentiates between reports of thought structures and reports of actions by overlapping the latter with the first two categories of codes.

The fourth category is a smaller interpretive coding group that describes technical strategies and skills with the technologies observed during the episodes.

The "Emerging Code and Thematic Patterns" section of this chapter outlines the code patterns and themes that emerged in the axial coding process across these categories and the conceptual groups within them.

In the next chapter, the results are further explored by a return to research literature to triangulate with the results of this study and specific areas of research and scholarship to help corroborate the apparent relationships.

Category 1: Nonymous and Anonymous Conceptual Groups

This category combines two conceptual groups of action codes that I named the "anonymous" and "nonymous" code groups, which emerged from episode content coding results. To explain the distinction, I will first outline those results of analysis, and then connect them to the definitions and contents of the two conceptual groups.

Use Event Episode Results

Episodes were initially defined simply by visitation to web sites. As code building progressed, I began to see that the practices were defined by two general but distinct characteristics of online participation by the young people in this study. The distinction became the foundation from which episode content codes emerged:

- participants' acts of engagement *with* the technologies of digital communication, but without direct interaction with others.
- participants' active social interaction *with* others *through* the technologies.

Practices observed in episodes with only the first characteristic of participation did not share aspects of the second characteristic, whereas episodes with the second always included the first. This distinction helped to inform early coding of episode content, but continued to inform code development as analysis of data continued.

The first characteristic of practices was found in all episodes coded, whether or not the activities included socializing with others. Coding of the practices in episodes with this characteristic can perhaps be thought of as providing surface details of each episode as the context for deeper meaning of actions and in oral reports. These codes described interactions with the study laptop itself, navigating web site interfaces, checking for messages, updating preferences, etc.

The second characteristic of the practices was active social interaction *with* other *through* the technologies, and were only coded in sites defined as SNS. In addition to codes relating to engagement with media technology, the coding in these episodes describe synchronous social interactions such as chat sessions or asynchronous

conversations through threaded comments on Facebook, but in general, the coded acts represented direct interaction with other.

Defining SNS and non-SNS episodes. The two characteristics of episodes eventually evolved into two broad distinctions in the coding of episodes: SNS or non-SNS (Non-social Network Sites). Generally, non-SNS displayed only aspects of the first characteristic, because the activities on those sites involved interaction with the technologies, but not with other online participants in networked publics. On the other hand, SNS shared both characteristics of practices, and were defined as such by the social and active participatory nature that was enabled by the site architecture.

This distinction helped differentiate between the broader social and cultural contexts of SNS activities and non-SNS activities associated with traditional audience-oriented consumption of media content. An analysis of this sort must account for both, as both represent the daily activities of the participants online, but the practices appeared to be distinctly different along this axis and within "genres" of each, which are defined next.

Episode coding by genres. Following the tradition of a grounded approach, the websites that constitute a genre were derived from the specific practices of the study participants, rather than classifications made by previous research or company missions. For this study, some web sites are grouped differently than popular classifications, and others tended to migrate between genres until a good fit was found. For example, YouTube is often thought of as an SNS (see Ito, 2010; Lange, 2007). In this study, episodes coded for YouTube were defined as non-SNS because the observed practices surrounding YouTube engagement were not social in nature, and more closely resembled those of television viewing, in terms of the quality of interaction. While the YouTube site

architecture has functionality to support social activity, the study participants ignored them. Thus, it remains to be seen if the genre classifications made here become generalizable to any extent.

Table 3 summarizes and defines the genres used to describe the sites visited by participants of this study.

SNS genres. Episodes coded as SNS were further segmented into the three "genre of participation" that were reviewed in Chapter 2: friendship-driven, interest driven, and

Table 3: Episode Definitions

Social Network Sites (SNS)		Allow individual to construct a networked public profile, articulate a list of connections to others, and view and visit others on that list (boyd & Ellison, 2007). Media sites support the exchange of communication messages and other content between participants. The site itself is conduit for this exchange. Participatory practices by users are essential because users provide much of the content.
	Friendship-driven	Facebook, MySpace
	Interest-driven	blogs, niche sites, Flickr, Twitter, networked gaming, etc.
	Collaboration	e-mail, google docs, wikis, crowd sourcing sites, etc. This includes pretty much anything to do with Jenkin's (2006) "participatory media culture."
Non-social Network Sites		Address a mass public like broadcast media. Access often does not require a public profile or membership. Are low- or non-participatory sites providing access to items and information, without an exchange as in SNS. Content generated by site/companies but rarely users. Users consume content, not exchange/share ideas and content.
Entertainment		Represents the intersection of traditional media, commerce, and mass media culture in digital media environment.
	Games (non-networked)	Online gaming sites
	Trad. Mass Media online	Netflix, Hulu, Film & TV shows on YouTube, etc.
	New Media "Stations"	Pandora, PlayList, Original media on YouTube, etc.
Commerce		retail shopping, amazon.com, etc.
Info Seeking		google, bing, ask.com, etc.

collaboration.

Episodes of friendship-driven SNS were primarily visits to Facebook, with 68 episodes coded. Episode content with the first characteristic of actions codes described acts of managing profiles and privacy settings, updating relationships statuses and biographical information, and changing an avatar image. Coding of content with the second characteristic were acts of interaction with others: written messages, texting, or vocal conversations, and through shared images. Efforts were also made to assess and code the social relationship between participants in social interactions, and content of written messages was coded.

The episodes of interest-driven engagement were significantly fewer than friendship-driven (30 episodes.) There was less activity to be coded within these episodes, too; the result was that less detailed coding emerged for the actions. Participants were apparently not very interested in the interest-driven segment of the Internet.

Collaboration-driven episodes were almost exclusively checking email (46 episodes). The discussion chapter looks at the role of email for youth participants in some depth, but this channel of communication was used primarily to communicate with adults outside social networks such as teachers, and for online identification. The interactions were defined as social because they were direct interactions with others, but the interaction was of a very distinct and confined sort that did not overlap with the first two genres.

Non-SNS genres. For web sites that did not represent participatory media activities, non-SNS "genre" definitions were created. I extended Ito's notion of genres of

participation to include “genres of nonparticipation,” for the sake of clarity when coding episodes. These nonparticipatory type of episodes involved interactive web sites, but the activities represented practices reminiscent of the traditional consumption of media, such as television, books, and so on. Practices in these genres, then, tended to resemble media consumption that has long been the purview of media studies and research prior to the emergence of Internet-based activities in contemporary society.

Forty-two episodes were coded as visits to entertainment media. The activities closely resembled traditional media consumption, but distributed online, so included video media: movie rentals (netflix.com) and television shows (hulu.com); music media similar to radio (pandora.com, playlist.com), and nonnetworked gaming sites.

Commercial site visits accounted for 41 episodes, but Allie accounted for almost all of this content (39). She had the habit of navigating through a site, adding and deleting items from her “shopping cart,” but never purchasing anything. Sonya visited a teen magazine site, although her goal was to play a game on the site.

Information seeking episodes (70) contained acts accessing a web site primarily through a search engine. Information episodes represent a broad spectrum of activities: Allie visited a Spanish translation site and looked for books from her school’s summer reading list; Amy googled the office web site in which she was about to intern; Jake never typed a URL, but always searched for a site (typing “facebook” in the search queue); and Sonya accounted for half the information episodes (33) because she was doing research for a summer camp project.

Table 4 summarizes the attributes of cases by number of episodes per case and frequency of episodes in each genre.

Table 4: Case and Episode Attribute Summary

			SNS			Non-SNS				
Pseudonym	Cases	Epds	Fri	Int	Col	E-G	E-T	E-N	Com	Inf
Allie	12	36	11	0	8	0	0	5	9	4
Amy	17	21	13	0	5	0	0	0	0	3
Ann	3	7	5	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Blake	3	4	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Bonnie	1	3	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0
Jake	15	35	2	1	2	7	4	4	0	15
Luke	6	15	6	0	0	0	3	2	0	4
Sarah	23	28	13	0	2	0	0	10	0	3
Sonya	19	34	10	6	3	2	0	1	1	11
Tina	1	4	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	1
Tom	6	15	6	1	3	0	0	1	0	4
Coded:	106	202	70	10	25	9	9	24	10	46

Key:

SNS sites

Fri	Friendship-driven sites
Int	Interest-driven sites
Col	Collaboration-driven sites

Non-SNS sites

E-G	Nonnetworked gaming
E-T	Traditional media online
E-N	New media online
Com	Commercial sites
Inf	Information sites

Summary of use events results. To summarize, episodes were coded by genre, time/day, and duration. Duration is summarized by genre in Table 5.

Table 6 provides a detailed look of episodes by case, including the sites visited in each episode and sorted by genre. Table 6 begins with the key for coding episodes, the key to the sites visited, and the frequency of visits to each. Some sites are grouped as miscellaneous sites of a type, usually when they were only visited once and the participant did not stay long. Appendix B breaks out the duration of each specific episode, as well as the order in which the episodes occurred in each case. The results of this layer of episode coding suggested that practices were narrowly defined along these boundaries. As already noted, of the 202 episodes coded, Facebook dominated in the friendship-driven genre, with 68 episodes of engagement by participants. MySpace, the

Table 5: Episode Duration Summary

	SNS			Non-SNS				
Durations	Fri	Int	Col	E-G	E-T	E-N	Com	Inf
Time on Task (Minutes)								
Minimum	0.1	0.19	1.86	0.18	1.09	0.1	1.03	0.17
Maximum	85.55	46.12	60.12	34.28	65.92	47.49	63.03	29.96
Mean	13.32	10.12	13.99	11.29	26.9	9.82	22.39	4.74
Standard Dev.	16.48	10.83	19.78	10.28	20.43	12.16	23.43	6.63
# Episodes	69	6	22	11	11	17	11	30

Key:

SNS sites		**Non-SNS sites**	
Fri	Friendship-driven sites	E-G	Nonnetworked Gaming
Int	Interest-driven sites	E-T	Traditional Media online
Col	Collaboration-driven sites	E-N	New Media online
		Com	Commercial sites
		Inf	Information sites

Table 6: Case and Episode Attribute Details

Sites Visited:

#	Key	URL			
2	AZ	Amazon.com	2	MS	MySpace.com
15	BI	Bing.com (all Luke)	3	NF	Netflix.com
1	BL	Blog Site	1	PA	Pandora.com
23	EM	E-Mail	5	PL	Playlist.com
5	ES	Espn.go.com	5	Sch	School Info Site
3	F21	Forever21.com	1	SK	Skype.com (download)
68	FB	Facebook.com	1	SV	Seventeen.com
2	FJ	Funnyjunk.com	1	SVEA	Editor's Asst. (games.seventeen.com)
4	FS	Formspring.com	3	TH	Threadless.com
8	GO	Google.com	1	TW	Twitter.com
9	GO/MI	Google for misc. info	2	WI	Wikipedia.org
4	HU	Hulu.com	1	XB	Xbox.com
3	MI	Misc. Info site	3	YA	Answers.Yahoo.com
8	MG	Misc. Game site	18	YT	Youtube.com

Episode Attribute Key:

SNS sites	
Fri	Friendship-driven sites
Int	Interest-driven sites
Col	Collaboration-driven sites

Non-SNS sites	
E-G	Nonnetworked Gaming
E-T	Traditional Media online
E-N	New Media online
Com	Commercial sites
Inf	Information sites

Complete definitions of genres in Table 3

Table 6: (continued)

Case & Episode Attributes				**1 - SNS**			**2 - Non-SNS**					**Duration**
Case	D	Start Time	Epds	Fri	Int	Col	E-G	E-T	E-N	Com	Inf	Mins
allie-0003	W	10:05 PM	4	FB		EM			PL		GO/MI	31.6
allie-0004	TR	8:12 AM	4	FB		EM			YT		Sch	77.9
allie-0005		1:42 PM	2	FB		EM						6.41
allie-0006		3:06 PM	2	FB		EM						23.57
allie-0008		6:55 PM	1							TH		1.41
allie-0009		6:57 PM	2	FB						TH		3.96
allie-0010	F	2:49 PM	4	FB		EM				TH	GO/MI	20.07
allie-0011	M	4:05 PM	4	FB		EM			PL	F21		85.55
allie-0012		7:46 PM	2	FB						AZ		19.06
allie-0013		8:54 PM	2	FB						AZ		28.95
allie-0014	T	12:56 PM	5	FB		EM			PL	F21	SD	43.89
allie-0015		9:17 PM	4	FB		EM			PL	F21		60.98
allie episodes total:			**36**	11	0	8	0	0	5	9	4	403.35
amy-0000	T	1:21 PM	2	FB							Sch	4.72
amy-0001		3:51 PM	1	FB								1.26
amy-0002		4:08 PM	1			EM						1.05
amy-0003		4:24 PM	2	FB		EM						1.42
amy-0004		4:44 PM	2	FB		EM						7.44
amy-0005		5:49 PM	1	FB								2.9
amy-0006		9:26 PM	1	FB								0.52
amy-0007		9:33 PM	1	FB								5.83
amy-0008	W	9:09 AM	1	FB								5.38
amy-0009		9:15 AM	1								GO/MI	0.81
amy-0010		2:13 PM	1	FB								4.21
amy-0011		6:46 PM	2	FB							GO/MI	2.42
amy-0012		6:59 PM	1			EM						2.08
amy-0013	TR	8:23 AM	1			EM						1.36
amy-0014		4:15 PM	1	FB								6.97
amy-0015		6:44 PM	1	FB								5.42
amy-0016	Su	8:38 AM	1	FB								4.96
amy episodes total:			**21**	13	0	5	0	0	0	0	3	58.75
ann-0003	Sa	7:43 PM	1	FB								1.72
ann-0004	W	1:41 PM	2	FB/MS								18.55
ann-0005	F	11:37 PM	4	FB/MS	FS	WI						13.42
ann episodes total:			**7**	5	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	33.69
blake-0001	Su	10:07 PM	1	FB								3
blake-0002		10:21 PM	2	FB					YT			11.26
blake-0003		10:26 PM	1								OV	2.61
blake episodes total:			**4**	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	16.87
bonnie-0001	Su	1:31 PM	3	FB		EM		YT				14.33
bonnie episodes total:			**3**	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	14.33
jake-0013	T	7:32 PM	2				MG				BI	5.34
jake-0014		7:38 PM	4	FB		EM	MG				BI	43.17
jake-0015		8:23 PM	1				MG				BI	19.14
jake-0017		9:48 PM	4		XB	EM			FJ		BI	19.09
jake-0018		10:39 PM	3						FJ/YT		BI	7.5
jake-0019		11:03 PM	2				MG				BI	34.57
jake-0020	W	12:02 PM	2	FB							BI	27
jake-0021		3:44 PM	2						YT		BI	12.51
jake-0022		4:55 PM	3					NF/HU			BI	4.56
jake-0023		7:15 PM	2					NF			BI	12.89

Table 6: (continued)

Case	D	Start Time	Epds	Fri	Int	Col	E-G	E-T	E-N	Com	Inf	Mins
jake-0023a	TR	9:58 PM	2					NF			BI	23.91
jake-0024	W	2:08 PM	2						YT		BI	21.98
jake-0025		2:41 PM	2				MG				BI	21.23
jake-0026	TR	9:13 PM	2				MG				BI	9.86
jake-0028	F	7:06 PM	2				MG				BI	6.48
jake episodes total:			**35**	2	1	2	7	4	4	0	15	269.23
luke-0002	W	5:39 AM	2	FB							ES	4.1
luke-0003		2:59 PM	2	FB							ES	20.9
luke-0004		8:23 PM	3	FB					YT		ES	17.9
luke-0005	F	8:48 PM	4	FB				HU	YT		ES	32.95
luke-0006	Sa	6:34 PM	2	FB				HU				27.03
luke-0007		9:08 PM	2	FB				HU				47.42
luke episodes total:			**15**	6	0	0	0	3	2	0	4	150.3
sarah-0001	W	8:18 PM	2	FB					YT			36.31
sarah-0002		9:59 PM	2	FB		EM						16.41
sarah-0003		10:43 PM	1								MI	5.11
sarah-0004	TR	7:19 AM	2	FB					YT			13.28
sarah-0005		12:58 PM	2			EM					Sch	4.73
sarah-0006		2:19 PM	2	FB					YT			28.03
~~sarah-0007~~		2:55 PM	0									1.39
~~sarah-0008~~		2:58 PM	0									0.1
~~sarah-0009~~		3:56 PM	0									0.18
sarah-0010		4:02 PM	1	FB								1.56
~~sarah-0011~~		4:04 PM	0									0.5
sarah-0012		6:04 PM	1	FB								5.59
sarah-0013	F	1:03 PM	2	FB					YT			7.91
sarah-0014		1:50 PM	2	FB					YT			3.79
~~sarah-0015~~		3:42 PM	0									0.19
sarah-0016		4:13 PM	1	FB								1.02
sarah-0017		5:51 PM	1								GO	1.46
~~sarah-0018~~	M	2:37 PM	0									0.94
sarah-0019		5:11 PM	2	FB					YT			2.49
sarah-0020		9:26 PM	1						YT			1.9
sarah-0021		9:33 PM	2	FB					YT			6.65
sarah-0022		10:53 PM	2	FB					YT			4.94
sarah-0023	T	6:47 AM	2	FB					YT			2.62
sarah episodes total:			**28**	13	0	2	0	0	10	0	3	147.1
sonya-0000	W	8:56 PM	1	FB								3.87
sonya-0001		9:05 PM	2	FB							GO	14.36
sonya-0002	TR	3:18 PM	2	FB							GO/MI	22.9
sonya-0003		3:45 PM	2				MG				GO	0.83
sonya-0004		3:50 PM	1	FB								4.82
sonya-0005		6:56 PM	3	FB	FS						GO	10.94
sonya-0006		8:38 PM	2	FB							GO	13.24
sonya-0007	F	6:25 PM	2		YA						GO	1.62
sonya-0008		7:12 PM	1								GO	2.11
sonya-0009		7:19 PM	1			EM						3.35
sonya-0010		7:27 PM	1			EM						8.5
sonya-0011		7:43 PM	3		YA	WI					GO/MI	7.71
sonya-0012	Sa	10:07 AM	2	FB	FS							3.51
sonya-0013		10:25 AM	1								GO/MI	0.76
sonya-0014		10:27 PM	1								GO/MI	1.4

Table 6: (continued)

				SNS			Non-SNS					
Case	D	Start Time	Epds	Fri	Int	Col	E-G	E-T	E-N	Com	Inf	Mins
sonya-0015		10:31 AM	1								GO/MI	0.87
sonya-0016		10:34 AM	1	FB								3.51
sonya-0017		10:40 AM	3	FB	YA				PA			67.32
sonya-0018		12:20 PM	4	FB	BL		SVEA			SV		18.52
sonya episodes total:			**34**	10	6	3	2	0	1	1	11	190.14
tina-0002	F	6:42 PM	4	FB	FS			PL			SK	26.16
tina episodes total:			**4**	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	26.16
tom-0003	W	4:29 PM	3	FB		EM					GO	30.12
tom-0004	Sa	5:00 PM	1	FB								2.47
tom-0007		11:40 PM	4	FB	TW						Sch/MI	26.31
tom-0008	Su	11:41 PM	4	FB		EM			ES		Sch	38.83
tom-0009	T	9:41 PM	2	FB		EM						15.26
tom-0010		10:47 PM	1	FB								1.77
tom episodes total:			**15**	6	1	3	0	0	1	0	4	114.76
total episodes by type:			202	70	10	25	9	9	24	10	46	1424.7

only other SNS in this genre, was visited twice. In the other genres, the use of a particular web site within a genre remained consistent within individual practices of each participant, but not always across participants. In other words, each participant had his or her favorite site within a genre, and did not try to access others. The young people in this study did not often experiment or explore beyond that site, suggested that the practices evolve around one site that fits their needs within a genre.

Nonymous and Anonymous Conceptual Groups

Episodes largely defined the actions within them, because they bore the first characteristic of activities discussed above: participants' acts of SNS and non-SNS engagement *with* the technologies of digital communication, but without direct interaction with others. Such action codes were further broken down into two distinct conceptual groups: "anonymous" and "nonymous" codes (i.e., not ''anonymous" by the definitions provided next). Coding of actions emerged along this divide based on how site architectures related to the construction and maintenance of identity online.

The *nonymous*, or "perpetual identity" (Zhao et al., 2008) group included the SNS Facebook and MySpace, which require a verifiable identity for participation, so are sites with the express purpose of (re)constructing one's offline self in mediated environments. One's identity in these sites is strongly associated with offline social relationships and the corporeal body itself. Given the dominance of Facebook and the centrality of community membership, identity construction, and self-presentation in peer communities constructed by participants in Facebook, versus other online activities, these were the first two conceptual groups of codes developed.

Therefore, this conceptual group contains descriptive codes isolating individual acts of navigating the interface and site architectures for the purpose of managing online presence in friendship-driven social media networks. Codes describe such practices as navigating between pages, changing preference and privacy settings, or reading news and comments, but without interacting such as posting a comment or replying.

The *anonymous* conceptual group is comprised of codes that describe practices relating to Interest-driven and Collaboration genres of participation in SNS, and all Non-SNS visited by study participants. In conceptualizing the engagement by study participants with SNS and Non-SNS sites, the second conceptual group was named *anonymous* as a convenient opposing term, but is not meant to suggest that anonymity is necessarily a prerequisite to participation.

Anonymous environments are defined here by two broad characteristics: 1) participants are offered a choice of whether to remain anonymous or not, and 2) creating an online identity, or authenticating it, is usually not prerequisite for participation. Therefore, in sites categorized as *anonymous* environments, offline identity and self-presentation play a less central role in the engagement, and are therefore more easily disguised or left undisclosed. Communities are generally based on personal interests, not offline social ties. In *anonymous* sites, offline social ties and the offline body can be detached from the online representation of self, allowing identity to be contested and ambiguous. Non-SNS included code groups for Entertainment and Information Seeking activities online.

Nonymous SNS codes. In the friendship-driven genre of episodes (70), Facebook was essentially the only site represented (68 episodes), so the codes relate exclusively to

interacting with the Facebook architecture, but an effort was made to keep them general enough to apply to other friendship-driven sites in future research and/or as they emerge on the social media landscape. There were codes for managing profiles (FPro/61), although most were in Tom's cases. He updated his profile and privacy settings (FPri) during the study, but reported that he was only doing so because he thought I would like to see that. Examples of specific codes include updating relationships statuses (FPro-Re/6) and biographical information (FPro-Ab/12). Tom, Sonya, and Allie updated their avatar image (FPro-Av/7).

Most common were coded acts of following Friends (FF/519) without actually interacting with them, which included checking for Friend requests (FF-RQ/4), checking for notifications and direct messages (FF-Not/87), reading/scanning FB news (FF-Ne/146), visiting one's own profile page (FF-Pr/42) or someone else's profile page (FF-Pr/65), using Facebook's search feature (FF-IS/11), and so on.

Anonymous SNS codes. The episodes of interest-driven engagement (INT/36 episode) were significantly lower, so detailed coding did not emerge for those acts. Participants were apparently uninterested in this segment of the Internet. Coded acts include visits to sites such as formspring.com (INT-Frm/9), answers.yahoo.com (INT-YA/2), sports info sites (INT-Sp/6), blog sites (INT-Bg/3), and microblog sites such as Twitter (INT-MBg-Tw/6).

Collaboration-driven (COL) site visits were almost exclusively email (COL-EM) with 64 acts of checking, responding, etc. coded. The discussion chapter looks at the role of email for youth participants in some depth, but this channel of communication was used primarily to communicate with adults outside social networks such as teachers, and

for online identification. Most online accounts require a valid email address, which must be verified. However, an email address can be verified, but not necessarily the offline corporeal identity of the account holder, which can remain hidden from other participants.

Wikipedia (COL-Wi/2) and crowdsourcing (COL-CS/6) were considered collaborative sites. Sonya accounted for both visits to Wikipedia, but expressed some concern to be seen doing so: (Sonya-0002) *"here Wikipedia. I don't know, like everyone is always like, don't trust [Wikipedia]."* Presumably, this qualification in the report was indoctrinated into her at school. The only site visited that qualified as crowdsourcing, an integral component of Jenkins's participatory media culture, was Threadless.com: a shirt company that is "a community-based company that prints awesome designs created and chosen by you!"[1]. All six visits were in Allie's cases.

Non-SNS codes. These codes described actions in non-SNS episodes, which included Entertainment Media (E/263), Commercial Sites (COM/41), and Information Seeking (INF/70). These actions were coded because they represent an area of youth practices, but little emerged through interpretations of them. Participants went to YouTube for example, started a video, watched it, and then moved on. In the case of music media, music was usually listened to like a radio, but often in the background of other on and offline activities.

Entertainment media were accessed frequently. The actions closely resembled traditional media consumption but distributed online, so included sites for video media (E-V): movie rentals (netflix.com) and television shows (hulu.com); music media (E-M)

[1] Retrieved from the home page of http://www.threadless.com on 03/13/2011.

similar to radio stations (pandora.com, playlist.com), and nonnetworked gaming sites (E-G).

Commercial sites were not commonly accessed. Of the 41 coded, Allie accounted for 39. She had the habit of navigating through a site, adding and deleting items from her "shopping cart," but never purchasing anything. Sonya visited a teen magazine site, which accounted for the other two coded acts, although her goal was to play a game on the site.

Information sites contained information sought by the participants, and they either typed in the URL, or found the site through a search engine. Information sites represent a broad spectrum of acts: Allie visited a Spanish translation site and looked for books from her school's summer reading list; Amy googled the office she was about to start work in as a intern; Jake never typed a URL, but always searched for a site (typing "facebook" in the search queue); and Sonya accounted for half the INF coded acts (33), because she was doing some research for a summer project but also visited formspring.com and answer.yahoo.com for help with personal issues (which is discussed in depth in the next chapter.)

Category 2: Interactions with Other

This category contains both descriptive and interpretive codes relating to the study participants' tangible interactions *with* other in online environments *through* the technological interfaces, in both *nonymous* and *anonymous* online environments, and includes four closely interrelated conceptual groups: Voice and Textual Engagement (OF, CL, TX), Affiliations (AF) with other, Visual Engagement (VI) with shared images, and Message Content (MC). An interrelationship found between the first two conceptual

groups in this category is one primary reason these groups were organized together in this category.

The Voice and Textual Engagement group contains the codes for direct social interactions with other. These interactions tended to range from real-time and synchronous, to near real-time but asynchronous. The code group originally was used to define online textual interactions only, but later expanded to include both online and offline modes of communication in proximity to the study laptop. The participants moved seamlessly between on- and offline socializing, and even socialized with Facebook Friends while friends were in the room with them. Separation of on- and offline activities seemed arbitrary because the participants appeared to make little distinction themselves. Offline Engagement (OF) included talking with friends, family members, or on a landline telephone during an episode and within the range of the study laptop. Cellular Engagement (CL) was voice or texting on a mobile device, and Textual Engagement (TX) were codes for the creation of online UGC through features such as chat sessions, comments, status updates, replies, "pokes," "likes," and so on.

The Affiliations (AF) group (which came to be understood as "social ties," and is discussed in the next chapter) is an interpretive group of codes because participants rarely reported on their relationship to others in interactions. Affiliation with the participant was surmised through interpretations based on age, gender, communication topics (school, mutual friends, etc.), language use in message content (teen talk), and whatever other clues could be found.

The third conceptual group in this category was coded as Visual Engagement (VI), for engagement with visual media, and refers here to *nonymous* modes of

interaction only. It is a passive mode of interaction with other, perhaps because of the implicit understanding that images are documentation of past events, but clearly, an important feature based on actions and reports. Exploration of visual media was a common activity in all the practices observed, but Facebook albums, avatars, etc. presented some unique practices because of the *nonymous* environment in which the visual media circulate.

The fourth conceptual group, Message Content (MC), is content analysis coding of textual messages created by the study participant or others with whom (s)he engaged online during the study. Oral reports often addressed message content (participants reading out loud or commenting on message content), so this group of codes was used quite often in tandem with other groups and categories.

Category 3: Oral Reports

This code category emerged from the results of coding oral reports. Oral report coding emerged organically, especially compared to action coding. This category represents a sharp break from the action categories because it contains codes for understanding both categories of actions above: actions of engagement with technology and interaction with other through technology. As discussed in the previous chapter, codes in this category go further to make the distinction between reports of actions (VRA) and reports that represented thought structures that were tangential or unrelated to the actions (VR). Coding in the VR grouping was further broken down into "topical groups" as relationships between coded reports emerged. In future research, this category of codes would undoubtedly continue to evolve, as it reflects the meanings in the oral reports, and may be specific to this cohort of study participants.

Most participants seemed to make conscious efforts to provide reported data that they thought would bring useful insights into the "teenage brain," as Ann called it. For example, Tom spent time updating his profile settings, while reporting that he felt that I, as researcher, would probably find that activity useful to observe. As noted, Sarah turned off *Morae* recording at times while watching YouTube videos, reporting that I would probably find it boring and besides, she didn't have anything interesting to say.

Allie was an anomaly. Her reports were apparently few, which she confirmed when asked about her reporting habits. This allowed her data to remain relevant despite no sound recording. At the same time, Allie spent the most time online of any participant and used the Internet in the most diverse ways. She seemed to completely forget the camera (as well as giving oral reports apparently) so the practices she displayed might be closest to unbiased everyday practices, rather than the other participants who were more conscious of the camera. Despite Allie's apparent ambivalence toward the camera, her actions occasionally suggested she had not forgotten the camera. She often used the laptop in her bedroom, and would avert the screen by turning it away from her, and then back again after a few moments, presumably for some privacy.

Each participant had her/his own *style* of reporting, perhaps because talking out loud about one's actions does not come naturally for most. For example, Tina, Sonya, and Sarah often began sessions with a bright *"Hello,"* apparently acknowledging the presence of the microphone and camera, but after that, they seemed comfortable and conscientious about verbalizing their thoughts and feelings. Their reports were like an ongoing, albeit one-sided, conversation. Tina seemed to find reporting almost therapeutic, *"I like this computer. It's kind of fun to talk to..."* whereas Jake found it difficult, *"I also feel like an*

idiot talking to a camera." On the other hand, Luke, Tom, and Sonya adopted an almost tour-guide style of oral reporting, talking at length about the kinds of activities they enjoy on-line, when they like to access online media, what other "kids" do, and even at times demonstrating for the camera (me) how things work in Facebook, etc., while reporting they thought I should see it or would like it.

When and what participants chose to report, in relation to the specific activities on which they reported, was instructional to an extent. I was initially concerned about a lack of structure in the reporting because ESM usually utilizes specific devices or actions to prod for a report. Instead, I found that because participants were verbalizing what was on their mind at that moment, the reports probably bore a correlation as to the importance of the activity or event to the reporting participant so represented their cognitive priorities while participating in a mediated experience. Many activities and events also went unreported, but the silences had informational value to some extent. In other words, the participant seemed to choose the priorities for what was reported, rather than random moments of cognitive thinking being documented. This is probably the reason for the diversity of reporting styles and content.

VR Topical Groups

Oral reports codes were formed into eight topical groups with multiple related codes in each group, and six isolated codes that I deemed needed no further segmentation.

Purpose of action (VR-P). A sticky note on the desktop of the laptops asked four questions in order to remind participants to report: Where are you? Why are you going online now? What are you thinking? Why are you doing these things? Three subgroups of

reports codes emerged for the "purpose for action," presumably in response to these questions:

- ambiguous, with no specific purpose for going online
- to access online media content for a general purpose
- to access online media content for specific information or answer to a question

Significant here is that the highest number of coded responses in the ambiguous purpose of action was using terms like "bored" or "boredom" (VR-P-B). Participants reported this purpose 50 times, as with Sarah (0014), *"I'm bored. I'm going to Facebook."* The other two codes in the ambiguous purpose subgroup were for "entertainment" and to "waste time." These are arguably closely related reasons because each is either the cause or the solution for boredom, so adding them together makes 72 coded responses in this subgroup, making it the single largest pattern of an individual code in this category.

The second most used code was: "checking in/seeing what's happening" (42), which belonged to the second subgroup. The total of all codes in this subgroup was 74 participant reports on a specific goal for going online, but spread over six diverse reasons. One code, (VR-P-Stlk) for that act of being "stalkery," originated in a report from Amy (0013) where she opened Facebook with a friend next to her, and said, *"Just want to show her what she looks like...kinda stalkery, but...(smiles)."* The code count in reports is low (6), but combined with related action codes from Categories 1 and 2, a thematic code category of online stalking emerged and is discussed below.

The third subgroup of purpose codes was used 44 times, when participants reported the specific purpose of seeking a particular piece of information, picture, and

answer. Of these, “seek specific item of info” was used 21 times, although 13 were by Sonya alone, who was doing some research and accessed yahoo.answer.com and other similar sites several times.

Self/Identity interactions with connections/community (VR-S). This topic group of codes was comprised of reports with references to online interactions with the Facebook interface itself. The most reported activity was regarding Facebook’s *notification* feature (VR-S-Not/24). There were 56 reports total (VR+VRA) pertaining specifically to receiving FB notifications, direct messages, and friend requests that were spread across all participants. All three of these types of notifications are in the same location in the FB interface. They are coded together here because the participants did not seem to make a distinction between the three in the reports and usually referred to all as simply “notifications.”

There were 10 other codes in this topic grouping, but none were as significant in terms of patterns and tended to be specific to particular participants rather than generalized across many of the participants.

Defining social relationship of self to other (VR-Fr). In this topic group are codes pertaining to comments by participants describing their relationship to their Friends. This was a small topic, only 28 reports. A notable result was that 21 represented negative attitudes toward other. Tina (0002) had this to say of a Friend, *“I don't really like her that much. Kind of stuck up. Thinks she's really cool.”* This topic group contributes to the notion that social media challenge and possibly redefine what traditionally constitutes a *friend* and links to the larger notion of a relationship between social ties and social media.

Describing other online (VR-Df). This group was used when participants reported about their Friends' actions and characteristics, rather than her/his social relationship with them. Codes from this topic were used 30 times. Reporting on romantic involvements of a Friend (VR-Df-Re) was the most frequently noted, with 14 coded reports. Sarah (0001) provided an example: *"So there's this girl, (XX), at our school. She just got back into a relationship with her ooold boyfriend" (as she sees a post about a relationship change in Facebook news).*

Report on looking at photos (VR-VI). This is a group for codes regarding comments about images being engaged. When the reports related directly to the Visual Engagement (VI) category below, it was coded by adding the VRA designation to the appropriate VI code for the act, as a report of the action on-screen (30). For example, Amy (0007) reported, *"Looking at more pictures now. Random people."* This was coded VRA-VI-V-O, which describes a report (VRA) of an act of visual engagement (VI) with an image (V) of other (O).

Five unique codes in this topic group for reports went beyond simple reporting of an act: participants reported on their thoughts/feelings regarding an image they were viewing. Engaging images was a very common occurrence (130 acts of engagement with a photo album of photographs of self and/or other), but the participants provided relatively few reports on the acts (25). In future research, more focus on visual media should be applied because social media appear to be increasingly visual in nature, yet the participants did not seem to be willing or able to articulate their thoughts about images beyond how people look, etc.

An example of a report in this topic (VR-VI-Phy, discussing physical characteristics) was Sarah (0012) noting of a photograph, *"Gee, that guy's ugly."* Sonya (0006) reported on an avatar of a Friend's new boyfriend, *"Whoa, he's not very attractive. Why does she...this girl, (XX), dates all the bad asses...its funny. Kind of like a pattern. Maybe it's her type."* This report was also cross-coded with another code (VR-Df-Re, describing other online: romantic relationships), and is an example of how reports could be connected topic groups. Further, these two codes became part of the emerging thematic pattern of online stalking (TH-Stlk).

Report on message content/info (VR-MC). Codes in this topic group were used when a participant reported on the content of a textual message. Similar to the above topic area, reports often related directly to the Message Content (MC) group. The convention of adding VRA- was used when participants read the content of a message out loud rather than reporting on the meaning of the message. Where a report was a comment that went beyond the content of the message, four codes emerged, but no patterns were noted.

Computer interaction (VR-Cp). There were 66 coded acts of participants' reports pertaining to interaction with the laptop itself. The pattern to emerge was 42 reports that resembled talking to the laptop directly as if it were a person (VR-Cp-SE.) Sarah (0006) was typical of this coded report, *"Hi! Come to play on Facebook some more today."*

The second highest number (18) was expressing frustration or impatience with the computer due to problems or slow connections.

Privacy issues online (VR-Pr). In this topic group, six codes were developed and applied 23 times to isolate reports that pertained to what I deemed as topics of personal

security and/or privacy. Reporting on how and why they accept or decline Friends, thus how they control their constructed community, was coded nine times. An example is Amy (0016) who reported, upon seeing a Friend request, *"I don't really know this girl so I am going to check out her profile."* Thirteen (13) codes total were assigned to reports pertaining to SNS content as too open/personal (2), uncontrollable aspects online (5), parental involvement/control (4), and adult involvement/control (teachers, etc.) (2).

By themselves, these reports did not constitute any significant patterns, but this group of report codes was combined with related codes regarding security and privacy online in other categories, which did lead to the pattern of contentiousness towards personal privacy and security (PATT-Pr), which is a component of the thematic result, TH-C/P (issues of control and privacy.)

Category 4: Strategies

This category's codes identify actions that demonstrated evidence of strategies and technical knowledge exhibited by participants when interacting and navigating the architecture and mediated environments of the computer and the Internet. The computer is the window on the Internet, so the strategies and technical knowledge of both are often interrelated. Actions tended to represent unique or novel ways of using the technology to accomplish tasks, ways probably unintended by the designers of the site architecture. This was a highly interpretive category because the definition of unique or novel is based primarily on my years of experience teaching computer technology.

Not many examples of generalizable strategies were observed in this study, and the only pattern to emerge confirms existing understandings of youth practices that contributes to the research: PATT-Mu, multitasking between sites and media devices

(TV, mobile phone, etc.). Such acts were coded 105 times. An example was Allie, who would open IE and log into Facebook. While that was loading, she would open a new tab and log into her e-mail account. She opened four tabs to various sites before she went back to Facebook, while also responding to text messages on her mobile device.

Ninety-five acts of what I interpreted as advanced technical literacy were coded, which included actions such as Sarah turning off *Morae* (without training to do so) when she did not feel like reporting. No patterns emerged in this category except to note that strategies and literacy were as diverse as the participants themselves. This is a category worth exploring further in future research because it relates to issues of "digital kids" and competence with the digital technology itself, and the self-taught learning and literacy aspects of youth media culture.

Emerging Code and Thematic Patterns

The code and thematic patterns that emerged from axial coding between categories often involved codes and code groups from more than one category, especially when coding across the category of oral reports and categories relating to the participants' actions. In such instances, links between the research objectives and summary findings were derived through a "general inductive approach," a strategy often used in qualitative data analysis (Bryman & Burgess, 1995; Dey, 1993) in order to "develop [a] model or theory about the underlying structure of experiences or processes which are evident in the raw data" (Thomas, 2006, p. 237).

No significant patterns emerged based on age, gender, or race, perhaps because of the small sample in a closely related social community. There may also be a certain bias effect in these attributes of participants because all come from middle to upper-class

families in the Uptown section of New Orleans, and who had access to computers and wireless Internet in their homes prior to the study.

Ten code patterns and themes emerged in theoretical axial coding, which are described here, and discussed in the next chapter. *Code patterns* that emerged were organized around reoccurring codes in the data and generally represent results from descriptive coding. *Thematic patterns* represent broader themes and occurrences that emerge from interpretation of data. The patterns and themes are introduced here by the code used in the data, and my shorthand note to guide its use.

PATT-Mu: Multitaking across and within Sites and Devices

This pattern references examples of multitasking on the laptop by accessing multiple web sites simultaneously, and/or accessing multiple devices. This is no surprise. Quantitative research has already found that young people consume more media in their daily lives than ever before, but are not spending more time doing it (Roberts et al., 2005). There are a significant number of examples of this throughout the study: accessing multiple windows (episodes) at once (ST-Mu-Sts/44) and multiple media devices (ST-Mu-Mdv/33). The pattern of multitasking while online also includes watching TV and/or talking to family/friends, texting and talking on cells, and having multiple windows open in IE in order to access multiple *nonymous* and *anonymous* sites and switching between them. Allie, Sarah, and Sonya often began a session by opening two to three tabs in IE, access a site in one, move to the next tab while the previous site opens, open a new site, and then go back to the first. Being a Mac user, Luke became frustrated at one point when he could not immediately figure out how to add a new tab in Windows IE.

PATT-DL: Inability to Differentiate Weak and Strong Friendships

This pattern originally described the observations that Friends in Facebook include people that the study participants reportedly disliked or did not know. As Amy (0007) reported of a Friend request, *"I guess I'll confirm it. I went to 8th, well, 6th, 7th, and 8th grade with him. I never really talked to him. I guess I'll accept if he wants to be my Friend."*

Later in the analysis, this expanded to encompass examples of the inability to differentiate weak and strong friendships, something noticeably missing in the privacy functions of social media sites. This discussion is central to the next chapter. Again, Amy (0007) provides this report: *"You see I have two "Friends lists"...I have a no list and a yes list... the no list I put people who are annoying or like I don't feel like talking to."* At the time of this study, the only lists to categorize Friends were based on availability online for the chat feature.

PATT-Pr: Security Concerns, More Interested than We Give Credit

This pattern code was derived from specific acts coded across several categories: for example, accept (into network) or decline friendship requests (FF-A, FF-D), strategies for protecting passwords, etc. (ST-Lt-Pr), message content (MC-Pri, privacy), and acts of deliberate deception/manipulation (De).

The pattern suggested that young people in this study were more concerned about security issues and privacy than seems to be popularly assumed. Participants were noticeably concerned about protecting their passwords (for example by asking me if I would be recording them,) electing not to let the study computer save passwords for

them, and giving careful consideration to whether to add people as Friends or not and the potential consequences of the decision.

PATT-SE: Computer as Social Entity

The code VR-Cp-SE (treat computer as social entity,) combined with VR-RL (Real Life issues) evolved into the pattern code of treating the computer as social entity. VR-RL was an ungrouped code that referred to reports that had nothing to do with the online activities, like Luke talking about why he liked certain sports, or Amy reporting she was a little excited because it was her first day at a new job, and how she got the job. The VR-RL code was applied 78 times in reports, so the young people apparently were very willing to discuss life issues with others, even the imagined researcher behind the camera.

The two code patterns (*PATT-DL & PATT-Pr)* were later incorporated in a thematic pattern of "Control & Privacy" (TH-C/P) described next.

TH-C/P: Control and Privacy (of the Flow of Info)

This code theme centers on the patterns describing how young people seem to have a different idea of what is and is not public information. There is popular concern that traditional binaries of "public" and "private" are breaking down in on-line mediated spaces, but evidence here suggests that it is the definitions of public and private that are in flux, rather than the boundaries breaking down or disappearing. What is private in the end? The best definition is rather vague: private is everything that is not public. Young people appear to perceive privacy as a right to the control of personal information, not the type of information itself. Young people in this study proved to be aware of private information in networked publics, and personal security such as passwords, etc. They

voiced a desire for even greater control in these environments than is afforded by the Facebook privacy settings.

Examples of this theme included both reports and actions that demonstrated concern for the control of their information (VR-Pr-Ctl). Luke (0003) reported, *"These are all around, these groups where you, uh, you click on to see what happens. Really it's kind of a scam to get you to join their group. Then there's really nothing on the page."* While he does not say it specifically, he seems aware that joining these groups allowed someone to gain access to their personal Facebook information without returning anything of value.

Participants do not necessarily want to know too much information about others (VR-Pr-Op). Sonya (0005), reported: *"I get so worked up about people who are always, like, flaunting about losing their virginity in high school. That is not something to flaunt...maybe I just shouldn't say anything."*

Adults present particular challenges to young people on Facebook (VR-Pr-Adu.) Luke (0006) reported after accepting a Friend request, *"actually, I might undo that because I try to keep Friends on Facebook in my age group. She was my life science teacher 2 years ago."*

TH-Ph: New Narcissism in Social Economy

This pattern code originally represented an apparently high preference by study participants for viewing photo albums of others on Facebook, rather than socially interacting with them. The thematic code then evolved to represent a larger pattern. This theme code now closely relates to the "stalkery" idea, but in online pursuit of self. It refers to participants strolling through social media sites for images of or references to

themselves. One way this is accomplished in Facebook is a feature called "tagging," commonly used to identify people in an image. In the "Photos" page on Facebook, a viewing option is a dynamically generated album of "Photos of You," which is all the images in which the participant is tagged from across all Facebook communities. It was very common for some participants to troll for images of themselves, and in some cases, evaluate and even "untag" if a photo is not deemed "a good one." Amy (0015) provides an example of these practices, *"There are a lot of tags, seven photos of me. Let's see which ones I'm going to keep."*

The narcissism is meant as a positive, proactive activity. It describes the effort by participants to actively manage their online presence by culling through UGC content that is not consistent with their online identity they want to communicate. Many different participants can provide UGC and it can be important to young people to have some measure of control over what others post about them.

The next two categories represent the increase in possibilities for visual presence associated with social networking sites. Faster Internet connections are facilitating a move toward more visually oriented media content and preferences in SNS. Photography, film, and television have certainly played an historical role in privileging visual over textual media forms in popular entertainment, but visual media in SNS are now on the rise and perhaps accelerating this trend. Two thematic patterns emerged to describe this visual engagement: *TH-Stlk* and *TH-Ph.*

TH-Not: Notifications/DM/like = Popularity/cultural Capital

In the social economy of SNS like Facebook, notifications, direct messages, and the number of like/replies/comments one receives define successful engagement. Greater

numbers of responses equals levels of popularity, thus success. Ann's brief report is an indictor of this theme (0004): *"Oh, five notifications. Not bad."* Blake (0003) has the opposite problem, *"Again! Zero notifications. This really makes me upset."* The participants react to notifications as if they alone can hail one into existence online, to invoke Althusser.

Textual and visual UGS in SNS are the primary means for building identity and distributing cultural capital in online social networking. Looking for these signs of social successes—numbers of comments generated by a status update, what images are posted, what web sites and Facebook apps are shared, etc.—were a top priority for many of the participants in this study. The relevant codes that led to the emergence of this theme included FF-Not (checking notification in Facebook), VRA-FF-Not (reporting on notifications/messages/pokes), and VR-S-Not (talking about notifications), which combined were coded 136 times. Further, checking notification was usually the first act upon logging into Facebook.

TH-B: Boredom Primary Reported Reason for Going On-line

The first question on the desktop sticky note, intended to remind participants to report, asked, "Why are you going online?" In verbal reports, apparently in response to this prompt, the two top reasons given were 1) *"I'm bored,"* and 2*) "See what people are doing"* or *"See what's going on."* Number two was perhaps assumed, but number one presents a conundrum for analysis and what it may mean in terms of social media participation.

With all the options for entertainment and socializing available to the participants in this study, is boredom the dominant condition in youth culture?

Tom (0007): *So I'm at home right now and I'm going online to... just because I'm bored and maybe see what people are doing, maybe on Facebook.*

Luke (0021): *(I'm) thinking where to go in my boredness.*

Amy (0006): (is talking to her friend in the room, then says to camera) *The reason I go on Facebook so often is that I am bored to death.*

Sarah (0001): *I go on Facebook a lot when I'm bored, uh, when I want to go see what all my friends are doing and stuff.*

Amy is with a friend in her room, she is online, yet still claims to be bored, and "to death" even. The codes for the word "bored" and its variations were generated 72 times in reports on the reasons for going online or the feelings about being online, whereas the desire to see what was going on with their Friends online was the reported reason only 42 times, but also often in conjunction with boredom, as in Tom's (0009) report, *"I'm going online because I'm bored and watching TV. Going to find out what people are doing and update my status."*

Sarah's reasons for going online directly reflect these apparent priorities of 1) being bored, and 2) seeing what friends are doing, in that order. More indirectly, Sarah (0012) posted this status update: *"nuthin 2 doooooo,"* after busily looking through Facebook news and photos.

As quoted earlier, Sonya speculated on some of the other reasons why people spend time on Facebook:

Sonya (0001): *That's the hardest thing about being online. It's that you get so...for some reason people are like interested in other people*

lives instead of more of their own. So they want to kinda stay in them for a while.

To be fair, some participants did report occasionally that they enjoy Facebook, even after complaining of being bored.

Sonya (0002): *Its fun. I, like, like Facebook sometimes.*

Sonya (0000): *I like Facebook mostly because I can talk to my friends...*

Sarah (0012): *I'm going to go play with Facebook, of course. I'm, like, obsessive with Facebook.*

The positive responses were tepid, like liking Facebook "sometimes." Perhaps their enthusiasm was guarded because of the potential conflict between the adult world and youth culture embodied in the camera that was watching them.

TH-Stlk: Online Stalking/voyeur

This code came to describe a voyeuristic tendency in social media, perhaps as a direct result of the limited control of the flow of personal information in the form of photographic images. Although derivations of the word appeared several times in reports by study participants, this theme is encompassed in the word "stalkery," a term used by Amy to report on her actions as she and a friend went online to Facebook specifically to look at a photo of another Friend. Using online media to "stalk" others in your social community became one way to conceptualize the browsing process of checking out others on Facebook, without the need to directly interact. It is a new form of voyeurism, because it is interaction that is unseen by other participants, which is discussed in the next two chapters.

Also encompassed in this thematic pattern is what study participants reported as Facebook Friends being *too* interactive and participatory. The participant must not leave too much evidence of her passing. Tina, for example, criticized a friend for apparently crossing a line (XX is the friend's name), *"Oh (XX) liked my photo.* (follows link to the photo). *(XX) also liked my status. Wow, she's kinda like, stalkerish. In a good way, I guess."*

LM-PrTx: Level of Presence and Social Ties = Textual Engagement

Choice/pleasure

Analysis of the coding suggests that the strength and nature of the social network tie strongly influences the use of communication channel in interpersonal communication for youth. The relationship between the first two conceptual groups from Category 2 provided the basis for this thematic code group.

The coded data provided a pattern of what appears to be complex but stable relationship between levels of co-presence afforded by the message channel and the affiliation (or social tie) between users. The relationship suggests, and possibly predicts, the message channel young people choose, in terms of the social relationship with other, and the priority of that communication channel to the participant in responding.

This finding has potentially broader implications than thematic and code patterns, and perhaps comes furthest toward theory being generated from the grounded approach of this study. This code theme is therefore elevated to the level of *leitmotiv* because it rises above other findings and came to be seen as the organizing principle behind many other patterns observed during the study. A *leitmotiv* here is defined as the dominant idea

or theme that motivates participants' actions and dictates their choices. It is a leading motive for their online behavior.

The next chapter provides an extensive discussion and review of literature that was specifically identified because of the emergence of the *leitmotiv*. This analysis of the activities related to this result is highly interpretive, but finds support in the research literature.

Summary

Code categories were developed around the diverse "texts" being coded, so many conventions in coding were developed to account for the overlapping nature of the many channels of communication employed by the study participants and the diversity of friends, family, peers, and Friends engaged. In other words, four code categories conceptually organized the types and manner of online engagement within the episodes and cases. As the analysis of coding within and across categories began, themes and pattern in the data began to emerge: a *leitmotiv* theme pattern, five code themes, and four code patterns. The *leitmotiv* appeared to structure all the communication practices observed, and is discussed in depth in the next chapter. In Chapter 6, the code themes and patterns are also discussed in the context of the research questions and goals of the study.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

As the channels for public and private interpersonal communication continue to expand, largely due to digital communication and the Internet, the options from which young people can choose have changed dramatically in the last decade. This chapter focuses on the practices that appear in the respondent-reported processes of making meaning and constructing identity across these communication options.

The major, interrelated findings of this study are the following:

1. There is a relationship between communication channels, and the type of interpersonal relationships or social ties that exist or develop between participants. This relationship marks the preferences of media and priorities of communication.
2. There are concerns among young people about privacy, which is defined as controlling the flow of information across the social ties that develop within social media.
3. There are tensions created by the constraints in social media architectures. These architectures largely disregard levels of "social ties" that may range from weak to strong and have been found to be significant in social networking sites (SNS). Young people respond to this by forming new strategies and practices for online engagement.

In this chapter, I will explicate the major findings outlined above. The discussion begins with the *leitmotiv* theme that emerged from the data, the role of unmediated activities in the study results, and a review of social presence and social tie theories that are relevant to conceptualizing the communication channel and social relationships. That discussion is the premise leading to the mapping of communication channel onto social relationships in a hierarchical system of connections, and includes a foray into the third conceptual code group in Category 2: visual media, and their relationship to the hierarchical system of mediated spaces. Next, I explicate young people's concerns about control of their privacy in networked publics observed in the study. At the end of the chapter, responses by young people to tensions in and limitations of social media are discussed.

Chapter 6 will provide a concluding discussion in the context of the research questions posed in Chapter 3, providing some insight into how the data helped answer those questions.

Channels and Relationships: The Ties That Bind Social Media

The Leitmotiv Theme (LM-PrTx)

Interpretation of the actions of, and reports by, the young people in this study provided data identifying a *leitmotiv* theme suggesting a complex but stable relationship between interpersonal communication channel options and the social relationship between participants, later conceptualized as social tie theory. The leitmotiv theme emerged as the organizing principle behind many other patterns observed during the study, and was the dominant theme that motivated participants' actions.

The leitmotiv relationship is displayed in Table 7 as a thematically ordered matrix of "interaction with other" in online social networking (OSN) with "voice and textual engagement" on the left and "social ties" on the right. The gray rows connect the channels of communication with the levels of social relationships that are typical for those activities. These were two of the conceptual code groups in Category 2, and the connection between the two is the basis for the code theme identified as LM-PrTx.

Interaction with Other – Voice and Textual Engagement

The channels of communication are listed vertically from top to bottom roughly in the order of preference demonstrated by study recipients through actions and oral reports, and the priority for attention each received from participants during cases. Channels are further divided into private 1-to-1 or 1-to-many in networked publics. The list of channels reflects those actually observed in the study, versus all possible channels of communication available to youth.

From my own background exploring the qualities of presence in mediated experience, I noted that the priority also paralleled what I considered the relative immediacy and intimacy of the channels, which together contribute to the sense of co-presence produced in the interaction. Presence and co-presence in mediated environments is discussed in more detail in the next section.

Interaction with Other – Social Ties

On the right of Table 7 is the conceptual group for affiliations, also from code Category 2, and lists participants' relationship to other according to the *type* of relationship, ranging vertically from strong to weak. Affiliations, or social ties as this conceptual group came to be understood, were defined by highly interpretive coding

Table 7: Interactions in SNS

Interaction with Other - Voice and Textual Engagement

HI Co-presence — Private -1 to 1/few — Public/Ntwk - 1 to all

LOW <----------Level of Priority & Immediacy----------> HIGH

OF	OF-Fam/Fri	Talking/sharing w/Family/Friend	
	OF-Phone	Landline phone	
CL	**Cellular Engagement Off-line**		
	CL-Vc	voice	
	CL-Tx	text	
Vid	Vid-Ch	chat video/conf.	
TX	**Textual Engagement (UGC) On-line Messages**		
	TX-Ch	IM/chat	
	TX-DM	direct mess	
	TX-Cm		post comment to other
	TX-Cm-Wal		post FB Wall (status)
	TX-Ry		reply to comments
	TX-Tg		tag photos
	TX-Lk		"like" (fb)
	TX-Pk		poke (fb)
	TX-Sta		provide status update
	TX-Grp		group (fb)
	TX-Rel		relatshps (fb)
	TX-App		apps (fb)
	TX-Shr		"share" news/info (fb)
	TX-Gi		gift (fb apps)
	TX-EM	e-mail	
	TX-Doc	attachents, etc.	

LOW Co-presence

Interaction with Other - Socal Ties

weak <----------Level of affiliation/social ties----------> strong

AF	Affiliations	
AF-C	SNS & Non-SNS strong ties	
		close friends
		immediate family
		extended family in same age group
AF-P	SNS weak ties	
		school peers
		extra-curricular
		neighborhood
		extended adult family
		others in age group
		consequential strangers
AF-W	non-SNS weak ties	
		teachers, coaches, bosses, strgrs
		ident. conf./security

derived from diverse evidence, clues, and observations, such as age, gender, communication topics (school, mutual friends, etc.), message content (teen talk, emoticons, etc.), and any other clues that presented themselves.

Connecting Conceptual Groups

In analysis, I made the connection between the two code groups by noting that there was a horizontal relationship as well, exhibited by the gray rows connecting them. As an example of how this relationship was identified, Sarah cried out while interacting with Facebook: "*Ooh, who's texting me. (Reads message on mobile phone) Ah, that boy is going to get it so fricking bad..."* After sending a text message back, she returned to Facebook. I interpreted this report and her actions as demonstrating the seamless connection between online and offline actions and reports, but also the priority and immediacy of the text message channel compared to Facebook functions. Participation in the less immediate and less intimate experience of Facebook halted upon reception of the more immediate and more intimate text message, which was from someone I assumed to be a close friend because of the apparent personal nature of the message. Further, as a 1-to-1 medium of expression, the text message allows for a more private form of communication, versus the networked publics of most OSN message exchanges, like many of the SNS Facebook channels.

Face-to-Face Versus Mediated Socializing

Coding for offline activities (OF) was added to this code category late in the process. While this study was intended to document online practices, actions and reports often related to offline activities as well, so coding should account for that. Participants

seemed to make no distinction between on- and offline activities and moved seamlessly between them, as noted above, so the coding process should, too.

The hierarchy of priority and immediacy in Table 7 places offline communication at the top of the list. In reference to social and academic concerns about how social media are changing social life, the data suggest that young people in this study seemed to privilege face-to-face engagement over online or mobile device forms of socializing whenever possible. Many expressed their enjoyment with engaging with social media, but that was not preferred over face-to-face interactions.

The evidence of this includes a sentiment that social media are too time consuming, almost a chore, as in this report:

> Amy (0016): (reading out loud Facebook's login screen) *'Facebook helps you connect and share with people in your life.' More like Facebook is a time-sucker.*

Amy's statement, and others like it throughout this discussion, begins to address questions of the relationship between social media and youth culture. A rhetorical interpretation of the statement suggests that she had other things she would prefer to do than spend time on Facebook. So, what were the other things? It was summer, so she had no homework. She did not have a job at that moment, so no time consideration there. She could be talking about family time, although she referred in some reports to not wanting to deal with parents and siblings. That leaves face-to-face time with her friends as the likely suspect. That may be what is missing in the time spent on Facebook. At the very least, Facebook may not be to blame for her not spending time with friends, but it may be seen as a reminder that the experience is not the same as being with them in person.

Another clue is the days of the week that saw the most cases and episodes (displayed in Table 2 from Chapter 3). Even though school was not in session, weekends saw the least number of cases. Several participants referenced this idea, reporting that they were not online much because they had a fun weekend with their (offline obviously) friends. Each had the laptop for seven to eight days, so had it over a weekend, but the pattern was consistent. This suggests that weekday online interaction may be a substitute for the kinds of social activities possible on weekends, but not preferred.

Liveness, Mediated Co-presence, and Social Ties in Networked Publics

The distinct but intertwined conceptual groups displayed in Table 7 are best understood as a synthesis of the theoretical perspectives offered by social presence theories and social tie theory. Judith Donath (2004) confirms the relevance of these perspectives when she defined "sociable media" as "media that enhance communication and the formation of social ties among people" (p. 1).

The connection between channels and relationships comes from two closely related claims. First, the order of communication channel preferences in Table 7 also parallels the perceptual sense of *liveness* associated with each channel, which I suggest, in turn, has a strong influence on the production of *co-presence*. Second, this sense of co-presence can be used to map communication channel to social tie strength between participants. In other words, social ties between participants (sender and receiver of a message) that define the content and goals of communication messages appear to have a significant influence over the channels the participants select to communicate.

The implications of this finding are that the strength and nature of the social network tie strongly influences the choice of communication channel, and not particular

attributes of any one channel, SNS, or attitudes toward particular social media by young people. One result is that some new tensions are created by the choices based primarily on the constraints within the architecture of the SNS engaged in this study.

In the following discussion, each of these conceptual areas of research are explicated and contextualized in existing social media scholarship reviewed because of this interpretation of the data. This approach provides verisimilitude and broadens the implications of the results of coding.

The Production of Co-Presence in Mediated Communication

I postulate that a primary criterion employed by youth for selecting an interpersonal communication channel is expressed in four dimensions: *immediacy*, and *intimacy*, creating a sense of *liveness,* which together contribute to the production of *co-presence* in mediated communication. Different levels of co-presence are deemed appropriate for different kinds of messages shared between various kinds of people with whom youth communicate, and young people's relationship to adult culture and society. Each is discussed in turn below.

Chronotopes of liveness in mediated experience. Philip Auslander (1999) argues that any form of mediated experience can be examined by its "liveness," which he defines as levels of *intimacy* and *immediacy* of the perceptual experience. It is applied here in the context of social media messages. *Immediacy* refers here to the range from synchronous communication as most immediate to asynchronous communication being the least immediate. *Intimacy* is defined as a close association between participants and the privacy in that association. The relative "liveness" of mediated experiences, then, is one of an aesthetic relationship of the body to the presentational source in time and space.

These are the two aspects of Baktin's (1981) spatial-temporal *chronotope* metaphor, since immediacy is really a temporal reference, and intimacy is a spatial relationship.

Social presence and media. The "chronotope of liveness" is an essential ingredient in the production of *presence*/*co-presence* in mediated communication. I set aside for a moment the notion of *co-presence* and focus on the concept of *presence* in mediated experiences, because that is the term more commonly used in media research on this topic.

The production of *presence* has been conceptualized for research in mediated communication and was studied by researchers interested in Computer Mediated Communication (CMC) in the 1970s. CMC approaches are devoted to comparing face-to-face communication to mediated interaction (Whittaker, 2003) but were conceived in a time when online communication was text-only. These channels, by their very nature, involve the reduction of face-to-face social cues that are considered essential in efficient and effective communication.

Short, Williams, and Christie (1976) introduced social presence theory to define how different levels of social cues impact communication during synchronous interactions. They define social presence as "the degree of salience of the other person in a mediated interaction and the consequent salience (and perceived intimacy and immediacy) of the interpersonal interaction" (p. 65). The focus is on the emotional phenomenon of social perception, but not the medium itself.

Media richness theory was first introduced by organizational communication scholars Daft and Lengel (1984) to focus directly on a medium and its richness, which is defined by its information carrying capacity. The research looked at primarily

asynchronous communication channels and compared rich and lean media for their task solving abilities. As shown in Figure 2, Daft, Lengel, and Trevino (1987) outlined a media richness hierarchy which incorporates four media classifications: the descending order of richness are face-to-face, by telephone, e-mail, and memos and letters. The richness of each medium is based on four criteria: feedback, multiple cues, language variety, and personal focus. This research informs organizational communication, specifically, with the assumption that increased information decreases uncertainty and equivocality.

Notably, there are distinct similarities between Daft, Lengel, and Trevino's (1987) diagram in Figure 2 to the hierarchy of social media channels in Table 7. The hierarchy in Table 7 reflects the relative liveness of the interactions, which allows analysis to account for the emotional immediacy and intimacy of the channels, not just the rich or lean

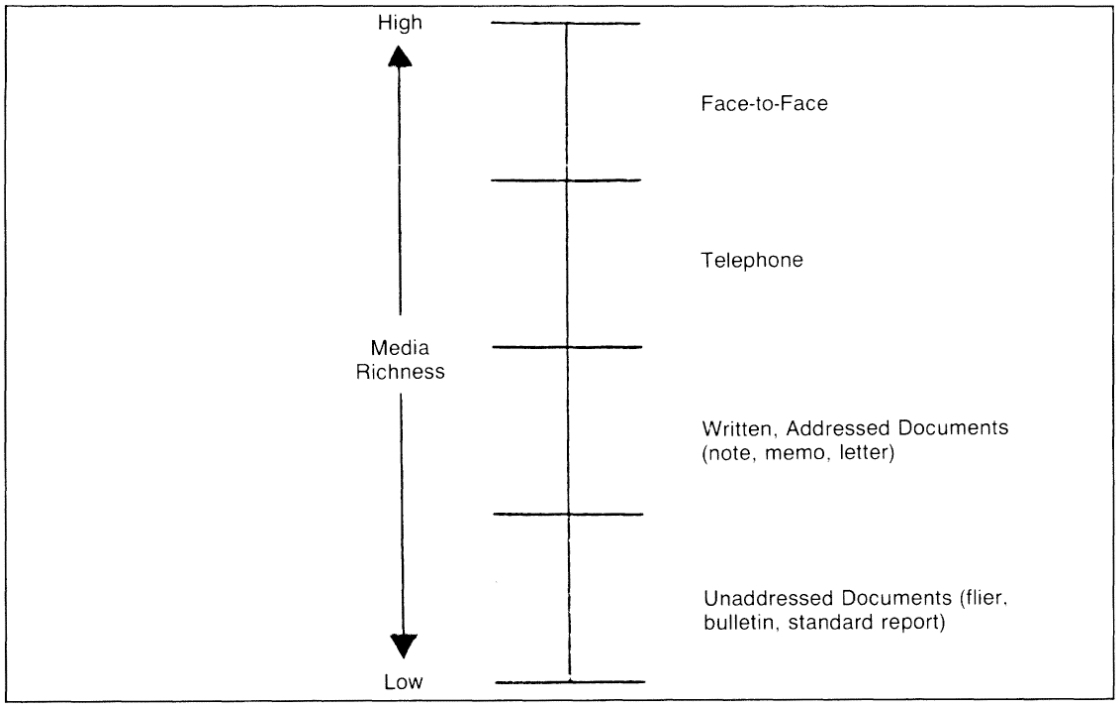

Figure 2: Hierarchy of Media Richness
Daft, Lengel, and Trevino (1987)

properties for conveying information. This connection suggests that the findings of this study provides a theoretical link between the constructs of synchronous emotional communication studied in social presence theory with asynchronous mediated communication under investigation in rich media theorizing.

Outside of social science theorizing, contemporary research seeks to describe the requirements that allow mediated technology to achieve, in the words of Short et al. (1976), salient interpersonal interactions, and specifically the aesthetic quality of human interactive experiences in computer generated environments. The production of *presence* has been most actively studied in the context of the communication technologies and mediated environments of virtual reality (VR) scholarship, which offers many additional dimensions of what can help constitute a positive sense of *presence*. Successful mediated experiences are defined as truly "natural," "immediate," "direct," and “real,” in which there is a “perceptual illusion of nonmediation” (Lombard & Ditton, 1997). More recently, Lee (2004) defines the successful production of presence in computer mediated spaces to be the “psychological state in which the virtuality of the experience is unnoticed” (p. 32). Fortunately for those interested in face-to-face interpersonal research, Lee adds that any definition of presence should not exclude the possibility of feeling *presence* in nonmediated experiences.

Being co-present in mediated spaces. In this analysis, I found that these social and virtual perspectives on *presence* in research fall short when applied to theorizing online-mediated social experiences because they do not, and perhaps ultimately cannot, take into account many other factors that affect the quality of mediated communication. Deeply intertwined in mediated exchanges are factors such as familiarity with the technology,

knowledge of and relationship with others in the exchange, motivations for interacting, and social contexts of the interactions. Perhaps more importantly, these perspectives fail to recognize the "communication imperative" (Walther, 1994) that drives people to use new media for interpersonal purposes and find creative ways to deal with barriers. Evidence of such drive and creativity was seen throughout this study and therefore intertwined in the many different patterns and themes in this discussion.

Attempts to discover ways to increase a sense of *presence* by replacing or compensating for missing social cues in mediated spaces may not be as necessary as assumed by the theoretical perspective discussed above. Perhaps it is ultimately not even possible to create the perfect illusion of nonmediation. If people are driven to communicate, then perhaps people are more willing to overlook the barriers and limitations perceived as inherent in mediated interpersonal communication than is assumed. Participants visited Facebook during almost every case, and it was usually the first activity when going online, suggesting that *social communication* was indeed imperative to them. Apparently, when face-to-face is not an option, the young people in this study seemed to easily engage the mediated options without a noticeable sense of loss, as long as they were satisfying their drive to communicate with others.

Presence, then, is arguably the sense of "being there," which is useful in gaming environments and other visual media that are best experienced as immersive environments, but less necessary for producing a positive aesthetic quality of social communication. A theory that helps define the mediated experience in OSN is needed in order to conceptualize the chronotope of liveness that I argue is associated with SNS channels. If *presence* is understood as the sense of "being there," it does not adequately

account for OSN communication strategies and everyday practices exhibited by participants of this study. A more useful way to conceptualize social media engagement is *co-presence*, the sense of "being with" others in online domains (Zhao & Elesh, 2008). Therefore, I use the term *co-presence* to describe the sense of *being with* someone else, interacting in mediated communication environments with much more immediacy and intimacy than the mere feeling of being present at a particular place and time. Later, the term *presence* is reserved to describe the sense of "being there" produced by viewing visual media, which helps differentiate and explain the role and importance of visual media versus interactive engagements in OSN.

Social Ties Research

The inability to differentiate levels of friendships and relationships (PATT-DL) was something missing in the privacy functions of SNS and several reports were coded for this pattern. The pattern brings the affiliations conceptual group into the Leitmotiv and the tensions that result from limitations in SNS architectures. This pattern represented an aspect of Friends versus friends notion, which is disliking people even through they are Friends, or having Friends they do not know offline:

> Sonya (0001): (sees suggested friend and clicks) *Oh, (XX) she's really cool, like, she's nice, but she's kinda creepy.*
>
> Tina (0002): (referring to a friend) *I love her and I hate her. I love her. She's like one of my best friends, but she's just so popular. It's just so hard to keep up with her.*
>
> Tina (0002): (referring to a friend) *Oh jeez, (XX), I hate her, so slutty.*
>
> Amy (0000): (looking at her list of Friends) *Just annoying having all these*

people... I didn't really know.

Why do young people accept people as Friends when they dislike them? These reports were coded in this theme because I speculate that the reasons are based in the inability to differentiate social relationships. On the school playground, youths may be polite to other people, perhaps to friend of friends, even if they do not like them, as a way to maintain relationships and reduce social tensions. Perhaps youth accept people as Friends for the same reason, because to decline the invitation can lead to hurt feelings and animosity in offline communities. A definitive answer did not emerge from this study, but these types of phenomena bare further scrutiny as conceptions of friendship evolve.

A return to the literature to look for references to this pattern found that social media has reignited the debates over the influence of the media on community and society. Specifically, concerns about how online media affect the offline community is a reemergence of a centuries-old debate about how large-scale social changes affect *social ties* between friends, neighbors, family, and work related connections in a community (Wellman & Leighton, 1979, review this debate).

Introduced by Mark Granovetter (1973), social tie theory has become an important analytic framework for studying social relationships between individuals and within organizations. The general argument is that all relationships are social, but not created equal. The conceptualization of *ties* provided by social network theory is a way media researchers are examining this affect. Social network theory research began to look at communication in contexts that we now would define by the oppositional label, *offline relationships*. The research identifies a number of features that distinguish ties by

strength, which are important for understanding the interaction between tie strength and media use.

Strong ties refer to trusted friends and close family members, whose social circles overlap your own the most. Weak ties are loose acquaintances with only partial overlap with your own social circle, and research has found that they too are important and valuable because weak ties often provide access to novel and creative information and ideas (Burt, 1992; Granovetter, 1973). People with networks of weak ties have access to information that is more diverse and resources, which can assist in search processes, such as job hunting (Granovetter, 1973).

The difficulty in social ties research is defining the criteria for calculating tie strength on a scale of strong to weak. Granovetter (1973) proposed four dimensions of tie strength: amount of time, immediacy, intensity, and reciprocal services. Subsequent scholars have suggested many more—emotional support (Wellman & Wortley, 1990), social distance (Lin, Ensel, & Vaughn, 1981), interaction frequency (Lin, Dayton, & Greenwald, 1978)—leading to a multiplicity of possible dimensions when attempting to calculate ties strength.

Social Ties in Mediated Networked Publics

In the context of mediated socializing, social ties research finds that people primarily use electronic and OSN communication tools to support and reinforce pre-existing social ties and relationships, rather than making new ones. The supported ties can be strong or weak. New media technologies like SNS, mobile phones, and instant messenger are found to have key roles in reinforcing both close friendships and weaker

peer group relationships (Boneva & Quinn, 2006; Gross, 2004; Subrahmanyam & Greenfield, 2008).

Scholars have applied social network theory as an analytical framework for Internet-based communication. Their research finds that OSN help maintain strong ties, but do not appear to have significant influence over them. Conversely, OSN do enhance and increase contact among weaker ties in online communities (Haythornthwaite, 2002) as well as offline ones (Hampton & Wellman, 2003). Nancy Baym (2010) notes,

> one of the most exciting elements of new media is that they allow us to communicate personally within what used to be prohibitively large groups. This blurs the boundary between mass and interpersonal communication in ways that disrupt both. (p. 4)

SNS are particularly well suited to enable broad networks of weak tie relationships. SNS are unique in their ability to allow for many less intimate, and often more public, levels of interaction with weaker tie connections, which affects the quality and importance of such relationships. Facebook's popularity can probably be attributed to the opportunities it provides to interact widely with those outside the immediate circle of friends and family, or the weak tie peers, and even relative strangers who are invited into one's social networks.

Luke reports on the differences between strong tie friends and weak tie Friends in everyday OSN participation:

> Luke (0003): *Uh, 467 Friends…At (school name) I saw like almost all of them almost every day, but now that I am going to (school name), like maybe 50 of them. The rest of them, I'll stay in touch with Facebook.*

> Luke (0003): (referring to one of his Facebook Friends) *It's cool that he got Facebook because he's a really good friend of mine, I'm going to (school name) next year...so this is how we'll keep in touch since he doesn't have a phone.*

Gilbert and Karahalios (2009) have been successful in applying social network theory to OSN research. They use seven dimensions to predict tie strength among Facebook users: *Intensity, Intimacy, Duration, Reciprocal Services, Structural, Emotional Support,* and *Social Distance*. They have developed a predictive model, using these dimensions, to distinguish between strong and weak ties with over 85% accuracy. Their conclusion is that fusing a tie strength model with social media design practices can greatly improve socio-technical systems of social media.

Mapping Social Ties onto Communication Practices

Using Table 7 as a guide, the following discussion brings together social presence and social ties theory by proposing that strong to weak tie relationships have a direct influence on the choice of social media channels used and the priority of messages on those channels for youth engaged in mediated spaces.

Hierarchical Communication Preferences

For the youth in this study, the more immediate and intimate lines of communication consistently were reserved for strong ties relationships and always had top priority for their attention. Weaker tie communication was accomplished through less immediate and intimate channels, but remain important relationships.

Hierarchy in networked private spaces. Private communications channels are typically used to exchange 1-to-1, or sometimes 1-to-few, messages, and tend to provide

the highest sense of co-presence. These technologies afford the most intimate and immediate exchanges because membership in the conversation is well defined as known individuals, not communities of participants.

The analysis indicates that the highest priority is offline, or face-to-face, communication, despite the multiplicity of mediated social communication options. Young people still seem to privilege face-to-face social relationships over mediated ones. Second in the hierarchy is mobile telephone-based communication, although prioritizing verbal conversations or mobile texting was difficult. The results were a bit confusing: participants provided some evidence that face-to-face and phone calls can become an annoyance, especially in regard to adult family members and some weaker tie peers, probably because such actions are more difficult to ignore. I try to clarify this apparent disruption in the private level hierarchy later in this discussion. Third in the hierarchy are synchronous online communication technologies such as I/M and chat. Despite tertiary status in this overall hierarchy, Facebook offers many options and advantages to young people for socializing with strong and weak ties, but with some new tensions in terms of public/private dyads that are discussed below.

In terms of producing co-presence, these types of synchronous mediated channels for communication come closest to "being with" others, at least as is possible with current technologies. In this study, Facebook was dominant in online sessions, but when online, activities quickly halt in response to the more immediate communicative experiences afforded by mobile phone text and calls or face-to-face conversations with friends and family. In other words, those channels were shown to have priority over anything Facebook had to offer. Sonya was a definitive example of these priorities in the

hierarchy. She frequently used social media channels to arrange face-to-face get-togethers with her close, strong tie friends. Facebook was a convenient vehicle to interact and maintain weak tie relationships, but she always privileged online chatting and messaging with close friends when online. Weak tie Friends were rarely interacted with directly.

Within Facebook itself, there appears to be a hierarchical pattern between channels and ties as well. Strong tie friends tend to have priority and are typically engaged using the more immediate channels of DM (direct messages) and chat sessions. Indeed, OSN are still primarily used by young people to connect with friends they already know (Hargittai, 2008; Lenhart & Madden, 2007; Zhao et al., 2008). Weak ties Friends were of a lower priority to the young people in this study, therefore, there is less interaction between these types of Friends. These people were often ignored as chat partners, their posts were not reported upon, and there was no interaction otherwise with them during the study. Many of the participants opened the Facebook chat window and reported that they were seeing who was online. Some had as many as 50-60 Friends online, but the participant inevitably reported that there was "no one online." It is probably reasonable to deduce that while there were many *Friends* online, there were not any *friends* online at those moments. For example, Tom (0008), during a Facebook session around midnight, reported, "I'm going to check out chat...see if anyone's on." He had 63 Friends online at that moment, and chose not to chat with any of them. That so many of his peers were online at midnight is discussed later in reference to some reasons why Facebook is important in contemporary youth culture: as a good solution to maintaining social identity and interaction under certain environmental conditions.

Hierarchy in networked public spaces. These channels of communication typically represent one-to-many distribution methods. As such, they are more public, making them less intimate (because many are "listening"), and/or less immediate, thus a "degraded" sense of co-presence. These channels tend to be used primarily for weak tie connections via Facebook because such social connections do not necessarily require the immediate and intimate forms of communication afforded by SNS architectures. One advantage they provide for young people is a space to express themselves in ways they could not when offline. Luke (0003) helps to demonstrate this: *"Yeah, sometimes on Facebook we'll kind of open up and say stuff on Facebook we would never really, uh, say in front of Mr. (XX), our social studies teacher…"* Online spaces can provide an alternative space for contemporary youth culture to be enacted. This report suggests that Luke and his Friends use OSN to converse during school hours: a private backchannel of their own. Luke's statement does not necessarily mean that online engagement is preferred over offline face-to-face conversations, but it does express the value for youth of having a space in which they can talk without adults' eavesdropping.

Facebook in particular presents youth with the advantage of building and maintaining connections within the *nonymous* SNS they have constructed, so youth probably perceive this as somewhat safer than *anonymous* SNS. Facebook engagement of this type metaphorically resembles the publically co-present acts of "hanging out" at school, in coffee shops, and around shopping malls. For several decades, shopping malls were a primary location for supporting both weak tie bonds for youth (Crawford, 1992), but now teens are seen as nuisances in public places even as they are targeted as consumers (boyd, 2008b). Add to this the decline of public leisure facilities, after-school

activities, and "street corner culture" (Livingstone, 2002), and these changes in teen social geography probably account for the apparent success of new weak tie but publically co-present channels of communication like Facebook's wall-to-wall posts, status updates, pokes, like, and so on.

Other architectural features and affordances allow for more asynchronic socializing. Facebook, as well as other SNS such as MySpace, YouTube, and Yahoo Groups, manage to retain some aspects of public co-presence once afforded in public places that are metaphorically like leaving a note on someone's locker or passing notes in class. These forms of social interactions are limited to comments about content. These types of messages can be engaged asynchronously, and they are more easily deferred or ignored, depending on time, mood, tie strength, and so on.

While of lower priority in everyday practices and interactions, these relatively public networked channels remain one of the most important features of SNS. As noted, scholarly research on social ties find that this category of interpersonal communication is the most highly impacted by new media, because of the opportunities it affords to interact widely with those outside the immediate circle of friends and family, with weak tie peers, and even strangers. Tina provided an interesting example of this practice of building and maintaining very weak ties when she reported on a new Friend recently added, one who lived in Europe.

Tina (0002): (looking at the Friends profile) *I really wish that I looked like her because I mean she's really pretty in like the way that I want to be, the style I wish I could pull off. But every one at my school is very judgmental. They would call me a poser for trying to be like*

it. If I did what I wanted to, I would have tons of eyeliner...(more description).

Her reports suggest that Tina accepted the friendship request because she liked the other girl's hair, and she wished she could have hair like that. This type of weak tie, consequential stranger interaction by Tina would not be possible in offline publics. They did not even speak the same language, but apparently shared some interests and attitudes.

Public channels in Facebook and other SNS are certainly not solely for maintaining weak tie relationships. This study provides some evidence of the potential importance for participants in using Facebook to help maintain strong ties as well as weak, but in unique cases. Allie poked one young man each time she went online, sometimes several times a day. I later discovered that he was her boyfriend, and that he was travelling with his parents on vacation. Given that the parents and the boyfriend were most likely co-present in geographic space while on vacation, intimate conversation of any sort was difficult. Allie used Facebook's "poke" function as a more discrete non-verbal means of creating a feeling of co-presence by letting him know she was thinking about him often. An unattributed axiom comes to mind: to be "present in mind if not body." It is an example of making intimate but subtle contacts in public spaces, perhaps metaphorically resembling holding hands or playing "footsy" under the table so the parents do not notice.

This discussion does not suggest that navigating between weak or strong ties channels are mutually exclusive activities. Many participants in this study actively cultivated weak ties affiliations through the more asynchronous modes of communication in the hierarchy, even as they were simultaneously engaged in conversations with close

tie friends using more immediate and intimate channels. In other words, the participants were in touch with close friends through texting and I/M, even as they were on Facebook interacting with other, weaker tie, Friends.

Despite the hierarchy presented here, the young people did not appear to, or orally report, consciously assigning a value to the choices of communication channels, at least not explicitly. They appear to move seamlessly between them, choosing the one that is most convenient, or the one most appropriate given the recipient of the message, without much conscious thought. When discussing the recruitment issues above, I noted how few of the participants had the means to contact many of their Friends except through Facebook, suggesting that those people represent weak tie affiliations supported by Facebook. This study was during the summer months, so face-to-face was not an option given the fact that most such relations in youth culture mirror the social structure of their schools. Facebook communication systems seem to satisfy the study participants' needs in this weak tie "economy" of socializing, so they were unprepared to contact Friends any other way.

Consequential Strangers as Social Ties

The very weakest ties on the social ties scale involve people who are probably outside one's own peer and family networks and therefore not usually Friends on Facebook. Despite that, they can be weak ties that are important and useful nonetheless. *Anonymous* SNS on the Internet are especially well suited to supporting these social ties. Communication choices in this mode encompass weak tie relationships formed and maintained through SNS that bring together the unique and complimentary functions of "consequential strangers" (Blau & Fingerman, 2009).

Blau and Fingerman (2009) note the importance of weak tie support systems enabled by networked publics, and extend the notion of weak ties to include "consequential strangers." They argue that relative strangers in our lives are far more important than we realize, from a car mechanic to someone we meet while walking the dog. When we have problems, they are more likely to help than close friends and family by providing meaning, comfort, social connections, and expose us to new ideas and perspectives. In other words, consequential strangers provide some of the same benefits as intimate ties, as well as many other unique and complimentary functions and support systems.

Sonya provided interesting data demonstrating how well suited SNS are to enabling broad networks of weak tie relationships. She used two sites specifically designed for this kind of weak tie support from anonymous strangers. She engaged sites that provide the possibility for questions to be asked and answered by participants of the site: Yahoo Answers (answers.yahoo.com) and Formspring (formspring.me). Both fall into the Internet-driven genre of SNS participation. Formspring has a narrow function: participants ask and answer questions of each other in an environment where identities are fluid. By default, all anonymous participants can see everyone's questions and answers, which is a necessary affordance for supporting interactions with consequential strangers. A social community can be created and is articulated by "connections, " which "consist of people you've asked questions non-anonymously, as well as those whose questions you've answered."[2] Thus, communities are formed by interactions within the architecture, which may or may not be related to the offline communities of participants. The boundaries of the social community are poorly defined because the architecture is

[2] Official site description of "connections." Retrieved from http://www.formspring.me on 10/12/2010.

designed for all participants to see all the content. Yahoo Answers has a similar purpose, but is more sophisticated because questions and answers are searchable. Participants do not need to necessarily ask a specific question to find answers because they can look for similar questions posed by others.

Sonya repeatedly demonstrated the importance to her of these diverse networks of consequential strangers. Seeking a way to deal with a recent disappointment over news about an acting part (communicated to her in an email message from the play's director), Sonya (0007) reported as she accessed Google, *"this is kind of stupid but I like looking up things that might help me, like, how to get over not…(types: getting the part you want)."* Several days later, she reported, *"Going to Yahoo to see if anyone answered my question about my role."* When she accessed her account, I saw that she had asked many questions over the last 6 months: most recently about the disappointment issue in the recent Google search, but she had also asked questions seeking help with self-esteem issues, fighting with a friend, weight questions, and what to do about a "guy." There were up to seven replies to some of her questions. The consequential strangers Sonya encounters in this site clearly serve a meaningful purpose for her. The attraction is probably the anonymity available in SNS of this type. She may be able to seek advice and ask questions about issues that she is uncomfortable asking of her strong tie friends and family.

This is a surprisingly valuable way to access diverse information on any conceivable topic. Google searches have a place in wading through the explosion of information on the web, but the ability to make a query and receive feedback from individuals suggests that these SNS have greater value in terms of building social capital.

I use the concept of social capital later in this chapter to describe the benefits accrued from one's social network in more detail. SNS such as these are particularly well suited for providing "bridging social capital" (Putnam, 1995) because of the diverse network of weak ties. The average Facebook Friend network includes 130 people[3], but that is a relatively limited network when compared to the SNS Sonya chooses for her questions.

Email as Communication Channel

For the study participants, email had the lowest priority in the communication channel hierarchy, as evidenced by reports and activities of study participants. Every one of them had an email account, so it serves a necessary purpose. Almost all participants visited an email account at some point during the study, but for a limited range of communicants: people or organizations that are outside their social networks: teachers, bosses, coaches, and others with whom they must communicate, but not part of their immediate social spheres.

Young people seem to perceive email as a functional and formal communication channel. As a mode of communication, email is probably perceived as having the least sense of liveness, thus least sense of co-presence, so is not well suited for socializing. As such, it has little value to young people beyond functional interactions with adults and organizations. The study data suggest it is probably one of the few, if not the only, channel for mediated communication with these types of people for the participants.

Ann used email to contact the boss at her summer job and later to retrieve a document sent by a former boss from a volunteer situation. She also checked for emails from her new school, which she is starting in the fall. Allie checked email daily, but the

[3] According to Facebook: http://www.facebook.com/press/info.php?statistics. Retrieved on 10/28/2010.

only messages she received were from commercial web sites where she had user accounts, which primarily informed her of sales and new items. Sarah checked email several times, while always complaining about all the junk mail, and she spent her time deleting unwanted emails, but never answering any. When participants did send email, analysis provided data that young people in this study thought more carefully about the content of email messages than they might be using an SNS. Tom, in a message to a coach at his school, wrote and rewrote the message several times, then decided to send it to his parents, reporting that he wanted them to look it over before he sent it.

This study was conducted during the summer months, which may account for some of the lack of activity with email. Given the limited evidence in this study, it is reasonable to assume that email is probably the official communication channel with the school and its teachers outside of the classroom. However, if this assumption were born out, the place of email in the communication hierarchy would probably remain unchanged, but would be used more often.

Two Mitigating Factors for the Channel Hierarchy

Two mitigating factors are addressed at this point, one relating to the use of the study laptop, and the other to an apparent inversion, in some circumstances, at the top of the channel hierarchy of mobile phone versus textual engagement.

Desktop or Mobile Access?

While I speculate that the channel hierarchy would remain essentially the same, the access device seems to be going more mobile. Some of the participants enjoyed mobile access through smart phones and seemed not to care which technology they used to access SNS, suggesting a trend that will perhaps make the desktop computer obsolete

for social media in youth culture. Tom and Luke's data provided evidence that they accessed Facebook from their mobile phone often enough to suggest mobile access is their preferred method, and they even may have been on the laptop computer more often than usual for the benefit of the study.

Luke often reported on using his mobile phone for several activities during the day, in addition to mobile status updates:

Luke (0003): *But yah, you know, every once in a while I'll run into a computer. It's pretty cool having a laptop, but I go on the Internet a lot on my phone because it's small and I carry it with me.*

Luke (0005): *I haven't been on the computer for a couple of days because I've been working. I have been checking Facebook on my phone. On my phone, I do the exact same thing as when I'm on the computer, so...it doesn't really make a difference to me. On a computer, it's faster though, because you have a full keyboard.*

He used it while traveling:

Luke (0005): *(re: missing a big game) I put that as my Facebook status. I can't believe I missed it. So, that's what I was doing on my phone for the last couple minutes, 'til I got home.*

He used it while watching TV:

Luke (0006): *I watched the world cup game, um, US versus Ghana. We were watching the (Facebook) news. I was on my phone, kinda on the Facebook app watching. Everyone was setting their statuses; "Nooooo." And I kinda did the same.*

Other participants reported on how much they appreciated their mobile devices as well, such as Ann:

> Ann (0004): *Its funny how I'll be out all weekend, without wireless, and I can still check Facebook on my phone. It's highly addicting.*

Call or Text?

There appear to be data that conflict with my overall assertions about the top of this hierarchy that warrants attention in this discussion. If cellular-based talk and text are both at the top of this communication hierarchy of channels, then why do young people appear to prefer to text on their mobile phones, rather than call their friends? The stereotypical image of the teen talking for hours to friends on landline phones comes to mind. Voice conversations would be a richer, live mediated experience and serve to reduce the impoverishment of social cues of other mediated communication channels.

The hierarchy proposed in Table 7 accounts only for cellular-based talk or text while participants were engaged with the laptop, so few claims can be made here about overall use of mobile devices for voice or text communication. While the study data provide little insight into this quandary, some may be gleaned from research literature.

Research data suggest that cellular-based talk and text have recently become inverted from that shown in Table 7, as exhibited in a recent Pew study of teen texting habits. Texting is on the rise as the preferred communication channel for teens. The study (Lenhart et al., 2010) finds that in that overall context, texting "has become the primary way that teens reach their friends, surpassing face-to-face contact, email, instant messaging and voice calling as the go-to daily communication tool for this age group" (p. 2). Texting by American teens shot up in the 18 months before the report, from 38%

texting daily in February 2008 to 54% in September 2009. This statistic is definitely on the move and demonstrates the rapidly changing and fluid ways in which teens communicate with both strong and weak ties peers. The cited study does not address any other communication channels displayed in Table 7, which are primarily for supporting weak social ties. However, teens would probably display the same transitive characteristics of media use in those channels as well.

Conversely, the Pew study found that the hierarchy in Table 7 remains accurate with regard to family ties. Voice calling is still the preferred mode for reaching parents and siblings for most teens: 55% say they were most likely to talk by voice with brothers, sisters and other family, while 38% say they are most apt to text with other family members.

Where social networking is concerned, the Pew study found that 25% of all teens contact their friends daily via social network site, versus 54% of all teens who do so via texting. For 15-year-olds, the Pew study found that the preferred communication methods with friends rank in this order: texting (54%), talk face-to-face (42%), calling on a cell phone (41%), social network site (40%, including SNS features like IM and message posts), calling via landline (37%), instant messaging (33%), and email (12%).

Based on the four dimensions identified in this discussion about the choice of communication channel in relation to ties, I suggest two reasons that may account for the inversion described in the Pew findings.

Multitasking may provide one answer. Young people can and do carry on text message conversations with multiple people at the same time, like in chat sessions in Facebook, but could only carry on one mobile phone voice conversation at a time. The

tyranny of traditional media has always been its linearity. The data provided strong support that multitasking within online and between on- and offline media is a very common practice, which was coded *PATT-Mu*.

The second reason may be a question of control and privacy: youth may avoid voice calls because of the very immediacy described above. Perhaps voice calls rob them of the control they have in networked publics with texting, tweeting, and chatting. Voice calls are harder to ignore because the moment of contact is lost if unanswered (the communication imperative again?). In all other channels, the message awaits until answered or deleted. There were no data collected regarding voice mail, but as the name implies, youth probably see that as similar to email in its importance to them as a communication channel.

It is also likely that voice calls are just seen as more invasive of personal space. The Pew study (Lenhart et al., 2010) also found that youth use text messages to schedule voice calls because they believe that young people fear being seen as rude or intrusive for unannounced calls, a characteristic that directly relates to the immediacy of the channel of communication. This suggests that the co-presence and richness of voice communication is probably innately understood by youth, so they adapt their practices to accommodate this conflict. Youth's apparent desire for this sort of control in their networked publics is coded in the "Control & Privacy" thematic pattern (TH-C/P), which is discussed more thoroughly below.

Visual Media and Presence

The importance of visual media to many of the study participants was apparent in this study. This is an area where we should see a great potential for growth in social

media. We already see visual components being added to microblogging sites such as Twitter, where participants can use twitpic.com to share images via Twitter messages while users are mobile. This effectively adds visual media to a text environment limited to 140 characters. More access to visual media are added each day, it seems.

Visual engagement was a frequent activity of study participants, but visual media follow a different logic than the textual/voice channel hierarchy just discussed. Engaging visual media is not an exchange of communication messages, not in the same way as the communication channels discussed so far. Ontologically, both still and moving images have always been understood as documentation of past events, so produce little sense of *liveness* (Auslander, 1999). Therefore, analysis using the social dimension of *co-presence* is not as well suited for visual media. But that is not to say that visual media do not contain and communicate significant social meaning.

In this section, I discuss the aesthetic properties of visual media, and visual presence online in terms of being both intimate and expository.

Aesthetic Meaning

Visual participation in networked publics can take many forms: from high fidelity semiprofessional and professional types of user-generated content (UGC) to lower fidelity amateur content generated by point-and-shoot digital cameras and mobile phones. The contributors of high quality images of representation on-line content are assumed to be trained artists who create more carefully calculated representations, particularly in what I called *anonymous* SNS such as Flickr.com, which is dominated by professional artists and photographers. This type of content is less useful in this analysis because it

probably has little to do with the enactment of everyday social practices of participants, and the study participants did not visit any sites like this.

Conversely, amateur visual UGC is assumed to be much more "spontaneous" representations of self and other. Further, this type of UGC is a critical element and represents a major characteristic of new media participation: anyone can represent self in mediated spaces, with or without formal training or technology instruction. Amateur UGC that is typical of most *nonymous* SNS content merits the most attention in a study of this kind.

The importance of the difference in visual UGC here is that these characteristics help in defining the affordances and limitations of SNS architectures. Default security/privacy settings and features for social interactions are largely defined by the purposes of each SNS. For example, Facebook UGC is primarily intended for a specific *nonymous* membership in a carefully articulated community, whereas Flickr, YouTube, and others like them serve to distribute content widely in networked publics. Often the creators in the latter genre want their UGC to be seen as widely as possible, in order to promote the creator and/or engage as many other participants as possible.

Intimate and Expository Visual Presence

Social meaning in visual media is communicated in a different way. As previously discussed, *co-presence* is the sense of "being with," whereas *presence* is the sense of "being there." The production of presence in images perhaps helps explain the popularity of visual media content on Facebook. Relationships in OSN with images are not immediate, but can possibly achieve the intimate relationship of being present at personal moments in the lives of others. At the same time, visual media on the Internet

can be expository, and the intimate relationship can be with hundreds or even millions of participants.

This dialectic between intimate and expository engagement with visual media is captured in two thematic patterns found in the study. The first is defined by the thematic code, *TH-Stlk: online stalking/voyeur*. Taken from a report made by Amy when she described some of her activities online as being "kinda stalkery," the term is well suited for describing and understanding the intimate and voyeuristic aspects of the participants' engagement with images in the study. This theme describes engagement with the photos of others for a variety of purposes, and is explicated more thoroughly in the context of RQ #4 in the next chapter. Briefly, the ubiquity of user-generated photo imagery online is something that is "new" about new media. In a Facebook community, browsing photo albums is easily accomplished, and becomes a sensual experience metaphorically similar to entering someone's home and taking photo albums off the shelf. The difference is that in this online version, this can be done without others' knowledge of the engagement, as an "invisible audience" (boyd, 2008a; Marwick et al., 2010). The only way other participants would know of a visit is if a comment or "like" was left behind as a trace of the engagement.

The second code theme associated with visual media is *TH-Ph: New narcissism in social economy.* This theme pertains to the expository potential of OSN that is enabled by SNS technology. This theme represents participants who actively post, seek out, and manage images of themselves in Facebook photo albums.

Narcissism in this theme is not meant to have negative connotations for social media participants. In conceptualizing this theme, I concur with Nicolai, Kirchhoff,

Bruns, Wilson, and Saunders (2008), who argue that, "narcissism can be a functional and healthy strategy for dealing with the growing complexity of our modern technological world." Encompassed in this theme are strategies of observing the social construction of personal reputation and managing the personal 'brand' (Lampel & Bhalla, 2007). The concern here is with visual media within the affordances of Facebook's architecture, and not the Internet at large. For a review of those strategies, see Halavais (2009).

The strategy of identity management in Facebook photo albums is somewhat unique to Facebook. Other SNS, like Flickr, Buzznet, and Photo Bucket, are photo-sharing services with architectures designed to provide a public space for participants to make their work broadly available to Everyone by default. User identity is fluid and control over access to images is limited, so they are *anonymous* SNS by nature. A common characteristic of these sites is to provide an even simpler binary level of control over access than Facebook (a tension described in the "Control & Privacy" thematic pattern discussed later): Friends/connections or Everyone. Limiting access to Friends/connections is somewhat contrary to the *raison d'etre* of these sites because the purpose is to make images widely available for networked public consumption.

For some, this level of visual exposure of self may be fun, or even thrilling to an extent. A discussion of the exhibitionist characteristics of social media is also discussed in answer to RQ #4 in the next chapter.

Sonya reports her feelings about Facebook images and the responsibility that comes with posting them.

Sonya (0001): *I don't like putting pictures on Facebook where people look really bad. I hate that when people do that to me, when there is an obvious*

> *picture that makes me look horrible. And then people post it on Facebook. Its like that's kind of rude 'cause you know people are going to respond badly. It's like just for your entertainment…someone else's…Its just I think its rude so I don't do it.*

The *nonymous* networked public of Facebook acts as a middle ground between exposing one's images to a specific online community, versus the entire Internet public. Engagement with Facebook photo albums is a sharing between Friends. Photo album images are predominately produced by an account holder: they are images of themselves, friends, peers, family, and so on: in other words, for sharing with Friends, close ties, and self in online communities. The result is that visual media on Facebook and Flickr differ greatly in goals for posting images and the perceived audience. That changes the content of visual media and the social behavior. I make this assertion based on the backlash Facebook faced when, in December 2009[4], the company changed the default privacy settings[5], perhaps in an attempt to make image sharing on Facebook more like that of Flickr and other sites like it. A result was that personal images became available to Everyone[6]. Previously private information (in the form of images) became public and available to Everyone on the Internet without the participant's knowledge, and remained so until the first time (s)he logged on and made a decision whether to keep the privacy setting changes or revert back to the old ones. The backlash suggests the importance to Facebook participants of controlling access to their UGC, especially visual media, and assumptions about who has access.

---

[4] Facebook Press Release: http://www.facebook.com/press/releases.php?p=133917 (Retrieved 10/15/2010).
[5] For a review of the changes, see http://www.wired.com/epicenter/2009/12/facebook-privacy-update/ (Retrieved 10/15/2010).
[6] For a review of the controversy, see http://www.wired.com/epicenter/2009/12/facebook-ftc-complaint/ (Retrieved 10/15/2010).

Patrolling SNS and Managing Online Presence

Many study participants frequently interacted with their own photo albums, the photo albums of their Friends, and when possible, Friends of Friends. For them, looking at images on Facebook seems to be a leisure activity, one anyone can do at anytime from anywhere in the world. As Amy reports more than once, *"I'm going to try and go to Facebook again...check out the pictures."* Amy, who recently returned from a trip overseas, frequently spent online time looking at her photos of the trip and for albums created by others from the trip. The high level of presence, in the form of nostalgia, is probably what attracted her again and again. Seeing the photos perhaps helped her relive the experience, one that was presumably very important, by recalling being in the presence of other travelers, and places they visited together. There is a high sense of presence, but not co-presence because of the low level of liveness.

On the other hand, this new visual presence afforded by Facebook photo albums has appears to have a downside for some. A common practice in the Internet age is "self-googling," which Nicolai et al. (2008) define as "a self□focussed (sic) concentration of the attention of an individual to themself (sic) by actively monitoring and shaping their persona and perception online" (p. 3). A Google search typically brings up any web page in which one's name appears in the textual content, but usually not images.

Serious research into facial recognition technologies to identify individuals in digital images has been underway for a decade, but is not quite here yet. In response, Facebook has a feature called "tagging," where Facebook users can be identified in images, which then becomes searchable and appear in a tagged user's profile page under "Photos of You." Again, Amy's reports suggest that she seems to take her responsibility

for her online visual presence seriously, (Amy 0014): *"there are a lot of tags, seven photos of me. Let's see which ones I'm going to keep."* At another point, she reported, (Amy 0007): *"Got tagged in a couple of photos, it looks like."* After she viewed one in particular, she removed the tag, an action that serves to hide the image from the image search feature. She made no report of the action but it was done very quickly, then she moved on. Her actions suggest she wanted to stop the distribution of the image, either to her own catalog of images or to "hide" it from a Facebook search by other users, or both. This is probably a healthy concern. After all, digital pixels do not fade. They do not age or turn yellow. Can we live with that, images that may last forever? We have not had to face that for very long, yet.

Within the hierarchy of communication channels, the production of presence through visual engagement with still photographs and video is probably not preferable to the sense of social co-presence made possible by the immediacy of textual chat and message functions in Facebook. Ontologically, photographs have historically been understood as documentation of past events, thus capable of producing a sense of "being there" (presence) when the photograph was taken, rather than "being with" (co-presence) and in the moment. Understood in that way, viewing images would not be a social activity, but this appears to be changing, as so many things have with the evolution of social media. Ito (2005) found that active co-presence is the direction that the role of visual imagery is taking in social media. There were no data regarding mobile photo sharing in the study, but Ito describes "an emergent visual sharing modality—intimate visual co-presence—that is keyed to the personal, pervasive, and intimate nature of social connections via handheld devices" (p. 1). Based on research of camera phone use in

Japan, Ito argues that new mobile photo sharing technologies fill an important social media niche, the production of intimate co-presence, which is a different experience in social media than sharing still photos between peers, as in Facebook photo albums. In particular, she found that couples "enjoyed sharing special and extraordinary visual information" (p. 2) in ways similar to the exchange of text-based "sweet nothings" observed in other research studies.

The implications of this trend in networked publics continue in answer to RQ #4 in the next chapter.

Control of Information in Networked Publics

A significant code pattern to emerge from this study is evidence that young people are more concerned about privacy and security in on-line spaces than they are given credit for in popular and political discourse. Luke reports that he only accepts as Friends people he knows offline:

> Luke (0005): *Uh, most of my friends I think have a 'My Facebook' (sic) and I try not to Friend anybody I don't really know...very well or anything like that. Because that would...I just wouldn't do it. It would make me uncomfortable.*

A common source of moral panic in our increasingly networked society is the loss of privacy, and youth are often depicted as showing disregard for fundamental personal privacy rights by blurring the lines between public and private. Social concern stems from the feeling that traditional binaries of "public" and "private" are breaking down in online mediated spaces, but the data suggest that it is the definitions of public and private that are in flux, rather than simply blurring or disappearing all together.

The young people in this study demonstrated that they are indeed concerned about their personal security and privacy. If the online publics of friendship-driven sites mirror young people's offline lives, they will probably demonstrate the same levels of concern about personal privacy and security online as they would offline. It is their concept of privacy that is changing. Privacy remains important, but it is defined differently by the current generation of teens, thus not what it meant to previous generations.

We must ask: what does privacy mean to young people? For Ann, privacy was having her own computer to access Facebook, rather than sharing computers. She may have a public presence in Facebook, but it is *her* public, and not shared with somebody else.

> Ann (0004): *I really like having this laptop because if I forget to close out of shit, I don't think about people going on Facebook reading all my stuff. I will worry about that like if I leave the house after just being on Facebook, I 'm like 'oh man, did I close out?' Because I don't like the thought of people being in my business. Because it's my business, nobody else's. And I like soldarity (sic), so, I like my solace.*

Ann's report suggests Warren and Brandeis' (1890) famous conception of the "right to be let alone" is relevant in networked publics. Otherwise, perhaps the best definition is rather vague: private is everything that is not public. The ambiguity of the concept of privacy has made it difficult for new media scholars to pin down.

Previous generations tended to equate private information with personal information, the type one might divulge on a job application: such as social security number, birthday, driver's license number, etc., but also medical information, financial

information, and so on. The binary exists in offline public to control, through law and policy, over who has access to what the U.S. Government refers to as Personally Identifiable Information (PII). It is considered private information unless one agrees to make it otherwise in specific instances and for select individuals or institutions.

boyd (2010) argues that online privacy is really about having control over information: how it flows and who has access to it, which means Westin's (1967) definition—the right to control information of oneself—is also relevant. The task of defining privacy in networked publics therefore becomes even more challenging.

In networked publics, young people seem to have a different idea of what information should or should not be public, and control of personal information is what gives them a sense of security and privacy, not the traditional barriers built around private information in order to protect it. When people feel as though control has been taken away from them or they lack the control they need or desire, they become concerned, upset, angry.

A recent study of college students found that three-quarters were concerned about privacy of passwords, social security numbers, and credit card numbers, but not with sharing personal information on Facebook and the like (Jones, Johnson-Yale, Millermaier, & Pérez, 2009). Social networks follow a different logic, it appears. Personal information is a range of more and less private types, and choosing what to reveal and what to conceal is an intense and ongoing process (Livingstone, 2008).

Multiple Networked Publics

As discussed, the participants in this study seem to define appropriate public and private communication channels by levels of intimacy and social ties with other

participants. A pattern regarding the types of information youth make public in networked space, and who should have access, suggests a conception of multiple networked publics. While channels of communication are vertical and hierarchical, they operate within multiple networked public spaces, which are horizontal and overlapping but distinct.

Offline public spaces are not one large space shared by everyone where a private conversation is not an option. Even in public places, there are various levels of privacy available. You can stand in a park and yell, whisper to your neighbor, or find a corner booth in a dark restaurant for an intimate conversation. In offline publics, you have some control over levels of privacy when you share information. Granted, you can never be completely sure just how private. Someone could be eavesdropping, or there could be hidden microphones or cameras, but we generally feel as though we have some control when sharing private information even in public places.

Young people want more control within multiple publics. The limitation in the architectures of many SNS is key to understanding young people's frustrations over control of information in networked public spaces.

Tensions Created by SNS Affordances and Limitations

The Internet was conceived as a means of making massive amounts of information widely available to all participants (Castells, 2001). Because of its design, information distributed over the Internet becomes hard to hide. While it is easier to have some privacy and control of information in offline public spaces, the control of information operates differently in networked publics and young people are frustrated by it, and perhaps more aware of the differences than adult users of social media.

In networked publics, participants find it is much harder to be visible to some and not others (boyd, 2010). They do not seem to mind making PII public, because this is necessary if they want to be found by friends. However, they *are* concerned about who constitutes that public, and would prefer to control the flow of information about themselves across multiple networked publics, but cannot.

Reports and actions by the young people in this study frequently suggested that they would prefer a more granular level of control over Friends in their community. They want to participate in different "publics," one for close friends, one for family members, one for school peers, one for relative strangers and very weak tie associations, etc. It is an inversion of the default: young people want to control the types of publics that have access to their information, rather than the types of information available in public spaces. Information is differentiated not as personal or public, but by which public should see it in the networked public spaces.

Using the Facebook privacy settings to illustrate this idea, I will discuss the tensions and concerns expressed by study participants, which were the result of the lack of control over the flow of personal information within limitations in SNS architectures.

Levels of social ties are not recognized at the Friend level of access on Facebook. A person is designated either a Friend or not, and that is the extent of the users' direct control over the flow of personal information. It is that binary of the Facebook architecture: once accepted as a Friend, a person is admitted into an "inner circle" of the social community created by the account holder. In essence, the user defines this community by who is accepted as a Friend, an exclusive group that has unfettered access

to everything posted by the account holder—comments, images, and biographical information.

The Friend/Not Friend dialectic in the security settings do not provide the levels of control over information that young people in this study wanted, leading to the code theme that describes the tensions and strategies surrounding this conflict.

Gilbert and Karahalios (2009) help to confirm this tension among SNS users. They point out that relationships are what make social media social, but regarding tie strength research and social media, they concluded, "Despite many compelling findings along this line of research, social media does not incorporate tie strength or its lessons" (p. 1). Their research is to develop tie strength models that map social data to tie strength, and distinguish between strong and weak ties based on analysis on online messages. They hope the findings will help SNS to improve their privacy control settings.

Allie is one exemplar of this tension between privacy and inclusiveness. She demonstrated that she at least sometimes gives careful consideration with whom she becomes a Friend. While she did not verbally report on this, I observed her as follows: Allie received several friend requests. She accepted several outright, but one request was from a boy she apparently did not know, but went to her school. She checked his profile page and there were mutual friends. She sent a direct message asking who he was and left the Friend request pending, deferring a decision, presumably while awaiting a response. A few days later, she has a friend in the room. She opens the request. They try to decide whether to accept. Allie and her friend reach a decision and she finally elects to ignore the request, thereby declining to add him as a Friend. Allie appears to take the responsibility of her network of Friends seriously. She did not want to reject him outright,

and even asked him for more information before finally deciding to ignore his request.

The frustration over a lack of granular control extends to images as well as other content. Amy (0005) reported: *"I really hate when people you don't really know comment on pictures...of you. Kind of awkward."*

Several of the study participants noted that they especially wanted more control over parents as Friends. Family and other adult acquaintances present a unique tension for young people. Parents are yet another public over which youth would prefer to have more control. Family is a strong tie, but youth do not want parents "stalking" them on Facebook. To Friend a parent is metaphorically like allowing them to sit in on conversations with peers and close friends. Ann describes this tension:

> Ann (0004): *It's kinda funny when you go out on weekends and take a bunch of pictures. They're not even bad pictures, they're just pictures. They'll be like, yah, don't put that on Facebook. It's not because they're bad pictures, it's because like my Mom has a Facebook and she'll definitely ask a bunch of questions. And its just like I don't feel like dealing with her questions.*

When accepting a Friend of any kind on Facebook, youth must have to ask themselves, "Do I want to let this person into my inner circle of Friends? That may limit the sorts of things I can talk about, because adults and weak tie peers would become privy to the things I say to my close friends." The only other option is to decline their friendship request, but what message does that send: not accepting as a Friend one's own mother or father?

During one session, Luke accepted a Friend request from an adult, then immediately reported regretting it.

Luke (0006): *Actually, I might undo that because I try to keep Friends on Facebook in my age group. She was my life science teacher 2 years ago.*

As an adult acquaintance, I attempted to Friend the first 2 participants in the study thinking it might be helpful to have access to their profiles, Friends list, and posts. Allie accepted me seemingly without hesitation or comment, whereas Jake said, *"Well, I guess I should confirm him. He's going to be seeing this. If he sees me ignore it, he'll know I ignored it."* I recognized immediately that choosing to Friend might be a source of tension between adults and youth in Facebook. I did not try to Friend any other study participants.

Beyond the articulated list of friends, the current privacy format allows the account holder only three levels of control over who can see UGC or personal content—Friends only, Friends of Friends, or Everyone. Friends of Friends are people over whom the user has no control since others accept or reject their Friends, and Everyone has become an astonishingly large number of people. On July 21, 2010, Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg announced that Facebook passed the 500 million-member mark[7]. So, outside your circle of Friends, the choice is potentially thousands or millions.

Responses to Social Media Tensions and Limitations

The themes and patterns that emerged suggested what appear to be new practices and strategies in response to the tensions and limitations of OSN in their everyday activities online. The first was to manipulate existing technological affordances for unintended purposes. The second was to essentially create a new social currency that

[7] "It's Official: Facebook Passes 500 Million Users." Retrieved from http://mashable.com/2010/07/21/facebook-500-million-2/ on 07/21/2010.

circulates in social economies delineated by SNS architectures and affordances. Last, OSN has become *necessary* and even *addictive* for some participants.

Manipulating Existing Technologies

Data collected in this study provided examples of how young people deal with the limitations of social media (PATT-DL), the one-size-fits-all Friends relationship category afforded by Facebook. Facebook's only feature in response to the tensions appears to be the ability to sort Friends into groups, but the initial practical application for that within the current architecture applies only to the live chat function. A participant can turn on/off groups so that others can/cannot see that they are online. Presumably, this saves one from potential embarrassment of having to decide whether to respond when someone else attempts to establish a chat session. There were several times when chats sessions were either initiated or received by the study participants, and were ignored. Facebook's use of the group function seems to be expanding as this document is produced. With no apparent fanfare from Facebook about this functionality, I noted recently that groups have some new uses: This is undoubtedly in response to the tensions discussed above, but I speculate Facebook is not foregrounding these changes because they tend to fragment the community, rather than contribute to its expansion.

I suggest that the relationship between message types and social ties noted earlier is perhaps specifically in response to this tension. Participants find the more granular control they want by equating messaging methods with the type of person with whom they want to communicate. In other words, they select the channel appropriate to the relationship with others, based on the affordances and limitations of each on the scale of intimate to public. No one channel or SNS can meet all these needs, at least not yet.

In what appear to be additional efforts to overcome this tension, Facebook participants take it upon themselves to find do-it-yourself solutions within the technological features provided by the site. Young people express differences in tie levels by manipulating the "relationships" feature in Facebook: several participants demonstrated the strategy of listing Friends as family members, usually along with their actual family, making no online distinction. This is presumably a way of differentiating strong tie friends for weaker tie Friends.

Sarah (0001) was updating her relationships and reported, *"Look at all my little siblings...my mother who I refuse to use online."* She had 10 people listed as siblings, and only one was her offline sibling. Her mother was listed as family but Sarah did not sound like she was happy that her mother was a Friend. Tom, Sarah, Sonya, and Luke manipulated their relationships as well. Tom (0003) spent some time on this, and reported, *"just updating some of the people that are in relationships with (me), um, not really that. Some of these are my cousins, some are my friends."*

Tom had a back and forth engagement with the relationship status feature, a function which lets people know with whom one is in a romantic relationship, and the kind of relationship it is (married, dating, "it's complicated," etc.) He had a married relationship listed with a girl, and then changed it to another girl. In a matter of hours, he subsequently received many comments about the change from Friends, including the "jilted" girl. He soon decided to change it back to the original girl and sent his apologies and a renewed request to "marry." This was all on a public Facebook channel, so all of his Friends were able to see it. Tom and his Friends were manipulating the function for their amusement, but also to single out especially close friendships.

The relationship category for Friends was used for other unanticipated purposes as well.

Amy (0004): *This is a kid I pretended to be in a relationship with and it freaked a bunch of people out. Because we put it on Facebook... So I undid it and now it's just a big joke. I think it was pretty funny.*

For these participants, the falsifying of information in SNS was usually for amusement, but this practice can be used to protect privacy as well (coded as DE for deception). Only a few examples were coded, but this practice seems very relevant to understanding youth culture. Lenhart and Madden (2007) found that almost half of respondents to a Pew Internet study falsified information on their profiles, both to protect themselves and be funny or playful. Youn (2005) found that more than half of the high school students sampled provided false information on commercial web sites, 43% left the sites without providing information or went to sites that did not require personal information.

These practices were more prevalent in older teens and adults. Youn (2009) speculated that younger children are unused to providing false or withholding private information, or are simply less savvy about the benefits of doing so.

Notifications as the New Social Currency (TH-Not).

While many social aspects of OSN mirror offline practices, a new set of practices seems to have emerged as an adaption to the affordances and constraints of new media architectures. Youth culture has developed a new currency in the social economy, which are *notifications*. I discussed what I called the "new narcissism" in the social economy

(TH-Ph) earlier, which is also relevant to this code theme because self-gratification is a reward of sorts for the actions and reports coded in this theme.

Notifications are Facebook's method of listing the number of like/replies/comments that participants received for their contributions in networked publics. The number of notifications is perceived as having a direct relationship to levels of popularity, thus social success in OSN. These text-based forms of engagement are a primary means for building social capital in online social networking (Brandtzaeg & Heim, 2011), although photographs play an important role because they can garner a like and comment from others as well.

Pierre Bourdieu (1986) defines social capital as "the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition" (p. 248). Nan Lin's (1986) definition of social capital is more useful to OSN research because it offers a more individualistic approach: "Investment in social relations with expected returns in the marketplace."

In this study, responses between a participant and her/his Friends became the most important aspect of social capital building and one's self-perception as popular and/or well liked in one's social circles. Blake provides the most effective example of this phenomenon:

> Blake (0001): *Wow, I see no indications [notifications] and that makes me really...I don't know, I don't know, because I've been doing a lot of stuff on Facebook lately. Seeing no notifications makes me feel like I haven't done anything.*

Building social capital and the perception of popularity on Facebook was represented by the quantity of textual engagements with other, but manifested primarily in *notifications*: direct messages and the numbers of likes, comments, pokes, and replies received for activities on Facebook. After chatting, these textual channels have the highest sense of co-presence of online engagements. Checking notifications was always the first order of business on login, and reports mentioned several times the pleasure of many notifications, and the disappointment if there were few. Several reports reflected on this theme specifically:

> Sonya (0001): (Upon login to Facebook, checking notifications) *...and I was kind of pissed that I had only one notification earlier. Usually I have 20. I guess I'm just not cool anymore.*
>
> And in a later case, Sonja says excitedly, *"Ooh, 5 notifications. Ooh."*
>
> Amy (0000) notes, "*One notification. Great* (sounded disappointed)*."*

To build on social capital, status updates were often designed to elicit interest and comments from Friends, rather than convey a state or condition of being:

> Tina (0002): *I love quoting songs for my status. People always seem to like it.*

Some saw the act of building social capital as transcending the actual social value of OSN:

> Sonya (0001): *I like lying in my statuses because people are like freaking out. I love people's reactions to my statuses, because no matter what, I always have a little comment or a little "like" symbol. I feel liked, I don't know why... I love when there are like 20 comments on my status. I'm like I'm so cool. People actually care.*

Conversely, like all social norms, there are limits. With notifications, it is to the quantity of participation: one can be perceived as trying *too* hard. Some participants were annoyed with people that provided status updates too often.

> Sonya (0000): *(XX) updates his Facebook status like every hour...this guy updates his Facebook status every single minute. It's like I'm going to the beach, I'm going to sit on the porch, I going to my room.*

And even a little jealousy about other's popularity as defined by the quantity and quality of participation:

> Sonya (0001): *I kinda don't like it when people get like 50,000 comments on stupid statuses. I don't know, I get angry sometimes...*

The literature on social capital in online communities suggests that the distinction between strong and weak ties is also a factor in building social capital. Social capital can be a difficult term to pin down in new media spaces, but Baym (2010) defines it in networked publics as "the resources people attain because of their network of relationships" (p. 82). She explains that social support in online groups are a means of contributing to one another's accumulated social capital in two ways: "bonding" and "bridging" (Putnam, 1995, as cited in Baym, 2010). Baym describes bonding capital in this context as an exchange between close ties that bonds them more closely together. Conversely, bridging capital is exchanged between those with weaker tie relationships, and even allows for expansion of such networks, which, as already discussed, SNS are very well suited to support.

Facebook Is so Boring, Yet so Addictive

The discussion so far suggests that most of the participants found in OSN a substitute for face-to-face socializing and as a backchannel for private conversations. With regard to social media, as a principle element of new media, the young people in this study did seem to have a strong interest in maintaining social ties online, but appeared to perceive OSN as *boring, but addictive*, which I interpret as *necessary (i.e.; a communication imperative)*.

The theme emerging from this study, coded (*TH-B*), is from the participants' orally reported comments that social media is "boring," even while continuing to access it. The theme code is perhaps best expressed in the message content of a live chat comment made by Tom (0008) to a Facebook Friend, *"Facebook is so boring, yet so addictive."* Tom (0007) must have gotten the idea the previous day, when a news item said, "Facebook is so boring, yet extremely addicting." Three of Tom's Facebook Friends had already stated their "like" for this statement by the time he saw it. He made no report of having seen it, but I happened to mark it in the timeline thinking the idea seemed to relate to this research question. It must have resonated with Tom on some level, as well, because he used the sentiment the next day in a chat conversation with a Friend. The Friend replied, *"It's killing me slowly*."

While it may be boring, the data collected in this study suggested that their participation was also motivated by the social anxiety over missing out on the conversation:

Ann (0005): *I guess it's kind of blow (sic). It's like you so want those notifications that you will continuously check your profile just to see if you have any notifications. And I check my phone all the time.*

Ann makes OSN sound like an addiction, "you *so want* those notifications" (my emphasis.)

These two examples represent an apparent dialectical tension between "boring" and "addictive," which suggests that participants find it somehow *necessary* to actively participate in OSN for the construction and maintenance of self. The perspective discussed earlier, the "communication imperative" (Walther, 1994), may pertain again. To go offline would be to separate from the social herd. It may be informative to explore further this tension that at least some young people have with Facebook.

The statement about being bored but addicted was repeated by Tom, and given added social value by others who selected "like," suggesting that these participants may indeed see themselves almost *dependant* on mediated social discourse, thus it is "addicting." It has thus become a *necessary* aspect of youth culture today, whether they enjoy the participation or not.

Talking about MySpace, Ann reported:

Ann (0004): *Nothing's ever on MySpace. I don't why I keep going to it. I really don't like it. Like, I hate MySpace. But I'll go on it…not everyday like I do Facebook, but every once in a while.*

Yet, Ann checked MySpace during two different cases, and said essentially the same thing each time. She could not stay away even as she expressed her dismay at being there. The second time she reported this:

Ann (0005): *I know I say this every single time I log on. I hate MySpace. The only time I check is if I'm bored, or at night when there is nothing else to do and I wanna see who's on. And its funny that people actually keep up with MySpace.*

OSN addiction could be both textual and visual. As mentioned, Amy especially seemed to enjoy photo albums when on Facebook. She checked for new ones in every Facebook episode, and went through them meticulously, even as she was exasperated with them, as in: *"When is this album over?"* Amy's report (0014) suggests that she does not want to miss anything, even as she is frustrated with the time spent. As quoted earlier in this discussion, Amy reported exasperation with the time required of her to keep up online,

Amy (0016): *"(reading on the login screen) 'Facebook helps you connect and share with people in your life.' More like Facebook is a time-sucker..."*

Yet, at the beginning of this same episode, she reported,

Amy (0016): *"First thing I am going to do is check my Facebook. See if anyone sent me messages, or any new pictures up...or any interesting statuses maybe."* Then she adds, *"most statuses are pretty annoying, but we'll see."*

Like Ann, Tom, and Amy above, OSN is annoying and boring, but they do it anyway, as if they cannot help themselves. Granted, Tom's message was probably intended to be nothing more than humorous or irreverent behavior, but the fact that Tom remembered and repeated the phrase a day later suggests it meant something more to

him. This seems to support the notion of a constant, unresolved, and perhaps irresolvable, dialectical tension for these people on Facebook.

What this line of thinking suggests is that despite all the hype about today's youth as "digital natives," they may not be so different from the digital immigrants in terms of sociability, at least in their preference for face-to-face connections over mediated connection. These young people find it *necessary* to be on Facebook because their friends are participating online. Indeed, participation is *necessary* and *imperative*, even as they prefer other forms of communication that are more intimate, were they available.

Youth probably do not recognize this aspect of social media participation. For them, OSN just represent another form of socializing that must be practiced if they want to stay connected and in the loop with their friends and family.

Summary

In this chapter, the major findings of the grounded approach to theory were explicated and cross-referenced with the relevant research literature. Many of the theories discussed—social presence, rich media, and social ties—were areas of research drawn primarily from organizational communication research, and were reviewed in this study with the guidance of the young people themselves. Study data and existing theories merged based on the teens' reports and their actions, leading to this discussion on how young people manage identity and make meaning in networked public spaces.

The major finding that emerged from the axial coding across the four code categories was a *leitmotiv* pattern suggesting a complex but stable connection between interpersonal communication channel options, the relative "liveness" of the channel, and the social relationship between participants. This pattern appeared to have a structuring

influence on communication practices in networked publics, and led to some tensions and concerns in terms of controlling the flow of information in those spaces.

The findings suggest that the young people did not appear to be conscious of a hierarchy of communication channels, at least explicitly. They did not report assigning a value to the relative richness or sense of co-presence in a social media channel. They appear to move seamlessly between them, choosing the one that is most convenient, or the one most appropriate given the recipient of the message, and without much conscious thought.

During recruitment of participants, I noted how few of the participants had the means to contact Friends except through Facebook, suggesting that many of them represent very weak tie affiliations. To an extent, study participants seemed surprised at this, as if contacting them in another way never occurred to them, and it had never been a problem before. Each weak tie had been assigned a particular communication channel, and revision had not been needed. Facebook communication systems seem to satisfy the study participants' needs in this weak tie "economy" of socializing, so they were unprepared or uninterested in contacting them any other way.

New media practices tend to be much more migratory and fragmented than mass media ones, especially among young people. The stable relationship between specific communication channels and social ties in interpersonal communication is susceptible to change as technologies evolve, but I postulate that the reasons for selecting them remain constant: liveness and the sense of co-presence as it relates to the tie strength of social relationships. From the review of social tie literature used to validate the *leitmotiv* articulated in this study, it is clear that changes in media can disrupt communication

systems, and established links between channel and tie strength can break down. As Haythornthwaite (2002) explains, “changes in media can also disrupt communication pathways and recast whole social networks” (p. 386). Haythornthwaite goes on to explain how weak tie bonds are more susceptible than strong ties, because strong ties typically use multiple media devices and communication channels to maintain ties, giving those communication networks some level of redundancy. It seems weak ties are more easily created in OSN, by simply accepting a request, but they are also more easily broken.

In the next chapter, the code themes and patterns are discussed in the context of the research questions posed as the goals of this project.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS

In this chapter, the data and findings of the study are examined for the insights they might provide in the context of the research questions posed in Chapter 3. In the sections that follow, each research question is restated, the major findings are summarized, and a discussion of their implications is provided. These sections are followed by an explanation of the limitations to data collection identified in this study and a few thoughts in closing.

Research Question One

How is identity constructed and maintained by young people through the practices of new media use?

This study addressed the answer to RQ1 from two different directions, then in the context of the potential for online social networking (OSN) and higher education.

Taking the last element in that question first, the definition of new media proved slippery. I proposed to define the term in Chapter 2 as "the intersection of traditional media with digital media" (Ito, 2010) and the "remediation" (Bolter & Grusin, 2000) that inevitably follows the emergence of each new medium. Following the coding process, I further defined new media on the basis of user engagement as divided between social

networking sites (SNS) and Non-SNS. This division suggests that it is appropriate to think of new media engagement in terms of solitary and social activities.

Returning to the first element of the question, the data suggested that youth find *value* for new media in their lives as a means to an end—socializing and entertainment—but not in and of themselves. Value appears to be a key dimension for understanding the role of OSN in identity construction and maintenance by young people.

Finally, the data also allow us to consider the ramifications for the application of new media by higher education. It would appear that the possibilities are likely limited as the intentions of the communicative processes may well be in conflict. Each of these discussions follows immediately.

New Media Engagement as Solitary and Social Activities

The literature review demonstrated that new media are a key component of entertainment and socializing in youth culture, but to get at the question about how identity is constructed and maintained requires that we look at two distinct activities separately: new media engagement as solitary entertainment or social activity. Non-SNS engagement is solitary. SNS engagement is both solitary and social, giving it unique characteristics.

New media as solitary entertainment. In this study, the engagement with entertainment media was not interpreted as a social activity in the same sense as interacting with others in networked publics. Many examples were coded of new media engagement for entertainment purposes—watching videos on YouTube, Netflix, playing video games online, etc.—but these activities did not provide much data in terms of new insights into the central question of how youth make meaning and identity with new

media. Entertainment activities online generally reflect traditional offline media consumption habits of watching TV, listening to the radio, etc. The mobility and customizability of media consumption is where most of the changes associated with these media occur.

As a solitary activity, some research argues that new media engagement detracts from time spent socializing with others in offline situations (Nie, 2001). There is concern that new media has become "an integral part of the search for solitary entertainment" (Davis & Owen, 1998, p. 40). Jake's activities may be an example of this trend. He demonstrated little interest in socializing and maintaining social ties online, so his media engagement was focused on nonsocial web sites that provided him with solitary entertainment, such as gaming or humor web sites.

New media as social activity. Jake's solitary engagement with new media was more of an exception than the rule. The other 10 participants placed a greater emphasis on socializing via new media. I did not ask the participants to visit any particular web sites so their interest in OSN was probably representative of their typical everyday practices.

One of the primary benefits of OSN in contemporary society is that they allow people to turn solitary engagement with a computer into a social activity. Identity can be constructed and maintained in always available networked publics that offer many channels for interpersonal communication.

As a social activity, some research suggests that OSN usage detracts from forms of social interaction that are perceived to be of a higher caliber, such as face-to-face communication or telephone-facilitated communications (Kraut, Boneva, Cummings,

Helgeson, & Crawford, 2002). While young people would probably agree that the higher quality of face-to-face socializing is preferable, this study suggests that, rather than being viewed as a deteriorated or distorted form of social interaction, OSN is a *valuable* extension to offline socializing.

New Media as Valuable

Perhaps the best way to characterize the social *value* of new media activity for the young people in this study is to acknowledge that the participants tended to use new media in ways that reflect offline interests and practices, thus mirroring and reinforcing their pre-existing offline social networks, as well as solitary entertainment priorities and interests. Youth culture is increasingly dependant on computers and cell phones to stay connected (Ling & Yttri, 2005), but the evidence suggests that most OSN participation is always to support the construction and maintenance of their offline social networks of family and friends. This characteristic of new media has been well documented in research (Hargittai, 2008; Haythornthwaite, 2002; Lenhart & Madden, 2007; Subrahmanyam & Greenfield, 2008; Zhao et al., 2008).

As a mirror, Facebook can be a source of social anxiety and stress for young people in many of the same ways offline social interaction can. On the other hand, evidence from reports and actions provided a glimpse of the potential *value* that participants gain from OSN for identity construction and maintenance.

An important element is the level of sociability OSN provides transcends offline limitations of time and geographic space. While any participant of OSN benefits from this, it is especially the value for young people because they often must rely on others for

transportation, money, and the other requirements of contemporary offline youth socializing, or "hanging out."

They provide a space for young people to express themselves in ways that may be difficult offline. The value here is that online spaces can provide an alternative space for contemporary youth culture to be enacted and without adults' eavesdropping.

Ramifications for Education

There are potential ramifications for commerce, mass media, and social communication strategies, and especially for education from the findings in this study.

These institutions attempt to engage youth through OSN, probably believing that they are going where the young people are. This study suggests that youth would prefer not allowing these connections to interact with them within media channels producing higher levels of co-presence and intimacy. Young people would prefer to keep such engagements at the low end of the channel hierarchy.

In other words, as adults try to find ways of engaging young culture through social media, young people will probably resist that engagement, and if necessary, switch to other forms of social networking and communication channels to avoid adult intrusion. Let us not forget: social media are *social*. Educational institutions, along with other types of organizations, have many different reasons for trying to find ways of engaging young people through social media. In many examples, they approach social media much like a business: students are clients for whom to provide the services and information they need or want. OSN is a good medium to fulfill this mission. Institutions must bear in mind that new media *is* the networked public place where young people are hanging out, but their type of engagement *is not* social interaction. Youth probably would prefer not to have

school-related information on the same "channel" as social interactions, but at this time, the architectures of SNS do not yet afford enough differences.

Further, as more adults in the lives of young people join Facebook, the tensions in social media for youth will heightened. A recent survey finds that the percentage of younger people (18-30) using Facebook, a key demographic for Facebook, is beginning to shrink in percentage of growth while older users remain constant[8]. This may be the beginning of a trend away from Facebook for young people, leaving us to wonder, at least for now, where they will go next for social media engagement.

These conclusions should cause educators to question some of the assumptions about OSN and students, and the goals for its use in education. The findings here suggest that young people may be no more interested in being connected to their school outside of traditional boundaries in time and space than previous generations of youth, despite the hype about what it means to be a "digital kid." In an era where millions of dollars are being spent integrating technology into the educational process, young people may actually resist the idea.

This impacts the ongoing work of teachers and educational institutions to integrate social media as a communication tool with and between students. As discussed in the control and privacy section of the previous chapter, young people probably do not want teachers "hanging out" in their networked public world. Teachers' place in youth social spheres is at school and on the other end of an e-mail message.

Further, even if youth accept distance educational pedagogies and social media interactions with teachers and organizations, the physical school remains central to

[8] Inside Facebook (http://www.insidefacebook.com/2010/07/06/facebooks-june-2010-us-traffic-by-age-and-sex-users-aged-18-44-take-a-break-2/). Retrieved on 08/01/2010.

building social ties in both on- and offline worlds. Most social ties in youth culture are created within the educational structures of schools and after-school extra curricular programs like sports or performance-based activities. This calls into question the focus in online educational modules and distance learning. Internet-based communication and educational technology may not be the panacea for educational enlightenment that it has been portrayed, because such goals do not, and perhaps cannot, account for the social aspects of the school experience for young people, nor effectively participation of adults.

Research Question Two

What specific patterns and practices are evident as youth (age 13-17) make meaning and construct identity in technology-mediated social environments?

In this section, patterns and themes are briefly revisited. Although they have been referred to previously, some details remain in order to address this question. First, I draw some conclusions about the future of OSN based on the *leitmotiv* identified. Then, I make some observations about the language of OSN: teen talk. Last, I note the ease with which the participants accept new technologies into their lives in the context of treating the study laptop like a person.

The Leitmotiv

In looking to the future, the trend in social media may be in two directions: more mobile and more visual (i.e., video chat and messaging.) Regarding the relationship between media channels and social ties, and production of co-presence, three conclusions may be drawn.

First, the primary reasons for going online seemed to be reinforcing offline social ties and interacting with weak tie affiliations. If the theorized relationship between co-

presence and social ties were generalizable, then continuing this reasoning with newer SNS technologies suggests that video chat could be a central function in the future of social media. Tina and Blake both downloaded video chat software, although their activities were not recorded. That sort of technology perhaps has the highest levels of liveness and co-presence of any online media. Video chat software is currently limited as a social media by the 1-to-1 or 1-to-few options for engagement in the current technologies like Skype and ooVoo, so a community cannot be formed. The video chat site, Chatroulette (http://chatroulette.com) appears to be an effort to overcome this limitation by creating online rooms where users can go to randomly find and connect to other people for a video chat. However, this site is designed to be an *anonymous* SNS as defined in this study, therefore young people will probably shy away from it, as did participants of this study from Twitter. Despite these limitations, it is reasonable to believe that solutions will be found in the future, if the market is there.

Second, the laptop computer itself was not always the choice for accessing SNS and other communication channels. Mobile phones are becoming smarter and young people seem to appreciate the convenience afforded them by mobile computing. The coding of Tom, Ann, and Luke's activities provided evidence that they accessed Facebook from their mobile phone often enough to suggest mobile access is their preferred method. This probably means that their laptop activities were mostly for the benefit of the study. Ito (2005) has found an emerging connection between camera phones and intimate relationships, which ties these two trends together. That is probably an area of tremendous growth in OSN.

Third, I should note that youth practices observed in this study probably differ across global cultural groups, so these findings may apply specifically to American culture. The possibility is that the channel hierarchy may vary in other countries. For example, Ling's (2004) research with Norwegian teens suggested that the number of friends in a mobile phone directory equated to popularity and a perception of being well liked. Perhaps it is the difference between culture and/or geography and/or timing in the rise of OSN, or SNS vs. mobile device, but in this study, having too many Friends seems to be burdensome to the study participants (see TH-C/P discussion.)

Teen Talk

There were ample examples of "teen talk" as a means of putting social cues back in mediated communication, made necessary because of what Nancy Baym (2010) describes as "mediation as impoverishment" (p. 51). Teen talk is thought to be one response to the loss of face-to-face social cues in mediated communication. Many well-known teen talk shorthand comments like "lol" and "haha" were noted in comments and chats. Some used these shorthand cues more than others during the study, but always to make clear when they were making a joke or teasing someone. In an interesting example of teen talk for other apparent purpose, Allie (0013) wrote this in a chat session, "i g2g c ya l8r!" ("I've got to go, see you later," for the uninitiated.) Given that she was using a full-size qwerty keyboard on the laptop, as opposed to more limited mobile phone keyboard options, there appear to be reasons for using "teen talk" beyond simply filling in for the impoverished social cues, or keyboard efficiency. Almost any culture has its own language that is unique to the group interaction, which helps to define the group. These types of textual cues probably began because of the limitations of mobile phone

keypads, but has since become a way of defining one's self as a member of contemporary youth culture.

Treating the Computer Like a Person

An interesting observation from the study was how comfortable the participants generally were with the computer in their personal spaces. They talked to it (me) as if the computer were a social entity. Many participants directly addressed the computer by saying hello or good morning at the start of a case, and even going so far as to confiding their thoughts and feelings about family and friends. They appeared to confirm what Reeves and Nash (1996) suggested more than a decade ago, that humans have little trouble accepting a computer as a social entity. In their experiments using the same interpersonal models and methods used in human-to-human communication, Reeves and Nash substituted one side with a computer and found that people treated the computer as they would a person in interpersonal situations. Their work focused only on the interpersonal relationship between people and the computer, not on the mediated effects on communication between two or more people through the computer over the Internet. This observation remains relevant because computer mediated communication (CMC) research has begun to acknowledge that there are many other layers of mediating technologies at work in such interactions: from the computer screen to the software choice to the type of network connection. Thus, this activity by participants brings focus to Reeves and Nash's work by suggesting that interpersonal relationships with the technologies themselves are but one part of the complex layers of mediated communicative experiences that should be examined in order to better understand the social relationship between youth and the technology itself.

Research Question Three

In what ways do young people gain access, participate, and create and/or maintain user-generated content in new media environments, given the affordances and constraints of each technology?

Up to now, I have discussed several patterns and themes that emerged from the data: the relationship between social ties and media channels, manipulation of the interface to overcome Friends limitations on social ties, concerns for security and privacy, constructions of boredom and social capital. Beyond that, no significant general patterns or themes emerged with regard to the ways in which the participants produced or interacted with UGC within the affordances and limitations of online social networking.

The relatively short time each participant had the laptop may be a factor, but what were noticeably missing from the practices observed in this study were examples of participatory media culture. As a digital media educator, this was something I had hoped to observe. The laptops had Adobe Creative Suite software on them, as well as some freeware video and audio editing software.

Participatory Media Culture

In Chapter 2, the notion of participatory culture (Jenkins, 2006, 2009) was outlined as a potential framework for this analysis. Given the statistics claiming that more than half of teens are producers of user generated content (UGC) as well as consumers (Lenhart & Madden, 2005), I had hoped to see some examples of content creation beyond simple text comments and photo uploading. To that end, the laptops included the current Adobe Creative Suite of computer graphic programs, a freeware web editor and video

editor, and some other software for creating UGC. Some participants seemed interested when this was demonstrated, but none took advantage of it during the study.

Luke was the only participant to refer to more technically advanced forms of UGC. He reported on, and played for the camera, a video posted on YouTube that he made using Apple iMovie, and a video a friend made. The friend had his own YouTube channel with numerous videos available. Both videos Luke reported about appear to be assignments for classes at school, so not for personally creative or entertainment purposes.

In terms of content creation, Lenhart (2010) finds that by 2009, 38% of teens surveyed share content (versus 30% of adults), 21% remix content online (vs. 15% adults), and 14% blog (versus 15% adults). I did not observe much evidence of "a culture with relatively low barriers to artistic expression and civic engagement" (Jenkins, 2009), but there could be a number of circumstances surrounding the study that may be considered mitigating: The sample method of selecting Friends as subjects could produce a pool of like-minded people with similar interests who have (or do not have) similar skill sets learned in and around school classes; one week with a laptop and graphic software was not enough time to establish new practices in this area; and this age group may not have enough experience with new media technologies and architectures to distribute technologically more advanced content like videos and web pages just yet.

Allie was the only participant to display an interest in "convergence culture" online activity as Jenkins (2006) defines it. She frequently visited an online site where participants submitted and voted on designs for the shirts that the site then sold (threadless.com). The site is an example of a phenomenon dubbed "crowdsourcing"

(Brabham, 2008) that is a result of the "cognitive surplus" (Shirky, 2010) that can be harnessed on the Internet, and as examples of a "collective intelligence" (Jenkins, 2006; Lévy, 1997) that is being enabled through digital connections, for commercial but also more altruistic purposes.

There was some evidence of civic engagement in this study, an aspect of participatory media culture, but only relatively passive engagement such as posting and "liking" Facebook messages with political points of view. Civic engagement has been on the decline in the United States over the last few decades (Putnam, 1995), but there are some who argue that social media may help reverse that trend (Smith, Schlozman, Verba, & Brady, 2009).

More research on this point is needed, but despite the potential of the Internet and free democratic expression and some high profile international examples of using OSN for social activism, social media may not lend itself well to organizing such activities (Sampson, McAdam, MacIndoe, & Weffer-Elizondo, 2005). Facebook is a good tool for managing a great quantity of Friends and providing access to weak ties acquaintances. These are a great source of new ideas and information, but may not be a good foundation for activism, especially if there is some risk to self, like the sit-in tactics of social movements in the United States and abroad. Further, the lack of a hierarchical structure in social media would make organizing difficult. Networked publics, in many ways, represent the opposite of hierarchies, and the ties that bind Facebook Friends as a group are loose. On Facebook, a Friend is not quite the same as an offline friend, so OSN would probably not be a good tool for social activism.

While Facebook might not be a foundation for organizing social movements, research is beginning to suggest that there are some benefits for civic engagement emerging from OSN participation. The notable exception is OSN and their relationship to local activities in "neighborhoods, voluntary groups, religious institutions, and public spaces" (Hampton, Lee, & Her, 2011, p. 3). Hampton (In Press) argues that,

> overall network diversity is a more consistent and substantive predictor of civic and civil behaviors than the size or heterogeneity of the small number of ties that make up the core network of most people.

Weak ties in OSN can represent a very diverse source network, which is a predictor of democratic engagement (Hampton, In Press).

Research Question Four

Are there assumptions, perceptions, and concerns expressed by young people as they engage new media environments in everyday life?

The concerns reported by the participants about control of information and their definition of privacy were discussed earlier. In addition, data contained references to perceptions and actions that appear to relate to the concerns and anxieties discussed in the opening chapters of this document. First, there were apparently misplaced fears of *anonymous* SNS observed in the study. Second, an interpretation of the data suggests an evolution of the participant-observer nature of social interaction in network publics, and the emergence of voyeurism as entertainment in network publics. Each is discussed in turn.

Misplaced Fears?

Young people's concern for their privacy and safety online has already been discussed. There was also specific evidence of unease about participating in *anonymous*

OSN among some participants. Adults at home or school may have instilled these fears, because the concerns do not seem to reflect actual engagement with or knowledge of the sites or their architectures.

As Sarah (0004) logged into Facebook, she reported, *"This is one of those times I wish I had MySpace. I've never had Twitter. Twitter is just a crazy place for all the rapists to get together and do whatever they want to do."* There was nothing I saw in her activities on her screen at that moment to motivate this comment. She apparently wished she had a page on MySpace, even as other participants said they disliked MySpace. Accounts are free, so it may be that her parents did not allow it for some reason. Perhaps the reason is because her parents perceive MySpace as an inappropriate or even dangerous networked public place for young people to hang out. MySpace's architecture is less restrictive than Facebook's in terms of selectivity, thus safety from online predators.

Further, neither comment seems grounded in the commonly held perceptions and criticisms of these SNS. They do demonstrate that Sarah has developed a perception about the relative security and personal safety afforded by different SNS like Twitter, no matter how misplaced or distorted. Both comments may be the result of outside influences attempting to instill some caution in Sarah about social media, by peers or adults (parents, teachers, etc.) or both. This also demonstrates that online concerns mirror offline concerns, and that moral panics and social concerns may emerge largely from a lack of knowledge about specific new media technologies.

Negative Behaviors?

There were a few reports about negative behavior in such sites, which the

participants seemed to accept as the norm and were apparently able to disregard it. They did spend most of their time on Facebook, and not *anonymous* SNS. Perhaps an explanation for the popularity of *nonymous* SNS over *anonymous* SNS is that negative behavior is somewhat mitigated in *nonymous* SNS because of their nature that supports offline social ties rather than creates online ones.

One of the earliest ethnographies of online public spaces noted negative behaviors specifically associated with *anonymous* SNS. Gurak's (1997) study of online discussion groups found that participants, drawn together by their like-mindedness, tended to penalize anyone who disagreed with the group norms. It seems that online public discourse does not handle controversy well. Gurak and others found that group deliberations could degenerate into *flaming*, which is very aggressive behavior that seems to be enhanced by the anonymity and physical separation of individuals in cyberspace. Johnson, Cooper, and Chin (2009) note that *anonymous* SNS are more prone to these behaviors because of the "reductions in the transfer of social cues, which decrease individuals' concern for social evaluation and fear of social sanctions or reprisals" (p. 661). Johnson et al. (2009) go on to note that, "When social identity and in-group status are salient, computer mediation can decrease flaming because individuals focus their attention on the social context (and associated norms) rather than themselves" (p. 661). A central characteristic of *nonymous* SNS is that social identity and in-group status are *very* salient.

Although there was little evidence of it in this study, another form of negative behavior online for youth is harassment. *Cyberbullying*, sometimes thought of interchangeably with *cyberstalking*, are acts intended to threaten, embarrass, or humiliate

youth (Lenhart, 2007), but usually do not involve the main characteristics of "schoolyard bullying" such as aggression, repetition, and an imbalance of power (Wolak, Mitchell, & Finkelhor, 2007). Despite this, cyberbullying is "magnified" (Lenhart, 2007, p. 5) over its schoolyard counterpart because it can continue outside the school grounds (Ybarra, Diener-West, & Leaf, 2007). There is no respite or refuge for the victims of cyberbullying: it can go on 24-hours a day and invade a victim's home. While a victim can choose not to read 1-to-1 media like e-mails or IMs, they cannot control who might read the messages on SNS, blogs, and other venues online where messages can be posted. It seems that while cyberbullying is a continuation of an existing offline practice, it is in some ways much worse and harder to avoid online.

Further, now that virtually every mobile device seems to have photo and video capabilities built in, cyberbullying may evolve to include paparazzi-like acts of capturing compromising or embarrassing images of others within an offline community and distributing them online in networked publics. Average people can become vulnerable and lose control of their image, a concern not just for celebrities any longer.

Cyberbullying via visual media may create a victim, but as discussed next, visual surveillance media may as easily create a dialectical relationship.

The Participant-Observer Dialectic in Network Publics: Voyeurism and Exhibitionism

While I saw no evidence of negative social aspects of "stalking" online, the rise of visual media in OSN should raise concerns about more serious issues that may not be obvious to young people, and is a side effect of the fracturing of privacy and public boundaries. Most of the interaction with SNS was "just looking." For them it is play, but

there are potentially more serious ramifications: the conceptualization of "stalkery" reported by Amy has voyeuristic surveillance overtones to it.

Just looking: Voyeurism in networked publics. The amount of actual interaction with others was typically low in this study, as a percentage of time online. They were intimate without exploring the expository elements of visual media. Most activity was just looking.

Baym (2010) notes, "The sense of shared space, rituals of shared practices, and the exchange of social support all contribute to a feeling of community in digital environments" (p. 86). Despite this participatory ideal, those who actively participate, by commenting or posting, are often a relatively small percentage of the community membership. Baym goes on to note that the most common role in most online communities is the "lurker, the person who reads but never posts" (p. 87). In her own research of a fandom listserv site (Baym, 2000), she found that half of all messages were posted by only 10% of the membership. She further cites Hansen, Ackerman, Resnick, and Munson (2007), who found that 4% of the community members on a mailing list wrote half the messages.

The media participant appears to spend most of the time looking through the posts and pictures of others in the communities constructed in networked publics, which are actions that begin to resemble a modern day version of the *flâneur*—Baudelaire's "detached observer," a person walking unnoticed through the crowded city, playing a role in city life but remaining a detached, unnoticed observer. Walter Benjamin identified this one of the archetypal figures of early modernism (Benjamin, 2002), but it is a modernist notion that an observer can be "detached," so this conception can be appropriate to

represent the digitally mediated voyeuristic gaze of the Facebook Friend and others in SNS. This new conception of the "digital *flâneur"* is the participant with the capability of strolling unnoticed in liminal spaces between on- and offline communities in which they are members, but exempt from the traditional offline divides between public and private in urban society.

This directly corresponds to boyd's (2008a) dynamic of *invisible audiences* in networked publics. Participants need not be visible to view online activities, or even a contributor or co-present entity. This was born out in this study. The participants spent hours online, but the online activities involving direct social engagements in the SNS community were limited: activities such as commenting on photos, commenting on posts, or posting their own statuses and images. Most of their time was spent looking at what others were saying and doing, but without actively participating in the discourse. Despite the potential for significant social interactivity, they exercised that ability very little. As already noted, Sonya voiced annoyance at people who post too much. She thought it rude by others in the community to update their status with mundane activities, or as Amy complained, she disliked people who comment on photos of people they do not know well. Moderate to low active participation seems to be the group norm in SNS.

Participants in networked publics must also recognize the possibility, indeed probability, of new types of surveillance and control in networked communities, and such activities would be easier and more intrusive than ever before. In addition to invisible audiences of peers, the more traditional notion of surveillance by authority figures is still a concern for young people. It is embodied in parental participation in their child's online communities, as already noted. It makes possible a form of "parental stalking": adults can

"patrol" Facebook, unseen and checking up on children's activities as they are displayed in Facebook. Indeed, several participants complained about having their parents as Friends, as noted earlier in the discussion about the control of personal information.

Exhibition in network publics. Surveillance and control by authoritarian state institutions has been the object of study in traditional critical theoretical perspectives. What once was primarily a technology of military and police control, new technologies of surveillance have become a form of entertainment. From webcams to reality TV shows, individuals subject themselves to constant observation, feeding voyeuristic and exhibitionistic desires. These are expository traits of visual media.

This is a powerful trend in television and films, and probably making its way into social media as well. Perhaps beginning with George Orwell's novel *1984*, first published in 1949, surveillance typically was portrayed as a menacing specter of government or corporate power. Laura Mulvey argued that today's cinema is structured by a paternalistic "controlling and curious gaze" (Mulvey, 1999, p. 835).

Contemporary television reality shows like *Big Brother, Lost,* and *Survivor,* have made surveillance and voyeurism become commonplace and frivolous. This may be a big source of the perceived ambivalence towards making the private public and deflects serious discourse about the body as data. This seems a dangerous slope since the message about being watched could be lost in its presentation as relatively innocent entertainment.

The societal concerns and anxieties about the Internet may be more relevant as OSN becomes more visual and more mobile, because exhibitionism is one response to surveillance. Youth want control of flow of information across multiple publics, including networked publics shared with parents, but there is perhaps legitimate concern

among parents and other adults about the content of those messages becoming the platform for exhibitionist fantasies.

There is little separation between the desires of exhibitionism and voyeurism in the imagination, because "exhibitionism derives from voyeurism" (Burgin, 2000). Mulvey also argues that while, "looking itself is a source of pleasure…in the reverse formation, there is pleasure in being looked at" (Mulvey, 1999, p. 835). Contemporary mediated visual surveillance depends on a camera, but the camera is just the mediating technology. Someone is watching the camera image, and someone is the object of that gaze, so each plays a role in the surveillance. Thus, the seeing/being seen dyad is a reciprocal dialogical relationship in the economy of OSN images. By my definitions of SNS, that relationship becomes a social one, and is perhaps at least partially responsible for this trend in social media.

Despite the popular moral panics on the topic, the numbers appear to be small but significant, and may become more so as youth begin to explore the dialectic of intimate visual co-presence (Ito, 2005) and exhibitionism that becomes possible through the economy of images that was discussed in the last chapter. A Pew Research Center study on teens and "sexting" (Lenhart, 2009) found that "4% of cell-owning teens ages 12-17 say they have sent sexually suggestive nude or nearly nude images of themselves to someone else via text messaging" (p. 2) and 15% they have received such images. The percentages double for older teens: 8% of 17-year-olds sent a sexually provocative image by text and 30% received at least one. The disparity between the numbers of senders versus the number of receivers could have two interpretations. Either a majority of sexts are sent by a small number of people, as with general OSN participation already

discussed, or senders are less willing to admit sending sexts than receivers receiving sexts.

Why is this a trending activity? According to the Pew study:

> Our focus groups revealed that there are three main scenarios for sexting: 1) exchange of images solely between two romantic partners; 2) exchanges between partners that are shared with others outside the relationship and 3) exchanges between people who are not yet in a relationship, but where at least one person hopes to be. (p. 2)

Most of the activity relates to sharing with a romantic partner, or with a person in hopes of a relationship, supporting Ito's notion of "an emergent visual sharing modality—intimate visual co-presence—that is keyed to the personal, pervasive, and intimate nature of social connections via handheld devices" (p. 1). New mobile image sharing technologies fill an important social media niche, the production of intimate co-presence, but she argues that it is a different experience in social media than sharing still photos between peers. Perhaps they are not such different experiences after all. Whatever the reason, young people need to be reminded that digital images on the Internet never fade, never yellow. Once the digital image is transmitted, it can represent a permanent record of the activity.

Limitations to Data Collection

Four limitations to the planned methodology were identified during the study, which may have had some affect on the potential of the findings toward theory building and future application of these methods: educational structure, laptop-specific practices, technical issues, and recruitment issues.

Educational Structure

The study began just after the school year ended for the participants, so the data does not directly reflect Internet usage by youth as it relates to school, homework, studying, and so on. Even though the participants were on summer break, thus school relations were not a daily influence as it is at other times of year, there were several school-related references and discussions observed.

Comparative research is needed to determine this, but recognizing the influence of educational structures is probably important in research of this type. An assumption in this study is that the practices observed differ somewhat from those during the school year, particularly in terms of time of day online, content of communication messages between peers, and other school-related factors that would influence online participation such as teacher/school interactions. The immediacy of school schedules and homework requirements, daily gossip and new intrigues, have receded, allowing altered practices, perhaps even latent ones, to emerge.

The research literature suggests that online youth cultural identity is strongly influenced by offline social worlds dominated by same-age peers, a result of the structures of educational institutions (boyd & Ellison, 2007). A result of the social construction of child and adolescent discussed in Chapter 2 led to social segregation by age because of the compulsory educational system in this and other Western countries. Social interactions between young people became peer-driven (Chudacoff, 1989). A peer society emerged and was further reinforced through school-run extracurricular activities. Schools-based peer networks appeared to influence the online social community of many of the participants in the study as well. This is Ito's (2010) definition of friendship-driven

SNS for youth: “their primary source of affiliation, friendship, and romantic partners, and their lives online mirror this local network” (p. 16).

Laptop-specific Practices

Participants who already had experience with using a laptop regularly to access new media tended to provide more thorough insights into everyday practices in this study. Sonya, Allie, Amy, and Sarah regularly used a laptop prior to the study, so were able to substitute the machine and continue the practices they had built around its use. These participants tended to be the most productive in terms of reporting and providing insight into typical daily practices. Conversely, Tom, Ann, and Luke reported that they typically engaged in online socializing with their mobile phones, so the activities on the laptop were not entirely typical practices for them. Tom and Luke specifically reported that they did some things with the laptop to benefit the study, by modeling such practices they perceived as typical or important. The other participants did not give any indications of the use of the laptop being any different from their typical daily practices without the computer provided.

For this reason, one week is probably not enough time to adapt new practices for participants who were used to a desktop computer or mobile phones as the primary point of access to the Internet. I suggest that future research with this methodology allow the participants to have the laptop for a longer period, perhaps 1 month. More time may provide a better opportunity for the participants to develop unconscious and taken-for-granted practices specifically related to the laptop as the main or primary screen for online participation, if it was not already. For those that already used a laptop, extra time would not make a big difference. The drawbacks of more time are that participants may

grow bored or forget to orally report as time goes by, and the researcher may need to meet with them occasionally to make sure the laptop is recording correctly and collect data from the hard drive if it starts to fill up.

Regarding mobile device practices, I was surprised how often the mobile device was the primary screen for online participation to some. Perhaps *Morea* can be encouraged to produce a recorder app for the Apple iPhone. Otherwise, this methodology may remain limited in this respect, and perhaps even obsolete if that trend continues.

Technical Issues

Sessions were probably lost and for unknown reasons, which casts doubts about the value of any interpretative claims that might be made about the session quantity and length numbers. Some participants reported to me that they went online more often than is reflected in the session count, but no software set up or hardware problems could be found when the laptop was returned. With computer technology, there are always potential problems. When the computer is out of the researcher's control, there is still more potential for problems. Such problems are unfortunate but there is no guaranteed way to guard against technical difficulties in a study of this kind. There are too many possible points of failure. I did my best to anticipate and prevent technical problems from intruding, but if data were lost, all I can do is mourn.

There was evidence that some tinkered with the *Morae* software—Luke, Blake and Tina managed to change their pseudonyms to their real names—and there were other odd glitches, including one 26-hour recording of a blank screen after the participant suddenly closed the laptop lid and *Morae* apparently continued to record.

Two participants downloaded video chat software, which appeared to cause some problems capturing data with *Morae*. Video chat software appears to conflict with *Morae* over the use of the camera and microphone. Unless a resolution could be found for this conflict, video chat software cannot be allowed. This is unfortunate because video chat software is probably an important aspect of online participation to those young people, given that they went to the trouble to download and install it. In Chapter 5, I speculate that video chat may be the next major area of growth in the ongoing evolution of youth online communication and socializing.

Recruitment Issues

Some time was lost early in the study because the proposed snowball sampling method did not work as efficiently as hoped. It became necessary to modify the selection process as I went along to keep the study on track.

The study design anticipated that defining the sample in SNS communities would have its challenges, where participation is based on acceptance of membership—an articulated list of Friends approved for access—making access difficult for people like me who are outside their family and peer community. The challenges are not unlike traditional ethnographic research and its requirement of gaining access to a community in the field.

The snowball sampling recruitment protocol was intended to provide the access to an online community by using its members to nominate and contact other potential participants. The first 2 participants were a convenience sample of young people who fit the selection profile. To nominate the next participants, each participant was asked to randomly select 2-3 people from the list of their Facebook Friends and invite them to

participate in the study. Participants chose names from a bowl with the printed names of all of their Facebook Friends.

The prospect of having a laptop for personal use for a week was assumed a good incentive for nominees to respond. The difficulty that arose was that Facebook messaging services were often the only method of communication between the study participant and their nominees during the summer. If the nominee did not respond, there was no other recourse. Further, the current participants often seemed almost reluctant or embarrassed to contact people on my behalf, perhaps because of a dynamic of adult-child power relationships. Overall, the response rate of nominees was very low, allowing for a potential nonresponse bias in the sampling. A quick review of literature uncovered a wide range of response rate advice, although little related closely to this study's protocol. For example, Baxter and Babbie (2004) regard 50% as adequate in mail surveys. Response rate to nominations in this study was 36% when using the original protocol; the rest were recruited with a slightly revised procedure. Of the 11 participants, 4 were recruited in the proposed snowball-sampling manner. I recruited the first 2, leaving 5 that where recruited in a revised sample selection method.

In the procedure revision, a participant selected random names from the Facebook list, but they needed to keep selecting names of nominees until we had a list of two to three young people that I felt I could contact myself through various channels, if necessary. In almost every case, I did need to make an additional effort to communicate with nominees, either personally, through their parents, or through other young people who knew them and had additional contact information. No undo pressure towards participation was applied, only efforts to communicate with nominees outside of the

Facebook interface and still using the IRB approved contact letter. This modification helped facilitate communication with the nominees and allowed the study to be completed in the time frame allotted.

In Closing

An interesting future direction for this research may be to see if and how often weak tie relationships, cultivated and maintained in Facebook between Friends, continue to flourish as youth grow to adulthood.

Further, will everyday practices of study participants, as related to online media, remain similar or evolve over time? This study seems to suggest that differentiations in online practices are related to age and social maturity rather than the technologies of social media, but this was only a snapshot so cannot account for evolutions in the technologies. Is age and social maturity what primarily drives evolving practices of social media, or is the primary driver the evolving affordances and limitations of social media site architectures? Mostly likely the answer is somewhere in between, because, as already noted, the evolutions in architectures shape practices even as practices shape the evolutions in the architectures.

Setting the evolution of personal practices aside, will we be able to anticipate the future of social media sites like Facebook, which are really too new to the social media scene to predict their longevity? What is likely, looking at the brief history of social media (boyd & Ellison, 2007), is that Facebook will go the way of MySpace and Friendster, as new channels of communication open up with a new host of affordances and limitations in the technologies for experimentation and socializing. Migratory behavior online is already a well-established characteristic of Internet use (Appadurai,

1996; Castells, 2001). In any case, as I already postulated, the criteria for channel selection would probably remain fairly constant in interpersonal communication via social media: preference will be given based on levels of liveness (co-presence, immediacy and intimacy) and the level of social ties between participants. We may find a migration toward new sites that continue to provide this range of communication channels across multiple levels of social ties, but manage to empower youth, and perhaps adults, by providing better control over the flow of personal information in OSN.

Last, the astonishing rise of video and other visual media online provides new layers and challenges to constructing and maintaining online identities. From the voyeuristic tendencies of the "lurker" to "intimate visual co-presence" between couples, the dynamic of online participation is becoming more visual. What was once a relatively small corner of social media is growing rapidly. Almost every mobile device now has a camera and/or video capabilities, which mean images can be captured in even more intimate spaces, and potentially without the consent of the object of the image. The potential for embarrassment from a text message or status update seems relatively limited, but it is harder to escape or claim a fraud when the image presents itself.

APPENDIX A

EPISODES BY GENRE

Key:												
SNS sites					**Non-SNS sites**							
Fri	Friendship-driven sites				E-G		Nonnetworked Gaming					
Int	Interest-driven sites				E-T		Traditional Media online					
Col	Collaboration-driven sites				E-N		New Media online					
					Com		Commercial sites					
					Inf		Information sites					

Note: Case duration began when IE launched. Discrepancies between episode durations and total duration of a case exist when multiple windows were open, or when IE is open but no Internet site has been accessed.

		SNS				**Non-SNS**						**Duration**	
Day/**Case**	Start Time	Fri	Int	Col		E-G	E-T	E-N	Com	Inf		Epis. Mins	Case Mins
Wed													
allie-0003	10:05 PM									1		3.81	
								1				1.86	
				1								1.81	
		1										22.51	31.6
Thu													
allie-0004	8:12 AM	1										17.2	
				1								3.92	
										1		7.4	
								1				47.49	77.9
allie-0005	1:42 PM	1										1.39	
				1								4.51	6.41
allie-0006	3:06 PM	1										1.14	
				1								4.09	
									1			4.09	23.57
allie-0008	6:55 PM								1			1.03	1.41
allie-0009	6:57 PM								1			2.97	
		1										0.94	3.96
Fri													
allie-0010	2:49 PM								1			17.82	
										1		0.63	
		1										0.69	
				1								0.49	20.07

Episodes		**SNS**				**Non-SNS**						**Duration**	
Day/**Case**	Start Time	Fri	Int	Col		E-G	E-T	E-N	Com	Inf		Epis. Mins	Case Mins
Mon													
allie-0011	4:05 PM	1										13.93	
				1								16.62	
									1			63.03	
								1				7.47	85.55
allie-0012	7:46 PM	1										9.06	
									1			4.66	19.06
allie-0013	8:54 PM	1										28.63	
									1			10.9	28.95
Tue													
allie-0014	12:56 PM	1										1.57	
				1								16.94	
										1		1.22	
								1				38.62	
									1			25.09	43.89
allie-0015	9:17 PM	1										27.03	
								1				60.12	
				1								8.83	
									1			59.75	60.98
allie episodes total:		11	0	8		0	0	5	9	4			403.35
Tue													
amy-0000	1:21 PM	1										1.88	
										1		1.25	4.72
amy-0001	3:51 PM	1										1.21	1.26
amy-0002	4:08 PM			1								1.05	1.05
amy-0003	4:24 PM	1										0.99	
				1								1.05	1.42
amy-0004	4:44 PM	1										2.31	
				1								4.68	7.44
amy-0005	5:49 PM	1										2.66	2.9
amy-0006	9:26 PM	1										0.24	0.52
amy-0007	9:33 PM	1										1.55	5.83
Wed													
amy-0008	9:09 AM	1										3.83	5.38
amy-0009	9:15 AM									1		0.54	0.81
amy-0010	2:13 PM	1										3.83	4.21

Episodes		**SNS**				**Non-SNS**						**Duration**	
Day/**Case**	Start Time	Fri	Int	Col		E-G	E-T	E-N	Com	Inf		Epis. Mins	Case Mins
amy-0011	6:46 PM									1		1.16	
		1										0.98	2.42
amy-0012	6:59 PM			1								1.92	2.08
Thurs													
amy-0013	8:23 AM			1								1.16	1.36
amy-0014	4:15 PM	1										6.61	6.97
amy-0015	6:44 PM	1										5.58	5.42
Sun													
amy-0016	8:38 AM	1										4.35	4.96
amy episodes total:		13	0	5		0	0	0	0	3			58.75
Sat													
ann-0003	7:43 PM	1										0.91	1.72
Wed													
ann-0004	1:41 PM	2										17.01	18.55
Fri													
ann-0005	11:37 PM	2										13.21	
				1								9.76	
			1									2	13.42
ann episodes total:		5	1	1		0	0	0	0	0			33.69
Sun													
blake-0001	10:07 PM	1										2.34	3
blake-0002	10:21 PM							1				6.87	
		1										6.56	11.26
blake-0003	10:26 PM									1		2.61	2.61
blake episodes total:		2	0	0		0	0	1	0	1			16.87
Sun													
bonnie-0001	1:31 PM			1								11.4	
		1										11.4	
							1					1.57	14.33
bonnie episodes total:		1	0	1		0	1	0	0	0			14.33
Tues													
jake-0013	7:32 PM									1		0.77	
						1						4.05	5.34
jake-0014	7:38 PM									1		0.7	
		1										17.14	
				1								6.19	
						1						15.61	43.17
jake-0015	8:23 PM									1		0.17	
						1						18.78	19.14

Episodes		**SNS**				**Non-SNS**						**Duration**	
Day/**Case**	Start Time	Fri	Int	Col		E-G	E-T	E-N	Com	Inf		Epis. Mins	Case Mins
jake-0017	9:48 PM									1		1	
				1								5.52	
								1				8.03	
			1									3.3	19.09
jake-0018	10:39 PM									1		1.06	
								1				6.33	7.5
jake-0019	11:03 PM									1		0.17	
						1						34.28	34.57
Wed													
jake-0020	12:02 PM									1		0.37	
		1										26.27	27
jake-0021	3:44 PM									1		0.53	
								1				11.66	12.51
jake-0022	4:55 PM									1		0.37	
							2					4.09	4.56
jake-0023	7:15 PM									1		0.17	
							1					12.63	12.89
Thu													
jake-0023a	9:58 PM									1		0.12	
							1					23.7	23.91
Wed													
jake-0024	2:08 PM									1		0.39	
								1				21.29	21.98
jake-0025	2:41 PM									1		0.64	
						1						19.36	21.23
Thu													
jake-0026	9:13 PM									1		0.41	
						1						8.42	9.86
Fri													
jake-0028	7:06 PM									1		0.47	
						1						5.57	6.48
jake episodes total:		2	1	2		7	4	4	0	15			269.23
Wed													
luke-0002	5:39 AM	1										2.35	
										1		0.9	4.1
luke-0003	2:59 PM	1										18.45	
										1		9.46	20.9
luke-0004	8:23 PM							1				11.07	
		1										6.13	
										1		3.01	17.9

Episodes		**SNS**				**Non-SNS**						**Duration**	
Day/**Case**	Start Time	Fri	Int	Col		E-G	E-T	E-N	Com	Inf		Epis. Mins	Case Mins
Fri													
luke-0005	8:48 PM	1										23.05	
								1				1.3	
										1		29.03	32.95
Sat													
luke-0006	6:34 PM						1					26.03	
		1										20.08	27.03
luke-0007	9:08 PM						1					46.34	
		1										46.12	
							1					6.56	47.42
luke episodes total:		6	0	0		0	3	2	0	4			150.3
Wed													
sarah-0001	8:18 PM	1										24.93	
								1				26.86	36.31
sarah-0002	9:59 PM			1								12.1	
		1										2.53	16.41
sarah-0003	10:43 PM									1		4.98	5.11
Thu													
sarah-0004	7:19 AM	1										13.28	
								1				2.29	13.28
sarah-0005	12:58 PM									1		1.93	
				1								2.47	4.73
sarah-0006	2:19 PM	1										27.38	
								1				21.24	28.03
~~**sarah-0007**~~	2:55 PM											1.39	1.39
~~**sarah-0008**~~	2:58 PM											0.1	0.1
~~**sarah-0009**~~	3:56 PM											0.18	0.18
sarah-0010	4:02 PM	1										1.56	1.56
~~**sarah-0011**~~	4:04 PM											0.5	0.5
sarah-0012	6:04 PM	1										5.4	5.59
Fri													
sarah-0013	1:03 PM	1										7.32	
								1				2.34	7.91
sarah-0014	1:50 PM							1				3.78	
		1										3.49	3.79
~~**sarah-0015**~~	3:42 PM											0.19	0.19
sarah-0016	4:13 PM	1										0.7	1.02
sarah-0017	5:51 PM									1		1.07	1.46

Episodes		**SNS**				**Non-SNS**						**Duration**	
Day/**Case**	Start Time	Fri	Int	Col		E-G	E-T	E-N	Com	Inf		Epis. Mins	Case Mins
Mon													
~~sarah-0018~~	2:37 PM											0.94	0.94
sarah-0019	5:11 PM							1				2.49	
		1										1.87	2.49
sarah-0020	9:26 PM							1				1.9	1.9
sarah-0021	9:33 PM							1				5	
		1										6.43	6.65
sarah-0022	10:53 PM							1				4.94	
		1										4.49	4.94
Tue													
sarah-0023	6:47 AM	1										1.96	2.62
								1					
sarah episodes total:		13	0	2		0	0	10	0	3			147.1
Wed													
sonya-0000	8:56 PM	1										2.25	3.87
sonya-0001	9:05 PM	1										9.92	
										1		3.5	14.36
Thu													
sonya-0002	3:18 PM	1										2.71	
										1		19.69	22.9
sonya-0003	3:45 PM									1		0.17	
						1						0.46	0.83
sonya-0004	3:50 PM	1										4.5	4.82
sonya-0005	6:56 PM	1	1									5.15	
										1		5.29	10.94
sonya-0006	8:38 PM	1										5.04	
										1		7.58	13.24
Fri													
sonya-0007	6:25 PM		1							1		1.11	1.62
sonya-0008	7:12 PM									1		1.85	2.11
sonya-0009	7:19 PM			1								3.12	3.35
sonya-0010	7:27 PM			1								8.39	8.5
sonya-0011	7:43 PM									1		6.07	
				1								0.44	
			1									0.92	7.71
Sat													
sonya-0012	10:07 AM	1										2.82	
			1									0.4	3.51

Episodes		**SNS**				**Non-SNS**						**Duration**	
Day/**Case**	Start Time	Fri	Int	Col		E-G	E-T	E-N	Com	Inf		Epis. Mins	Case Mins
sonya-0013	10:25 AM									1		0.54	0.76
sonya-0014	10:27 PM									1		1.18	1.4
sonya-0015	10:31 AM									1		0.73	0.87
sonya-0016	10:34 AM	1										0.9	3.51
sonya-0017	10:40 AM							1				65.92	
		1										21.96	
			1									3.14	
												21.96	67.32
sonya-0018	12:20 PM	1										18.31	
			1									2.83	
						1						12.51	18.52
									1			14.23	
sonya episodes total:		10	6	3		2	0	1	1	11			190.14
Fri													
tina-0002	6:42 PM	1										25.98	
			1									4.13	
							1					20.25	
										1		19.3	26.16
tina episodes total:		1	1	0		0	1	0	0	1			26.16
Wed													
tom-0003	4:29 PM	1										29.33	
										1		3.6	
				1								1.02	30.12
Sat													
tom-0004	5:00 PM	1										2.37	2.47
tom-0007	11:40 PM									2		5.37	
		1										22.82	
			1									17.84	26.31
Sun													
tom-0008	11:41 PM	1										38.83	
										1		1.08	
				1								12.97	
								1				0.82	38.83
Tue													
tom-0009	9:41 PM	1										15.05	
				1								7.27	15.26
tom-0010	10:47 PM	1										1.35	1.77
tom episodes total:		6	1	3		0	0	1	0	4			114.76

total episodes by genre:	70	10	25		9	9	24	10	46

APPENDIX B

CODEBOOK-FINAL

Episode Context Codes			
TP	Time/Place		
TP-Mor	Morning (5-11a)		
TP-Mid	Mid-day (11a-5p)		
TP-Ev	Evening (5-11p)		
TP-Ni	Night (11p-5a)		
TP-PF	public family (living, dining, family rm)		
TP-Bd	bedroom		
TP-Oth	Other		
TP-Al	alone		
TP-Fr	with friend(s)		
TP-Fa	with family		
TP-Uk	unknown		
Category 1 - Interactions with Technology			
"Nonymous" Environments (Zhao, 2008)			
Friendship-driven SNS			
F			
F-FB	facebook		
F-MS	myspace		
FPro	**Manage Profile (facebook)**		
	FPro-N	Networks	
	FPro-Re	Relationships (romantic)	
	Fpro-Av	avatar	
	FPro-F	Family	
	FPro-CL	Current Location	
	FPro-HT	Home Town	
	FPro-Po	Political Views	
	FPro-Rg	Religious Views	
	FPro-Ab	about me/bio info	
	FPro-Int	likes and interests	
FPri	**Privacy settings**		
	FPri-		
FF	**Follow Friends/connections/networks/contacts**		
	FF-RQ	Chk Friend request(s)	
	FF-A	accept (into network)	
	FF-D	decline	
	FF-Man	manage existing/clean up	
	FF-Cr	create/join new	
	FF-Not	chk notification/DMs	
	FF-Ch	chk chat list	
	FF-Ne	chk news page/home page	

	FF-Pr	chk profile page/personal	
	FF-Vi	chk profile page/other	
	FF-Re	chk comments by others (passive)	
	FF-DM	visit direct messages	
	FF-Po	delete/hide a post	
	FF-Gr	visit groups/fanpages/links	
	FF-Ev	visit events	
	FF-App	visit SNS apps	
	FF-Fan	fandom/celebrity	
	FF-IS	use search	
	FF-Ph	Add/Remove photo tag	
Anonymous Environments			
Interest-driven SNS			
INT			
INT-Frm	formspring.me	Q & A	
INT-YA	answers.yahoo.com	self-help Q & A	
INT-Sp	Sports engage using SNS		
INT-G	gaming (networked)		
	INT-G-SNS	game-based SNS site (Xbox)	
INT-Bg	blog		
	INT-Bg-Fan	fandom/celebrity	
INT-MBg	microblog		
	INT-MBg-Tw	twitter	
	INT-MBg-Tw-Fan	fandom/celebrity	
INT-VC	video chat: Skype, ooVoo		
Collaboration			
COL			
COL-EM	Email		
	COL-EM-TX-EM	checking/responding	
	COL-EM-Mg	managing	
	COL-EM-Doc	view/dwnld attachments/media	
COL-Wi	Wikis		
COL-CS	crowdsourcing		
Non-Social Network Sites			
E	**Entertainment Media**		
E-V	Video Media		
	E-V-YT	youtube.com	
	E-V-YT-Re	check comments	
	E-V-Hu	hulu.com	
	E-V-NF	netflix.com	
E-M	Music Media (including video)		
	E-M-PLst	playlist.com	
	E-M-Pan	pandora.com	
	E-M-YT	youtube.com	
	E-M-Ve	vevo.com	
E-G	Game Media (non-networked)		
E-Oth	other entertainment sites		
E-Sp	Sports Media	espn.com, etc.	
E-Cr	create/join new		
E-X-X-Se	use search function on site		
COM	**Commerce sites (Shopping, etc.)**		
	COM-Shp	Shopping site	
	COM-Mg	Magazine site	
	COM-Misc	Misc. sites	

	Inf-YA-IS	information search	
INF-Gg	google.com		
	Inf-Gg-URL	URL search	
	Inf-Gg-IS	information search	
	Inf-Gg-Img	image search	
	INF-Gg-Ind	individual search (stalking)	
INF-Sch	school-related info		
INF-Bi	bing.com		
	INF-Bi-IS	info search	
	INF-Bi-URL	URL search	
Inf-Oth	other info sites	dictionaries, etc.	
Category 2 - Interactions in SNS **Interaction with Other - Voice and Textual Engagement**			
		Private -1 to 1/few	Public/Ntwk - 1 to all
OF	OF-Fam/Fri	Talking/sharing w/Family/Friend	
	OF-Phone	Landline phone	
CL	**Cellular Engagement Off-line**		
	CL-Vc	voice	
	CL-Tx	text	
Vid	Vid-Ch	chat video/conf.	
TX	**Textual Engagement (UGC) On-line Messages**		
	TX-Ch	IM/chat	
	TX-DM	direct mess	
	TX-Cm		post comment to other
	TX-Cm-Wal		post FB Wall (status)
	TX-Ry		reply to threaded comments
	TX-Tg		tag photos
	TX-Lk		"like" (fb)
	TX-Pk		poke (fb)
	TX-Sta		provide status update
	TX-Grp		group (fb)
	TX-Rel		relatshps (fb)
	TX-App		apps (fb)
	TX-Shr		"share" news/info (fb)
	TX-Gi		gift (fb apps)
	TX-EM	e-mail	
	TX-Doc	attachments, etc.	
Interaction with Other - Affiliations with Other in Social Engagement			
AF	**Affiliations**		
AF-C	SNS & Non-SNS strong ties		
		close friends	
		immediate family	
		extended family same age group	
AF-P	SNS weak ties		
		school peers	
		extra-curricular	
		neighborhood	
		extended adult family	
	AF-P-Ot	others in age group	
	AF-P-CS	consequential strangers	
AF-W	non-SNS weak ties	teachers, coaches, bosses, commerce, strgrs outside ntwk	
		ident. conf./security	

Interaction with Other - Visual			
VI	**Visual Engagement (UGC) On-line**		
VI-V	View Images	*Producer*	*Context*
	VI-V-S	Self	solo
	VI-V-S/O		w/others (social)
	VI-V-O	Other	
	VI-V-O/S		Self in Other
VI-M	View Media (not photos)		
	VI-M-Vi	Video in SNS	
Interaction with Other - Content			
MC	**Message Content Codes**		
MC-SI	self-image		
MC-B	bored		
MC-Dru	drugs/ach/cigs		
MC-Fl	flirting		
MC-Sx	sex-related		
MC-Phy	phys attrib		
MC-Su	supportive		
MC-Neg	mean/negative		
MC-Pl	planning/suggesting action		
MC-Pr	parents		
MC-Pri	privacy		
MC-Sch	school-related		
MC-Re	relationships (romantic)		
MC-Am	amusing		
MC-St	Structured engagement (goal, question, etc.)		
MC-Ust	Unstructured engagement ("hey" not agenda)		
MC-TT	teen talk		
	MC-TT-ShH	shorthand	lol, whd
			lmao
	MC-TT-Rpl	replace f2f	[emoticon]
			haha
			jk
De	**Deception/Manipulation**		
	De-Age	Lying about age	
	De-Rel	Playing with relationship, etc.	
	De-Inf	Misinformation	
	De-Btg	Baiting	
	De-Amu	For amusement	

Category 3			
VR	**Oral Reports**		
VR-P	Purpose for action		
ambiguous	VR-P-B	boredom	
	VR-P-Ent	Entertainment/fun	
	VR-P-WT	waste time	
goals	VR-P-Ph	look at pictures	
	VR-P-Mu	listen to music	
	VR-P-Vi	watch videos	
	VR-P-G	play games	
	VR-P-Ch	checking in/ see what's new	
	VR-P-Stu	update status	
specific	VR-P-Stlk	be "stalkery"	
	VR-P-Sch	Seek school-related item/info	
	VR-P-Qu	Seek answers to questions	
	VR-P-Info	Seek specific item/info	
	VR-P-Of	Plan offline events	
	VR-P-Mess	See specific message or comment	
VR-S	Self/Identity interactions with connections/community		
	VR-S-St	status content/style	
	VR-S-Not	notifications/messages/pokes	
	VR-S-Mg	engage friends (pokes, sharing)	
	VR-S-On/Of	Online speech vs. offline	
	VR-S-Ti	Time spent online (min/hr)	
	VR-S-Imp	freq of online SNS engagement of part.	
	VR-S-Num	importance of SNS/messages to part.	
	VR-S-CL	Number/Types of Friends	
	VR-S-Age	Mobile access to SNS (iPhone FB app, etc.)	
	VR-S-Anoy	Age deception online to gain access	
VR-Fr	defining social relationship of self to other		
	VR-Fr-L	Like a Friend	
	VR-Fr-DL	Dislike a Friend	
	VR-Fr-Ev	Envy of Friend	
	VR-Fr-St	"stalkerish" - busy online (likes and comments)	
	VR-Fr-VC	prefer VC (form of f2f?)	
VR-Df	describing other online		
	VR-Df-Phy	physical characteristics	
	VR-Df-SA	social atributes (mean, nice, funny)	
	VR-Df-Re	relationships (romantic)	
	VR-Df-Hid	hidden agendas	
VR-VI	report on looking at photos		
	VR-VI-Mg	image management (tags, share, etc.)	
	VR-VI-Phy	discussng physical characteristics of image	
	VR-VI-Rel	deducing social relationship from image	
	VR-VI-Ex	reliving past experiences/moments/places/	
	VR-VI-Cri	critical of types of images others post	
VR-MC	report on message content/textal engagement		
	VR-MC-->		
	VR-MC-Bg	boring	
	VR-MC-Sar	sacrastic response	
	VR-MC-Dis	disappointment	
	VR-MC-Bad	Made to feel bad	
VR-Cp	Computer Interaction		
	VR-Cp-SE	treat computer as social entity	
	VR-Cp-Imt	impatience w/computer	
	VR-Cp-Fru	frustration w/computer	

	VR-Cp-Cus	customize computer interface/bkgrd	
	VR-CP-Apps	using local apps (iMovie, etc.)	
VR-Pr	privacy issues online		
	VR-Pr-Op	SNS content too open/personal	
	VR-Pr-Ctl	uncontrollable aspects online	
	VR-Pr-Pa	parental involvement/control	
	VR-Pr-Adu	adult involvement/control (teachers, etc.)	
	VR-Pr-F	Friend management	
	VR-Pr-Cro	Cross media issues (SNS generating e-mails, etc.)	
VR-Ad	advertisement comment		
VR-RL	Real Life issues (talking about)		
VR-Au	Info Authenticity		
VR-CL	Mobile Access to SNS (apps, etc.)		
VR-Cr	Site critique		
VR-G	about/to games		
Category 4			
ST	**Strategies in Mediated Engagement**		
ST-Mu	Multitasking		
	ST-Mu-Sts	Multiple Windows	
	ST-Mu-Mdv	Multiple Media Devices	
	ST-Mu-Conv	Mulitple conversations via txt/chat	
ST-Lt	online literacy		
	ST-Lt-Lrn	learn by doing (trial and error)	
	ST-Lt-SL	skilled w/comp/interface	
	ST-Lt-E	efficiency (uses time/interface wisely)	
	ST-Lt-Cro	Cross Media (e-mail msg->facebook)	
	ST-Lt-Use	unintended use (manipulating tech to serve need)	
	ST-Lt-Pr	Priv/Security conscious (protect passwords, etc.)	
	ST-Lt-MM	comm across multi media chs. w/friends	
	ST-Lt-Net	Netiquette attitudes	
CP	**Non-Internet Activities on Computer**		
	COM-Brow	browsing apps on HD	
Emerging Patterns			
LM	Leitmotiv	A dominant and recurring theme	
	LM-PrTx	Lvl presence=textual engagement choice/pleasure	
PATT	Pattern		
	PATT-DL	friends but dislike/don't know (AF)	
	PATT-Mu	multitaking across and within sites and devices	
	PATT-Pr	Priv/Security concerns	
	PATT-SE	computer as social entity	
TH	Theme		
	TH-Not	Notifications/DM/like=popularity/cultural capital	
	TH-B	bordom is main reason for going on-line	
	TH-Ph	New narcissism in social economy	
	TH-Stlk	online stalking/voyeur	
	TH-C/P	Issues of control & privacy (in flow of info) (lacks, grandular)	

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Agger, B. (1998). *Cultural studies as critical theory*. London: Falmer Press.

Adler, P. A., & Adler, P. (1998). Observational techniques. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Collecting and interpreting qualitative materials* (pp. 79-109). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Althusser, L. (1978). *Lenin and philosophy* (B. Brewster, Trans.). New York: Monthly Review Press.

Althusser, L. (1984). *Ideology and ideological state apparatuses (Notes towards an investigation)*. London: Verso.

Anderson, J. A. (2008). Media literacy, the first 100 years. In J. K. Asamen, M. L. Ellis & G. L. Berry (Eds.), *The sage handbook of child development, multiculturalism, and media* (pp. 381-408). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Anderson, J. A. (In Press). *Media research methods: Understanding metric and interpretive approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Anderson, J. A., & Meyer, T. P. (1988). *Mediated communication: A social action perspective*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Annells, M. (1996). Grounded theory method. Part 2: options for users of the method. *Nursing Inquiry, 4*(3), 176–180.

Appadurai, A. (1996). *Modernity at large: Cultural dimensions of globalization*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Auslander, P. (1999). *Liveness: Performance in mediatized culture*. New York: Routledge.

Bakhtin, M. M. (1981). *The dialogic imagination* (C. Emerson & M. Holquist, Trans.). Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.

Barthes, R. (1977). The rhetoric of the image (S. Heath, Trans.). In S. Heath (Ed.), *Image, music, text* (pp. 32-51). New York: Hill and Wang.

Barthes, R. (2000). The photographic message. In R. T. Craig & H. L. Muller (Eds.), *Theorizing communication: readings across traditions* (pp. 191-199). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Baudrillard, J. (1981). *For a critique of the political economy of the sign* (C. Levin, Trans.). St. Louis, MO: Telos Press.

Baxter, L. A., & Babbie, E. (2004). *The basics of communication research*. Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.

Baym, N. K. (2000). *Tune in, log on: Soaps, fandom, and online community*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Baym, N. K. (2010). *Personal connections in the digital age*. Malden, MA: Polity Press.

Bender, J. B., & Wellbery, D. E. (1990). Rhetoricality: On the modernist return of rhetoric. In J. B. Bender & D. E. Wellbery (Eds.), *The ends of rhetoric: History, theory, practice* (pp. 3-42). Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Benjamin, W. (2002). *The arcades project* (H. Eiland & K. McLaughlin, Trans.). New York: Belknap Press.

Blau, M., & Fingerman, K. L. (2009). *Consequential strangers: People who don't seem to matter...but really do*. New York: W. W. Norton.

Bolter, J. D. (1998). Hypertext and the question of visual literacy. In D. Reinking, M. C. McKenna, L. D. Labbo & R. D. Keiffer (Eds.), *Literacy for the 21st century: Technological transformation in a post-typographic world* (pp. 3–13). Mahwah, N.J: Erlbaum .

Bolter, J. D., & Grusin, R. (2000). *Remediation: Understanding new media*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

Boneva, B. S., & Quinn, A. (2006). Teenage communication in the instant messaging era. In R. E. Kraut, S. Kiesler, & I. Shklovski (Eds.), *Computers, phones, and the Internet: Domesticating information technology* (pp. 201-218). Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1980). *The logic of practice*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1986). The aristocracy of culture (R. Nice, Trans.). In R. Collins, J. Curran, N. Garnham, P. Scannell, P. Schlesinger, & C. Sparks (Eds.), *Media, culture, and society: A critical reader* (pp. 164-193). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

boyd, d. (2008a). *Taken out of context: American teen sociality in networked publics.* Berkeley, CA: University of California, Berkeley.

boyd, d. (2008b). Why youth ♥ social network sites: The role of networked publics in teenage life. In D. Buckingham (Ed.), *Youth, identity, and digital media* (pp. 119-142). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

boyd, d. (2009a). *The not-so-hidden politics of class online.* New York: Personal Democracy Forum.

boyd, d. (2009b). *Do you see what I see?: Visibility of practices through social media.* Paper presented at the Supernova and Le Web, San Francisco and Paris, 1 and 10 December 2009.

boyd, d. (2010, March 13). *Making sense of privacy and publicity*. Paper presented at the SXSW, Austin, Texas.

boyd, d., & Ellison, N. (2007). Social network sites: Definition, history, and scholarship. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication, 13*(1), 210 - 230.

Brabham, D. C. (2008). Crowdsourcing as a model for problem solving: An introduction and cases. *Convergence: The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies, 14*(1), 75 - 90.

Brandtzaeg, P. B., & Heim, J. (2011). A typology of social networking sites users. *International Journal of Web Based Communities, 7*(1), 28-51.

Brock, B. L., & Scott, R. L. (1972). *Methods of rhetorical criticism: A twentieth-century perspective*. New York: Harper & Row.

Bromley, H. (1997). The social chicken and the technological egg: Educational computing and the technology/society divide. *Educational Theory, 47*(1), 51–65.

Bruckman, A., & Resnick, M. (1995). The MediaMOO project: Constructionism and professional community. *Convergence, 1*(1), 94-109.

Bryman, A., & Burgess, R. G. (1995). *Analyzing qualitative data*. New York: Routledge.

Buckingham, D. (2000). *After the death of childhood: Growing up in the age of electronic media*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Buckingham, D. (2003). *Media education: Literacy, learning, and contemporary culture*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.

Buckingham, D. (2008a). Introducing identity. In D. Buckingham (Ed.), *Youth, identity, and digital media* (pp. 1-22). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

Buckingham, D. (2008b). *Youth, identity, and digital media*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Buckingham, D., & Sefton-Green, J. (2003). Gotta catch 'em all: Structure, agency and pedagogy in children's media culture. *Media, Culture & Society, 25*(3), 379.

Burgess, J. E., & Green, J. B. (2009). *YouTube : Online video and participatory culture*. Cambridge, MA: Polity Press.

Burgin, V. (2000). Jenni's room: Exhibitionism and solitude. *Critical Inquiry, 27*, 77-89.

Burt, R. (1992). *Structural holes: The social structure of competition*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Butler, J. (1991). Imitation and gender insubordination. In D. Fuss (Ed.), *Inside/Out: Lesbian theories, gay theories* (pp. 371-387). New York: Routledge.

Butler, J. (1997). *Excitable speech: A politics of the performative*. New York: Routledge.

Card, S. K., Pirolli, P., Wege, M. V. D., Morrison, J. B., Reeder, R. W., Schraedley, P. K., et al. (2001). *Information scent as a driver of web behavior graphs: Results of a protocol analysis method for web usability*. Paper presented at the CHI 2001.

Castells, M. (2001). *The internet galaxy: Reflections on the internet, business, and society*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Castells, M. (2010). *The power of identity* (2 ed. Vol. 2). Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.

Chandler, D. (2002). *Semiotics: The basics*. New York: Routledge.

Children, The Digital Divide, and Federal Policy. (2004). Menlo Park, CA: The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation.

Chinn, M. D., & Fairlie, R. W. (2007). The determinants of the global digital divide: A cross-country analysis of computer and internet penetration. [Article]. *Oxford Economic Papers-New Series, 59*(1), 16-44.

Clippinger, J. (2007). *A crowd of one: The future of individual identity*. New York: PublicAffairs.

Cook-Gumperz, J. (2006). *The social construction of literacy*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Cooper, R., & Burrell, G. (1988). Modernism, postmodernism and organizational analysis: An introduction. *Organization Studies, 9*(1), 91-112.

Cope, B., & Kalantzis, M. (2000). *Multiliteracies: Literacy learning and the design of social futures*. New York: Routledge.

Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. (2008). *Basics of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Crawford, M. (1992). The world in a shopping mall. In M. Sorkin (Ed.), *Variations on a theme park: The new American city and the end of public space* (pp. 3–30). New York: Hill and Wang.

Croteau, D., & Hoynes, W. (2003). *Media society: Industries, images and audiences*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press.

Csikszentmihalyi, M., & Kubey, R. W. (1981). Television and the rest of life: A systematic comparison of subjective experience. *Public Opinion Quarterly, 45*(3), 317-328.

Csikszentmihalyi, M., & Larson, R. (1987). Validity and reliability of the experience sampling method. *Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease, 175*, 526-536.

Daft, R. L., & Lengel, R. H. (1984). Information richness: A new approach to managerial behavior and organizational design. In L. L. Cummings & B. M. Staw (Eds.), *Research in organizational behavior* (pp. 191-233). Homewood, IL: JAI Press.

Daft, R. L., Lengel, R. H., & Trevino, L. K. (1987). Message equivocality, media selection, and manager performance: Implications for information systems. *MIS Quarterly, 11*(3), 355-366.

Dahlberg, L. (2001). Democracy via cyberspace. *New Media & Society, 3*(2), 157-177.

Dake, D. (2005). Aesthetic theory. In K. Smith, S. Moriarty, G. Barbatsis, & K. Kenney (Eds.), *The handbook of visual communication: Theory, methods, and media.* (pp. 3-22). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Davis, R., & Owen, D. M. (1998). *New media and American politics*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Debatin, B., Lovejoy, J. P., Horn, A.-K., & Hughes, B. N. (2009). Facebook and online privacy: Attitudes, behaviors, and unintended consequences. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication, 15*(1), 83-108.

Deleuze, G., & Guattari, F. (1987). *A thousand plateaus: Capitalism and schizophrenia* (B. Massumi, Trans.). Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Denton, C. (2005). Examining documentary photography using the creative method. In K. Smith, S. Moriarty, G. Barbatsis, & K. Kenney (Eds.), *The handbook of visual communication: Theory, methods, and media* (pp. 405-427). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Derrida, J. (1976). *Of grammatology* (G. C. Spivak, Trans.). Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Derrida, J. (1978). *Writing and difference* (A. Bass, Trans.). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Dey, I. (1993). *Qualitative data analysis: A user-friendly guide for social scientists*. New York: Routledge.

Dey, I. (1999). *Grounding grounded theory*. San Diego, CA: Academic Press.

Donath, J. (Ed.) (2004) *The encyclopedia of human-computer interaction.* Great Barrington, MA: Berkshire Publishing Group.

Drotner, K. (2008a). Informal learning and digital media: Perceptions, practices. In K. Drotner, H. S. Jensen & K. C. Schrøder (Eds.), *Informal learning and digital media* (pp. 10-28). Newcastle, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Drotner, K. (2008b). Leisure is hard work: Digital practices and future competencies. In D. Buckingham (Ed.), *Youth, identity, and digital media* (pp. 167-184). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

Drotner, K., & Livingstone, S. (2008). *The international handbook of children, media, and culture*. London; Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Elm, M. S., Buchanan, E. A., & Stern, S. R. (2008). How do various notions of privacy influence decisions in qualitative Internet research? In A. N. Markham & N. K. Baym (Eds.), *Internet inquiry: Conversations about method* (pp. 69-98). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Ericsson, K. A. (2006). Protocol analysis and expert thought: Concurrent verbalizations of thinking during experts' performance on representative tasks. In K. A. Ericsson, N. Charness, P. J. Feltovich & R. R. Hoffman (Eds.), *The Cambridge handbook of expertise and expert performance*. Oxford: Cambridge University Press.

Ericsson, K. A., & Simon, H. A. (1993). *Protocol analysis: Verbal reports as data* (Revised ed.). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

Farrell, T. (1999). Knowledge, consensus, and rhetorical theory. In J. L. Lucaites, C. M. Condit, & S. Caudill (Eds.), *Contemporary rhetorical theory: A reader* (pp. 140-152). New York: Guilford Press.

Fogela, J., & Nehmad, E. (2008). Internet social network communities: Risk taking, trust, and privacy concerns. *Computers in Human Behavior, 25*(1), 153-160.

Foss, S. K. (2005). Theory of visual rhetoric. In K. Smith, S. Moriarty, G. Barbatsis, & K. Kenney (Eds.), *The handbook of visual communication: Theory, methods, and media* (pp. 141-152). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Foucault, M. (1972). *The archaeology of knowledge* (A. M. Sheridan-Smith, Trans.). New York: Harper & Row.

Foucault, M. (1979). *Discipline and punishment: The birth of the prison* (A. Sheridan, Trans.). New York: Vintage Books.

Foucault, M. (1991). Governmentality. In G. Burchell, C. Gordon, & P. Miller (Eds.), *The Foucault effect: Studies in governmentality* (pp. 87-104). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Frow, J. (1991). Intertextuality and ontology. In M. Worton & J. Still (Eds.), *Intertextuality: Theories and practice* (pp. 45-55). New York: Manchester University Press.

Gee, J. P. (2004). *Situated language and learning*. New York: Routledge.

Gee, J. P. (2008). Learning theory, video games, and popular culture. In K. Drotner, H. S. Jensen, & K. C. Schrøder (Eds.), *Informal learning and digital media* (pp. 156-179). Newcastle, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Genette, G. (1997). *Palimpsests* (C. Newman & C. Doubinsky, Trans.). Lincoln, NB: University of Nebraska Press.

Gergen, K. J. (1994). *Realities and relationships: Soundings in social construction*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Giddens, A. (1991). *Modernity and self-identity: Self and society in the late modern age*. Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press.

Gilbert, E., & Karahalios, K. (2009). *Predicting tie strength with social media*. Paper presented at the CHI 2009.

Glaser, B. G. (1978). *Theoretical sensitivity*. Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press.

Glaser, B. G. (1992). *Emergence vs. forcing: Basics of grounded theory analysis*. Sociology Press: Mill Valley, CA.

Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*. Piscataway, NJ: Aldine Transaction.

Goldman, S., Booker, A., & McDermott, M. (2008). Mixing the digital, social, and cultural: Learning, identity, and agency in youth participation. In D. Buckingham (Ed.), *Youth, identity, and digital media* (pp. 185–206). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

Granovetter, M. (1973). The strength of weak ties. *The American Journal of Sociology 78*(6), 1360-1380.

Grant, I. C. (2006). *Online privacy: An issue for adolescents*. Paper presented at the Proceedings of the Child and Teen Consumption Conference 2006.

Grimes, T., Anderson, J. A., & Bergen, L. (2008). *Media violence and aggression: Science and ideology*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Gross, E. F. (2004). Adolescent Internet use: What we expect, what teens report. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology, 25*(6), 633-649.

Gurak, S. (1997). *Persuasion and privacy in cyberspace: The online protests over LotusMarketplace and the clipper chip*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Gutting, G. (1989). *Michel Foucault's archaeology of scientific reason*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Halavais, A. (2009). *Search engine society*. Malden, MA: Polity Press.

Hall, S. (1980). Encoding/decoding. In S. Hall, D. Hobson, A. Lowe & P. Willis (Eds.), *Culture, media, language: Working papers in cultural studies, 1972-79* (pp. 128-138). London: Hutchinson.

Hall, S. (1985). Signification, representation, ideology: Althusser and the post-structuralist debates. *Critical Studies in Media Communication, 2*(2), 91-114.

Hall, S. (1996). *Critical dialogues in cultural studies*. New York: Routledge.

Hall, S. (1997). *Representation: Cultural representations and signifying practices*. Thousand Oaks, CA.

Hammersley, M. (1989). *The dilemma of qualitative method: Herbert Blumer and the chicago tradition*. Routledge: New York.

Hampton, K. (In Press). Comparing bonding and bridging ties for democratic engagement: Everyday use of communication technologies within social networks for civic and civil behaviors. *Information, Communication & Society, 14*(4).

Hampton, K., Lee, C., & Her, E. J. (2011). How new media affords network diversity: Direct and mediated access to social capital through participation in local social settings. *New Media & Society, published online before print*.

Hampton, K., & Wellman, B. (2003). Neighboring in netsville: How the Internet supports community and social capital in a wired world. *City & Community, 2*(4), 277-311.

Hansen, D., Ackerman, M., Resnick, P., & Munson, S. (2007). *Virtual community maintenance with a repository*. Paper presented at the Proceedings of ASIS&T 2007.

Haraway, D. (1988). Situated knowledges: The science question in feminism and the privilege of partial perspective. *Feminist Studies, 14*(3), 575-599.

Haraway, D. (1991). A cyborg manifesto: Science, technology, and socialist-feminism in the late twentieth century. In D. J. Haraway (Ed.), *Simians, cyborgs, and women: The reinvention of nature* (pp. 149–181). New York: Routledge.

Hargittai, E. (2008). Whose space? Differences among users and non-users of social network sites. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication, 13*(1).

Hartsock, N. (1987). Rethinking modernism: Minority vs. majority theories. *Cultural Critique, 7*, 187-206.

Haythornthwaite, C. (2002). Strong, weak, and latent ties and the impact of new media. *The Information Society, 18*, 385-401.

Haythornthwaite, C., & Wellman, B. (2002). The Internet in everyday life: An introduction. In B. Wellman & C. Haythorthwaite (Eds.), *The Internet in everyday life* (pp. 3-41). London: Blackwell.

Heckathorn, D. D. (1997). Respondent-driven sampling: A new approach to the study of hidden populations. *Social Problems, 44*, 174-199.

Heim, J., Brandtzeg, P. B., Kaare, B. H., Endestad, T., & Torgersen, L. (2007). Children's usage of media technologies and psychosocial factors. *New Media & Society, 9*(3), 425-454.

Henke, L. L. (1999). Children, advertising, and the Internet: An exploratory study. In D. Schumann & E. Thorson (Eds.), *Advertising and the World Wide Web* (pp. 73–80). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Herring, S. C. (2008). Questioning the generational divide: Technological exoticism and adult constructions of online youth identity. In D. Buckingham (Ed.), *Youth, identity, and digital media* (pp. 71-92). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

Hill, C. A., & Helmers, M. (2004). *Defining visual rhetorics*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Hodkinson, P. (2002). *Goth: Identity, style and subculture*. Oxford: Berg.

Hsi, S. (2007). Conceptualizing learning from the everyday activities of digital kids. [Article]. *International Journal of Science Education, 29*(12), 1509-1529.

Intille, S., Kukla, C., & Ma, X. (2002). *Eliciting user preferences using image-based experience sampling and reflection*. Paper presented at the CHI 2002.

Ito, M. (2005). *Intimate visual co-presence*. Paper presented at the 2005 Ubiquitous Computing Conference.

Ito, M. (Ed.). (2010). *Hanging out, messing around, and geeking out: Kids living and learning with new media*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Jameson, F. (1992). *Postmodernism, or, the cultural logic of late capitalism*. Chapel Hill, NC: Duke University Press.

Jenkins, H. (1998). Childhood innocence and other modern myths. In H. Jenkins (Ed.), *The children's culture reader* (pp. 1-37). New York: New York University Press.

Jenkins, H. (2006). *Convergence culture : Where old and new media collide*. New York: New York University Press.

Jenkins, H. (2009). *Confronting the challenges of participatory culture*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Johnson, N. A., Cooper, R. B., & Chin, W. W. (2009). Anger and flaming in computer-mediated negotiations among strangers. *Decision Support Systems, 46*(3), 660-672.

Jones, S., Johnson-Yale, C., Millermaier, S., & Pérez, F. S. (2009). Everyday life, online: U.S. college students' use of the Internet. *First Monday, 14*(10). Retrieved Aug. 22, 2010 from http://www.uic.edu/htbin/cgiwrap/bin/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/2649/2301

Kaare, B. H., Brandtzeg, P. B., Heim, J., & Endestad, T. (2007). In the borderland between family orientation and peer culture: The use of communication technologies among Norwegian tweens. *New Media & Society, 9*(4), 603-624.

Katz, J., & Aspden, P. (1997). Motivations for and barriers to Internet usage: Results of a national public opinion survey. *Internet Research, 7*(3), 170-188.

Kelle, U. (2005). "Emergence" vs. "forcing" of empirical data? A crucial problem of "grounded theory" reconsidered. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research, 6*(2). Retrieved from http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0114-fqs0502275

Kellner, D. (1995). *Media culture: Cultural studies, identity and politics between the modern and the post-modern*. New York: Routledge.

Kendall, J. (1999). Axial coding and the grounded theory controversy. *Western Journal of Nursing Research, 21*(6), 743-757.

Kenney, K. (2002). Building visual communication theory by borrowing from rhetoric. *Journal of Visual Literacy, 22*(1), 53-80.

Kenney, K. (2005a). Representation theory. In K. Smith, S. Moriarty, G. Barbatsis & K. Kenney (Eds.), *The handbook of visual communication: Theory, methods, and media* (pp. 99-116). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Kenney, K. (2005b). A visual rhetorical study of a virtual university's promotional efforts. In K. Smith, S. Moriarty, G. Barbatsis & K. Kenney (Eds.), *The handbook of visual communication: Theory, methods, and media* (pp. 153-166). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Kotchemidova, C. (2005). Why we say "cheese": Producing the smile in snapshot photography. *Critical Studies in Media Communication, 22*(1), 2-25.

Kraut, R., S., K., Boneva, B., Cummings, J., Helgeson, V., & Crawford, A. (2002). Internet paradox revisited. *Journal of Social Issues, 58*(1), 49-74.

Kristeva, J. (1980). *Desire in language: A semiotic approach to literature and art*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Kubey, R. W., & Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1990). *Television and the quality of life: How viewing shapes everyday experience*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

Kubey, R. W., Larson, R., & Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1996). Experience sampling method applications to communication research questions. *Journal of Communication, 46*(2), 99-120.

Laclau, E. (1977). *Politics and ideology in Marxist theory*. London: New Left Books.

Laclau, E., & Mouffe, C. (1985). *Hegemony and socialist strategy: Towards a radical democratic politics* (W. Moore & P. Cammack, Trans.). London: Verso.

Lampel, J., & Bhalla, A. (2007). The role of status seeking in online communities: Giving the gift of experience. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication, 12*(2), article 5. Retrieved Aug. 12, 2010 from http://jcmc.indiana.edu/vol12/issue2/lampel.html

Lange, P. G. (2007). Publicly private and privately public: Social networking on YouTube. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication, 13*(1), 361-380.

Larson, R., & Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1983). The experience sampling method. *New Directions for Methodology of Social and Behavioral Science, 15*, 41-56.

Leach, J. (2000). Rhetorical analysis. In M. W. Bauer & G. Gaskell (Eds.), *Qualitative researching with text, image and sound: A practical handbook* (pp. 207-226). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Lee, K. M. (2004). Presence, explicated. *Communication Theory, 14*(1), 27-50.

Lemke, J. L. (1998). Metamedia literacy: Transforming meanings and media. In D. Reinking, M. C. McKenna, L. D. Labbo, & R. D. Keiffer (Eds.), *Literacy for the 21st century: Technological transformation in a post-typographic world*. Mahwah, N.J: L. Erlbaum Associates.

Lenhart, A. (2007). *Cyberbullying and online teens*. Washington, DC: Pew Internet & American Life Project.

Lenhart, A. (2009). *Teens and sexting*. Washington, DC: Pew Internet & American Life Project.

Lenhart, A. (2010). *Social media & young adults.* Paper presented at the OSTWG, NTIA, Dept of Commerce, Washington, DC.

Lenhart, A., Ling, R., Campbell, S., & Purcell, K. (2010). *Teens and mobile phones*. Washington, DC: Pew Internet & American Life Project.

Lenhart, A., & Madden, M. (2005). *Teen content creators and consumers: More than half of online teens have created content for the Internet; and most teen downloaders think that getting free music files is easy to do*. Washington, DC: Pew Internet & American Life Project.

Lenhart, A., & Madden, M. (2007). *Teens, privacy and online social networks*. Washington, DC: Pew Internet & American Life Project.

Lenhart, A., Madden, M., & Hitlin, P. (2005). *Teens and technology: Youth are leading the transition to a fully wired and mobile nation*. Washington, DC: Pew Internet & American Life Project.

Lévy, P. (1997). *Collective intelligence: Mankind's emerging world in cyberspace*. Cambridge, MA: Perseus Books.

Lievrouw, L. A., & Livingstone, S. (2002). *The handbook of new media*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Lin, N. (1986). *Social capital: A theory of social structure and action*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.

Lin, N., Dayton, P. W., & Greenwald, P. (1978). Analyzing the instrumental use of relations in the context of social structure. *Sociological Methods Research, 46*(4), 149-166.

Lin, N., Ensel, W. M., & Vaughn, J. C. (1981). Social resources and strength of ties: Structural factors in occupational status attainment. *American Sociological Review, 46*(4), 393-405.

Lindlof, T. R., & Taylor, B. C. (2002). *Qualitative communication research methods*. Sage Publications: Thousand Oaks, CA.

Ling, R. (2004). *The mobile connections: Cell phone's impact on society*. Amsterdam: Morgan Kaufmann.

Ling, R., & Yttri, B. (2005). Control, emancipation and status: The mobile telephone in teen's parental and peer group control relationships. In R. Kraut (Ed.), *Information technology at home*. Oxford: Oxford Univeristy Press.

Littlejohn, S. W., & Foss, K. A. (2007). *Theories of human communication*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Livingstone, S. (2002). *Young people and new media: Childhood and the changing media environment.* London; Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Livingstone, S. (2003). Children's use of the Internet: Reflections on the emerging research agenda. *New Media & Society, 5*(2), 147-166.

Livingstone, S. (2004). Media literacy and the challenge of new information and communication technologies. *The Communication Review, 7*, 3-14.

Livingstone, S. (2006). Children's privacy online: Experimenting with boundaries within and beyond the family. In R. Kraut, M. Brynin, & S. Kiesler (Eds.), *Computers, phones, and the Internet: Domesticating information technology* (pp. 128–144). Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.

Livingstone, S. (2007). The challenge of engaging youth online - Contrasting producers' and teenagers' interpretations of websites. *European Journal of Communication, 22*(2), 165-184.

Livingstone, S. (2008). Taking risky opportunities in youthful content creation: Teenagers' use of social networking sites for intimacy, privacy and self-expression. [Article]. *New Media & Society, 10*(3), 393-411.

Logan, R. K. (2010). *Understanding new media: Extending Marshall McLuhan*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing.

Lombard, M., & Ditton, T. (1997). At the heart of it all: The concept of presence. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication, 3*(2). Retrieved March 22, 2007 from http://jcmc.indiana.edu/vol3/issue2/lombard.html

Lyotard, J. F. (1984). *The postmodern condition*. Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press.

Manovich, L. (2001). *The language of new media*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Mantovani, G. (1996). *New communication environments: From everyday to virtual*. London: Taylor & Francis.

Marwick, A. E., Diaz, D. M., & Palfrey, J. (2010). *Youth, privacy and reputation: A literature review*. Cambridge, MA: The Berkman Center for Internet & Society at Harvard University.

McKarrow, R. E. (1993). Critical rhetoric and the possibility of the subject. In I. H. Angus & L. Langsdorf (Eds.), *The critical turn: Rhetoric and philosophy in postmodern discourse* (pp. 51-67). Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press.

McLuhan, M. (1994). *Understanding media: The extensions of man*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Melia, K. M. (1996). Rediscovering Glaser. *Qualitative Health Research, 6*(3), 368-378.

Messaris, P., & Moriarty, S. (2005). Visual literacy theory. In K. Smith, Moriarty, S., Barbatsis, G., & Kenney, K. (Ed.), *The handbook of visual communication: Theory, methods, and media* (pp. 481-502). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Mirzoeff, N. (2002). *The visual culture reader* (2nd ed.). New York: Routledge.

Mitchell, W. J. T. (1994). Metapictures. In W. J. T. Mitchell (Ed.), *Picture theory* (pp. 35-82). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Mitra, A. (1997). Diasporic web sites: Ingroup and out group discourse. *Critical Studies in Mass Communication, 14*, 158-181.

Mitra, A., & Cohen, E. (1999). Analyzing the web: Directions and challenges. In S. Jones (Ed.), *Doing Internet research: Critical issues and methods for examining the net* (pp. 179-202). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Mitra, A., & Watts, E. (2002). Theorizing cyberspace: The idea of voice applied to the Internet discourse. *New Media & Society, 4*(4), 479-498.

Moriarty, S. E. (1994). Visual communication as a primary system. *Journal of Visual Literacy, 14*(2), 11-21.

Morson, G. S., & Emerson, C. (1990). *Mikhail Bakhtin: Creation of a prosaics*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Moscardelli, D. M., & Liston-Heyes, C. (2004). Teens surfing the net: How do they learn to protect their privacy? *Journal of Business and Economics Research, 2*(9), 43-56.

Mulvey, L. (1999). Visual pleasure and narrative cinema. In L. Braudy & M. Cohen (Eds.), *Film theory and criticism: Introductory readings* (pp. 833-844). New York: Oxford UP.

Myers, D. (2010). *Play redux: The anti-aesthetic of computer games.* Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Nicolai, T., Kirchhoff, L., Bruns, A., Wilson, J. A., & Saunders, B. J. (2008). *Google yourself! Measuring the performance of personalized information resources.* Paper presented at the Proceedings Association of Internet Researchers 2008: Internet Research 9.0: Rethinking Community, Rethinking Place, Copenhagen, Denmark.

Nie, N. (2001). Sociability, interpersonal relations and the Internet. Reconciling conflicting findings. *American Behavioral Scientist, 45*(3), 420-435.

O'Sullivan, P. B. (2000). Communication technologies in an educational environment: Lessons from a historical perspective. In R. A. Cole (Ed.), *Issues in Web-based pedagogy: A critical primer* (pp. 49-64). Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

Ochoa, X., & Duval, E. (2008). *Quantitative analysis of user-generated content on the web.* Paper presented at the First International Workshop on Understanding Web Evolution, Beijing, China.

Ogden, C. K., & Richards, I. A. (1923). *The meaning of meaning*. London: Routledge.

Orgad, S. (2008). How can researchers make sense of the issues involved in collecting and interpreting online and offline data? In A. N. Markham & N. K. Baym (Eds.), *Internet inquiry: Conversations about Method* (pp. 33-53). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Palfrey, J., & Gasser, U. (2008). *Born digital: Understanding the first generation of digital natives*. New York: Basic Books.

Palfrey, J., Sacco, D. T., & boyd, d. (2008). *Enhancing child safety and online technologies: Research advisory board report for the Internet safety technical task force*. Cambridge, MA: The Berkman Center for Internet and Society at Harvard University.

Parker, M. (1992). Post-modern organizations or postmodern organization theory? *Organization Studies, 13*(1), 1-17.

Parker, M. (1995). Critique in the name of what? Postmodernism and critical. *Organization Studies, 16*(4), 553-564.

Peirce, C. S. (1958). *Collected papers of Charles Sanders Peirce* (Vol. 2). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Pink, S. (2001). *Doing visual ethnography: Images, media and representation in research*. London: Sage.

Poster, M. (1997). CyberDemocracy: Internet and the public sphere. In D. Porter (Ed.), *Internet culture* (pp. 201-218). London: Routledge.

Poyntz, S. R. (2006). Independent media, youth agency, and the promise of media education. *Canadian Journal of Education, 29*(1), 154-175.

Prensky, M. (2001). Digital natives, digital immigrants. *On the Horizon, 9*(5), 1-6.

Press, A., & Livingstone, S. (2006). Taking audience research into the age of new media: Old problems and new challenges. In M. White & J. Schwoch (Eds.), *Questions of method in cultural studies* (pp. 175-220). London: Blackwell.

Putnam, R. D. (1995). Bowling alone: America's declining social capital. *Journal of Democracy, 6*(1), 65-78.

Rainie, L., & Wellman, B. (2010). The rise of networked individuals. Retrieved Aug. 20, 2010, from http://www.pewinternet.org/Presentations/2010/Apr/University-of-Minnesota.aspx

Reeves, B., & Nass, C. (1996). *The media equation: How people treat computers, television, and new media like real people and places*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP.

Reichertz, J. (2009). Abduction: The logic of discovery of grounded theory. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research, 11*(1). Retrieved November 9, 2010 from http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0114-fqs1001135

Rheingold, H. (1993). *The virtual community: Homesteading on the electronic frontier*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Pub. Co.

Rheingold, H. (2009). A mini-course on network and social network literacy. Retrieved December 7, 2009, from http://howardrheingold.posterous.com/a-min-course-on-network-and-social-network-li

Roberts, D. F., Foehr, U. G., & Rideout, V. (2005). *Generation M: Media in the lives of 8-18 year-olds* (No. 7251). Washington, D.C.: Kaiser Family Foundation.

Rosenau, P. (1992). *Post-modernism and the social sciences*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Russell, A., Ito, M., Richmond, T., & Tuters, M. (2008). Place: The networking of public space. In K. Varnelis (Ed.), *Networked publics*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Said, E. W. (1983). *The world, the text, and the critic*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Sampson, R. J., McAdam, D., MacIndoe, H., & Weffer-Elizondo, S. (2005). Civil society reconsidered: The durable nature and community structure of collective civic action. *American Journal of Sociology, 111*(3), 673-714.

Saussure, F. d. (1983). *Course in general linguistics* (R. Harris, Trans.). London: Duckworth.

Sayer, R. A. (2000). *Realism and social science*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Schrock, A., & boyd, D. (2008). *Online threats to youth: Solicitation, harassment, and problematic content*. Cambridge, MA: Berkman Center for Internet and Society at Harvard University.

Schwartz, D. (1989). Visual ethnography: Using photography in qualitative research. *Qualitative Sociology, 12*(2), 119-154.

Scott, J. W. (1991). The evidence of experience. *Critical Inquiry, 17*(4), 773-797.

Scott, L. M. (1994). Images in advertising: The need for a theory of visual rhetoric. *The Journal of Consumer Research, 21*(2), 252-273.

Sefton-Green, J. (2006). Youth, technology, and media cultures. In J. Green & A. Luke (Eds.), *Review of research in education 30, 2006* (Vol. 30, pp. 279-306). Washington: American Educational Research Association.

Selwyn, N. (2003). 'Doing it for the kids': Re-examining children, computers and the 'information society'. *Media, Culture & Society, 27*, 351-378.

Shaw, C., & Chase, M. (1989). *The imagined past: History and nostalgia*. New York: St. Martin's Press.

Shirky, C. (2010). *Cognitive surplus*. New York: The Penquin Press.

Short, J., Williams, E., & Christie, B. (1976). *The social psychology of communication*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Smith, A., Schlozman, K. L., Verba, S., & Brady, H. (2009). *The Internet and civic engagement*. Washington, DC: Pew Internet and American Life Project.

Soukup, C. (2006). Computer-mediated communication as a virtual third place: Building Oldenburg's great good places on the world wide web. *New Media & Society, 8*(3), 421 - 440.

Spivak, G. C. (1988). Can the subaltern speak? In C. Nelson & L. Grossberg (Eds.), *Marxism and the interpretation of culture* (pp. 271-313). London: Macmillan.

Stam, R. (2000). *Film theory: An introduction*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.

Steele, J. R., & Brown, J. D. (1995). Adolescent room culture: Studing media in the context of everyday life. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 24*, 551-576.

Stern, S. R. (2004). Studying adolescents online: A consideration of ethical issues. In E. A. Buchanan (Ed.), *Readings in virtual research ethics: Issues and controversies* (pp. 274-287). Hershey, PA: Information Science.

Strauss, A. C. (1987). *Qualitative analysis for social scientists*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Strauss, A. C., & Corbin, J. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory procedures and techniques* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Sturrock, J. (1979). Roland Barthes. In J. Sturrock (Ed.), *Structuralism and since: From Lévi-Strauss to Derrida*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Subrahmanyam, K., & Greenfield, P. (2008). Online communication and adolescent relationships. *Children and Electronic Media, 18*(1), 119-146.

Taylor, B. C. (2005). Postmodern theory. In S. May & D. Mumby (Eds.), *Engaging organizational communication theory and research* (pp. 113-140). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Therborn, G. (1980). *The ideology of power and power of ideology*. London: Verso.

Thomas, D. R. (2006). A general inductive approach for qualitative data analysis. *American Journal of Evaluation, 27*(2), 237-246

Thurman, N. J. (2008). Forums for citizen journalists? Adoption of user generated content initiatives by online news media. *New Media & Society, 10*(1), 139-157.

Turkle, S. (1995). *Life on the screen: Identity in the age of the Internet*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

Urquhart, C. (2001). An encounter with grounded theory: Tackling the practical and philosophical issues. In E. M. Trauth (Ed.), *Qualitative research in IS: Issues and trends* (pp. 104-140). Hershey, PA: Idea Group Publishing.

Vattimo, G. (1988). *The end of modernity: Nihilism and hermeneutics in postmodern culture* (J. R. Snyder, Trans.). Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Voithofer, R. (2005). Designing new media education research: The materiality of data, representation, and dissemination. *Educational Researcher, 34*(9), 3-14.

Walther, J. B. (1994). Anticipated ongoing interaction versus channel effects on relational communication in computer-mediated interaction. *Communication Research, 20*(4), 473-501.

Warnick, B. (1998a). Appearance or reality? Political parody on the web in campaign ’96. *Critical Studies in Mass Communication, 15*, 306-324.

Warnick, B. (1998b). Rhetorical criticism of public discourse on the Internet: Theoretical implications. *Rhetorical Society Quarterly, 28*(4), 73-84.

Warnick, B. (2001). Rhetorical criticism in new media environments. *Rhetoric Review, 20*(1/2), 60-65.

Warnick, B. (2005). Looking to the future: Electronic texts and the deepening interface. *Technical Communication Quarterly, 14*(3), 327-333.

Warren, S. D., & Brandeis, L. D. (1890). Right to privacy. *Harvard Law Review, 4*, 193-220.

Wartella, E., & Jennings, N. (2000). Children and computers: New technology, old concerns. *The Future of Children, 10*(2), 31-43.

Wartella, E., & Reeves, B. (1985). Historical trends in research on children and the media: 1900-1960. *Journal of Communication, 35*, 118-133.

Weber, S. (1976). Saussure and the apparition of language: The critical perspective. *MLN, 91*(5), 913-938.

Wellman, B., & Leighton, B. (1979). Networks, neighborhoods, and communities: Approaches to the study of the community question. *Urban Affairs Review, 14*(3), 363-390

Wellman, B., & Wortley, S. (1990). Different strokes for different folks: Community ties and social support. *The American Journal of Sociology, 96*(3), 558-588.

Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of practice: Learning, meanings, and identity*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Westin, A. F. (1967). *Privacy and freedom*. New York: Atheneum Press.

Whittaker, S. (2003). Theories and methods in mediated communication. In A. C. Graesser, M. A. Gernsbacher & S. R. Goldman (Eds.), *The handbook of discourse processes* (pp. 243-286). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Williams, D. (2003). The video game lighting rod: Constructions of a new media technology, 1970–2000. *Information, Communication & Society, 6*(4), 523-550.

Williams, R. (1975). *Television: Technology and cultural form*. New York: Schocken.

Wilson, B. (2006). Ethnography, the Internet, and youth culture: Strategies for examining social resistance and 'online-offline' relationships. *Canadian Journal of Education, 29*(1), 307–328.

Wolak, J., Finkelhor, D., Mitchell, K. J., & Ybarra, M. L. (2008). Online "predators" and their victims: Myths, realities, and implications for prevention and treatment. *American Psychologist, 63*(2), 111-128.

Wolak, J., Mitchell, K. J., & Finkelhor, D. (2007). Does online harassment constitute bullying? An exploration of online harassment by known peers and online-only contacts. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 41*, S51-S58.

Xie, E., Teo, H., & Wan, W. (2006). Volunteering personal information on the Internet: Effects of reputation, privacy notices, and rewards on online consumer behavior. *Marketing Letters, 17*(1), 61-74.

Ybarra, M., Diener-West, M., & Leaf, P. J. (2007). Examining the overlap in Internet harassment and school bullying: Implications for school intervention. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 41*, S42–S50.

Yin, R. K. (1984). *Case study research: Design and methods* (1st ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Youn, S. (2005). Teenagers' perceptions of online privacy and coping behaviors: A risk-benefit appraisal approach. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media, 49*(1), 86-110.

Youn, S. (2009). Determinants of online privacy concern and its influence on privacy protection behaviors among young adolescents. *Journal of Consumer Affairs, 43*(3), 389-418.

Zappen, J. P. (2005). Digital rhetoric: Towards an intergrated theory. *Technical Communication Quarterly, 14*(3), 319-325.

Zhao, S., & Elesh, D. (2008). Copresence as 'being with': Social contact in online public domains. *Information, Communication & Society, 11*(4), 565 - 583.

Zhao, S., Grasmuck, S., & Martin, J. (2008). Identity construction on facebook: Digital empowerment in anchored relationships. *Computers in Human Behavior, 24*, 1816-1836.

Zizek, S. (1989). *The sublime object of ideology*. New York: Verso.