CELL PHONE CYBERBULLYING'S IMPACT ON VICTIMS' ATTENDANCE,

ACADEMICS, AND SOCIAL AND PERSONAL LIFE IN SCHOOL:

A PHENOMENOLOGICAL QUALITATIVE STUDY

by

Nathan Joseph Heltzel

Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study is to describe and understand the shared experiences of five students in a medium-sized public high school in Northern Westchester County, New York, who were victims of cell phone cyberbullying and the impact this phenomenon had on the victims' attendance, academics, and social and personal life in school. Over the last decade, cell phone cyberbullying has evolved into its own phenomenon, thus becoming a significant singularity to be confronted. It is important to understand the didactic and textural descriptions of these experiences as lived by the participants in order to help parents, teachers, and other school officials understand what it means to be cell phone cyberbullied and how to address cell phone cyberbullying accordingly. This research was examined from the theoretical perspective of Clark Moustakas' theories of phenomenological research, Abraham Maslow's study of basic human needs and Carl Rogers' person-centered approach to understanding human relationships. The results of this study make significant contributions to the existing research in this field. Data suggests that all of the participants in this study engaged in excessive cell phone use. This was a contributing multiplier toward negative interaction with peers. The excessive cell phone use is complementary to a need for instantaneous information, at times causing social and emotional distress. Cell phone cyberbullies utilize these physiological responses to exert interpersonal and social control over their cyber victims. This control contributed to a compromise in social, emotional and physical security. Finally, participants sought help from parents to manage their insecurities when they could no longer manage those insecurities independently.

Descriptors: cell phone, cyberbully, attendance, academics, social life, personal life

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Dedication

This research study is dedicated to the victims of traditional bulling and all forms of cyberbullying. To the victims of both the past and the present, to those who have perished and to those who have survived, you are our unsung heroes. To those who continue to endure, you are not alone and you will never be forgotten. Continue to move toward the light at the end of the tunnel as you withstand your pain, even in your darkest hour when you know that light is not coming. Be strong and be brave as you enter the battle for your dignity and life, for you will persevere and move past your oppressors by means of faith and direction.

Proverbs 31:8-9: Open your mouth for the mute, For the rights of all the unfortunate.

Open your mouth, judge righteously, and defend the rights of the afflicted and needy.

Acknowledgments

To my lovely wife, Roshni Desai, O.D., M.S., FAAO who inspired and motivated me to "get my own," and to my two beautiful children, Shivani and Shaan. For without your patience, love, and support, this dissertation would not have been possible. I love all of you so very much!

To my mother, who has watched over me from God's kingdom since Mother's Day 1999, may you rest in peace knowing your boy has tried to please you as I delight in your will and walk in your way. To my father, I may wear a white collar to work, but my blood is blue through and through. I will never forget my roots, who I am or where I come from. To my little sister, you are the strongest person I know! Thank you for being there for me.

To all of the men and women I served with in the Armed Forces of the United States of America. I carry a piece of each of you eternally. Never Forget!

To my cousin Andrea, a survivor of the attack on Columbine High School on April 20, 1999. Look only ahead and never behind. Life is right before your eyes.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Background

School violence is a worrisome phenomenon that is known the world over and has no geopolitical boundaries. Most studies examining abusive behavior in schools have seen students as bullies or victims; however, a noteworthy number of students tend to be both bullies and victims, henceforth "bully-victims" (Berkowitz & Benbenishty, 2012, p. 67). Researchers have identified four main types of bullying—physical, verbal, relational, and cyber (Wang, Nansel, & Iannotti, 2009, p. 368)—which can be direct or indirect (Dracic, 2009, p. 217). This study sought to describe and understand the shared experiences of students who were victims of cell phone cyberbullying, some of whom may also be "bully-victims," and the impact this experience had on the victims' attendance, academics, and social and personal life in school.

It has recently been argued that the traditional categorization of cyberbullying may be obsolete because the advent of Smartphones has enabled multiple forms of media to converge, i.e., phone calls, emails, text messages, video clips, photographs, websites, among others. Furthermore, the source of media is now indistinguishable between computer and cell phone (Pieschl, Porsch, Kahl, & Klockenbusch, 2013, p. 243). Additionally, cyberbullying via cell phone presumably has different effects on the experience of cyberbullying (p. 243). Cyberbullying is traditionally defined as peer harassment perpetrated using computer technologies such as emails or social networking sites (Bauman & Del Rio, 2006, p. 219). For the purpose of this study, cell phone cyberbullying will be defined as actions that use mobile phone technologies with or without internet service to support the deliberate, repeated, and hostile behavior by an individual or group that is intended to harm another or others. This behavior can be achieved through one or more of the following, which include but are not

limited to intimidation, control, manipulation, humiliation, false discrediting, and putting down or embarrassing another or others (Belsey, 2005; Cell Phone Safety, 2013; Creswell, 2007).

Mobile phones have become the new weapon of choice for bullies (Bullying by mobile phone and cell phone, 2014; Taylor Michigan Police Department, 2007). Bullying via cell phone-integrated technology, which includes slanderous notes on message boards, blogs, emails, and instant or text messages, has become increasingly rampant. Researchers have suggested that the more time students spend using their cell phones, the less time they spend on studying and the more bullying they suffer as a result (Adachi, 2009, p. 6). Furthermore, bullying may cause other short-term problems for the victim, including anxiety, depression, and problems with school work (Aricak, 2009, p. 167; Clemson University IFNL, 2002, p. 1; Olweus, 1993a, pp. 32-33, 55-57). Bullying may also contribute to a negative school social climate that is not conducive to building solid relationships or learning (Clemson University IFNL, 2002, p. 1; Olweus, 1993a, pp. 46-49, 55-57)—both of which are important incentives to school attendance.

Of widespread concern to some school administrators is their inability to enforce restrictions on cell phone use during the regular school day because of opposition by parents who insist their children should be able to carry cell phones for safety reasons (Adachi, 2009, p. 6). In most cases, however, cyberbullying does not take place on school property; therefore, school administrators must adhere to their local board of education policies, state education department regulations, and laws of the state in which they reside (Goldstein, 2012, p. 208) when addressing this issue. Lastly, students used to seek refuge from bullies by avoiding school, although the possibility of avoidance is less of an option with cyberbullies because the bullying often occurs via social networks and text messaging on a 24-hour basis (Brank et al., 2012, p. 218).

Situation to Self

This study engaged me as the researcher both intellectually and emotionally. The issues of bullying and cyberbullying are prominent in my life and this will be discussed specifically at a later point within the context of this research. I believe there is both a personal and social significance to this study. It is personal because my own past was laden and riddled with tragic and fatal illustrations of peer-on-peer victimization as well as peer-on-peer harassment; it is social because an estimated two-thirds of all adults can reflect on a childhood memory related to being the bullied, the bully, or the observer (Sesar, Barisic, Pandza, & Dodaj, 2012, p. 133). Those exposed to bullying are more likely to experience negative psychosocial and behavioral outcomes well into adulthood, such as an undesirable self-image or difficulty with interpersonal relationships (p. 134).

This study was built upon three theoretical frameworks: Clark Moustakas' theories of phenomenological research, Abraham Maslow's study of basic human needs, and Carl Rogers' person-centered approach to understanding human relationships. Individually, each theory represents a collaborative understanding of cultural norms, human needs, and societal norms. Collectively, the theories assemble the preponderance of evidence necessary to describe and understand this phenomenon.

Scholarly interest in the analysis of stories has increased in recent years as researchers in many disciplines has struggled to understand the shared thematic experiences of others (Riley & Hawe, 2004, p. 1). Narrative inquiry is a comparatively new qualitative practice which attempts to understand the study of experience narratively; it is a cognitive and philosophical way of studying experience. Narrative inquiry emphasizes ethical elements and contours new theoretical understandings of people's experiences (Clandinin & Huber, in press).

Recognizing the benefits of describing and understanding these experiences, I as the researcher will practice the discipline of narrative inquiry in this phenomenological study. Narrative inquiry is focused on how people's knowledge and understanding of an experience are unveiled by the stories they tell. Narrative inquiry uses field texts such as stories, journals, conversations, interviews, life experiences, and other artifacts as the components of analysis to research and understand the way people generate meaning in their lives through narratives (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 98).

The primary theory espoused in this study is a transcendental phenomenological approach to qualitative research. In adopting this approach, I will set aside, as far as is humanly possible, all predispositions regarding the phenomenon being investigated (Moustakas, 1994, p. 121). I will rely on instinct, imagination, and knowledge of cultural and social norms to obtain a picture of and understand the experience that the participants have lived (Creswell, 2007, p. 237). In other words, from my perspective, I as the researcher will make an honest attempt to experience this phenomenon freshly and for the first time, in accordance with Moustakas' view.

Axiology will serve as the primary philosophical assumption for the study as I will be investigating the ethics of right and good within individual and general social conduct. In accordance with this philosophical assumption, I admit the presence of bias in the interpretation of the values discussed in the narrative of this study.

Problem Statement

Research-based literature supports the need for continued investigation into this phenomenon because bullying has historically impacted school attendance (Fried & Fried, 1996, p. 49; Morgan, 2013, p. 148) and cell phones appear to be the most commonly used device for cyber harassment (Beran et al., 2012, p. 571). Cell phones provide anonymity from detection,

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while legal limitations protect bullies and provide them with the perfect means of taunting their target with little fear of being caught. Text messages provide complete anonymity (City of Taylor Michigan Police Department, 2007). The potential threat of anonymity provided by the internet is compounded by the fact that the cyberbully cannot see the victim's emotional reactions. Thus, responses such as crying, which might lead people to recognize that their comments have been carried too far or misread, are no longer observable (Kowalski et al., 2007, p. S30).

The use of cell phone-applied technology such as texting, emailing, and instant messaging by students during the regular school day may increase the frequency of cyberbullying activities, thus impacting the victims' attendance (Hoby, 2005). It is estimated that one of every six first-year junior high school students and one of every three first-year high school students engage in "excessive" cell phone use, defined as more than three hours a day (Adachi, 2009, p. 6). Furthermore, 77% of teens take their cell phones to school and many keep them on and use them during the school day, including during instructional time (Lenhart, Ling, Campbell, & Purcell, 2010). It is not surprising that the amount of time one spends on computer-based activities (found on most android and iPhone platforms) is directly related to cyber victimization (Twyman et al., 2010, p. 7). Moreover, the communication gadget of choice for harassment is the cellular telephone. Because of its size and available options for text messaging, photography, video, and internet capabilities, cell phones provide both a gateway and a methodology to transmit harassing messages (Beran et al., 2012, p. 571).

Bullying behavior is a particular problem in schools and the negative consequences associated with bullying can be wide-reaching. These consequences can include a negative impact on schoolwork, familial and peer relationships, psychological well-being, and physical

health (Brank et al., 2012, p. 228). Observers and witnesses of bullying are also affected. The hostile atmosphere caused by bullying creates a negative impact on learning (Dracic, 2009, p. 218).

More specifically, bullying is a problem in schools because of the negative psychological and physical health problems associated with victimization (Aricak, 2009, p. 167; Darstadt & Woods, 1999, p. 33; Stickley et al., 2013, p. 1). Examples include anxiety, depression, insomnia, enuresis, headaches, dizziness, and stomach aches, with an increase in the frequency of bullying being responsible for an increase in symptomology (Aricak, 2009, p. 167; Darstadt & Woods, 1999, p. 34; Stickley et al., 2013, p. 1). The experience of being continually bullied by peers can be extremely stressful for some children and that experience can alter a person's emotional state, producing episodes of anxiety and depression (Rigby, 1999, p. 121). Stress associated with bullying, whether emotional or physical, may also produce changes in physiological function (Cox, 1996, p. 28). In some cases, this can be causal to a lowered immunity to infection, resulting in an assortment of problematic health complaints (Vaernes et al., 1991, p. 17). Suffice it to say that student health is paramount for regular school attendance, period to period and day to day.

Students often miss school because they fear physical harm at school (McClure & Shirataki, 1989, p. 490). Associated with this problem is the fact that students miss school because they suffer frequent and severe physical and emotional violence, and cannot rely on teachers' support or help. Students involved in violence usually experience both social isolation and low levels of social support from peers as well as low support from teachers, thus creating feelings of social insecurity and concern for personal safety (Berkowitz & Benbenishty, 2012, p. 74).

While physical violence and verbal attacks are a more direct form of bullying behavior (i.e., kicking, punching, pushing, or name calling) often associated with boys, girls tend to be victimized by indirect bullying. Indirect bullying includes behaviors such as excluding, ignoring, or gossiping and relying on a third party (i.e., social group, group text, message board, blog, etc.) (Dracic, 2009, p. 217). Indirect bullying can also include public humiliation via one of the aforementioned methods.

School attendance is a high-stakes point of interest for society in general, with serious consequences for students, their families, teachers, schools, and school districts (Landis & Reschly, 2010, p. 720). When a student is absent from school at the rate of one half-day per week in New York, where the school year lasts a minimum of 180 days (New York State Education Department, 2013), the student over the course of a school year will miss 18 days of school or over 3½ weeks of classroom instruction. When a student is late for a particular class by five minutes per day in a medium-sized public high school, where the classes are 44 minutes long (Psuedonym High School, 2013), they will miss 15 hours of classroom instruction over the course of a school year, or the equivalent of 23 class periods. This could be of particular interest if a student was continuously tardy to a class in order to avoid a bully or a cyberbully. Suffice it to say that learning is difficult if a student is not present in class.

At the elementary and middle-school level, students will fall academically behind their peers if they are tardy to or absent from school; at the high school level, the absences could potentially mean a loss of credit (Jones, 2012). In turn, a loss of credit could impact students' graduation status; of course, students graduating high school on time is of importance to schools and school districts for both state and federal funding (Raising school attendance, 2002, p. 54) and community prosperity.

The maximum compulsory school attendance age requirements—otherwise known as the age at which students are required by law to remain in school, which varies from state to state—should be acknowledged and considered when addressing matters impacting attendance (Landis & Reschly, 2010, p. 721). I have found that few studies have considered the effects of bullying or cyberbullying when addressing issues of school attendance, academic achievement, or student dropout rates. Since compulsory school attendance age requirements do vary from state to state, the policies, regulations, and laws impacting parental responsibility vary as well.

As noted above, bullying and cyberbullying can have a negative impact on schoolwork, familial and peer relationships, psychological well-being, and physical health (Brank et al., 2012, p. 228; Olweus, 1993a, pp. 55-57). Comprehensively, this includes both attendance and learning and impacts all students, including bullies, victims, bully-victims, and observer witnesses.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to describe and understand the shared experiences of students in a medium-sized public high school in Northern Westchester County, New York, who were victims of cell phone cyberbullying, and the impact this phenomenon had on the victims' attendance, academics, and social and personal life in school. Any form of bullying has a plethora of harmful consequences on children. Academic complications include the inability to concentrate in class, reduced grades, and increased absences (Beran et al., 2012, p. 570). The findings of this study will be used to edify parents, educators, and community leaders by describing the phenomenon of cell phone cyberbullying in order to promote a positive, safe, and healthy learning environment.

Significance of the Study

This study sought to describe and understand cell phone cyberbullying and its possible impact on victims' attendance, academics, and social and personal life in school. Countless studies have been conducted on peer-to-peer schoolyard and hallway bullying, dating back as far as the early 1970s, including multiple studies by Dr. Dan Olweus. Numerous cyberbullying research studies have also been conducted as far back as the mid-1990s (O'Neill, 1995). However, limited research has been directed to address the combination of a cell phone that travels with a student, wherever he or she may go, and its impact on a victim's attendance, academics, and social and personal life in school. Cell phone technology has many undeniable beneficial purposes; however, with the advent of advanced camera, texting, and internet technologies installed in cell phones, these purposes are often overlooked by parents, teachers, and school administrators as cell phones become an application tool of torment for Generation Y bullies.

On a local level, the significance of this study could lead to a heightened state of understanding how peer victimization and harassment can impact attendance in the school community. Both, especially the former, are still accepted by many as an unfortunate part of growing up that some students have to endure (Will & Neufeld, 2003, p. 32). Understanding the possible impact of this phenomenon on student attendance and related learning difficulties could be essential to raising local test scores (Raising school attendance, 2002, p. 54) and be critical to promoting a safe and healthy learning environment.

Most states have ratified anti-bullying legislation that prohibits bullying in schools. However, definitional issues present obstacles to enforcing cyber-related bullying. For example, some states have focused exclusively on physical forms of bullying or leave the delineation of

bullying entirely up to individual localities or school districts (Brank et al., 2012, p. 213). Exacerbating this issue is an apparent oversight by states to train educators to identify, report, and manage cyberbullying. The New York State Education Department regulations encompass provisions advising schools on a punitive code of conduct language for cyberbullying (New York State Education Department, 2013); however, neither the New York State Education Department nor the New York State anti-bullying legislation addresses training in-service educators to identify, report, or manage cyberbullying (New York State Government, 2013).

The findings of this study could also help State Education Department officials steer professional development objectives into other areas. Research has indicated that teachers demonstrate a lesser degree of support toward students who bully and are bullied, compared with the support afforded to bystanders or witness observers of bullying (Flaspohler et al., 2009, p. 645). In other words, students generally agree that teachers do not want to get involved and therefore disassociate themselves from the situation. When adults in positions of power do not intervene, they send several harmful messages to the students. First, the perpetrating students conclude that their behavior is sanctioned and they have a right to treat others as they are treating them; second, teachers whom students generally love and respect are no longer a source of counsel or protection, which confuses children and alters their moral and ethical compass (Will & Neufeld, 2003, p. 34). Both educators and students of school communities would benefit from state-mandated professional development, encouraging teachers to take positive and active roles in bullying or cyberbullying situations. This could start with supervising access to internet-based technology in school (Will & Neufeld, 2003, p. 34).

Bullying changes with age, and what may begin as interpersonal or cyber-harassment can ultimately progress to sexual harassment, gang violence, child abuse, workplace harassment or

elder abuse (DeBruyn & DeBruyn, 2005, p. 22). In fact, when a 32-year-old milk truck driver

stormed a one-room Amish school house in Nickel Mines, Pennsylvania on October 2, 2006 and

killed five children execution-style before committing suicide, he previously cited in a suicide

note his despondence over a bullying incident that occurred 20 years earlier. The shooting was

neither connected to the Amish community nor that particular school, but was the result of a

significant emotional event with his childhood peers which had been unattended to and

unresolved (Wike & Fraser, 2009, p. 164). Furthermore, 71% of attackers in incidents of school

violence from 1974 to 2000 felt bullied, persecuted, or threatened by their peers at school prior to

carrying out the violent incident (Vossekuil et al., 2002, p. 30).

The preponderance of the aforementioned evidence indicates a distressing social

epidemic with far-reaching effects across many societal boundaries. Nationally, the findings of

this study could help various organizations and agencies understand how the relatively recent

phenomenon of cell phone cyberbullying impacts attendance in school, work, and community

gatherings. The findings of this study may also provide insight into the shared traumatic

experiences of those exposed to cell phone cyberbullying, affording educators and other

professionals with an understanding of how to prescribe accordingly.

<p style="text-align:center">Research Questions</p>

I believe that the occurrence of cell phone cyberbullying is best suited for qualitative

phenomenological research because it is important to understand several individuals' common

or shared experiences of this phenomenon (Creswell, 2007, p. 60). Understanding the common

or shared experiences of this phenomenon could help parents, teachers, and school

administrators understand what cyberbullying looks like, what it means to be cyberbullied, and

how it can be addressed.

1. How does the phenomenon of cell phone cyberbullying affect the victims on a personal level?

2. How does the phenomenon of cell phone cyberbullying affect the victims on a social level?

3. How does the phenomenon of cell phone cyberbullying affect the victims on an academic level?

Research Plan

I chose a phenomenological qualitative research design for this study. This qualitative research plan ascribed to the shared experience of the phenomenon of cell phone cyberbullying, as the participants described it, by investigating and understanding the relationship between cell phone cyberbullying and its possible impact on attendance, academics, and social and personal life for the victims of this phenomenon. A phenomenological qualitative design allowed me to understand the experience of cell phone cyberbullying and its possible impact on a victim's attendance, academics, and social and personal life in school. The participants were graduates of a medium-sized public high school in the Northern Westchester County suburbs of New York City and (at the time of this study) were attending various colleges within the United States.

Delimitations and Limitations

Delimitations

The population of the research site was relatively homogeneous, with 85.2% of prospective participants being White of European descent. The research site was also located in one of the more affluent communities of greater metropolitan New York City. My professional experience has shown that many families choose to garner counseling services via private means rather than confide in the care of school district counselors. Many counseling and clinical matters

of legal concern are also dealt with discreetly through private consultants rather than overtly via school officials.

Limitations

This study focused on participants who graduated from a medium-sized suburban public high school in Northern Westchester County, New York, and (at the time of this study) were currently attending various colleges across the United States. I did not address matters involving students currently attending the school as they were minors and included in my clinical counseling caseload. Thus, I identified the use of current students as a potential conflict of interest due to both academic and referential influence.

It should also be noted that the comprehensive size of the district (at the time of this study) was 1,631 students in Kindergarten through Grade 12 (Pseudonym High School, 2013). The physical structure of the district serves this population with only one elementary school building and one shared middle-school and high-school building. Therefore, using students from another building within the school district was not possible for the purposes of this study.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to describe and understand the shared involvements of students in a medium-sized public high school who have experienced cell phone cyberbullying and the impact of this phenomenon on the victims, academically, personally, and socially, resulting in possible absenteeism and difficulty in learning. Although bullying behavior has plausibly been as much a part of school as pencils and books since the time of the one-room school house (Olweus, 1978, p. 19), the issue of peer-to-peer harassment and victimization at school did not garner recognition as being problematic until the 1970s when Dr. Dan Olweus (2011) initiated the world's first organized bullying research. The results of Olweus' research were published in a Swedish book in 1973 and in the United States in 1978 under the title *Aggression in the Schools: Bullies and Whipping Boys*.

Although Olweus brought to light the problem of traditional peer-to-peer and group-to-peer bullying in schools, encouraging others cited in this research to study the more recent phenomenon of cyberbullying, little research has since been done to understand the phenomenon of cell phone cyberbullying and its unique impact on victims' attendance, academics, and social and personal life in school. In order to accomplish this, one must understand the culture of cell phone use in our society. Cell phone technology is rapidly eliminating the digital divide and cell phone use contributes to several influential factors leading to cell phone cyberbullying in schools. First, cell phones have become an acceptable application of everyday life in industrialized nations around the globe. America ranks third in the world behind India and China in cell phone ownership and use (Mrnaveen, 2011). With a total population of 310,866,000

citizens and a total of 302,947,098 cell phone subscribers, 96% of all Americans own and

presumably use a cell phone on a regular, if not daily, basis (Mrnaveen, 2011).

In addition, researchers associated with the Pew Internet Research Center have suggested

that gender, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status do not play a significant role in one's ability to

gain internet access (Madden & Zickuhr, 2011). Ninety-five percent of American teens age 12 to

17 are now online, while 66% have reported being online daily (Lenhart et al., 2011). A recent

study associated with the Pew Internet Research Center indicated that 55% of Americans with

internet-ready cell phones used the technology to go online, while 31% of those users reported

they did most of their internet browsing on cell phones instead of desktop computers, laptop

computers or tablets. As of January 2014, this study suggested 17% of Americans could

perceivably be "cell-mostly internet users" (Brenner, 2013). The same study also suggested that

68% of Smartphone owners used their phone to access a social networking site such as Facebook

or Twitter, while 50% of them did this on a daily basis. Lastly, 82% of all cell phone users

utilized their phone to take pictures, 80% to send or receive text messages, 50% to send and

receive email, and 44% to record video (Brenner, 2013). Some schools have even initiated

integrated technology education using students' cell phones. These methods include students

using the calculator function to solve math problems, texting questions to the teacher instead of

raising their hands, taking pictures for projects, referencing teacher blogs, and even taking class

notes (Solochek, 2009).

As rapidly emerging technology continues to develop, parents and school administrators

on the sideline continue to struggle with the use of technology, especially as it becomes more

portable. The irony is that parents provide their children with cell phones as a measure of safety

and security, but the reality is these devices can be used to compromise their children's safety as

well, both socially and emotionally (Keith & Martin, 2005), and in some events, physically (Lenhart et al., 2011). Students, however, remain on the front line of compact technology and its many uses. It is estimated that 24% of teens age 12 to 17 have been bullied in the past year in some form via cell phone, including 9% via texting and 8% via email, social networking, or instant messaging; moreover, 7% said they were bullied verbally via their cell phone (Lenhart et al., 2011). While little mystery is left about the exact definition of traditional bullying and the impact of traditional bullying in schools, studies examining cyberbullying through the lens of cell phone technology are still developing.

In summary, parents and educators who are involved, use technologically applicable parental controls, and talk to kids as key adults in their lives can make a big difference. Only 34% of parents have reported enabling parental controls to limit the use of their child's cell phone. Teens rely most heavily on parents and teachers or another trusted adult at school for advice about online conduct and managing difficult experiences (Lenhart et al., 2011). Eighty-six percent of cell phone-using teens have reported receiving general advice about responsible and safe use from parents. Seventy percent of cell phone-using teens reported obtaining the same counsel from a teacher or another adult at school. While kids also receive advice and guidance from peers and friends on "acceptable" conduct and behavior for using cell phones and the plethora of technologies that go with it, 58% of teen cell phone and internet users have cited parents as the most significant influence on what they judged to be acceptable or unacceptable cell phone conduct (Lenhart et al., 2011).

This literature review highlights and defines cell phone, bullying, cyberbullying, the history of bullying, the history of cyberbullying, the methodology of bullying and cyberbullying, and school attendance. It also examines theories of cyberbullying, cyberbullying in schools, and

programs that effectively address counseling methodology and coping strategies for victims of cell phone cyberbullying.

Theoretical Framework

In the *Holy Bible*, Judah said to his father Israel, "I myself will guarantee the child's safety; you can hold me personally responsible for him. If I do not bring him back to you and set him here before you unharmed, I will bear the blame before you all my life" (Genesis 43:9, New Living Translation, p. 37). In this context, the same holds true for modern-day educators' obligation to parents regarding the students under their charge on a day-to-day basis.

Phenomenology as we know it today was inspired by Edmund Husserl and presented in his two-volume book series, *Logical Investigations*. Husserl was motivated by Franz Brentano's descriptive psychology. Through this, Husserl's phenomenology integrated psychology with logic. The two come together and develop a descriptive or analytic psychology that describes and analyzes conscious emotion or feeling (Smith, 2009).

This study was built on three theoretical frameworks: Clark Moustakas' theories of phenomenological research, Abraham Maslow's study of basic human needs (better known within Maslow's hierarchy of needs), and Carl Rogers' person-centered approach to understanding human relationships. Individually, each study represents a collaborative understanding of cultural norms, human needs, and societal norms. Together, each study builds the preponderance of evidence necessary to understand this phenomenon.

Understanding the Essence of Experience Through Storytelling

Moustakas (1994) outlined two theories of phenomenological research that are applicable to this study. The first theory is ethnography, which involves extensive field work with direct observations and activity of a certain group to obtain an understanding of its cultural norms. The

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result of ethnographic inquiry is a cultural description. This may require much time to include residency in a particular social setting. Moustakas suggested a researcher speak the proverbial language of the group being studied, engage in first-hand participation in the group's activities, and, of most significance, create a profound dependence on intensive work with a few informants drawn from the setting (pp. 1-2). An example of the relevance of this theory put to the test would be if one were to walk into any given public middle or high school in the United States and observe a shoving match between two boys. One may automatically assume this to be an aggressive act or the premise to a physical altercation. However, the boys are, more often than not, simply friends who are "fooling around." We must know our students and know those with whom they associate. We cannot mute these developmental moments for the sake of assuming that foul play is involved.

Second, empirical phenomenological research returns to the experience in order to obtain all-inclusive accounts by asking open-ended questions. The goal is to understand the experience of the storyteller. The intended result is to conclude what the shared experience means for the individuals who have lived it. In other words, we can let the phenomena speak for themselves (Moustakas, 1994, p. 13). As an example, we can understand through the lived experience of the participants in this study whether harassment and victimization via cell phone cyberbullying had ever impacted a student's decision to attend a particular class or even attend school. According to Moustakas, "the understanding of meaningful concrete relations implicit in the original description of experience in the context of a particular situation is the primary target of phenomenological knowledge" (p. 14).

The Impact of Personal Safety on the Human Psyche

Maslow (1954) spoke of some basic human needs in his hierarchy of needs model. He suggested that individuals advance through the following stages: physiological needs, security needs, social needs, belongingness and love needs, esteem needs, and self-actualization needs (p. 91). According to Maslow, the final psychological need that is achieved after basic physical and psychological needs are met and self-esteem is accomplished is the motivation to satisfy one's potential, academic or otherwise (Meyers, 1996, p. 394). All of the needs described by Maslow, with the exception of the physiological needs to satisfy hunger and thirst, directly apply to the concept of cell phone cyberbullying. However, as noted in the introductory writings of Maslow's motivation theory, an individual who perceives himself or herself to be in chronic and extreme danger, thereby compromising their safety, security and stability needs, will view practically everything as less important, even necessary physiological needs, for the sake of safety alone (Maslow, 1943, p. 376). It is therefore perceivable that the student who is exposed to victimization and harassment will compromise school attendance and learning for the sake of meeting safety needs.

Children cannot learn effectively if they fear for their safety. The average child in our society generally prefers a safe, orderly, predictable, organized world on which they can count and in which unexpected, unmanageable, and other dangerous things do not happen; in any case, however, they have a reliable adult to count on who will shield them from harm (Maslow, 1943, p. 378). Therefore, in accordance with Maslow's theory, a safe and supportive school environment free of harassment and victimization is critical for children to learn and grow. This is true for the bully, the victim, the bully-victim, and the witness observer alike. Maslow (1954) further contended individuals progress upward in the hierarchy only when lower needs are

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satisfied, but they may regress to lower levels if lower necessities are no longer satisfied. Therefore, if students are not able to meet the basic needs for safety and security, satisfying survival and stability needs, it is perceivable that, in accordance with Maslow, one will not be able to progress up the hierarchy to satisfy belongingness and love needs, esteem needs or, ultimately, the need for self-actualization and the realization of one's potential.

As humans, we have the basic need to be secure—secure within our homes, secure within our day-to-day lives, and secure in school. According to Olweus (in Hoover & Oliver, 1996), "every individual should have the right to be spared oppression and repeated, intentional humiliation in school and in society at large" (p. 14). The problem with fulfilling the security and safety needs of this generation is that kids are always connected. They are technologically harassed and victimized at school, at the dinner table with their parents, when they are doing homework on their computer at night, and even in the safe haven of their bedroom when their cell phone rings or pings a text in the middle of the night. There is no safe haven for the victim of cell phone cyberbullying (Wendland, 2003).

Maslow's social needs are also gained and breached by technology. Social networks and friends in the virtual world are quickly replacing those in the "real" world (Carmody, 2012, p. 51). The needs of esteem within the age group sampled are measured through the satisfaction of social relationships and self-image. Both of the aforementioned can be easily compromised through chronic or acute cyber-attacks (Valkenberg et al., 2006, pp. 584-585). Lastly, self-actualization as an adolescent can be as simple as social class ranking. Unfortunately, young people are susceptible to actualizing that which is not so.

Person-Centered Qualitative Analysis

Carl Rogers founded the person-centered approach. Person-centered therapy is built on a philosophy of human nature which assumes an instinctive endeavor for self-actualization and rests on the assumption that clients can work through the negative effects that certain past experiences have had on their attitudes, feelings, and behaviors (Cepeda & Davenport, 2006, p. 2). Person-centered therapy is a phenomenological view of human nature that strives to understand personality and human relationships. According to Rogers (in Corey, 2001), "we structure ourselves according to our perceptions of reality. We are motivated to actualize ourselves in the reality that we perceive" (p. 183).

The person-centered approach has been refined over the years and applied to various vocations, including education, for example, under the title "student-centered teaching" (Rogers, 1970, p. 89). While his theories on the "self" are considered to be both humanistic and phenomenological, Rogers gave wide application to innumerable purviews such as psychotherapy and counseling as a basis for client-centered therapy (Meyers, 1996, p. 394). Fundamentally, the objectives of person-centered therapy strive for independence and integration of the individual. They focus on the person as an individual, not on the person's presenting problem. In other words, the goal is not simply to solve the presenting problem, but rather to help clients in the development of their own growth. In theory, this helps clients better cope with the problems they are experiencing, both presently and in the future (Rogers, 1977, p. 138).

A fundamental theme originating in Rogers' (1986) original writings that resonated throughout his research is a crucial sense of trust in the client's aptitude to progress in a productive fashion, given the existence of appropriate conditions (p. 125). Furthermore, Rogers outlined that the specific goals in the person-centered approach to counseling therapy are to help

clients understand their experience and enable them to strive for meaningful personal fulfilment. In the end, when clients are free, they will find their own way (Combs, 1989, p. 96).

The affirmative perspective of human nature has meaningful effects for the practice of therapy and, for that matter, the phenomenological study of describing and understanding experience. Due to the understanding that the individual has an innate ability to move away from psychological instability toward mental health, the counselor or facilitator empowers the client with primary responsibility. The person-centered approach discards the ideology of the counselor as the supreme subject matter expert who knows what is better for the layperson, who sheepishly obeys the decrees of the counselor. Counseling therapy is therefore ingrained in the client's aptitude for awareness and self-directed change in attitudes and conduct (Corey, 2001, p. 173).

The relationship between counselor and client should be integrated for the purpose of advancing therapeutic progress (Rogers, 1957, p. 96). The primary focus of this model stresses that the two people, both counselor and client, are in psychological contact and the client experiences a sense of unconditional positive regard and empathetic understanding by the counselor (p. 101). To facilitate change, the counselor must fully receive the client and the client must experience being fully received, which includes the experience of being understood and accepted (Rogers, 1961, p. 29). Rogers summarized his hypothesis of person-centered therapy in one sentence: "If I can provide a certain type of relationship, the other person will discover within themselves the capacity to use that relationship for growth and change, and personal development will occur" (p. 33). Rogers (1967) further asserted in his hypothesis that "significant positive personality change does not occur except in a relationship" (p. 73). Rogers continued to emphasize the need for a trusting interpersonal relationship between counselor and

client, outlining necessary and sufficient conditions conducive to creating a suitable

psychological climate in which the client will experience the freedom necessary to discover

himself or herself. The present research study utilized a prior counselor-client relationship, given

Rogers' expressed focus on the need for an existing relationship between two people. The

counselor-client relationship between myself as the researcher and the participants in this study

is detailed in Chapter Three, Methodology.

Review of the Literature

Cell Phone Cyberbullying Terminology

Cell phone. A portable, usually cordless telephone for use in a cellular system (Merriam-

Webster, 2013). The participants in this study had cell phones with the capability to send short

message service (SMS) messages, otherwise known as text messages, at the least. More often

than not, the participants in this study had Smartphones with the capability of sending

multimedia message service (MMS) messages that included still photographs, audio, video, and

electronic mail messages. Smartphones are also capable of using Skype web video conferencing

or face time, an application used by iPhone owners ("Say Hello to Facetime," 2013). Moreover,

Smartphone owners can access the internet with great dexterity and log on to social networking

sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, and Snapchat, to name a few.

Bullying. According to Olweus (2011) and the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program,

students who bully demonstrate an abrasive need for power and control. These students also gain

fulfillment in causing injury and suffering, both emotionally and physically, to other students.

Students who bully are often rewarded in some way for their behavior with material, social, or

psychological actualization (Olweus, 2011).

Bullying is an aggressive behavior that is intended to cause distress or harm in the target or victim. It exists in relationships where there is an imbalance of power, whereby the targeted child is unable to defend himself or herself, and the action is repeated over time. The bully is likely to feel excited and powerful, whereas the victim is likely to feel hurt, embarrassed, ashamed, and publicly humiliated. Repetition and power differential are considered core to the definition of bullying and differentiate bullying from other forms of aggression (Stanton & Beran, 2009 p. 247).

Bullying can take many forms, but the most common are physical (e.g., pushing, hitting, and kicking), verbal (e.g., teasing, name calling, and threatening), or relational (e.g., rumor spreading, social exclusion, harming friendships). Suffice it to say that physical bullying cannot occur directly through the use of mobile technology; however, both verbal and relational bullying can. When this transpires, it is classified as "cyberbullying" or "cyber-harassment" (Bauman, 2007, p. 1).

Cyberbullying. Cyberbullying has been defined as bullying in which the aggression occurs through modern technological devices (Slonje & Smith, 2008, p. 147). For the purposes of this study, technological devices were defined as computers and cell phones. Shariff and Gouin (2006) offered a more specific definition of "modern technological devices," stating that cyberbullying is "covert psychological bullying conveyed through the electronic mediums" of electronic or wireless media.

Texting. Tilley (2009) described "texting" as an umbrella term encompassing several discrete concepts and activities transmitted over a cellular telephone network. Originally, texting was only available in SMS format and limited to 160 characters. As technology improved, MMS was introduced which enabled users to send photographs, videos, and hyperlinks to other

websites. However, text messaging in the SMS format is still the most popular form of text

messaging and is commonly associated with the term *texting*. Some experts in the field even use

the terms SMS and texting interchangeably (p. 1). Text messaging remains the most favored

method of teens communicating with other teens through a mobile device, with 63% of teens

texting with friends or acquaintances daily (Lenhart, 2012, p. 10) and 88% reporting at least

occasional usage (Lenhart et al., 2010, p. 10). In an unsettling parallel demonstrating the extent

to which texting is favored over all other means of communication, Lenhart (2012) also

suggested that only 35% of surveyed teens actually socialized face to face with others outside of

school on a daily basis.

Sexting. The practice of sending or receiving sexually suggestive, nude or nearly nude

photographs or videos via electronic devices such as computers or cell phones (Cramer et al,

2010, p. 39) is known as sexting. This is of particular importance because many jurisdictions

regard the transmission of such digital data as child pornography. A new phenomenon in sexting

is the use of Snapchat, which is a mobile phone application that lets users share pictures and

comments for a limited amount of time, between 1-10 seconds, before the photograph

disappears. This concept theoretically loosens the inhibition that a picture of questionable

character could be shared without permission or viewed later. The caveat to this application is

that it cannot prohibit the receiver of the message from saving the photograph within the time

allotted (Ford, 2013; Hill, 2013).

Social network. For nearly two decades, teens have had access to social networking sites

as a mainstream means of communicating online (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). It was not until the

technology of the late last decade revolutionized mobile internet access that teens headed to

social networking on their phones. The ever-increasing omnipresence of internet-enabled cell

phones, specifically Smartphones, has allowed social networking to be only a click away. Research has indicated that 40% of cell phone owners have used a social networking site on their Smartphone, and 28% did so on a daily basis. Teens, African Americans, Hispanics, those with high education levels, and those with higher incomes are most likely to access social networking sites on their internet-enabled cell telephone or Smartphone (Brenner, 2013).

Twitter. Twitter is a micro-blogging web tool designed to blend and meet the needs of both social networking and SMS users (Tilley, 2009, p. 1). Twitter's "About" page describes itself as an "information network." At the core of Twitter are small bursts of information called Tweets, each of which is 140 characters long. One can view photos, videos, and postings or conversations by one or more people directly in Tweets to gain a comprehensive understanding of an event or a story. Twitter for SMS is an instant infrastructure for mobile communications. Individuals and groups can use Twitter for SMS to connect directly to anyone with a mobile phone (Twitter.com). Twitter's web-based social networking service, in which 80% of subscribers tweet using their cell phone (@media_trust, Twitter.com, 2013), helped spur a 30% reported growth in online hate over the past year (MacMillan, 2013). By using hashtags (i.e., #), a metadata tag preceding a descriptive keyword, users can organize their ideas and tweets in a simple and easy-to-follow method, for example, #hatejohnorsally.

Instant messaging. Instant messaging is a live conversation between two or more people via the internet, in which the members of the conversation use screen names to identify themselves (Rouse, 2008). Although instant messaging of any kind is vastly favored by teens on a daily basis more so than emailing and talking via landline combined (Lenhart, 2012), it has lost its favor among teens in recent years. The reason is simple; texting is easier on a phone than communicating through an instant messaging Smartphone application such as America Online

Instant Messenger, commonly known as AIM. Furthermore, the portability of cell phones allows users to text from anywhere, at any time, whereas instant messaging is more commonly accessed through a desktop or laptop computer with an internet connection and requires the user and receiver to be signed in to exchange interpersonal messages.

One of the primary uses of instant messaging is as a method of communicating within a group of people in an online community (Koutamanis et al., 2013, pp. 2265-2266). It is perhaps through this use that instant messaging has the propensity to become a bullying instrument, especially for internet-ready cell phone users. A principal concern of instant messaging is cyberbullying by proxy. This occurs when an unauthorized user hacks into the target's account, assumes his or her identity, and transmits hassling, insensitive, or repulsive messages to known online acquaintances of the user that may include friends and family. Consequently, addressees of the harassing messages believe the account owner is sending the messages; this may result in loss of trust, loss of friends, and humiliation (Kowalski et al., 2008, p. 44).

Finally, cyberbullying by proxy encompasses impersonation or assumption of false identity. Some bullies, as noted above, use this method to either impersonate their victims by transmitting embarrassing pictures or false information; however, other bullies claim to be someone they are not to get their target to provide personal information that, if released, could be traumatically humiliating and cause real-world social avoidance (Kowalski et al., 2008, p. 45).

Electronic mail. Electronic mail, universally branded as email, is one of the most commonly used methods of communication by adults; however, it is estimated that only 6% of teen Smartphone owners use email on a daily basis (Lenhart, 2012). Still, email is one of the most favored methods of cyberbullies for two key purposes. First, one email message can be transmitted to hundreds, or even thousands, of recipients to disseminate information expediently.

Second, although email can theoretically be traced, proving that the transmitted email was sent by the email account owner can be difficult, if not impossible (i.e., compromised user name and password). One illustration of email cyberbullying is when a bully enlists his or her victim's email to various pornographic websites and advertising or promotional lists so the victim is inundated with invasive and hassling emails (Kowalski et al., 2008, p. 52). However, the most likely method of cell phone cyberbullying via email would perceivably be associated with making private information public, such as publishing a private conversation, embellishing an event into a rumor, or sharing embarrassing photographs or video (Lenhart, 2007).

The History of Bullying in Schools

In the *Holy Bible* is a verse applicable to this topic: "And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me'" (Matthew 25:40, New Living Translation, p. 756). The impact of the experience of harassment and victimization is not isolated to the victim of cyberbullying.

The instinctual desire to survive is communal among all living entities. Survival can be directly associated with competition because of the limited resources on our planet and the variety of species vying for them. The ideology of both survival and competition has breached the safe harbor of the classroom. Students are susceptible to conjuring unethical means to get an edge in reaction to the anxiety and stress presented in the hypercompetitive social and educational environments of school. These tactics can be as simple as coercing other students for answers on assignments to earn higher grades in order to get perceivably better college opportunities. Once a student understands the effectiveness of any such tactic, he or she may change his or her modus operandi. Advancing a routine employment of bullying methods can

lead to long-lasting impact on the lives of other students as well as turbulence in both workplace and personal relationships later in life (Donegan, 2012, p. 34).

Etymology. The etymology of the word *bully* can be traced back to the 1530s in its original Dutch gender-neutral derivative slang meaning "sweetheart," which was taken from *boel*, meaning "lover; brother." The spelling changed and the connotation deteriorated over the next 150 years through the 17th century as the Middle Dutch *broeder,* meaning "brother," or Middle High German *buole*, meaning "brother," transitioned through the inferences of "fine fellow" and "blusterer" to "harasser of the weak." In the mid- to late-1600s, the term grasped its modern-day spelling with the phrase *bully-ruffian*, which was said to be influenced by the word *bull* (Harper, 2013) and used as a noun meaning an adult male of a large animal (Merriam-Webster, 2013). It is believed that the relationship between "lover" and "ruffian" may have historical significance in "protector of a prostitute," which was one meaning of *bully* circa 1706 (Harper, 2013). *Bull* as a verb, meaning to advance forcefully or to act on with violence—for example to "bull through a crowd" (Merriam-Webster, 2013)—was first demonstrated in 1710 (Harper, 2013). The expression *"bully for you!"* implying "worthy, jolly, or admirable" and applied to praise someone or someone's courage, was first used in the 1680s and became widely popular in the United States in 1864, preserving the original affirmative sense of the word *bully* (Harper, 2013).

Fundamental definition. In its most basic sense, bullying behavior can be defined as a student's repeated exposure to negative actions by one or more other student aggressors (Olweus, 1993b, p. 9). When two or more student aggressors attack a victim, the action is commonly referred to as mobbing. These negative actions can take the form of physical contact, verbal abuse, spreading rumors, or social exclusion. Bullying also requires an imbalance of power

between the bullies and the victim. This is what experts call an asymmetric or a lopsided power relationship (Olweus, 2001, p. 24).

Historical examples over the centuries. Although systematic research on bullying before the 1970s is non-existent, specific incidents of bullying as a behavior have been documented in writings and newsprint as early as 1857, as described in the Tom Brown book *Schooldays* (Koo, 2007, p. 109). Although not many books have documented stories of bullying, aggressive incidents using the word *bullying* among school children and institutions were extraordinary and upsetting, especially in those venues serving boys exclusively (Koo, 2007, p. 109). Most notably, on April 27, 1885, *The Times* newspaper in London, England, reported that a 12-year-old boy was bullied to death by a group of older boys at the King's School in Cambridge. The article itself garnered so much attention that the public demanded authorities initiate an investigation of the boy's death. The final outcome of the investigation cited the incident as a "misadventure" and no punishment was meted to the perpetrators involved (Koo, 2007, p. 109). One can only surmise that bullying was a tolerable part of life in school for students circa 1885, the same way it was through much of the 20th century.

Historical examples can be found in American newsprint through the 20th century, indicating that a tolerance for bullying in fact existed from the classroom level through the ranks of school administration, who demonstrated an unwillingness to protect students or the integrity of the institution of academia. For example, on February 18, 1952, three freshman students at Proviso Township High School in Cook County, Illinois, were charged by Northlake police with extortion and assault. The three accused students reportedly bullied seven other students, and at least one more who denied being a victim, during shop class every day for six weeks. The objective of the three bullies was to obtain pocket money from the smaller boys as a "protection

fee," stating they would "fight their battles" for a weekly fee that started at five cents. As the weekly fee quickly climbed to 15 cents, the students were further extorted by one of the trio who would subject each boy to arm twisting and punching if he was not paid daily. The harassment and intimidation climaxed when the trio settled on a protection fee of one dollar for the rest of the semester. One of the victims finally verbalized a complaint to his father about a sore arm. After probing, the student reported the lengthy series of incidents to his father, who in turn reported the extortion and assaults to the police. The media printed the names and addresses of the juvenile perpetrators and the name of the negligent teacher in the *Chicago Tribune* in 1952.

On April 23, 1963, an article ran in the *Chicago Tribune* entitled "Grade School Bullies Are Problems." One parent cited in the article complained that her son had only a two-block walk to school in a nice suburban neighborhood but could not make it. The bullies ripped up his textbooks and his homework. She stated that when she "had to embarrass him" by escorting her child to school in the morning, noon for lunch, and after school, she realized that the children knew they were protected from punitive action both legally and at school. The mother stated that knowing this, the juvenile bullies had the nerve to push her off the sidewalk as well. The bullies swore at the mother and yelled, "You can't do a thing to us!" The mother brought the matter to the attention of the elementary-school principal and asked for help. Even though the principal had caught the bullies in the act, he stated he could not do much and went on to tell the mother, "God help your kid; they're really out for him, Saturdays and Sundays, especially." Another mother took a similar problem in a different neighborhood to the principal of her son's school. The mother said she was rudely informed by that principal, "I run a good school and don't need women coming around to tell me how to do things" (Beck, 1963). Fifty years of hindsight later, perhaps the article would be more appropriately titled "Grade School Principals Are Problems."

Acceptance of Bullying Changes

Countless examples of bullying similar to the three noted above can be found in American newsprint throughout the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. Tolerance by teachers, administrators, parents, and communities of overt "hallway" bullying in schools seemed to climax to an end, however, on April 20, 1999, when Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado, suffered the most egregious act of school violence to that date when Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold killed 12 classmates and one teacher after citing a general hatred of "jocks" and faculty who looked the other way when they were bullied (A. Coe, personal communication, April 20, 2013).

Perhaps what is most disturbing about the Columbine attacks was not the information that was released by the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office, but more so the information that was not released. In one case, county officials acknowledged five years after the fact that they had met privately after the attacks to discuss a 1998 affidavit for a search warrant on Harris' home after the mother of a former friend of Harris reported to police that he had been threatening and cyberbullying her son on Harris' personal website. Furthermore, the complaint stated that Harris had been bragging about building bombs on his website as well (Toppo, 2009). In those days, posting information on the internet was not taken as seriously, if even regarded at all, depending on locality. As a result of the search, police found a small bomb matching the description on the warrant near Harris' home, but detectives never presented the affidavit or the supporting evidence to a judge for further action (Toppo, 2009). Harris had been making direct and exacting threats publicly to individuals and groups via his website for no less than a year prior to the Columbine attacks, but both police and school officials dismissed him as just a troubled kid with no real means or opportunity to follow through on such action.

Bullying Legislation in the United States

Before the turn of the century, state laws addressing bullying in schools were virtually non-existent in the United States (C. Scheid, personal communication, May 16, 2013)—that is, until January 27, 1999, just 82 days prior to Columbine, when State Representative Charles Scheid of the Georgia House of Representatives wrote and introduced a bill that would prohibit and discourage bullying, and require the implementation of a character education program at all grade levels. It would also institute "strike three" anti-bullying programs in all of schools. This was the first of its kind and would commonly be referred to later around the United States as "Anti-bullying Legislation."

In a conversation that he shared with me, Representative Scheid himself stated,

Hey, you know, I was the victim of a bully myself in middle school, so I know how it feels. In those days you were told to fight back and toughen up. I remember putting a picture of my bully on punching bag to build up the courage to fight him. Things were different then. We certainly know better today that there are healthier ways to handle things as adults and leaders.

The former Georgia State Representative described two compelling events leading to the revolutionary bill he authored in 1999: H.B. 84, Chap. 282 (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751.4 and O.C.G.A. § 20-2-751.5) (C. Scheid, personal communication, May 16, 2013).

Representative Scheid first shared in brief the story of Brian Head, a student at Etowah High School in Cherokee County, Georgia. In the fall semester of 1993, Brian, who was a heavy-set boy and classic target of victimization, had been the target of repeated harassment by bullies at Etowah High School. Brian even came home from school bloody and beaten, but when his father questioned school authorities about Brian's condition, they told him that Brian was a

boy and boys just fight. Brian's father accepted this, although Brian did not. Brian apparently decided that after years of victimization, something had to change. He secretly put his father's loaded revolver into his backpack and went to school. Was this the first time? Perhaps, but we will never know. That day, while in economics class, a well-known bully was victimizing one of Brian's classmates by slapping him in the face. At that point, Brian, a common target himself, stood up and demanded the bully pick on someone his own size. The bully complied by slapping Brian across the face, and Brian responded by pulling out his revolver, standing up, and pointing it at the bully. As his classmates fled the room, Brian squeezed the trigger, but the revolver did not fire. Brian reportedly put the revolver to his own head and yelled, "I'm sick of it!" and squeezed the trigger again. The revolver discharged one round and Brian Head, age 15, was dead (C. Scheid, personal communication, May 16, 2013; Junod, 2002).

Representative Scheid himself had a 12-year-old son at the time of the next highly publicized bullying incident just five years later, which resulted in the death of E.T. Booth Middle School student Joshua Belluardo, who was also about age 12. As Scheid recalled, on November 2, 1998, the bully, Etowah High School student Jonathan Miller, and the target victim Joshua Belluardo—who happened to be neighbors—were on the same school bus which serviced both the middle school and high school, when Miller began to harass and torment Belluardo by throwing condiment packets from the school cafeteria at him. Belluardo reportedly looked at Miller with revulsion in response to the harassment, and Miller responded with a challenge to fight. Belluardo accepted the challenge, but on the condition that the fight take place on his front lawn, not on the bus. Representative. Scheid noted that at Miller's trial, it was said that Miller verbalized he would hit Belluardo from behind. As the two got off the bus, first Belluardo followed by Miller, Belluardo walked toward his yard and away from Miller when the latter

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rushed up and punched Belluardo in the back of the neck, causing a microscopic tear in the vertebral artery. Belluardo immediately collapsed to his knees as Miller continued the attack. Miller subsequently left Belluardo for dead on the grass and never looked back (C. Scheid, personal communication, May 16, 2013; Junod, 2002).

Was Miller a bully to Belluardo? Both Belluardo's parents and Miller's parents can agree on this: Miller did not repeatedly harass, intimidate, and victimize Belluardo specifically. However, in middle school, Miller was referred by faculty and staff to school administrators for disciplinary issues on more than 30 occasions and was expelled on 11 occasions. Faculty members testified in court on the nature of Miller's unruly conduct toward both teachers and peers alike while in school. Miller continually assaulted his peers without provocation by tripping and shoving them, and he was even known to spit on others. Miller's principal testified that school officials suggested counseling for him, but Miller's parents did not accept the suggestions of the school administration (Quinn, 2010).

Students who rode the bus with Miller described him as a dreadful boy who intimidated, threatened, and ridiculed all students with equal contempt. He had reportedly punched another student from behind during a prior quarrel (Quinn, 2010). Therefore, was Miller a bully to Belluardo? Reasonably speaking, no, one is not a bully exclusively through one isolated incident, even if that incident results in murder, as it did with Belluardo. Belluardo by all accounts was not repeatedly victimized by Miller; however, Miller repeatedly victimized others and was commonly known in his middle school and high school communities as a bully—that is, one who repeatedly targets and victimizes physically and emotionally weaker students.

Representative Scheid became involved in this issue after community members and the media demanded that government officials take action in the wake of two deaths in five years in

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one school district. With the weight of a constituency, a family of his own to protect, and the

history of having been bullied himself on his shoulders, Representative Scheid pushed through

the bipartisan legislation that went into effect on July 1, 1999 (C. Scheid, personal

communication, May 16, 2013). In doing so, Representative Scheid and the Georgia legislature

did what no government in the United States had done before and set the groundwork for 48

other states to follow over the next 12 years (C. Scheid, personal communication, May 16, 2013;

Junod, 2002).

Before Georgia enacted the first anti-bullying legislation in 1999, only Vermont in 1994,

Oregon in 1997, and California in 1998 had laws vaguely addressing the problem of bullying in

schools (National Conference of State Legislatures, 2013). In fact, of the three, Vermont was on

the cutting edge specifically requiring school boards to develop, adopt, and make available to

students and parents the policies prohibiting harassment of students in school. Act 162, S. 313

even defined harassment and intimidation, connecting it to race, creed, color, national origin,

marital status, sex, sexual orientation, and disability. Furthermore, it outlined policy to include

procedures for reporting and investigating. However, Vermont never went as far as to call

harassment and intimidation which disrupts the educational process by the term bullying until

Act 117, H. 629 in 2004 (National Conference of State Legislatures, 2013).

Oregon's H.B. 3544 in 1997 simply required the state education department to establish a

two-year pilot program to address problems associated with disruptive students by offering

counseling and social work services to the disruptive students and training classes to their

parents. State and school leaders never went as far as mentioning the word *bully* or *bullying*.

Furthermore, they did not address consequences for the actions associated with the repeated

harassment and victimization associated with bullying behavior. Oregon would not address the

matter of bullying until 2001 and did not require enactment of the legislation until 2004 (National Conference of State Legislatures, 2013).

California, through A.B. 499 in 1998, simply asked the State Board of Education to develop guidelines, adopt policies, and fund programs to create a school environment free of discriminatory attitudes and hate violence. In 2001, California readdressed the matter first by using the word *harassment* in S.B. 257, and later in 2001 corrected itself by using the word *bullying* to fund conflict resolution programs through A.B. 79 Chapter 646 (National Conference of State Legislatures, 2013).

Hundreds of years after formal schooling began, bullying is still the most frequent form of peer victimization in the United States. To date, every state in the union, except Montana, has passed and enacted anti-bullying legislation which defined traditional bullying and outlining policy to include procedures for reporting and investigating bullying by both schools and law enforcement. As a point of clarity, Montana's state government has published policy on bullying, but has not passed legislation (Ramirez, 2013).

Evolution of Technology Applied to Cell Phone Cyberbullying

APRANET/Internet. At 10:30 p.m. Pacific Standard Time on October 29, 1969, student researcher Charley Kline, under the direction of Professor Leonard Kleinrock, sent the very first text message through the Advanced Research Project Agency Network computers, referred to as the ARPANET, from Room 3420 of Boelter Hall at University of California Los Angeles to researchers at Stanford University. The message was supposed to be the word *login*. Researchers were able to send only the letters L and O before the computers crashed. Less than a month later, researchers resolved the crash and the first constant ARPANET connection was created on November 21, 1969 (Savino, 2011).

Eventually, the ARPANET, sponsored by the United States Department of Defense, transcended the restrictions of government regulation and became widely available to average citizens as the internet. By November of 1988, the internet had extended to over 160,000 host personal computers and was also located in Australia, Germany, Israel, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom (Cyberbully Timeline, 2013). On January 1, 1989, the World Wide Web was created in Switzerland by CERN, a European laboratory for particle physics. This was accomplished by changing the internet into a hypertext format (W3.org, 2013). By January 1, 1990, search engines started to appear on the web, and on April 30, 1993, CERN announced that the World Wide Web would be free to anyone (Cyberbully Timeline, 2013).

Electronic mail. Electronic mail, more commonly known after 1993 as simply "email" (or "e-mail"), was born of the efforts of computer scientists trying to find a way to use the ARPANET. The first electronic mail messages more closely resembled facsimiles than anything else because they were largely transmissions of existing files and documents to be delivered by remote printers. Ray Tomlinson is credited with creating modern email while working for Bolt, Beranek, and Newman (BBN) Technologies in 1971. Tomlinson was inspired to do so by distant colleagues who did not answer their phones. He is also responsible for the @ symbol being used in email addresses. Tomlinson noted that because @ was not commonly used in 1971, it made sense to use the symbol to discern to whom or where the electronic mail was supposed to go; it literally means "user at host." Tomlinson concluded, "It's the only preposition on the keyboard" ("The Net at 40," 2009).

Cellular phones. Dr. Martin Cooper is credited with making the first hand-held mobile phone call that did not need to be powered through a car. This occurred on April 3, 1973, in New

York City with his new invention, the Motorola Dyna-Tac (Oehmke, 2000). Ten years later, the analog Motorola Dyna-Tac 8000X advanced mobile phone system was introduced to the public.

Text messaging. The first text message to a mobile phone was sent on December 3, 1992, when British engineer Neil Papworth used his computer to wish Richard Jarvis, of Vodafone, a "Merry Christmas" on his Orbitel 901 mobile phone. Papworth did not receive a reply because there was no way to send a text from a phone in those days—until Nokia's first mobile phone was introduced in 1993. Text messaging started as a free service, but could only be used between phones on the same network. The introduction of Tegic technology in 1995, also known as "T9," which created "predictive" texting based on the letters one typed, enabled users to send text messages with speed and efficiency, something that was not possible before. Texting was about to become extremely popular (Arthur, 2012).

Smartphones. Although IBM first developed a prototype as early as 1992, Bell South introduced the IBM Simon Personal Communicator for sale in the United States in August of 1994 and sold 50,000 units over the next year. This was a primitive version of the world's first Smartphone. Over and above the capability to transmit and receive cellular phone calls, the device was capable of transmitting and receiving cellular pages, in both text and voice format, emails, and facsimiles (Sager, 2012).

Web-enabled phones. The way people communicate gained substantial ground circa 1996 when the Nokia 9000 became the first mobile phone to be commercially sold, allowing access to the real internet. The service was only available in Finland via the Sonera and Radiolinja networks. In 1999, the first commercial unveiling of a mobile-specific browser-based internet service, such as the one offered today, was in Japan when i-mode was introduced by

NTT DoCoMo (Aquino, 2011). This allowed people to use their mobile phone to communicate much as they would on a computer.

      Camera/video phones. On June 11, 1997, the first camera phone was invented haphazardly when technology innovator Philippe Kahn jury-rigged his mobile phone with a digital camera and emailed still photographs of his newborn daughter to family and friends in real time (Agger, 2007). Three years later, Sharp released the J-SH04 in November of 2000 as the world's first commercial mobile phone with an integrated digital camera and a photographic resolution of 0.11 mega pixel; it was only available in Japan (Debjit, 2010). Kahn had a premonition of sorts in an interview with *Wired Magazine* in 2000 when he stated, "With this kind of device, you are going to see the best and worst of things," in reaction to a comment from a journalist comparing Kahn to the likes of Mikael "Avtomat" Kalashnikov, inventor of the AK-47 assault rifle (Agger, 2007). When the ability to share video was released to Northern Europe with the advent of the Nokia 6600 in the second quarter of 2003 (Sundgot, 2003), it was not long before teens around the world took to the camera phone. They quickly employed it as a tool for recording and transmitting humiliating moments in time. This included happy-slapping and the publication of otherwise private or embarrassing moments (Agger, 2007).

      iPhone. The iPhone was released on June 29, 2007, and changed the way we use cell phones. Steve Jobs, CEO of Apple at the time, proclaimed the iPhone to be more than a communication tool—it was a way of life (Burrows & Kharif, 2013). This was exemplified by the media dubbing it the "Jesus Phone" because of the power it wielded ("Where would Jesus queue," 2007). The iPhone distracted consumers from cell phone fashion and brand, and focused more on technological innovations such as applications or "apps." The iPhone also gave users a comprehensive media experience, including the ability to browse the internet on one's phone

with the speed one could have on a computer, access social networking sites, send unrestricted texting, take videos and instantly post them to websites like YouTube, take still pictures and instantly post them to websites, and voice-record, to name a few. Essentially, the iPhone was the first phone to truly mimic a hand-held computer (Burrows & Kharif, 2013).

History of Cyberbullying

As technology has progressed, bullying has flourished (Donegan, 2012, p. 33). Over the last decade, cyberbullying has evolved into its own phenomenon, thus becoming a significant singularity to be accounted for (Tokunaga, 2010, p. 82). The word *cyberbully* was believed to be coined by Canadian researcher Bill Belsey in the 1990s (B. Belsey, personal communication, July 17, 2011).

The earliest examples of cyberbullying may have occurred through chat rooms, as this was the most common form of communication between people on the internet in the early 1990s. Online forums offered a collective hotbed for young people to attack each other (Subrahmanyam & Greenfield, 2008, p. 120). Chat rooms then became private one-on-one or group-specific when America Online Instant Messenger, commonly known as AIM, supplemented the chat room with private and instant messages (Donegan, 2012, p. 34). It was not until the school shooting at Columbine High School in 1999 that school administrators considered traditional bullying as a serious problem while recognizing its ties to the cyber world (Paulson, 2003).

Fundamental definition. Belsey has provided one of the most complete definitions of cyberbullying:

Cyberbullying encompasses the use of information and communication technologies such as email, cellular phones to include text messages, instant messaging, defamatory websites, and defamatory online personal polling websites, to support deliberate, repeated

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and hostile behavior by an individual or group, that is expected to hurt or humiliate

others. (B. Belsey, personal communication, July 17, 2011)

This definition is widely accepted because Belsey is recognized as a subject matter expert in the field as founder and President of bullying.org.

Traditional bullying versus cyberbullying. Traditional bullying differs from cyberbullying in many ways, even though cyberbullying research is largely guided by the conclusions drawn in historical bullying literature (Tokunaga, 2010, p. 82). Technologies such as computers and cell phones offer a unique advantage to the bully of yesteryear and the bully who may have never been. These technologies give cyberbullies an opportunistic and clandestine avenue of approach for their attacks (Hinduja & Patchin, 2006, p. 153), but depend to some degree on technological expertise (Smith, 2013, p. 83). Anonymity is perhaps one of the bully's most intimidating qualities. Cyberbully attacks are often indirect rather than face to face (p. 83). Temporary electronic mail accounts and pseudonyms in chat rooms are just two ways that make identifying cyberbullies difficult (p. 153).

A greater problem with cyber-attacks is the lack of supervision in cyberspace (p. 153). Historically, bullies must be aware of their environment under the supervision of faculty and staff. In cyberspace, however, there is very little supervision in internet chat rooms, and no supervision or regulatory agency monitoring private messages through instant messaging programs, electronic mail, or text messages on phones (p. 153). An associated effect in cyberbullying is that neither the bully nor the observer witnesses personally observe the victim's immediate reaction (Smith, 2013, p. 83). A principal motive for traditional bullying is rationalized by the notion of one gaining social status by demonstrating dominant abusive power over others in front of witnesses. However, in cyberbullying, the perpetrator will often lack this

(Hinduja & Patchin, 2006, p. 153). Most notably, the extensiveness of the potential audience is decidedly larger, as cyberbullying can reach particularly large audiences in a peer group, compared with the small groups that are the usual audience in traditional bullying.

Finally, it is difficult to escape from cyberbullying because the target can receive text messages to his or her cell phone, or access horrid website comments anywhere at any time (Smith, 2013, p. 83). Cell phones present a unique problem with cyberbullying. Most cell phone users keep their cell phones on and in close proximity. This affords cyberbullies the opportunity to attack the victim on a continuous basis. Therefore, the hollowed sanctuary of home where victims of bullying historically seek refuge is effectively breached (Hinduja & Patchin, 2006, p. 154). This can only amplify the already emotional traumatic struggle that bullied victims endure (Smith, 2013, p. 83).

Cyberbullying goes mobile. As the digital divide between interpersonal communication and technological communication amplified, the propensity for inappropriate online behavior increased with it. This continued through the mid-2000s with text messaging and email bullying (Donegan, 2012, p. 34). Teens are especially heavy users of communication forms such as instant messaging, email, and text messaging, as well as websites such as blogs, social networking, photo-sharing sites including Instagram and Snapchat (which is unique to cell phones as an application), and video-sharing sites such as YouTube (Subrahmanyam & Greenfield, 2008, p. 119); all of these are accessible directly through today's cell phones. The popularity of Smartphones and social networking websites have gained traction and worked in tandem as tools for bullies (Donegan, 2012, p. 34).

With the advent of the Smartphone, particularly the first-generation iPhone, came the innovation of applications, a tool frequently used by cyberbullies. For example, a new app

named LuLu allows women to rank men on a scale from 1 to 10. Women not only have the ability to rate men and use tags like #sexualpanther, #hygienicallychallenged, #manchild, and #napoleoncomplex, but they can do it covertly ("Popular iPhone apps take collegiate cyberbullying to new levels," 2013). Other coded messages are generationally implicit, claiming, for example, that a male has an STD using tags like #HotCar (Levin, 2013). Given this information, a reasonable conclusion is that some apps are used for sexual harassment and personal humiliation. In other words, the apps are used for peer-on-peer cyberbullying ("Popular iPhone apps take collegiate cyberbullying to new levels," 2013). Other cyberbully apps include The Ugly Meter ("iPhone app promoting cyber-bullying reaches 3 million users," 2011), Playbook (like LuLu, but for males to rate females), and iBoob, used to rate female breasts (West, 2013).

Harris Interactive, Inc. (2011) suggested that teenagers age 13 to 17 who use their cell phones more extensively are at an increased risk of experiencing and engaging in unsuitable cell phone usage at school. Teenagers who use cell phones excessively at school—defined as those who send 60 or more texts per school day—are more likely than average users—defined as those who send less than 60 texts per school day—to be cell phone misusers, become cyberbullies, or experience victimization themselves (p. 3). Approximately one quarter of all participants in the Harris Interactive, Inc. study acknowledged sending 60 or more texts per day from their cell phones (p. 2). The same research also suggested that teens who were cell phone misusers similarly took part in other at-risk actions such as truancy and cutting class more excessively than teens who used their cell phones appropriately (p. 6). Finally, 49% of all teens confessed to using their cell phone in class when they should be learning and 40% experienced some sort of harmful or inappropriate action from other cell phone users, while 23% admitted to engaging in

harmful or inappropriate action on their personal cell phones to include cyberbullying (p. 5). I found these data to be both significant and disturbing with regard to the impact of cell phone cyberbullying on victims' attendance, academics, and social and personal life in school.

Historical examples of cyberbullying. Generally speaking, cyberbullying accounts for a palpable segment of total bullying in young people, about one third of all bullying incidents (Tokunaga, 2010, p. 82). While Ryan Halligan of Essex Junction, Vermont, was certainly not the first victim of cyberbullying, he is noteworthy of mention in starting the story of the impact of cyberbullying on a victim's attendance, academics, and social and personal life in school. Before Halligan suffered cyberbullying in the summer between his seventh- and eighth-grade years, he was bullied as a skinny fifth grader. The traditional physical and emotional bullying went off and on for years, and Halligan and his parents discussed changing schools or doing home schooling (Halligan, 2013).

The cyberbullying was not apparent at first and lasted only a few short months via computer, particularly America Online Instant Messenger. The cyberbullying first started when a school bully, who befriended Halligan, turned into a cyberbully accusing Halligan of being gay. Halligan would even run out of class in tears later that fall after an online episode found its way into a classroom. A popular middle-school girl initially defended Halligan online and later turned against Halligan to gain further social status. The girl allegedly pretended to start an online romance with Halligan while posting all of their private conversations on other websites over the summer. When Halligan tried to approach his new girlfriend in person on the first day of school, she called him a loser and said in front of her friends that she was only joking online and did not want anything to do with him. Halligan's middle-school environment was as toxic in person as it was became online after school. Halligan discussed suicide with another boy online and

ultimately committed suicide by hanging himself on October 7, 2003 (Halligan, 2013). In an email conversation with the researcher, Halligan's father could not recall the exact number of school absences incurred due to cyberbullying, but did state that Halligan's grades declined significantly preceding his death (J. Halligan, personal communication, June 10, 2013).

In another noted example, if one had internet access at any time after November 3, 2002, one may have likely been part of the estimated one billion viewers of the two-minute viral video featuring the heavy-set 14-year-old Ghyslain Raza, a high school student from Trois-Rivieres, Quebec, Canada, who clumsily imitated light saber moves from the Star Wars series ("10 years later, 'Star Wars Kid' speaks out," 2013). Raza made the film in his high school television production studio and left the tape on a shelf where it was discovered by classmates some time later. After the film was digitalized and uploaded to the net via Kazaa on school computers without his knowledge or permission, Raza endured harassment and mockery from his classmates and the general public for years, causing him to drop out of school and finish his current semester of school in a psychiatric ward. Raza later stated that no matter how hard he tried to ignore the harassment, he could not get away from it. Raza also stated that what he saw in online messages to him was violent. People told him to commit suicide and he contemplated it. Raza calls the multi-year episode a very dark moment in his life. He lost what few friends he had and eventually had to change schools. Raza concluded that he could not help but feel worthless, that his life was not worth living. "The Star Wars Kid" remains one of the most shared internet videos of all time ("Star Wars Kid," 2013).

The Rehtaeh Parsons case is an extreme example of the impact of cell phone cyberbullying on a victim's attendance, academics, and social and personal life in school. In November 2011, Parsons, who was just 15 years old, went with a friend to a home with a small

party of four boys who were drinking excessive amounts of alcohol. Parsons recalled very little about the event as she too became intoxicated. At the apex of the event, one boy raped her while another boy captured the episode via camera phone ("Rehtaeh Parsons, Canadian girl, dies after suicide attempt; parents allege she was raped by 4 boys," 2013). The images were circulated via text over the next three days and quickly went viral at Parsons' Cole Harbour High School and in her town of Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, Canada ("This is rape culture," 2013). Parsons began to receive frequent text messages and Facebook messages on her cell phone from unknown people petitioning her for sex and sexual favors. Many students in school were calling her names, including "slut" ("Rehtaeh Parsons, Canadian girl, dies…," 2013).

The various situations eventually led Parsons to conclude that she could not go back to Cole Harbour High School. She was never left alone and her friends turned against her. The fallout of the incident that included cell phone cyberbullying was more than she could handle. The Parsons family had to move out of the community and Rehtaeh transferred to Halifax ("Rehtaeh Parsons, Canadian girl, dies…," 2013), but missed more school there after checking into a hospital as she struggled with depression, anger, and thoughts of suicide while dealing with an unremitting barrage of toxic social media ("This is rape culture," 2013). Seventeen months after the initial incident, following frequent peer harassment attributed to the distribution of photos via text message and Facebook, Parsons attempted suicide by hanging herself in the bathroom at her home. The attempt initially failed, but she was taken off life support three days later ("Rehtaeh Parsons, Canadian girl, dies…," 2013). One of Parsons' last posts on Facebook was a photo of herself with a quote from Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. stating, "In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends" ("This is rape culture," 2013).

Legislation Applied to Cyberbullying in the United States

The First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States of America is arguably the most prized of all constitutional amendments by the citizens of this country ("Paralegal guide: First Amendment rights," 2013). Within this document, the First Amendment prohibits the making of any law abridging the freedom of speech. However, the interpretation of any part of the Constitution has never been done with ease, and rapidly emerging technology is challenging the practice of how school officials and policymakers study the specifics of technology with pertinent legal value while considering the sanctity of the First Amendment (Pike, 2008, p. 972).

The First Amendment is of fundamental concern for the issue of cyberbullying because no actual physical assault occurs (Pike, 2008, p. 972). The bully would like to hide under the guise of the First Amendment's freedom of speech, while the target victim of intimidation and harassment is met with verbal and emotional distress and, from time to time, threats of physical violence. This has historically challenged school administrators and policymakers because the practice of leveraging the school code of conduct policy often occurs after the actual physical threat has been fulfilled. Not long ago, school administrators and policymakers found it easy to refer to existing local, state, and federal laws concerning physical assault. Cyberbullying and, in particular, cell phone cyberbullying challenged this practice and challenged the extent to which students are entitled to free speech.

The First Amendment as it is applied to school discipline is widely acknowledged to be covered by the "Tinker Trilogy" or "Tinker Test" during school hours or at a school functions (Pike, 2008, p. 972). In either sense of the word, Tinker's foundation lies in *Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District* (1969), in which the Supreme Court decided that when students are off campus, their expression continued to be protected if it did not

"materially and substantially" disrupt the educational process on behalf of a plaintiff who wore a black armband to school to publicize her objection to the Vietnam War. In this case, Tinker's school sent her home and suspended her in violation of a newly adopted policy banning armbands. The suspension was later revoked (*Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District*, 1969).

In *Bethel School District v. Frasier* (1986), the Supreme Court expanded on *Tinker* and held that it is appropriate for a school to disassociate itself from speech that is vulgar, lewd, and wholly inconsistent with the fundamental values of public school education. The decision was tied to a speech Frasier delivered during school hours to a voluntary assembly of over 600 students, some as young as 14 years old, in which he used sexually explicit innuendo and graphic language. The resulting punishment from the school was a three-day suspension and disqualification from delivering a speech at graduation. Two lower courts previously sided with Frasier allowing him to speak at graduation. The Supreme Court overruled the decision of the lower courts three years later (*Bethel School District v. Frasier*, 1986).

Lastly, in *Hazelwood School District v. Kuhlmeier* (1988), the Supreme Court held that educators do not offend the First Amendment by exercising editorial control over the style and content of student speech in school-sponsored expressive activities—in this case, the school newspaper—as long as their actions are reasonably related to legitimate pedagogical concerns. The case was filed by students after the school principal halted the printing of two articles scheduled for publication. The first article recounted the story of three pregnant students, their use of birth control, and their sexual philandering. The principal felt this topic was not appropriate for the school's younger underclassmen. The second article told the story of students with divorced parents, one of whom harshly criticized a father without offering him the

opportunity to tell his side of the story or asking his permission (*Hazelwood School District v. Kuhlmeier*, 1988).

Although school administrators must carefully observe the "Tinker Test" in making policy and administering punishment for on-campus expression, off-campus expression has historically proven more puzzling to manage and oversee. In 1969, when the Supreme Court held that students do not "shed their constitutional rights to freedom of speech or expression at the schoolhouse gate" (*Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District*, 1969), there was no legitimate question about the location of the school house gate or of a particular student's proximity to the gate. In the 45 years that have passed since *Tinker*, students have embraced cell phone-enabled technologies to expedite communication and are progressively able to impact other students from afar, distorting the distinction between speech on or off school grounds. The capacity to impact others in space and time, otherwise known as "telepresence," creates significant difficulties for the courts (Pike, 2008, p. 973).

Enter into discussion the Supreme Court decision of *Chaplinsky v. New Hampshire* (1942), in which Justice Frank Murphy developed a two-tier theory of the First Amendment in the unanimous decision stating:

> There are certain well defined and narrowly limited classes of speech, the prevention and punishment of which has never been thought to raise any Constitutional problem. These include the lewd and obscene, the profane, the libelous, and the insulting or 'fighting' words, those which by their very utterance inflict injury or tend to incite an immediate breach of the peace. (*Chaplinsky v. New Hampshire,* 1942)

Justice Murphy went on to declare, "It has been well observed that such utterances are no essential part of any exposition of ideas, and are of such slight social value as a step to truth that

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any benefit that may be derived from them is clearly outweighed by the social interest in order and morality" (*Chaplinsky v. New Hampshire,* 1942). Jurisprudence reasonably leverages *Chaplinsky v. New Hampshire*, affirming that school districts are arms of the government and students are citizens of this nation (Miller, 2002, p. 627), further recognizing that on-campus speech, even facial expressions used as speech, can be restricted by the state's interest in effectual public education (Pike, 2008, p. 973).

The difficulties facing cyber-speech are the ambiguity of where the speech takes place and where it is accessed, whether the action of cyberbullying is done during or after school hours, and whether or not the device used to transmit or receive the methodology was personal or school-sanctioned. In other words, did any part of the action take place within the school house gate (Pike, 2008, p. 1002)? To answer this, school administrators and policymakers rely on the act of telepresence (p. 1002). Telepresence refers to a set of technologies which allow individuals to feel as if they were present, to give the appearance of being present, or to have an effect of being present at a place other than their true location ("Telepresence—Next generation video conferencing," 2013). Examples of how active telepresence could be achieved include, but are not limited to, the telephone, more often today by cell phone and all of its applicable technologies, instant messaging, texting, email, and websites (Pike, 2008, p. 1002). Schools must identify the method of telepresence; determine if the speech was on or off campus; decide whether or not there was a disturbance or whether a conjectured disturbance is eminent, in which case no "Tinker Test" is needed; and determine whether or not the speech was inappropriate (p. 1002). If reported by a third-party student, is there evidence that the offender had a reasonable intent to communicate the threats or harassment, which implies an intent to disrupt (p. 989)?

School administrators in the millennial generation must take an active role in educating themselves and their faculty about cyberbullying and the implications associated with it. If school administrators are not entirely familiar with emerging technologies, they will likely be ineffective in enforcing the telepresence criterion, and will therefore be incapable of taking appropriate action on students who are cyberbullying. Furthermore, they will likely lack an understanding of the impact the phenomenon may have on their school (Pike, 2008, p. 1006).

Practices of Cell Phone Cyberbullies

According to Olweus (2008), cyberbullying has some unique characteristics that could enable a sense of compromised safety in school or the inability to otherwise attend class. Maslow's (1943) theory also argued that a safe and supportive school environment free of harassment and victimization is critical for children to learn and grow. Since the intent of this study was to understand the essence or experience of the victims of cyberbullying, the methodology described in Chapter Three is especially important for identifying if and how cyberbullying impacted the victims' attendance, academics, and social and personal life in school.

Cyber-harassment. Harassment is defined as the use of repeated and consistent words, conduct or action that, being directed at a specific person, annoys, alarms, or causes substantial emotional distress in that person and serves no legitimate purpose (Kowalski et al., 2012, p. 63). Cyber-harassment is generally looked at as a unique form of bullying that involves recurring distasteful and abusive messages transmitted to the victim. It usually transpires via direct communication conduits such as text messaging or email, but it may also take place in public chat rooms or discussion forums (p. 63).

Text wars. Text wars encompass one or more cyberbullies and one victim. The basic premise of text war methodology is for the cyberbullies to transmit hundreds or thousands of text messages to the victim's mobile phone. This leaves the victim with both an overwhelming number of messages and possibly a hefty cell phone bill (Kowalski et al., 2012, p. 63).

Denigration. Denigration occurs when one sends untrue or false information to others about someone. Spreading rumors and texting or posting ill-timed or digitally altered photographs are some of the most popular methods (Kowalski et al., 2012, p. 63). Recent events similar to the Rehtaeh Parsons case, which included the spreading of sexual photographs via texting the target and causing enormous embarrassment, have highlighted the pain associated with denigration.

Flaming. Flaming occurs when two or more individuals engage in an emotionally charged exchange in a public forum online. Flaming only occurs when it is viewed by a grander cyber audience, such as a chat room. Therefore, the more isolated methods connected with texting or email would not be associated with flaming (Kowalski et al., 2012, p. 62).

Impersonation. Impersonation typically happens when someone breaks into someone's user account on a website, email, IM, or chat room and pretends to be the account owner for malicious purposes. While assuming the identity of the victim, cyberbullies can send offensive messages, sexual messages, or sexual images to others, causing the target to become ridiculed or ostracized (Kowalski et al., 2012, p. 64). In some cases, cyberbullies have created webpages or mirror accounts of the victim. However, most cases occur when user names and passwords are compromised, usually by a current or former friend.

Outing and trickery. Outing denotes sharing someone's secrets to embarrass his or her. Trickery occurs when the victim is tricked by someone into sharing personal secrets. In each

case, the bully posts the information on an open forum to humiliate the target (Kowalski et al., 2012, p. 65). This was the case with Ryan Halligan, as previously detailed, and led to his suicide.

Exclusion. Whether students are on- or offline, there is a perceived notion of being "in" or "out"—that is, one is either with the "in-crowd" or the "out-crowd" (Kowalski et al., 2012, p. 66). Socially, as noted earlier with Maslow, everyone has a basic human need, want or desire to be included by others. This is usually a point of fulfilling both one's safety and self-actualization needs in accordance with Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs (p. 370). A considerable amount of social behavior, especially as adolescents, is directed by efforts to be accepted by others and to prevent exclusion by all, otherwise known as social-death. Exclusion is a very dangerous practice by cyberbullies and can occur very passively. Examples include being "defriended" on Facebook or related social networking sites, or being taken off a buddy list similar to those on America Online Instant Messenger (Kowalski et al., 2012, p. 66).

Ostracism. Ostracism can be real or perceived. Online ostracism occurs when one person does not respond to another. It can also be perceived as ostracism if, for example, one does not respond to a text in a timely or prompt manner as there is a certain social faux-pas in not responding to texts quickly in the cyber world (Kowalski et al., 2012, p. 63).

Cyber-stalking. Cyber-stalking transpires when someone sending a person repeated messages that are threatening or intimidating (Kowalski et al., 2012, p. 67). This can have the same effect as the hang-up phone call or the act of physically following someone. Cyber-stalking usually occurs via text messaging and is less commonly achieved through social media and email.

Video-recording of assaults. To increase the victim's level of humiliation, cyberbullies first act as bullies in this unique realm of cyberbullying (Kowalski et al., 2012, p. 67).

Cyberbullies first digitally record an assault on the target, most often via cell phone, and then upload the recorded assault to a website such as YouTube for hundreds or thousands to see and comment on. Unfortunately, it is much easier to upload a video to the internet than it is to remove a video from the World Wide Web. Gyslain Raza's case, described earlier as the "Star Wars Kid," is an early example of unwanted notoriety and fame online (p. 67).

Happy slapping. According to Kowalski et al. (2012), happy slapping started on the subway trains of London, England, and has now infected our schools. Happy slapping occurs when a person, usually a teen, runs up and slaps a random passerby—or even not random—while another teenager films the incident on a camera phone or Smartphone. The incident is then uploaded to the internet or texted using the same cellular device on which the victim was made a mockery (p. 67).

In both cases, video recording of assaults and happy slapping are becoming extremely popular in the United States and elsewhere. In one case, an 11-year-old student was ferociously assaulted in the hallway of his school as classmates captured the event via cell phone camera. Photographs documenting the attack were subsequently emailed to the bully and his acquaintances as well as other observers to humiliate the victim further. In another incident, a boy in the United Kingdom was killed in a happy slapping incident. A bully slapped the boy so violently that he fell and hit his head on the concrete floor. Camera phone pictures documented the boy trying to talk as he lay hemorrhaging to death (Kowalski et al., 2012, p. 67).

Counseling Methodology and Coping Strategy

Previous studies on cyberbullying have revealed a direct effect of psychiatric symptoms such as anxiety, depression, interpersonal sensitivity, and obsessive-compulsive on cyberbullying, in both the cyber victim and the cyberbully (Aricak, 2009, p. 167). Cyberbullying

is also connected with being an associative predictor to addictions and addictive personality traits. For example, O'Neill observed the compulsive nature of electronic communication, going so far as to use the word *cyberbully* when describing the loss of character and social control in internet chat rooms (M. O'Neill, personal communication, December 12, 2011). In her observation, as the number of electronic messages exchanged increased and control over social favorability was at stake, people often obsessively resorted to the denigration of other electronic communicators (O'Neill, 1995).

As noted by Kowalski (2008), victims of cyberbullying are often unwilling to report their abuse to a parent or other trusted adult. Reporting the harassment and victimization presents a challenge for parents and counselors. Victims of cyberbullying may be disinclined to share their encounter for many reasons, including, but not limited to, the fact that victims fail to recognize they have been cyberbullied. Victims also fear that the attacks will escalate if the cyberbully gets into trouble and, finally, victims fear their parents will remove their computers or cellular phones in an effort to protect them.

Any sign of a student's anxiety, depression, or low self-esteem should be the primary point of interest for parents and school officials (Kowalski, 2008, p. 45). Victims should be counseled and encouraged to realize they are not at fault, and cyberbullies must take responsibility accordingly. It is suggested that counselors tending to students who cyberbully should focus on helping their students understand the severity and significance of their behavior. This is especially true with cyberbullying, where bullies do not fully comprehend the cause and effect of their actions. Counselors should assist bullies in developing both an understanding and awareness of their actions in an effort to prevent any reoccurrence of cyberbullying (Rigby, 2003).

One-on-one counseling for cyberbullying and matters of confidentiality issues can be difficult to navigate. School officials in most localities are mandated to report child abuse, which can include any cyberbullying that involves sexually explicit images of a minor. If cyberbullies are forwarding or distributing such images, they are effectively dispensing child pornography, which requires law enforcement attention. As the frequency of "sexting" increases, counselors will need to sharpen their knowledge of legal matters associated with such behavior (Battersby, 2008).

Need for the Study

Another verse from the *Holy Bible* echoes the motivation for conducting the present study: "For the ruthless shall come to nothing and the scoffer cease, and all who watch to do evil shall be cut off" (Isaiah, 29:20, New Living Translation, p. 538). Current studies tend to focus exclusively on the conundrum of cyberbullying rather than on the tools that can be used to resolve the problem (Slonje & Smith, 2008, p. 147). This is particularly evident with cell phone cyberbullying and the rapidly emerging technology available to cyberbullies and their victims with cell phones (Brenner, 2013; Morgan, 2013, p. 147). Current research also seems to look past cell phone use applied to cyberbullying, even though other research has suggested that more Americans are becoming cell phone-mostly internet users (Brenner, 2013) and teens increasingly favor communication via texting over all other means of communication, including face-to-face (Lenhart, 2012). Lastly, current research has often tended to use quantitative internet surveys addressing preconceived philosophies about cyberbullying rather than attempted to investigate the phenomenon by understanding the stories told by participants who have lived through the experience first-hand (Hinduja & Patchin, 2007, 2008; Tokunaga, 2010).

While extensive research has been executed identifying the side effects of the stress associated with bullying and cyberbullying, including insomnia, enuresis, headaches, and abdominal pain (Aricak, 2009, p. 167; Darstadt & Woods, 1999, p. 34; Stickley et al., 2013, p. 1), little research has investigated how cyberbullying impacts the victims' attendance, academics, and social and personal life in school. An assortment of documented cases have cited stress-related symptomology as being causal to a lowered immunity to infection, resulting in an assortment of problematic health complaints (Tung et al., 2012, p. 6494; Vaernes et al., 1991, p. 17). While few can argue about the rational connection between student health and school attendance, the present study may be able to understand through the participants' experiences the degree to which psychological and physiological side effects of stress influenced their decisions about attending school.

Finally, students often miss school because they fear physical harm at school (McClure & Shirataki, 1989, p. 490; Morgan, 2013, p. 148). While traditional bullying normally ceased when a student entered the safety and security of his or her home, this is no longer the case (Hinduja & Patchin, 2006, p. 154). Text messaging via cell phone as well as chat room activity appears to be causing widespread disruptions and absenteeism during the regular school day and may threaten adolescent social and emotional development (Katzer, Fetchenhauer, & Belshack, 2009, p. 32; Raskauskas & Stoltz, 2007, p. 565). In dozens of documented cases, students have rapidly or instantaneously spread rumors to other students via text about fellow students. Given the enormous number of students with cell phones and their exponential rumor-spreading capability, schools will likely continue to deal with such instantaneous communication and its impact on victims' attendance, academics, and social and personal life in school (McQuade et al., 2009, p. 160). Students avoid school following cell phone cyberbullying for many reasons, both social

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and personal, including embarrassment, shame, ostracism, exclusion, and fear of physical harm. Furthermore, 93% of cyberbullying victims have reported feelings of sadness, hopelessness, depression, and anxiety (Raskauskas & Stoltz, 2007, p. 569). Understanding the complexity of these feelings and emotions and what they mean may help education professionals and other government policymakers direct initiatives to reduce the phenomenological problem of cell phone cyberbullying.

Summary

To date, little research has been conducted to understand the relationship between cyberbullying via cell phones and its impact on victims' attendance, academics, and social and personal life in school (Kowalski, Limber, & Agatston, 2008; Mark & Ratliffe, 2011; Raskauskas & Stoltz, 2007). The swelling accessibility to cell phones with internet technology has provided a generation with both new and unlimited ways to bully. The purpose of this research was not to place blame on any group—parents, teachers, school administrators, public officials, and certainly not the young people involved in cell phone cyberbullying behavior. Rather, I hope this work will advance awareness and understanding of the increasingly complex social, psychological, and academic problems surrounding cell phone cyberbullying's impact on the victims' attendance, academics, and social and personal life in school.

While quantitative research has studied numerous gaps in cyberbullying studies (Hinduja & Patchin, 2007, 2008; Slonje & Smith, 2008; Tokunaga, 2010), this research often lacks the voices and stories of all participants associated with the phenomenon. Understanding the lived experience of the participants may in fact reveal more questions than answers. The nature of pure qualitative phenomenology in this study allowed me as a researcher to explore the experience as the participants understood it without obligation to foregone conclusions.

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CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Overview of the Study

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to describe and understand the shared experiences of students in a medium-sized public high school in Northern Westchester County, New York, who were exposed to cell phone cyberbullying, and the impact this phenomenon had on the victims, academically, personally, and socially, possibly resulting in absenteeism and difficulty in learning (Creswell, 2007, p. 103). For this research, cell phone cyberbullying was defined as actions that use mobile phone technologies with or without internet service to support the deliberate, repeated, and hostile behavior by an individual or group that is intended to harm another or others. This behavior can be achieved through one or more of the following, which includes, but is not limited to, intimidation, control, manipulation, humiliation, false discrediting, putting down, or embarrassing another or others (Belsey, 2005; Cell Phone Safety, 2013; Creswell, 2007, p. 103).

Research Design

The design of pure phenomenology best suited this study because of the emotional and psychological impact one endures as a victim of cyberbullying. Quantitative methods would fail to capture the essence of the shared experience, nor could one analyze the data and come away from the phenomenology with the comprehension, "I understand better what it is like for someone to experience that" (Polkinghorne, 1989, p. 46).

The broad philosophical assumption about bullying, to include cyberbullying for the millennial generation, is that bullying is simply a part of growing up (Limber & Small, 2003, p. 445). One must deal with bullying as a learning experience to discover how to relate better with one's peers. The victim of bullying must do so by ignoring the bully and the act of being

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bullied or confronting one's attacker or attackers head on. This past practice by parents and school administrators has neither accounted for the psychological trauma one may experience as a victim of bullying, nor does it account for the manner in which the victim copes with the trauma during or after the harassment, intimidation, and abuse (Lyznicki et al., 2004, p. 1729). The above philosophy also puts the victim at risk to endure greater physical harm and possible overt embarrassment in front of one's peer group (Goldman, 2012).

Over the past two decades, however, the above philosophical ideologies have changed; bullying and cyberbullying are now viewed as serious problems that demand attention (Campbell, 2005). The impartial certainty is that cyberbullying, like traditional bullying, involves an imbalance of power, aggression, and a negative action that is frequently repeated. This imbalance of power is shaped through either perceived or actual physical, intellectual, emotional, and/or social capital by both the victim and the bully (Stanton & Beran, 2009, p. 247). In light of these influences, the imbalance of power is causal to manifesting the bullying and the persistence of the bullying (Olweus, 1993b).

Since this study focused on cell phone cyberbullying, specific details relative to this phenomenon were used in the research methodology. The details of this phenomenon were exemplified through the lived experiences of the participants and were consciously directed toward cell phone cyberbullying, as opposed to the exclusivity of computer cyberbullying.

Research Questions

As previously noted, I believe the occurrence of cell phone cyberbullying was best suited for qualitative phenomenological research because it is important to understand several individuals' common or shared experiences within this phenomenon (Creswell, 2007, p. 60). Understanding the common or shared experiences of this phenomenon could help parents;

teachers, and school administrators understand what it means to be cyberbullied, what it looks like, and how to address it. The following research questions are of noteworthy interest:

1. How does the phenomenon of cell phone cyberbullying affect the victims on a personal level?

2. How does the phenomenon of cell phone cyberbullying affect the victims on a social level?

3. How does the phenomenon of cell phone cyberbullying affect the victims on an academic level?

Participants

It was essential to select the participants of this study based on their personal lived experiences within the phenomenon of cell phone cyberbullying and its possible impact on the victims' attendance, academics, and social and personal life in school. The participants of this study were recent graduates of a medium-sized public high school in Northern Westchester County, New York. The age range of the participants was between 18 and 22 years at the time of the study.

The participants were former students of a medium-sized public high school who also were in my clinical counseling caseload while attending the school. The students had worked with me in a client-to-counselor relationship in the past. As stated previously in this study, Rogers (1957) asserted that the relationship between counselor and client should be integrated for the purpose of promoting therapeutic progress. He emphasized the need for a trusting interpersonal relationship between counselor and client, outlining necessary and sufficient conditions conducive to creating a suitable psychological climate in which clients will experience the freedom necessary to discover themselves. Given Rogers' expressed focus on the

need for an existing relationship between two people, I felt it was essential to this phenomenological study that I interview participants with whom I had working relationships.

Bullying of any form is a sensitive issue and most school administrators would like to suggest their school is a safe place in which children can learn and grow (Jacobsen & Polin, 2004, p. 37). Consequently, school administrators are unlikely to volunteer their school for a study examining current and active bullying behavior of any form. Furthermore, the results of this study could divulge information related to immoral or illegal activity, neither of which any school would want to address. To resolve this conundrum, I contacted former students who were my clients in the guidance office while attending high school. The adult participants had discussed the issue of cell phone cyberbullying with me in the past. The issues were resolved in accordance with the academic and behavioral necessities of the time. No further counseling ensued in relation to this study.

Setting

This study was conducted with recent graduates of a medium-sized public high school in Northern Westchester County, New York. The high school at the time of the study had a total enrollment of 592 students. The demographics of the high school student population were as follows: 83% Caucasian; 9% Asian, American Indian, Alaskan or Pacific Islander; 4% African American; and 4% Hispanic (New York State Report Card 2011-2012, 2013, p. 1). The community is located less than 20 miles from the New York City limits and has a total of 10,072 residents, with 2.9 members per household and a median household income of $140,547 per year (Demographics for 10510, New York 10510, 2013).

The school district is comprised of one elementary school, one middle school, and one high school. The elementary school and school district administrative offices are located on one

campus, while the middle school and high school are located on a separate campus less than a mile away. The governing Board of Education at the time consisted of five school board members, who were well educated and had professional working backgrounds in law, finance, or the management of businesses and corporate structures in the greater New York metropolitan area.

It is important to note that the medium-sized public high school generally receives nearly 30 students per year from a feeder school in a neighboring community. This transpires because the neighboring school district only provides a Kindergarten through Grade 8 education. Once students finish eighth grade, they can opt to transfer to one of three feeder high schools in the county. This medium-sized public high school seems to garner the lion's share of the neighboring feeder school district students every year as the top choice for both parents and students. The students coming from the neighboring feeder school district provide much racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic diversity to the high school demographic. Most students from the neighboring feeder school district are minority students of Asian (Indian), African American, or Hispanic descent. The students fit well into the fabric of the high school, and there is no obvious rift between the medium-sized public high school students and the neighboring feeder school district students at the high school level.

This site was selected for this project based on several factors that contributed to the phenomenon of cell phone cyberbullying. First, there was no total ban on the use of cell phones during the school day. Using cell phones while in class was restricted, but texting between students and parents or between students and other students during class was commonplace. Many community members have staunchly opposed any ban on students' possession of cell phones in large part because of the looming threat of terrorism to the New York metropolitan

area and the need for parents to have immediate communication with their children if warranted. Therefore, students may use cell phones at will during lunch and outdoors, and although the practice is banned, students do use their phones between classes as well.

Second, most of the students attending this medium-sized public high school had cell phones. Furthermore, many students here had costly data packages with critical features pertinent to this study, such as text messaging, multimedia messaging that supported still photographs, audio and/or video texting, and email and internet access that supported apps or applications. These features also allowed students to contribute to social media message boards, forums, blogs, and chat rooms as well as post "status updates" on social media networks such as Facebook and Twitter throughout the day with pocket-sized technology.

Lastly, the community was small in population and geography. Although located in suburban New York City, residents generally take pride in the fact that everybody knows everybody. Because of this, students who are victims of cell phone cyberbullying have nowhere to hide. Students cannot change schools without paying tuition to a private school or neighboring district which is both costly and burdensome. Rumors spread quickly in a small school through word of mouth and even faster through social media (McQuade et al., 2009, p. 160).

Procedures

In phenomenology, the objective is to describe the events related to the phenomenon as they are, not as a researcher impulsively and mechanically interprets the events, words, phrases, or themes based on past experience (Gall et al., 2007, p. 496). Dukes (1984) has suggested that phenomenological research methodology differs from other qualitative research studies both in purpose and procedure. The duty of a phenomenological researcher is to describe and understand the logic or meaning of an experience for any participant, rather than to discover causal

connections or patterns of correlation between participants. Dukes further asserted that the nature of phenomenological study demands extensive study of a small sample, allowing the participants to speak for themselves and tell the story of their lived experience within the phenomenon being studied. Since this particular study aimed to describe and understand the impact of cell phone cyberbullying on the victims, academically, personally, and socially, resulting in possible absenteeism and difficulty in learning within a specific group rather than the impact of cell phone cyberbullying in general, five research participants were studied. In phenomenological research studies, the number of participants can be as small as one, although 3 to 10 participants are recommended (Creswell, 2007, pp. 126, 131). Creswell further asserted the importance of phenomenological research in describing the meaning of the phenomenon for a small number of individuals who have experienced it (p. 131).

IRB approval was required before the research could begin. First, I obtained a letter from the school district superintendent to study participants who graduated from the research site as required by IRB. After I received IRB approval, I asked the research participants to join this study by means of purposeful sampling because they had confided with me in the past that they had been cyberbullied via cell phone. I also obtained consent from the participants themselves before starting research in accordance with IRB procedures. This qualitative phenomenological study depended primarily on individual interviews, focus group interviews, and online journal entries via micro-blogging by the participants to collect data. These data collection methods provided a better understanding of the impact of cell phone cyberbullying on the victims' attendance, academics, and social and personal life in school within this specific group.

Participant interviews were conducted via Skype because the participants had graduated from high school and moved on to colleges around the country. With Skype, I was able to use

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electronic voice recording procedures to save the files to my computer's hard drive. The focus

groups were conducted via secondlife.com through avatar interaction to assure both verbal and

nonverbal means of communication were accounted for as well as to ensure confidentiality

between participants. Participants were also asked to use /Twitter to micro-blog feelings and

emotions that emerged over the course of the study as a 21st century method of journaling.

Data Collection

The individual interview was used as the primary method of data collection in this

phenomenological investigation. An interview involves an informal and interactive process using

a series of open-ended statements and questions from the principal researcher to the research

participants (Moustakas, 1994, p. 114). Although I developed, in advance of the individual

interviews, a comprehensive list of research questions that evoked an all-inclusive account of

each participant's lived experience, it became necessary at times to vary, alter or not use the

questions at all. These circumstances occurred in the event that the participant shared his or her

full story of the experience of the phenomenon, based on the bracketed question (p. 114). The

interview process was generally unstructured, but focused on producing all aspects of the

experience (Gall et al., 2007, p. 496).

The research participants were also asked to contribute to a synchronous online focus

group which took place in real time, in my virtual office in secondlife.com, using avatars to

preserve and secure their anonymity. Some concerns have tainted online focus group research,

such as the lack of body language and voice inflection lost in email exchanges and chat rooms.

The same concerns are also found in telephonic focus groups, although they are widely

recognized as legitimate (Blore et al., 2001, p. 102). These important forms of communication

that aid both the researcher and the participants in interpreting and analyzing in the real world are

now available via the virtual three-dimensional online environment (Stewart & Williams, 2005, p. 405). Using this virtual platform, each avatar is recognized by a detailed set of animated emotions, so avatars can display both positive and negative emotions and responses to the comments of other group members or the facilitator. These nonverbal forms of communication through body language sufficiently emulate their real-world equivalents which, in turn, allow a more comprehensive understanding of emotion and opinion within the virtual group (p. 405).

In the past, focus groups have been described as a controlled group conversation around a given subject, which is supervised, guided if necessary, and chronicled by at least one researcher. They are differentiated by a well-defined implementation of group interaction to produce data (Kitzinger, 1994, p. 105). Proponents of online focus groups agree that the groups facilitate more open discussion, and they cite the comfortable, unthreatening, and neutral setting of virtual environments (Stewart & Williams, 2005, p. 397). Temporal and spatial flexibility, supported by the World Wide Web, can be advantageous to both the researcher and the participants. Research subjects can be questioned over an extended amount of time because of the benefits offered by online communication (p. 413).

Journaling by research participants was encouraged throughout the study. Because interviewing is widely regarded as the primary data collection point for phenomenological researchers (Creswell, 2007; Dukes, 1984; Gall et al., 2007; Moustakas, 1994), journaling by the participants served as a source of field text (Creswell, 2007, p. 131). The participants were provided with my personal Twitter account to journal as well as private access codes. As part of the research instructions, participants were asked to use pseudonyms instead of real names. They were also asked to avoid confrontational behavior on the shared blog and micro-blog (p. 141).

<center>**Instrumentation**</center>

To accumulate data from the research participants in the interview and focus group units of the study, I produced a series of research-based questions approved by the dissertation committee and chair to stimulate discussion. Research participants were asked to blog their journal entries on an invitation-only Twitter micro-blog that I created purposefully for this study. The participants were also encouraged to micro-blog about any thoughts, feelings, or emotions that surfaced about the phenomenon of cell phone cyberbullying at any time during the study.

Individual Interviews

The participants were interviewed for a more in-depth analysis of their experiences. Interviews were also used to analyze the degree to which cyberbullying impacted attendance. The participants were asked the questions found in the research design. I then analyzed the data gathered from these questions and highlighted significant statements, sentences, or quotes that provided understanding of how the participants experienced the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994).

Individual interview questions. The participants were asked broad general questions (Moustakas, 1994, p. 180) to focus attention on gathering data that would lead to a textural description and a structural description of the experiences, thus ultimately leading to an understanding of the participants' common experiences of cell phone cyberbullying (Creswell, 2007, p. 61). The following research questions were also used in the investigation. Some of the questions were open-ended, given the needs of the study.

1. Do you understand the definition of cell phone cyberbullying for the purposes of this study?

2. Do you feel comfortable speaking with me today about your lived experience within the phenomenon of cell phone cyberbullying?

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3. Can you tell me, as much as you are comfortable sharing with me right now, what have you experienced in terms of cell phone cyberbullying?

4. What contexts or situations have typically influenced or affected your experiences when you were cyberbullied via your cell phone?

5. To your knowledge, did any of the following people ever know at any time about your involvement in cell phone cyberbullying?

   a. Parent or Guardian

   b. Other family member

      1. If yes, please specify, i.e., grandparent, aunt/uncle, sibling, cousin

         a. Friend

         b. Clergy member

         c. School bus driver

         d. Teacher

         e. School counselor

         f. School social worker

         g. School psychologist

         h. School nurse

         i. School administrator

            2. If yes, please specify, i.e., dean, assistant principal, principal.

               a. Coach

               b. Club advisor

               c. Other school staff member

                  1. If yes, please specify, i.e., librarian, secretary, security guard.

        d. Other person(s) not listed above

     3. Did you tell this person(s)?

        a. Why or why not?

        b. Were you satisfied with their response?

        c. Did telling them stop the activity?

6. When is cyberbullying occurring via cell phone in your experience?

7. Which associated technologies available on cell phones are used to cyberbully via cell phone?

   a. Phone call

   b. Voice mail

   c. Text message using short message service

     1. By one person

     2. By two or more people at the same time with the intent to invoke a text war

   d. Text message using multimedia message service

     1. Still photograph

     2. Video recording

     3. Voice recording

     4. Hyperlink to a website with the intent to harass, threaten, intimidate, humiliate or blackmail you

     5. Combination of any of the above

   e. Taking a still photograph(s) of you without your consent

   f. Video recording you with your consent

   g. Electronic mail

h.　Internet chat room

　　　i.　Smartphone application

　　　　　1.　Please specify which app is used

8.　Where does the cell phone cyberbullying take place?

　　a.　Home

　　　　1.　Before school

　　　　2.　After school

　　　　3.　After a reasonable bedtime during night hours

　　　　4.　Weekends

　　b.　School

　　　　1.　On the bus or while being transported or walking to/from school

　　　　2.　Breakfast or before first bell

　　　　3.　While class is in session

　　　　4.　Between classes

　　　　5.　Lunch

　　　　6.　School-sponsored activities after school hours, i.e., clubs and sports

　　c.　Other dates, times or locations not listed above. Please specify.

9.　Did you use your cell phone more than three hours per day?

　　a.　If yes, does this time include use during the regular school day?

　　b.　If yes, did you ever use your cell phone in class and what experiences came of that?

10.　Were you ever intentionally late to class to avoid the person or people involved in your experience?

a. Approximately how late were you on any given occasion?

11. Did you ever intentionally miss a class to avoid the person or people involved in your experience?

a. Was it a specific class on a regular basis?

12. Did you ever intentionally miss an entire day of school or multiple days of school to avoid the person or people involved in your experience?

13. Do you believe your grades or standardized test scores were affected in any way due to your cell phone cyberbullying experience?

a. If yes, please specify.

14. Did you ever personally experience a negative impact on learning as a result of cell phone cyberbullying?

a. If yes, please explain.

15. Did you ever experience any psychological or health-related complications that you are aware of as a result of your cell phone cyberbullying experience?

a. If yes, please explain, e.g., insomnia, enuresis, headaches, abdominal pain, and other anxiety or depression-related issues.

16. Did you have friends before the experience of cell phone cyberbullying?

a. Did you have friends after?

17. Did your experience affect any peer or familial relationships?

a. If so, with whom?

18. How did this experience impact you personally?

19. How did this experience impact you socially?

20. Did you ever fear physical or emotional harm at school as a result of implicit information sent to your cell phone?

21. Do you believe the teachers involved in your experience were aware that cell phone cyberbullying had an impact within their classroom?

    a. Why or why not?

    b. If you believe that teachers were aware of the phenomenon, do you believe they sufficiently addressed it?

    c. Did you feel there was any support for victims and observers or corrective action and education for the bully?

22. Do you believe that school leaders understand cell phone cyberbullying?

    a. Can they do anything about it?

23. Did your experience with cell phone cyberbullying impact the way you feel about school? Please expand and elaborate beyond yes or no.

24. Is there anything else that you would like to share or discuss with me about this phenomenon?

25. Are there any relevant or important points of interest and understanding that you feel need to be clarified or elaborated?

Focus Group Interviews

The research participants were asked to participate in focus groups by joining secondlife.com. They were instructed to use pseudonyms and provide me with their pseudonym or username prior to the focus group portion of the study. The focus groups were held in my virtual office by invitation only. Secondlife allows participants to use body language, speak, and

text chat. Using a virtual office allowed the research participants to remain anonymous, thereby encouraging a free and unobstructed exchange of information.

Focus group questions. I formulated the following focus group questions with the target objective of gathering data to answer the research questions. The questions were based on prior research gathered in this study. The intent of the focus group questions was to generate additional discussion about the phenomenon of cell phone cyberbullying and its possible impact on the victims' attendance, academics, and social and personal life in school. The focus group questions were as follows:

1. Does everyone in the focus group feel comfortable speaking with me today and interacting as a group with regard to your personal lived experience within the phenomenon of cell phone cyberbullying?

2. Have you ever been physically bullied?

3. Have you ever been cyberbullied through traditional means, i.e., by computer?

4. How does cell phone cyberbullying compare to traditional bullying or cyberbullying via computer?

5. Did you know the bully(ies) before your experience?

   a. If yes, in what context?

6. In your experience, what does cell phone cyberbullying mean?

7. Does it impact school attendance?

   a. Period by period?

   b. Day to day?

   c. Over many weeks, months or even years?

8. Why does cell phone cyberbullying impact or not impact school attendance?

9. Did your experience with cell phone cyberbullying impact learning?

10. What grade were you in when you experienced cell phone cyberbullying?

11. Why do kids cyberbully using cell phones?

12. Based on your personal experience, what types of events can cause cell phone cyberbullying to start?

13. What dimensions, incidents, and people intimately connected with the experience stand out for you?

14. What are the primary thoughts or feelings that emerge from this experience?

15. How did your experience affect you in high school?

16. Does your experience in high school continue to affect you today? Please expand and elaborate beyond yes or no.

17. What coping mechanisms or strategies are used to deal with this trauma or manage this experience?

Journal Entries

I requested the participants to maintain a journal of their thoughts and feelings during their involvement in this study. Journaling is a useful method of data collection, specifically to clarify implicit thoughts in order to formulate explicit accounts and expand the data corpus (Creswell, 2007, p. 290). The participants were asked to create an anonymous, free Twitter account using pseudonyms and follow me on my Twitter account. Access to my Twitter account was limited to the research participants by invitation only. The Twitter blog was completely restricted from posting or viewing by anyone outside of this research study. I prompted the participants with an encouraging message to micro-blog their thoughts or feelings whenever they felt it was necessary. The micro-blog may also be therapeutic as other research participants can

give feedback and comment on each other's posted messages. I was the only person privy to the true identities of the research participants and used pseudonyms. I followed their Tweets and triangulated the data of the Tweets with the responses of both the personal interview and focus group questions.

Triangulation

I conducted the personal interviews on each research participant individually, followed by focus group interviews on secondlife.com. Finally, I collected the journal entries on Twitter until I reached a point of data saturation. Using the three points of data described above served to strengthen this study by providing a complete understanding of the lived experience of each participant through various data points rather than one single data point. After I triangulated and transcribed the data, I provided copies of the transcribed data as they applied to each participant to conduct member checks. I asked each participant to sign a document verifying the data were correct after each member authenticated that his or her specific data were accurate.

Researcher's Role/Personal Biography

I am a New Jersey State and New York State certified school counselor with 12 years of experience counseling high school students in Grades 9 through 12 at the time of the study. I was employed at the research site for six years at the time of the study and gained a positive reputation from the students, parents, faculty, staff, and administration.

My chief employment role at the site is in the capacity of school counselor, although in the culture of the site upon my arrival six years ago, school counselors exclusively facilitated college search, selection, application, and ultimately admission. A "hands-off" procedure was effectively applied to any clinical or therapeutic counseling by the senior members of the

counseling department, and the departmental practice was to refer students in need of counseling to the school's social workers or psychologist.

However, I am very passionate about the practice of counseling and forged a "right of first refusal" path regarding the above matter. In effect, I have counseled students within my caseload and referred them out to social workers and psychologist only upon recognizing my own professional limitations or upon the student's request when the initial problem was identified.

It is important to note that I was brutally victimized by numerous bullies throughout my own middle school experience. This victimization occurred openly in front of teachers and was frequently reported by me or my parents to school administrators, to no avail. The bullying took place in the late 1980s through the early 1990s. I grew up in a small rural farming and manufacturing community in northwestern Pennsylvania. The teachers ignored the bullying in large part and the school administrators stated, "Bullying is a part of growing up and there is nothing we can do if we don't see it." The solution to resolve the bullying, as my father advised, was to fight back. At the time, I was well under the average height and weight of my peers. I did engage in many fights, losing most, winning some. Eventually the bullying stopped, albeit after several black eyes and years of bruised ego.

I recall frequently missing class intentionally, specifically science class where we were assigned to lab in a very busy, chaotic, and loud environment that could shield bullies from detection. One bully would frequently harass me by throwing chemicals on me and cutting me with blunt objects during lab. The teacher, who was probably closer to retirement than mid-career, completely ignored the bullying and my lack of attendance. I would hide in bathroom

stalls and wait for time to pass until I felt safe to attend the next class. Even then, I would show up late to avoid the brutality that awaited me in the hallways.

I also recall not tolerating others being bullied, even though I was a frequent target of attention. I had a friend, who was one year younger than I, whom I now know was autistic. I met him in Little League because we were assigned to the same team that his father's car dealership sponsored. One day he was being brutally victimized by two of the most vicious bullies in his grade in an open forum, with a crowd of onlookers admiring the bullies' work. I jumped into the fight without hesitation and, to my surprise, the bullies dispersed almost immediately. One week later, my friend hung himself and died in his bedroom.

Another tragic event that is notable in my life is my close tie with the Columbine High School Massacre on April 20, 1999. My cousin Andrea was a high school sophomore at Columbine High School in attendance on the morning of the tragedy. The assailants, Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold, were associates of my other cousin Timothy, who described them as "normal guys." There are countless accounts of Dylan and Eric reporting their bullying via online message boards. This bullying occurred at school and online. My cousin Andrea survived the attack physically unscathed, but has never been the same person emotionally since the event.

Because 24 years have passed since I was a middle school student and 12 years have passed since I took on my role of professional counselor, I did not anticipate these events impacting this study. There was the potential for bias in how I asked follow-up questions to the participants, but I remained keenly aware of possible bias and shared my interview transcripts with my dissertation committee members to ensure minimal bias was apparent.

Data Analysis

This research study used a modification of the van Kaam method of analysis of phenomenological data (Moustakas, 1994, p. 120) in concert with Creswell's (2009) six-step linear hierarchical approach. The first step in data analysis originated by organizing and preparing the data for analysis. Data analysis began with transcribing the individual interviews, focus group interviews, and journal entries, optically scanning the data and horizontalizing the data to grant equal value to every statement (Creswell, 2009, p. 186; Moustakas, 1994, p. 118).

In the second step, I read through the data to obtain a general sense of the information and reflect on its overall meaning. During this process, I took copious notes, annotating thoughts and ideas about each piece of data. It was important to decipher the general beliefs, feelings, judgments, and concepts the participants were expressing and to consider the tone of their individual and collective thoughts and ideas. It was also important to reflect on the overall depth, credibility, and use of the information gathered for this study (Creswell, 2009, p. 185).

In the third step, I began a meticulous analysis with a coding process (Creswell, 2009, p. 186). Phenomenological data analysis is said to be bottom-up. Therefore, I generated codes from the data rather than used a pre-existing theory to identify codes that might be applied to the data. Phenomenological studies do not test theories, but rather often serve as relevant to the development of existing theories (Larkin et al., 2006, p. 104). This method of coding was in accordance with the traditional approach of social scientists to allow the codes to emerge during data analysis (Creswell, 2009, p. 187). The coding process began with listing meaning units and clustering them into common themes, removing overlapping and repetitive statements (Moustakas, 1994, p. 118). The coding process was very detail-oriented to derive a sense of the whole experience. I was observant of codes that readers of the research would expect to find

based on past quantitative or qualitative studies or pure common sense and codes that emerged as unusual or unanticipated or addressed a larger theoretical angle in the research (Creswell, 2009, p. 187).

In step four, I used the coding process to generate a description of the setting, people, categories, and themes for analysis (Creswell, 2009, p. 188). I used these clustered themes and meanings to develop the textural descriptions of the experience of the impact of cell phone cyberbullying on the victims' attendance, academics, and social and personal life in school. From the textural and structural descriptions of the impact of cell phone cyberbullying on the victims' attendance, academics, and social and personal life in school, I constructed an integration of textures and structures into the meanings, essences, and understanding of the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994, p. 118).

The fifth step of my data analysis included a narrative passage to express the findings—in other words, a vicarious experience of being there. This included, but was not limited to, a chronology of events, a detailed discussion of several themes and subthemes, multiple perspectives from individuals, and quotes or a discussion about interconnected themes. This narrative passage supported the descriptive information each participant shared throughout the research study.

The sixth and final step of data analysis involved manufacturing an interpretation or meaning of the data (Creswell, 2009, p. 188). The ultimate goal of the phenomenological data collection as it related to cell phone cyberbullying's impact on the victims' attendance, academics, and social and personal life in school was to reduce the textural (what) and structural (how) meanings of experiences to a brief description that typified the experiences representative of the group as a whole (Creswell, 2007, p. 235). It was important to understand that this step

might include the revelation that the study has created more questions about the phenomenon than it has answered. It may confirm known quantitative or qualitative information or diverge from it. Moreover, this study may in fact induce a call for action agendas for reform and change by members of the school community, school administrators, or policymakers (Creswell, 2009, pp. 188-190).

Credibility

Qualitative credibility indicates that the researcher's approach is consistent across different researchers and different projects (Creswell, 2009, p. 190). To accomplish this, a few simple safety nets were implemented in this study. First, I reviewed all of my transcripts from individual interviews, focus group interviews, and the participants' micro-blogging to check for accuracy, ensuring that no obvious mistakes appeared. I also ensured there was no drift in the definition of codes or shift in the meaning of codes during the coding process by consistently comparing data with the codes and by writing memos about the codes and how I defined them (p. 190). Lastly, two doctoral-level faculty members at the research site cross-checked my coding in accordance with Creswell's intercoder agreement. The goal of the intercoder agreement is not to ensure we code the same passage of text, but rather to help us agree on the same or similar code at least 80% of the time for solid qualitative reliability (p. 191).

Validity

Validity in qualitative research does not convey the same inference as validity in quantitative researcher, nor is it a handcuff to reliability or credibility (Creswell, 2009, p. 190). Qualitative validation refers to the notion that the idea is grounded and well supported (Creswell, 2007, p. 215) and that the researcher has checked the accuracy of the findings by employing certain procedures (Creswell, 2009, p. 190). Polkinghorne (1989) identified five questions a

researcher must ask regarding validity. First, did the researcher influence the participants in any way so that the descriptions of their experiences did not truly or accurately reflect their actual experience? Second, is the transcript accurate? Third, are there conclusions other than those offered by the researcher that could be derived? Fourth, is it possible to move forward from the original structural description of the phenomenon to the transcript and account for specific contents and connections in the original examples of the experience? Fifth, is the structural description situation-specific to one experience or does it hold for the comprehensive experience in general (p. 57)? I strove to be mindful and steadfast in employing these points of interest using the techniques that follow.

The development of an early and sustained familiarity with the culture of participants and/or their organization before data collection dialogues take place is essential to the validity of the researcher (Shenton, 2004, p. 64). In fact, many researchers stress the importance of "prolonged engagement" between the principal investigator and the research participants so they may gain a sufficient understanding of the people and organization and institute a rapport of trust between the parties (Erlandson, 1993; Guba, 1981; Lincoln, 1995; Shenton, 2004). Shenton (2004) further asserted that the validity of the findings of a particular research study largely depends on the credibility the principal researcher has with the research participants.

I solicited the participants' views of the validity of the findings and interpretations through member checking, which is the single-most critical technique used to bolster and establish the validity of any study (Creswell, 2007; Guba, 1981; Lincoln, 1995). This involved taking data, analyses, interpretations, and conclusions back to the participants so they could judge the accuracy and credibility of the account (Creswell, 2007, p. 208). Member checking the accuracy of data can be verified immediately or at the end of data collection and transcription

(Shenton, 2004, p. 68). Lastly, verification of my emerging theories and inferences resulting from dialogue with the research participants was discussed so they had an opportunity to offer explanations to certain patterns that I observed (p. 68).

Validity was also established through "thick descriptions" of the phenomenon of cell phone cyberbullying's impact on the victims' attendance, academics, and social and personal life in school. This is an important provision for validity and helps the reader understand the situations that were investigated and the specific circumstances surrounding those situations. Without thick descriptions, it is problematic for the reader to determine if the final account reflects well with the researcher's findings (Shenton, 2004, p. 69).

I also kept and maintained a reflexivity log throughout the research and findings components of this study to be cognizant of personal bias. This was done to establish transparency and clarity about bias on my part. The log not only established transparency to the readers of this research study, but it was a constant reminder to me to maintain objectivity and avoid extraneous variables that might distract from the study's focus (van Manen, 1990).

Lastly, I garnered support from doctoral colleagues for the purpose of peer debriefing to enhance the accuracy of my account of the phenomenon of cell phone cyberbullying's impact on the victims' attendance, academics, and social and personal life in school. They reviewed the study and asked questions so that the description of the phenomenon would be understood by readers of the research. This methodology ensured interpretation of the accounts by the participants and beyond that of the researcher.

Ethical Considerations

This qualitative phenomenological study had three main ethical considerations. The primary concern lay in the possibility that the participants might be unwilling to participate or

provide accurate information because they feared their identity would be compromised. I addressed this issue by gathering information in virtual environments and used pseudonyms to protect their privacy.

The second consideration was the benefits of research for the participants over the risks. In this study, the benefits for the research participants were in taking the first step to talk about their experiences while realizing they were not alone. One possible risk was that participants could be "outed" by their peers if their confidentiality was inadvertently compromised.

As of July 1, 2013, cyberbullying through any communication device is illegal in New York State (New York State Government, 2013); therefore, I advised the research participants accordingly. I formulated the questions to be specific toward the lived experience of the phenomenon. To minimize any ethical dilemma, I concentrated on the focus of the lived experience of the impact of cell phone cyberbullying on the victims' attendance, academics, and social and personal life in school rather than on the impact of cell phone cyberbullying elsewhere.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Introduction

This chapter summarizes the data collected and the analysis executed on those data. The recruitment period for this research study was from April 2, 2014 through April 4, 2014, with periodic follow-up with participants to ensure research completion until May 10, 2014. Eight potential research participants were selected via purposeful sampling for this study, while five participants agreed to join the study initially. I had intended to include three additional research participants, but after collecting data on these first five, the data consistently returned the same codes. My findings suggested that data saturation had occurred at a very early stage in the research and this did not warrant pursuing additional participants. The research participants were all adults who had graduated from the research site between the years 2010 and 2012.

To bridge the gap between distance and geography yet maintain an interpersonal connection with the participants during the study, I formulated a plan of action to integrate computer-based audio-visual platforms. The research participants were asked to participate in individual interviews via Skype so I could collect information for the first data point. The individual interview consisted of 25 questions that I constructed based on the wealth of research cited in both the introduction and literature review. The participants were then provided with two different dates for focus group interviews and assigned to a date according to their preference without knowing the other participants or how many other participants would be included in the focus group. Three participants, Zoe, Charles and Orlando, were placed in focus group one, while the other two participants, Katie and Annette, were placed in focus group two. Secondlife.com was used to gather data from the research participants in the focus group

interviews. The focus group interview consisted of 17 questions that I constructed based on the

wealth of research cited in both the introduction and literature review. All of the questions in

both the individual interview and focus group interview were proposed to and approved by the

dissertation committee, dissertation chair, and a research consultant prior to data collection. The

participants were also asked to journal periodically on Twitter as a third point of data collection.

The data collection transcripts can be reviewed in the accompanying appendices.

Due to the sensitive psychosocial nature of the research, the participants in this study

assumed pseudonym names, which were used throughout the study to protect their identity as

well as the identity of the research site. All five participants who started the study completed it.

Upon completion of the study, the participants were provided with the transcripts of their

individual interview, focus group interview, and micro-blog journal entries to ascertain that the

data presented were accurate in context, tone, and language. The participants were eventually

also issued a copy of my findings and conclusion chapters and asked to member-check all

aspects of the data, findings, and conclusions to ensure no misrepresentation or error. The

member check verification form is included in Appendix G.

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to describe and understand

the shared experiences of five students in a medium-sized public high school in Northern

Westchester County, New York, who were victims of cell phone cyberbullying and what impact

this phenomenon had on the victim's attendance, academics, social and personal life in school. A

modification of the van Kaam method of data phenomenological analysis was used in this

research study (Moustakas, 1994, p. 120) in concert with Creswell's (2009) six-step linear

hierarchical approach in order to report the results of the data. This chapter also provides a brief

synopsis of each participant, including baseline demographic and other relevant clinical

characteristics when applicable. Each participant synopsis describes their lived experience within the phenomenon of cell phone cyberbullying and its impact on the victim's attendance, academics, social and personal life in school. Multiple perspectives from individuals and quotes are discussed in an effort to support interconnected themes and subthemes as they relate to the research questions previously noted in Chapters One and Three. Themes and subthemes related to the collective lived experiences of the participants were manufactured as an interpretation or meaning of the data in order to typify the experience representative of the group as a whole (Creswell, 2007, p. 235). Lastly, the data are presented in the order in which the three research questions were stated.

Participants

Table 1 presents a demographic overview of the five participants in this study, with their age, gender, race, and period of time during which they were victimized by cell phone cyberbullying. A narrative profiles the table to describe each participant in more detail.

Table 1

Participant Overviews

Participant	Age	Gender	Race	Victimization Period
Katie	21	Female	Caucasian	2008-2011
Zoe	20	Female	Caucasian	2006-2012
Charles	20	Male	Caucasian	2008-2009
Annette	20	Female	Caucasian	2011-2012
Orlando	22	Male	Hispanic	2004-2009

Katie

Katie is a 21-year-old Caucasian female and full-time college student. She was the victim of cell phone cyberbullying by her high school boyfriend's best friend and a few close friends. The situation climaxed when Katie and her boyfriend Dave broke up while he was simultaneously experiencing a terminal relationship conflict with his best friend Chris. Chris had suggested that both he and Katie "get back at Dave" by "sleeping with" each other. Katie refused and Chris hit Katie with a continuous barrage of harassing text messages. Unsure of what to do or how to handle the situation, Katie turned toward a trusted school psychologist who attempted to mediate the situation. Chris had no interest in mediation and his conduct with school officials had been very troublesome throughout his tenure as a student in high school, which prompted the school psychologist to keep him on a short leash in mediation. Chris was ultimately dismissed from mediation because of his affect and deception.

Katie felt even more alone and afraid and eventually was hospitalized for depression. She stated that 11th grade was the worst time in her entire life and the cell phone cyberbullying she endured was definitely an escalator, if not the cause, of both depression and anxiety. Katie even went so far as to ask, "Was I crazy before cell phone cyberbullying or did the cyberbullying make me crazy? Like the chicken or the egg." Katie also suggested that a contributing factor to her experience was the fact that her peer group was largely based on a shared collection of friends because she and her ex-boyfriend Dave had dated for a long while. This gave credence to Chris's accusations to the group about Katie, which caused her to be socially isolated for long periods of time.

Katie missed a specific class on a regular basis during junior year because Chris was assigned to the same class at the same time. Katie explained, "It was total social damage control

all the time and I was just tired . . . just tired of defending myself . . . so nothing was on my mind other than social damage control. SATs, Regents, college, nothing mattered to me." Katie also admitted to using her cell phone more than three hours per day and destroyed her phone at one point to liberate herself from the harassment. With regard to cell phone cyberbullying, Katie stated:

It occurred non-stop, because cell phones have the internet and you can't get away from the internet. They used to be different but now those two things are the same [cell phone and internet]. Most of it [the harassment] happens after school, at night, stuff like that, kind of like a little bit of a latch key kid type of thing like when kids just don't know what else to do.

However, in Katie's small social circle, the harassment went beyond the virtual world of cyberspace and found its way into her everyday life.

In reflection, Katie described not only being humiliated by Chris's accusations, but also being unprepared for the social fallout and health-related impairments associated with the cell phone cyberbullying experience. She also believed that technology was simply moving so fast with the internet and cell phones during her experience that teachers had a "knowledge" of cell phone cyberbullying but not an "understanding" of it. Katie went on to explain that if anyone could have an understanding of the situation, it would be younger teachers, not administrators, because teachers have more of a connection with students. When asked if school leaders can do anything about cell phone cyberbullying, Katie stated:

They could say don't have your cell phone on during the day, but kids do. I don't know what the laws are now and obviously they're changing all the time, but like I don't

know if they could do too much because a lot of this plays out at home and I don't know where education can come in there except to educate students to make the right decisions.

Lastly, Katie believed that school was ultimately her safe place because there, she could receive support from counselors. Because most cell phone cyberbullying occurred at home in her experience, she felt incapable of negotiating the obstacles of the experience independently and thus succumbed to stressors associated with the experience in the form of anxiety, depression, and insomnia. Katie felt that the phenomenon of cell phone cyberbullying will only get worse before it gets better, both socially and legally, because of the internet technologies available via cell phones to include applications that allow young people to share photographs and other potentially controversial materials.

Zoe

Zoe is a 20-year-old Caucasian female who could be described as savvy and chic and is currently attending college. She moved to Pseudonym High School from out of state in 6th grade and stated that she found it difficult to make friends. Zoe's cell phone cyberbullying experience occurred mostly over the Facebook messenger app on her Smartphone, Snapchat, and via texting. As a matter of fact, Zoe stated:

I never call my friends and they never call me because that is just kind of weird if it is not a very urgent matter. . . . You just text each other. Also, if I do call someone my age, I would never leave a voicemail unless it was serious business. Texting is just where things happen as far as communicating was concerned. It is just easier than calling someone. . . . Also, with Facebook, I know if someone is online because I can see it, but they can also see me so there really is no privacy".

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Zoe explained that although she was in Generation Y, she felt kids in general cannot communicate anymore without a cell phone.

There are no real emotions involved. There are only feelings and words and everything can only be implied because you don't what the tone is . . . so you don't know what people are really saying. I like to feel people out because if you can't see them, you don't really know what they mean with the words they are saying. You can be vague and there is always an out if you change your mind about what you said.

Zoe stated that her cyberbullying experience was not like the gruesome stuff one hears about on television or in the news. Her experience spanned all four years of high school and was always with associates and sometimes with friends. "Typical girl stuff," Zoe explained. "Everything is implied on text and you never really know what is going on with what a boy wants or how your girlfriend(s) feel about it." Usually, a boy would text Zoe and she would text back or one of them would "friend" the other on Facebook. She added, "A lot of cell phone cyberbullying occurs on Facebook because you typically aren't good friends with these people, they are your Facebook friend, but not your real-life friend."

Zoe recalled experiencing a range of harassing messages, defamation of character, and occasional ostracism by Facebook friends and other real-life people she thought were friends throughout high school. She asserted that she felt this was a mainstream experience, even suggesting the rollercoaster ride of emotions was normal nowadays. Zoe would occasionally withdraw socially to reexamine her personal image and social network. She also dealt with mild to moderate anxiety and depression over certain social situations, especially ones involving boys she liked or who liked her.

Lastly, Zoe confessed that using her cell phone at least three hours per day was a very low-ball estimate. "It's a fifth limb," Zoe explained. "I need it and I hate that I do." Zoe's parents never imposed a limit on when she could use her cell phone and she suggested that most of her harassment, defamation, and ostracism occurred well into the night and usually via Facebook and texting, both of which she accessed through her cell phone. Zoe rarely used her phone during class early in her high school experience, but certainly texted during class frequently in senior year, suggesting that not knowing what was going on outside of the classroom where she was assigned created anxiety. "In that sense, of course it is distracting; of course you're going to miss something in class. Learning is going to be affected when you're trying to dodge getting busted for texting instead of taking notes or listening to lecture." Avoiding class never crossed Zoe's mind because many of the cyberbullies were Facebook associates and not real friends; therefore, for her, it was socially unacceptable to talk to someone face to face in real life if they were only Facebook friends. Zoe also dismissed the idea that school leaders understood cell phone cyberbullying. As she explained, "If I have to explain things to you [a school leader, i.e. principal], then it is just not worth my time." For Zoe, the past was the past and she did not feel her experience changed how she looked back on her secondary school years.

Charles

Charles is a 20-year-old Caucasian male. Although Charles is currently attending college in the same county where he grew up, he still depends heavily on his parents for social and emotional support. Charles had a socially limited high school experience and found it hard to make real friends. He was tall and slender and sported thick glasses to complement his messy hair. The highlight of his high school social life was his participation as a member of the cross-country, winter track, and spring track teams where he had dozens of supportive teammates, but

made few friends outside of those activities. Charles rarely engaged in social media while in high school, mostly because he found it difficult to use. Like most in his generation, Charles texts a lot.

Charles was involved in two separate cell phone cyberbullying incidents during his high school years. The first incident occurred in his freshman year, before transferring to his school. The episode involved a girl who he thought was a friend of his. Charles explained that in the beginning, the two of them would text each other on occasion. Charles and the young lady were even on the track team together. At the time, she was a senior and a captain on the team. Everything changed when Charles said the young lady brought what he thought were private conversations to public and shared some intimate details with others on the team during track practice.

Some of Charles' initial feelings included being embarrassed and humiliated. He tried to talk to the girl in person about what was going on because he did not understand why she would share their private conversations with others. The girl quickly escalated the situation by reporting Charles to the head coach for "harassment." The coach immediately barred Charles from speaking to any of the others girls on the team without even discussing the matter with Charles before doing so. This was absolutely devastating personally and socially, both from an extracurricular perspective and a curricular perspective. Charles not only worried about peer-imposed ostracism, but he also worried how much staff- and faculty-imposed ostracism would impact him.

Charles was completely alone at that moment. His one source of social pleasure and human interaction had been stripped from him. He was banned from speaking with the girls on the team and when the boys were not distancing themselves from him, they made fun of him

based on hearsay from the female captain about the text messages the two of them had exchanged. Although Charles was isolated and afraid, the nightmare was not over yet. The head coach proceeded to file a formal complaint against Charles to the athletic director for discrimination. The cyber world of communication and the blurred lines between context and meaning had finally unleashed their full wrath on the 14-year-old boy.

Charles mother called the athletic director to discuss the matter, which led to an investigation on the procedures the coach followed and the policy in place. In the meantime, Charles suffered from terrible anxiety and bouts of depression. He did not have any common classes with the girl he used to call his friend, so he never skipped class to avoid her. However, the whole situation weighed so heavily on Charles that he recalled being unable to concentrate in class or at home when he tried to do homework or study. He definitely noticed a dip in his grades in the second and third quarters of freshman year. The coach was not a teacher at the school and was subsequently fired.

The second incident took place in Charles's freshman year as well. Again, the cell phone cyberbullying was caused by an older girl via text. The two cases are remarkably similar because Charles stated his relationship with the girl occurred over a brief period of time, but never in person. Charles grew fond of the girl through texting; at one point, she advised Charles that she was short on cash and asked if she could use his debit card. Thinking nothing of a one-time use with a promise to repay him, Charles provided his debit card information to her via text. Weeks went by before Charles was approached by his mother about various charges on his debit card amounting to hundreds of dollars. Packages were being sent to the school in her name and the U.S. Postal Police soon seized them and the girl was arrested. The two ceased communication almost as soon as they began.

Charles was humiliated as a result, and because the packages were being sent to the school, the thief's parents did not immediately know what had happened, but many students did. Charles ultimately had to change his phone number, but even worse, change schools. He transferred to Pseudonym High School late in his freshman year under an agreement with the Board of Cooperative Education Services.

Charles stated that he did not keep track of his exact cell phone use, but explained he had it on him at all times, suggesting that use over three hours per day was possible. His experiences did not ensue from using cell phone-equipped communication technology during class time as Charles was an ethical student who followed the rules to a T. His experience arose from texting before and after school hours and between classes. His parents did not impose boundaries on Charles regarding the time of day or night that he was allowed to text, although he added that he was more restrictive on himself than his parents were on him. His social and personal life was destroyed in freshman year because of the two cell phone cyberbullying incidents which led to his transfer to Pseudonym High School. Grades and learning suffered as well. Charles was steadfast that he never missed school to avoid harassment, but admitted that almost all of the harassment occurred via text whereby the perpetrators hid behind a screen. He felt that certain school leaders understood cell phone cyberbullying, "like the younger cool teachers." Charles claimed he truly hated school for a while when he was enduring these bouts of cyberbullying and did not want to come back to this school for sophomore year. Charles was able to put all of this behind him once he transferred to Pseudonym High School.

Annette

Annette is a 20-year-old Caucasian female and college dropout. She had initially enrolled in the local community college, but without the demand of others encouraging her every move,

she quickly lost her way. Annette is a typical "bad girl," with tattoos on every finger spelling words an employer would not appreciate, piercings in all available space on her face, and a different hair style and color every week.

When Annette was a senior, she started dating a boy two years older than she was. He attended college at a distance and developed a very jealous obsession with Annette. Annette thought nothing of his close attention with her and worked hard to preserve their long-distance relationship. They frequently met on Skype to see each other. At one point, Annette's boyfriend suggested that if she really loved him, then she would "show" him—that is, strip tease live on Skype. She did not know that he was, in fact, clandestinely recording a video and took still photographs of her Skype strip tease on his cell phone without her knowledge.

A few weeks later, the two teens had a long-distance fight via cell phone text messaging and Annette informed him via text message that she wanted to take a break from the relationship. The young man lost his temper and texted her some of the still photographs of her nude and partially nude body, threatening to spread the pictures wherever he needed to retain her. Annette panicked and luckily turned to her school counselor for help. The school counselor immediately advised Annette that her parents as well as law enforcement needed to be informed. The boy was arrested for aggravated harassment and possession and distribution of child pornography.

The incident created an exorbitant amount of stress, anxiety, insomnia, fear, and depression for Annette. She was violated personally and devastated socially. Unsure of who had seen the still photographs and video, what was sent, or where they may have been sent, Annette kept a low profile throughout senior year and withdrew socially. Her grades suffered moderately and her attendance at first and second periods was sporadic because she could not sleep at night.

Annette used her cell phone far more than three hours per day. Her parents never imposed any restrictions on when or where she could use it. Annette used her cell phone at all hours of the night to text or call her boyfriend. She also used the computer late at night to Skype because "it has a bigger screen than Facetime." Annette's experience continues to affect her today as she struggles to find her place in college and career.

Orlando

Orlando is a 22-year-old Hispanic male and graduate school student who is also employed full-time. He had a speech impediment persisting into his middle school years that he believed was the onset of constant cell phone cyberbullying by his peers in school. The cell phone cyberbullying, however, also had racial implications. Although the cell phone cyberbullying ceased late in high school, he still tried to "be a typical White guy" and kept a low profile to avoid harassment. Even as a 22-year-old, he continues to resent what he called the "entitled White Jewish and Italian kids" who harassed him racially.

Orlando stated that his parents provided him with phone and a plan that allowed 1,000 text messages per month. In a wealthy community where many students had unlimited plans, even at a time when this was a novelty, it was known that Orlando had a texting limit. He experienced text war cyberbullying that would often involve multiple students in unison referring to him as a "Mexican" and demanded that he "mow their lawn" or suggested he was a day laborer. This was intentionally done to humiliate Orlando, but the result was a telephone bill that was often burdensome on the family. Orlando said that his father would demand he shut his phone off by the middle of the month because his texting limit had been exceeded.

The harassment was driven toward suggesting Orlando was from Central America or South America in a very affluent White community. In fact of Puerto Rican heritage, Orlando

was more devastated because teachers did little about the harassment even when it transcended the cyber world into the classroom. He felt he had no support whatsoever and his peers knew it. This was an especially isolating experience for Orlando because less than 4% of the student population and less than 1% of the faculty population were of Hispanic heritage in the Pseudonym School District.

Orlando's lived experience of cell phone cyberbullying rarely caused him to miss class, but it did affect his ability to pay attention in class and he believed he suffered academically to a moderate degree because he struggled to understand his self-image. Socially, Orlando tried his best to "blend in with the White community" to fit into it. Personally, he was depressed that he felt he needed to hide his identity and his heritage. Orlando struggled with this issue until he attended a college in New York City where "the White man was the minority" and he could be himself.

Orlando used his cell phone more than three hours per day to text or talk until he was directed by a parent to turn it off, which was usually in the middle of the month. For about a year, Orlando's parents were not aware of the reason why he seemed to reach such a high number of text messages so quickly each month. The experience affected peer relationships because Orlando's experience transcended texting and flowed into the classroom and the internet, most notably to Facebook and the video game "Halo" where the objective of many players he associated with was to "Kill the Mexican." It was hard to fit in as a racial minority when every aspect of social normality in his living environment implicated race hand in hand with social status. When asked if he believed school leaders understood cell phone cyberbullying, he responded, "I don't think they understood it when I was in school, but that was

at the beginning of this technology madness and now it's like, you know, blowing through the roof."

Themes and Subthemes

Analysis of the triangulated data for each individual participant produced six common themes and several subthemes relative to cell phone cyberbullying and its impact on attendance, academics, and social and personal life in school. The data suggested that all of the participants in this study engaged in excessive cell phone use. Excessive cell phone use is defined as using one's cell phone for more than three hours in any given 24-hour period (Adachi, 2009, p. 6). Research has suggested that the amount of time one spends on computer-based activities (found on most Smartphone platforms), such as social networking, private messaging or texting, directly influences cyber victimization (Twyman et al., 2010, p. 7). The excessive cell phone activity for these participants seemed to carry on into the late hours of the evening, often until midnight or beyond. This was a contributing multiplier toward negative interactions with their peers. The cell phone use into late evening hours and even school hours was a result of the need for instant gratification to know information. There was also a generational anxiety about the social implications of not responding to cell phone-based messages or social media postings in short order. In other words, generationally-based formal, lexical, and conceptual semantic messages are being implied to others if one does not respond to cell phone-based messages or social media postings at all, or at least in a timely manner, and this can lead to exertion of interpersonal and social control. The irony here is that parents usually provide their children with cell phones as a measure of safety and security, but the reality is these devices can be used to compromise their children's social, emotional, and—in some cases—physical safety as well (Keith & Martin, 2005; Lenhart et al., 2011). Finally, the participants in this study cited parents as a resource for a

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safe harbor and a compass for both ethical and moral direction in times of social, psychological, and physical distress.

Textural Descriptions Applied to Themes and Subthemes

  Excessive cell phone use by participants is causal to cyber-victimization. Of the five participants, Katie, Zoe, Annette, and Orlando overwhelmingly agreed that they spent at least three hours per day using their cell phone as a communication device, while Charles stopped short of accepting that he did not spend less than three hours per day using a cell phone as a communication device. Participation in social media for long periods of time can also have a negative consequence on basic cognitive processes by influencing basic attention skills (Diaz, Evans, & Gallagher, 2014). Some of the participants' comments attest to the consequences of excessive cell phone use.

  Katie: Umm probably, I know in twelfth grade I like literally broke my phone on purpose
    'cause I just didn't want anyone to contact me, period. I just wanted to be free and
    didn't want anyone to know where I was ever. My parents loved that idea.

  Zoe: Oh my god yes, and I really hate to say that because everything is on your phone.
    . . . It's like a lifeline really.

  Charles: I don't exactly keep track of how long I use the phone for, I'm not constantly
    using it, only if I need to, but I keep it on me all day in case I need to use it.

  Annette: Did you say twenty-three? (Laughing) Yes.

  Orlando: Ahh, yeah as I recall, whether it be internet surfing, texting, phone calls.

  Adachi (2009) found as a corollary that the more time high school students spent with a cell phone, the less time students spent on school work and the more bullying they endured as a result. The activity of excessively communicating on a cell phone leads to multitasking, which

brings with it cognitive and academic distractions and loss of concentration (Diaz, Evans, & Gallagher, 2014); it is not possible to multitask accurately. Katie, Zoe, Charles, Annette, and Orlando all reported that their experience of cell phone cyber-victimization was distracting enough that it led to a drop in their personal academic performance.

> Katie: That was just a really shitty year. It was total social damage control all the time and I was just tired . . . just tired of defending myself . . . so nothing was on my mind other than social damage control. SATs, Regents, college, nothing mattered to me. . . .

> Zoe: Umm, I would say, I wouldn't say like a standardized test, but like maybe other tests where if I'm in a text fight with someone or if I'm dealing with messaging drama on Facebook, you see, communication related anxiety or implications of not communicating back right away could mean something it doesn't.

> Charles: I think it affected my grades for the worse, although I don't know how much better I could've done, so finally I told my mom I can't do any work if this is going to keep happening. So if I'm not doing homework because of this, how am I able to do tests because of this?

> Annette: Umm, there were definitely days where I wasn't myself and I'm sure my grades suffered.

> Orlando: I was generally an A minus student that, that, during that like, whatever you call it, during that semester, umm I don't really remember what they call it in school anymore (laughing), umm during that few months it was like a B average.

Lastly, the reason for the excessive use was effortlessly simple; the participants no longer saw a difference in communication functionality between cell phones and computers. As a matter

of fact, the participants seemed to prefer cell phones for communication purposes over computers because of their portability and ease. Cell phones were cited as being more convenient and accessible.

> Katie: Umm you know they can't pull out a computer and if there is no Wi-Fi available in school, and many schools have lost the Wi-Fi and some haven't, but they're not going to pull out their laptop or whatever, they're going to pull out their cell phone and it's going on all day long so a kid that is being harassed or bullied it's just nonstop regardless.

> Zoe: Umm, I would say yeah, because phones now are pretty much computers. They have all the same applications that I would be using on my computer, so yeah I guess I would say you can do the same stuff with your phone and it probably would be easier to have, I mean I don't have my computer with me all the time, you know it's a pain in the neck . . . plus I have to open it and turn it on but your phone's always on.

> Annette: Pretty much anything that is meant to provoke or insult someone or pretty much hurt them in any way through internet technology using your cell phone or whatever you would use on your computer or tablet or whatever it is because your cell phone is your computer now. It is really easy to be a bully anytime anywhere now. . . .

> Orlando: Kids today, they would rather be on the phone than on the computer. You don't need the computer. It's easier to be on the phone, you can get everything on the phone, so it's just right there. If you get a Twitter message or a Facebook message

or whatever, it comes in as a text to your phone and you're alerted instantly just like a text, so you check it.

Negative interaction with peers. The participants were unable to escape negative interactions with their peers. All five participants reported that what started out as cell phone cyberbullying morphed into bullying and harassment in the "real world." They seemed to share an experience in which the line between their cell phone cyber world and physical world became indistinguishable. Their aggressors were able to establish a telepresence and there was no obvious avenue of escape.

> Katie: What really threw me over the edge was it started off as cyberbullying by text messages to me, but then he placed some soft, umm maybe it was like food or something underneath the handle of my car door . . . just really weird things that he would do and it just kept escalating from there. He started lying to my friends, our friends both in person and via text at night and spreading rumors about me over the internet and he texted lies to Dave about things that I would do to him.

> Zoe: You know, like school is essentially where all of, you know like your social life is. If you're an outcast, what else, like where else do you go. I think phones are like a multiplier, meaning like, rumors move fast, they move faster on like online, but like when the internet is in your back pocket, like, you can't . . . you can't stop it or do anything. You are at the mercy of those around you . . . so. . . .

> Charles: There was this new student who I wanted to welcome, but the senior who I was having problems with threatened me in front of the entire team, which I was surprised she did this, and said don't speak to her. . . . She pointed her finger in a way to interrupt me.

Annette: It really wasn't until I had a fight with him weeks later that he got all crazy

when I told him I needed a break. He just texted me a picture of myself topless

and then another and another and another and told me he would show everyone if

I didn't take back what I just said about breaking up with him.

Orlando: That is when I'd get into trouble 'cause I couldn't ignore it like I could the

texting. You can do your best with texting, even though that gets to you to, but

when someone is in your face you can't ignore that.

Need for instantaneous information leads to social and emotional distress. The

participants suggested throughout this study that there was a cultural emphasis on obtaining

information as soon as possible and sharing or transmitting knowledge or information in a timely

manner. The nature of this habitual behavior can potentially impact the psychosocial

development of young people, causing both anxiety and depression (Diaz, Evans, & Gallagher,

2014). This behavior also generated a compulsive need for vigilance, for example, to keep

checking on comments made about the individual, as well as impulsiveness to react to and

correct impressions or comments being circulated via social media (Diaz, Evans, & Gallagher,

2014).

Katie: It occurred nonstop because cell phones have the internet and you can't get away

from the internet. They used to be different but now those two things are the

same. Most of it happens after school, at night, stuff like that, kind of like a little

bit of a latch key kid type of thing like when kids just don't know what else to do.

Zoe: I'm in a text fight with someone or if I'm dealing with messaging drama on

Facebook, you see, communication related anxiety or implications of not

communicating back right away could mean something it doesn't. [In response to

cell phone cyberbullying's impact on learning:] There is this continuous texting

argument going back and forth and if I don't answer in a certain amount of time

then that sends a whole new message, like an unintended message that can really

like escalate the situation. Honestly, my phone in general just like makes me

anxious, like just knowing that it's there and I can't look at it, that makes it so I

can't focus.

Charles: It affected me not only when I would do tests, every time I would do homework,

every time I would try to do something, I would always get a call or an email

from my mom about the charges on the card or I would think about what people

were saying about me, about me being stupid and I would get mad.

Annette: It really became my world. If I wasn't looking at that screen it didn't matter, you

know, the world around me was like bone dry and nothing else mattered except

for that next text from him and if I didn't answer right away, well then, boy was

he pissed.

Exertion of interpersonal and social control by cell phone cyberbullies. There was a

general sense that cell phone cyberbullies had the ability to manipulate and control their cell

phone cyber-victims to a point where the abuse altered their day-to-day lifestyle. The victims

reported anxiety, depression, anger, ostracism, and humiliation as a result of their victimization

experience. Many participants shared the experience of ostracism and loneliness during the most

difficult point of their lived experience within the phenomenon of cell phone cyberbullying.

Katie: My personal experience with cyberbullying with cell phone technology in my own

experience was again that, umm that bullying that did happen at umm home, it

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happened at school, it happened, umm really anywhere where your phone is accessible so it's really any place at any time.

Zoe: I think it like was a learning lesson, like a life lesson, like superficial people don't have anything, like I mean a way to meet their needs other than like making other people around them, like you know, feel crappy about themselves. I mean really if I had to like pinpoint it, I'd say there was definitely anxiety at some point about how to handle things.

Charles: Basically, you defined cell phone cyberbullying as controlling and some other things, but basically, I felt like she was controlling over me. [In response to when cell phone cyberbullying is occurring:] Umm, do you mean controlling people? It never stops. Once someone has control over you and like the way you live, you can't ever stop thinking about it. I just hate her for what she did to me. Like, I really hate how she controlled me and my life. . . . I felt like I could not control my life, other people controlled me. . . . I was depressed and people controlling me, like I was depressed all the time.

Annette: I was so, like pushed down, like suffocated in a way and manipulated. I was trapped in a box and yeah, it was like a serious mind game, but you could feel it all the time like bricks were strapped to my chest and he was pushing them down on me.

Orlando: I felt I was . . . on an island, just completely isolated from everybody else. Umm, and I just felt slighted . . . like I was being wronged . . . and I lived with it for so long.

Social, emotional, and physical security are compromised. There were several accounts of psychosocial irregularities during the periods in which the participants were experiencing cell phone cyberbullying. The participants reported suffering various physiological and psychological side effects to the trauma of cell phone cyberbullying, including anxiety, depression, insomnia, headaches, and stomach aches. In one example, a participant was hospitalized.

> Katie: I pretty much had all of that . . . everything and it just escalated. I was in and out of Westchester Medical Center's outpatient nonstop, I was in like your office nonstop, so it's kind of hard to separate one from the other, the chicken or the egg. Was I crazy before cell phone cyberbullying or did the cyberbullying make me crazy?

> Zoe: I definitely was not sleeping enough, but more than anything the anxiety of not knowing what was being said to who or in what context.

> Charles: I didn't care about myself and I was depressed and people controlling me, like I was depressed all the time.

> Annette: All of that, especially the anxiety and depression. My mom started taking me to a counselor twice a week at night after all of that went down and we talked about meds but that never happened 'cause I was able to sort it out, but yeah, headaches and stuff, and I was especially sick to my stomach after he sent those pics to me so you can't even imagine what that is like, it's like, like your life is over and you'll never be wanted by anyone again, not anyone, not a college, not a job, not a boy, no one, like who would want that?

Orlando: Umm, yeah, I was definitely anxious for sure and mad, really mad sometimes

'cause at one point it got to be racially charged, which made me not like myself,

like I didn't want to be me, or who I am, I wanted to be /White, which is, which

looking back is, is, is like messed up. So depressed . . . umm, I, you know I, I like

never saw a doctor but yeah, how can you not call it depression?

Four of the five participants seemed to have a sense that their social network was

negatively impacted as a result of cell phone cyberbullying infiltrating their physical space. The

participants experienced either losing friends or suffering broken relationships as a result of cell

phone cyberbullying activity. In one example, a participant transferred to a different school

district as a result of cell phone cyber-victimization.

Katie: I think that there were a lot of friends connected to it, umm, ahh, yeah, I mean I

was hospitalized and I'll never forget that. Ahh, friends who could have stopped it

or been there for me. It taught me a lot about, umm, human nature. I mean if

they're not going to stand up for you, then you know where you stand and where

they stand as your friend. It can tear apart friendships that don't need to be torn

apart. It's really about how my peers reacted to the cyberbullying in one sense.

And that is pretty much going to stay with me for the rest of my life. . . . It just like

destructed my whole social circle completely, umm and I don't know, that was

probably the biggest thing.

Zoe: "Well, my experience was not like the gruesome stuff you hear about on television

or in the news, typical girl stuff, I guess like friends, or people who you thought

were your friends can get really passive aggressive or even aggressive when their

face is not involved. They tend to be more curt with you, I don't know, there's

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just a, umm, a tone-ness lost in translation and people have more freedom to say

what they want over text message rather than in person, but I think people in my

experience have been crueler over text message rather than in person.

Charles: I ended up transferring to a new high school sophomore year.

Orlando: [In response to the question whether he had friends after their experience:] Oh

yeah, for sure, just different friends.

The participants struggled with low self-esteem and self-image as a result of cell phone

cyberbullying. The esteem needs within the age group sampled are achieved through the

satisfaction of social relationships and self-image, both of which can be easily compromised

through chronic or acute cyber-attacks (Valkenberg et al., 2006, p. 584-585). Regrettably, those

exposed to bullying are more likely to experience negative psychosocial and behavioral

outcomes well into adulthood, such as an undesirable self-image or difficulty with interpersonal

relationships (Sesar et al., 2012, p. 134).

Katie: I wasn't really used to being harassed like that, like by peers, like I've always had

good friends and stuff like that, but I just kind of freaked out when this happened.

. . . I just felt so alone and so defeated in way, you know?

Charles: I was thinking. . . . I don't care what happens to me.

Annette: I was so humiliated and horrified that he was doing this to me, but at the same

time I was doing it to myself and I, I knew that, but I, I wanted it to stop but I

couldn't, I didn't know how, how like to, how to make it stop. He had what he

wanted and I was under his spell.

Orlando: I guess for me I was just anxious and self-conscious. I didn't like who I was,

you know, ethnically.

Lastly, it is likely that cell phone cyberbullying can lead to compromised physical security. The virtual platform on which cell phone cyberbully rests is similar to that of both traditional or computer-based cyberbullying and interpersonal bullying. As noted in Maslow's (1943) introductory writings to his motivation theory, an individual who perceives himself to be in chronic and extreme danger—thereby compromising their safety, security, and stability needs—will view practically everything as less important, even necessary physiological needs for the sake of safety alone (p. 376). One participant in this study felt so physically insecure that he avoided school for a short period of time to secure his safety.

> Orlando: [In response to whether or not cell phone cyberbullying impacts school attendance:] Definitely, I would cut class and school entirely for a while. [In response to intentionally missing class to avoid a particular person:] I played a lot of hooky, I pretended sick just to not go to school to avoid this one kid, and I was definitely, I like did not want to go to school because I was honestly scared of this kid . . . umm for a few weeks. [In response to the question of having been physically bullied:] It definitely took a while to recover from. I look at pictures of myself from that time in my life and I just looked sad inside.

Parents as a resource. Interestingly, the participants consistently gave their parents high accolades as a source of counsel, direction, and resolve when dealing with the residual effects of cell phone cyberbullying. The participants seemed to unilaterally and decisively cite parents as people they look to for help in times of need. Prior research in the field has suggested that teens rely most heavily on parents and teachers or another trusted adult at school for advice about online conduct and managing difficult experiences (Lenhart et al., 2011).

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Zoe: Parents should be in a child's life and really guiding them and the people that like,

the kids that don't have that guidance really get themselves in trouble and they

can't reach out to their parents for help, whereas if you lived in a safe household,

you should feel that you can go to your parents, so like I know I can go to my

parents for help and vent to them when I'm in trouble. . . . It's also like what's

going on in the home, like that would never be acceptable in my house to like

bully someone else 'cause like my parents taught me like what that feels like, you

know what I mean? To like hurt somebody.

Charles: I told my mom everything that happened . . . my parents were on my side . . .

they spoke to the director and it stopped after there. [In response to why kids

cyberbully using phones:] Maybe because they don't like the way they were

raised so they think they can get back at others. Like, depending on how they

were raised, like the person with the fraud, she never talked about her family and I

love my family, so maybe she thought it was ok to do what she did because she

wasn't raised properly.

Annette: I didn't know what I wanted, but I didn't want my parents involved, but I guess

I didn't know how bad, like really how bad it really was until it stopped and it was

like being born again, you know. . . . It was really like I could come up for air for

the first time. . . . My parents told the police.

Orlando: You just have to go to your parents and tell them the situation. . . . I mean, that

is why they're your parents, they're going to help you out.

Finally, one participant even suggested that schools should be more involved in cell

phone cyberbully prevention. Schools have historically been a source of community support and

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gathering as well as social direction. It is no surprise that the students themselves have high

expectations of those who provide both a moral and ethical scope.

> Katie: I disagree that schools can't do more. I think they can and should. Kids need
>
> direction from those they trust.

Invariant Structural Description

The textural descriptions listed above provide a deeper understanding of what the

participants experienced in terms of the phenomenon of cell phone cyberbullying and its impact

on their attendance, academics, and social and personal life in school. Structurally, the students

appeared to experience cell phone cyberbullying most often at home. While at home, they often

stated that the cell phone cyberbullying occurred in the evening and late evening hours, even

eclipsing midnight and beyond. The participants universally supported the idea that cell phone

cyberbullying rarely occurred during school hours and transpired even less during instructional

time. The problem of cell phone use while in school during instructional time was far less of a

problem than I first expected, while cell phone cyberbullying at home was far more of a problem

than I originally estimated.

<div align="center">Summary</div>

The preservation and sanctity of data collection are arguably the most delicate and

valuable aspects of any research study. I took great care to monitor and acknowledge my own

bias going into data collection and I maintained a reflexivity log throughout the study to account

for any discrepancy. Of utmost concern during this stage of the research was the protection of

any identifiable characteristics of the research participants. I was acutely aware of my obligation

to safeguard their identities. I followed all aspects of IRB procedure in collecting and preserving

the data. Lastly, two credentialed faculty members at the research site who held doctoral degrees

cross-checked my coding in accordance with Creswell's intercoder agreement. The resulting

analysis of these codes was categorized in this chapter as themes and subthemes. These themes

and subthemes are used in the following chapter to address the research questions and discuss the

findings.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

Summary of the Findings

The results of this study make significant contributions to the existing research in this field. The data suggested that all of the participants in this study engaged in excessive cell phone use, which was a contributing multiplier toward negative interactions with peers. The excessive cell phone use was complementary to a need for instantaneous information, at times causing social and emotional distress. Cell phone cyberbullies utilized these physiological responses to exert interpersonal and social control over their cyber-victims. This control, in turn, contributed to a compromise in social, emotional, and physical security. Finally, the participants sought help from parents to manage their insecurities when they could no longer manage those insecurities independently.

Research Question One

How does the phenomenon of cell phone cyberbullying affect the victims on a personal level?

The phenomenon of cell phone cyberbullying affected the participants in various and diverse ways. They all experienced some level of anxiety or depression as a result of their experience, while some experienced additional physiological and psychological health-related ailments including, but not limited to, sleep deprivation, anxiety-related stomach pain, hopelessness, sadness, and increased fear. The victims employed different strategies and techniques for coping with these conditions, such as counseling (both in school and privately), avoidance of their cell phone cyberbully(ies), disabling their phones, and even psychological

treatment in the hospital. The participants also identified parents as a source of help and directions in their greatest time of need.

<h2 style="text-align:center">Research Question Two</h2>

How does the phenomenon of cell phone cyberbullying affect the victims on a social level?

The sociological effect on the participants within the phenomenon of cell phone cyberbullying had measured consequences. One participant transferred to a new school as a result of both the victimization and the ostracism he suffered during his freshman year of high school. Another participant endured racially charged harassment that affected his self-image so negatively that he attempted to "act White" for years while in high school as a routine to endure the victimization. In all cases, the cyberbullying that transpired transcended cell phones and the victims experienced social implications in their "real worlds." In some cases, the real-world harassment started before the cell phone harassment and, sometimes, vice versa. This caused the participants to lose a friend or groups of friends or to end romantic relationships. The participants also experienced a sense of real danger as well, whether in the form of a physical confrontation or psychological or emotional distress. These stressors instigated a fight-or-flight response in the participants whereby they withdrew socially from their peer groups for various amounts of time.

<h2 style="text-align:center">Research Question Three</h2>

How does the phenomenon of cell phone cyberbullying affect the victims on an academic level?

The phenomenon of cell phone cyberbullying had far less of an impact on academics than I anticipated. This was true of both the attendance category and the learning category associated

with the all-encompassing term of academics. Two of the five participants reported various forms of cutting one or more classes on a sporadic or regular basis, while two participants stated that they never missed class to avoid a cell phone cyberbully. One participant stated that she would miss her first two periods of class on a regular basis as a result of excessive cell phone use the night before. All participants acknowledged some form of academic hardship, but nothing significant. One participant transferred from one school to another because of his lived experience. Overall, the participants seemed to identify evening hours as the time when most cell phone cyberbullying activity occurred. In one example, the participant cited the school as her safe haven, even though her aggressors attended the same school and shared the same classes with her. Her reason for the unconventional response was that her school offered a source of professional advice and counsel in the form of helping professionals, such as school counselors, school social workers, and a school psychologist who were capable of helping her to address and understand her feelings, emotions, and experience.

Discussion of the Findings

The participants in this study often correlated cell phones and computers as one and the same. They found cell phones faster and easier to use than computers for the most basic communications functions. The fact that cell phones are easier to carry and more accessible also enabled 24-hour connectivity and, thus, a compulsive behavior to be socially connected. The participants, particularly Zoe and Annette, often discerned that not being connected could infer unintended social communiqués. Cell phone cyberbullying often occurred at home via texting and social media. The availability and ongoing rhythmic nature of text speak and social media appeared to invoke a need for instantaneous information, which can be socially and emotionally distressing. This communication often transcended the victims' cyber-world and entered their

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real world in school. All five participants shared an experience related to an exertion of interpersonal and social control by their cell phone cyberbullies that seemed to influence their daily decisions, both personally and socially. These decisions included, but were not limited to, avoidance of people, avoidance of certain classes, and occasional avoidance of school, which was mildly problematic for the academic progress of participants. Data collection also indicated that the participants experienced an impact on social, emotional, and physical security; four of the five participants strongly suggested that their compromised social, emotional, or physical security influenced their decision not to attend class, circumvent certain places, avoid particular people, or simply feel socially ostracized or excluded. Moreover, parents were a surprising source of security for the participants in times of insecurity. The participants sought personal safety through the protection of the people they knew they could count on and found social relief in fulfilling their love and belongingness needs with their parents. Finally, it is perhaps because of these unconditional positive parent-child relationships that the participants incurred only mild declines in grades and marginal deterioration in attendance.

Excessive Cell Phone Use by Participants is Causal to Cyber-victimization

Several components of the literature review suggested that excessive use, measured by several indicators (Adachi, 2009, p. 6; Harris Interactive, Inc., 2011, p. 3), was problematic within the phenomenon of cyberbullying (O'Neill, 1995) and cell phone cyberbullying (Adachi, 2009, p. 6; Harris Interactive, Inc., 2011, p. 3). In O'Neill's (1995) observation, as the number of electronic messages exchanged increased and control over social favorability was at stake, people often obsessively resort to the denigration of other electronic communicators. An associative effect specific to cyberbullying is that neither the bully nor the observer witnesses personally observe the victim's immediate reaction (Smith, 2013, p. 83)—and this has

historically been a principal motive for traditional bullies. This reaction is needed to gain social status by demonstrating dominant abusive power over others in front of witnesses. Cyberbullying often lacks this component (Hinduja & Patchin, 2006, p. 153), which is perhaps why the participants in this study seemed to share the experience of their cyber and real worlds colliding, often in an attempt to conceivably garner this face-to-face reaction. Additionally, the participants who were cell phone misusers appeared to experience higher levels of victimization as their level of communication persisted, in accordance with Adachi (2009) and Harris Interactive Inc. (2011). In support of the research, this led to negative interactions with peers.

Negative Interactions with Peers

Social networks and friends in the virtual world are rapidly complementing or replacing friends in the real world (Carmody, 2012, p. 51). Most of the participants in this study suggested that their interactions with peers in person was complemented by their interactions with those same peers virtually, through text or an online service. The participants described the extent of communication via cell phones as confusing at times. One participant particularly described texting and other electronic messaging as something of a second language as it pertained to the meaning of expression by how many letters or different forms of punctuation are used. Now more than ever, teens favor communication via texting over all other means of communication, including face to face (Lenhart, 2012). The results of this study found this was accurate in several examples. One participant, for example, described communicating with certain people in person as weird if one did not know them on Facebook first, whereas others were only acceptable friends through Facebook messenger, which this participant most often used on her cell phone. Another participant described communicating throughout the day with her boyfriend via text message because of the long-distance relationship they had. Yet another participant

thought his relationships with others were based on the text messages they had exchanged. Observing the lived experiences of the participants in this study gave credence to how easy communicative misunderstandings can occur between two or more cyber correspondents.

Need for Instantaneous Information Leads to Social and Emotional Distress

Cell phones are now an acceptable, if not necessary, tool for functionality in everyday life within industrialized nations around the globe (Mrnaveen, 2011). According to the results of this study, teens may not be capable of distinguishing the difference between information that is time sensitive and information that is less vital, as it pertains to transmitting and receiving. The literature review supported this idea through several conduits. First, the research suggested that we have become a cell phone-mostly society vis-à-vis the consumption of information (Brenner, 2013). This means many people prefer to ingest information via their cell phone as opposed to traditional print, radio, television, desktop and laptop computers or tablets. Cell phones are now capable of obtaining media in all of the aforementioned forms. Associative to this, almost half of all teens polled confessed to using their cell phone in class when they should be learning (Harris Interactive, Inc., 2011, p. 5). The participants in this study explained that the reason for this is that an unintended message could be transmitted by abstinence of communication. Abstinence, however, is only as strong as one's environment, whether it is abstinence of alcohol, sex or communication. One can choose not to put oneself in an environment conducive to alcohol or sex, for example. Yet communication is both pocket-sized and vital. Finally, the aforementioned telepresence effect discussed (Pike, 2008, p. 1002), coupled with teenagers' desire to manage personal and social issues, immediately appear to concur with the lived experiences of the participants in this research study.

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Exertion of Interpersonal and Social Control by Cell Phone Cyberbullies

Technologies associated with cell phones offer a unique advantage to the bully of yesteryear and the bully who may have never been, because they offer both cover and concealment for bullies (Hinduja & Patchin, 2006, p. 153). The popularity of cell phones and social networking websites have gained traction and worked in tandem as tools for bullies (Donegan, 2012, p. 34). However, the findings of this study disagreed with the dependence on some degree of technological expertise (Smith, 2013, p. 83). Communications technologies associated with cell phones appear to be more than a normal part of everyday life for Millennials. As a matter of fact, one participant in this study found technology such as Facebook and Twitter challenging; however, he still had accounts for both. Therefore, there is little reason to believe that bullying or victimization relies on technological expertise.

Social, Emotional, and Physical Security are Compromised

One participant in this study asked the question: What came first, her mental illness or the cyberbullying? As she said, "Was I crazy before cell phone cyberbullying or did the cyberbullying make me crazy? Like the chicken or the egg." Previous studies on cyberbullying have revealed a direct effect of psychiatric symptoms, such as anxiety, depression, interpersonal sensitivity, and obsessive-compulsiveness, on cyberbullying in both the cyber-victim and the cyberbully (Aricak, 2009, p. 167). All of the participants agreed that their real world and cyber world seemed to collide at some point and the two were absolutely indistinguishable. The parent of Ryan Halligan, a young middle-school boy in Vermont cited in Chapter Two, described his son's middle-school environment as "toxic," elaborating that his life in school was as bad as it was online, ultimately leading to his suicide (Halligan, 2013). The participants in this study, whether experiencing mild or sever cyber-attacks, shared the experience that the hollowed

sanctuary of home where victims of bullying have historically sought refuge was breeched by their cell phones (Hinduja & Patchin, 2006, p. 154). This can only strengthen the emotional and social struggles that victims of bullying endure (Smith, 2013, p.83). Although Hinduja and Patchin (2006) suggested cyberbullying to be indirect rather than face-to-face, the findings of this study suggested that while Hinduja and Patchin may be correct, the effects of such "indirect" activity often find their way out of the cyber realm and into the present physical dimension, thereby creating direct victimization and harassment.

Parents as a Resource

The review of the literature in this study required semantically detailed analysis. Although the research suggested that teens rely most heavily on parents and teachers or another trusted adult at school for advice about online conduct and managing difficult experiences (Lenhart et al., 2011), this does not suggest that teens actually go to their parents or teachers when they are in the progress of managing those difficult experiences. As noted by Kowalski (2008), victims of cyberbullying via cell or computer are often unwilling to report their abuse to a parent or other trusted adult. There are several reasons for this, including, but not limited to, failing to recognize they are being victimized, fear that the attacks will escalate if the cyberbully(ies) get into trouble, and—of utmost importance and influence—the victims' fear that their computer or cell phone or both will be taken away in an effort to protect them. This finding is contrary to the findings of this study, in which the participants overwhelmingly sought help from their parents when they could no longer manage the trauma independently.

<center>**Relationship of the Study to the Theoretical Framework**</center>

Excessive Cell Phone Use by Participants is Causal to Cyber-victimization

   According to Olweus (in Hoover & Oliver, 1996), "every individual should have the right

to be spared oppression and repeated, intentional humiliation in school and in society at large"

(p. 14). The findings of this study suggested that the participants used their cell phones

excessively. Some would suggest that the participants were always connected. The participants

endured victimization and harassment most often after school hours at home, which supports the

research concerning the subject (Smith et al., 2008, p. 376). Although significant academic

decline did not appear for the participants of this research study, Diaz, Evans, and Gallagher

(2014) suggested that excessive media participation can have negative consequences on basic

cognitive processes. It can also influence basic attention skills. Research has also suggested that

students who spend an excessive amount of time on their cell phones spend less time on school

work and endure more bullying as a result (Adachi, 2009). It appears that young people are

therefore seeking to fulfill certain needs on Maslow's hierarchy, including their social needs,

belongingness and love needs, and esteem needs via cell phone applied technologies and

applications. Two participants, Zoe and Katie, both cited in their personal interviews an apparent

interpersonal disconnect in the communication skills of young people while engaged in cell

phone communiqués. While engaged in such communiqués, misunderstandings and confusion

within interpersonal communication will become more excessive, thereby contributing to

inadvertent distress and anxiety as well as cell phone cyber-harassment.

Negative Interactions with Peers

   Maslow (1943) explained in detail how human behavior is influenced by meeting certain

benchmarks of personal fulfillment through his hierarchy of needs model. After one meets one's

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basic physiological needs of breathing, food, water, sleep, and so on, one then seeks to fulfill safety needs, which include security of body, resources, morality, family, health, and property. The undemanding association to the finding of negative interactions with peers as it relates to the theoretical framework of this research study is to advance a theory connected to safety needs. However, a more profound angle might lie in a link to love and belongingness needs. In search of meeting their belongingness needs, some young people seek to achieve this by exerting power and control over others. A demonstration of such supremacy can be a reason for other young people to follow the leader per se, elevating the now "bully" to a more elite social status as the leader of a small group or informal gang of youth who bully other children or an easy target (Gray, 2014; Hinduja & Patchin, 2006, p. 153). Therefore, explaining negative interactions with peers with regard to cyberbullying may be more an issue of an unsatisfied bully's need to fulfill love and belongingness needs than it is a victim's attempt to maintain safety needs.

As one refers back to Maslow's hierarchy, it is easy to observe how the cyberbully and his or her associates can advance up the hierarchy toward greater self-esteem, confidence, and respect by others and onward to self-actualization. According to Maslow's hierarchy of needs model, this is natural human behavior, although the avenue of approach is certainly not acceptable by the societal norms of our generation. On the other hand, the victim(s) of such attacks rapidly fall down the hierarchy, losing self-esteem, confidence, respect from others, friendships, and possibly safety and security needs—and therein lies the problem. While the human behavior associated with being a bully demands attention and recognition for resolution efforts, educators and parents must also acknowledge the role the victims played in the cyberbullying as well. Generationally, a considerable amount of social and emotional

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development is occurring while using technologies that are available on cellphones, including

texting and the internet (O'Keeffe & Clarke-Pearson, 2011, p. 800).

Need for Instantaneous Information Leads to Social and Emotional Distress

The prescription for this aspect of the phenomenon is not as simple as proposing that an

individual use his or her phone less excessively. There is a fundamental system of understanding

the lived experience of the participants. Moustakas (1994) suggested that one must partake in

extensive field work with direct observations and activity of a certain group to obtain an

understanding of its cultural norms. This might include speaking the proverbial language of the

group being studied and engaging in first-hand participation in the group's activities. Through

this direct action, one can say with a high degree of certainty, "I understand what it is like to live

that experience." Once a system of understanding is achieved within the cultural group, the

confounding nature of the problem at hand is easier to approach.

Certainly, one can argue that the apparent need for instantaneous information is

principally generational. This by itself does not dismiss the behavior as any less important to

researchers, educators, or parents. Simply dismissing the behavior as superficial also dismisses

the conundrum as not being important and prominent in the life of young people who are

experiencing the phenomenon or in the lives of those close to these young people. School

professionals and parents should be able to identify, understand, and address the matter in order

to resolve it accordingly.

Exertion of Interpersonal and Social Control by Cell Phone Cyberbullies

The participants shared a common experience that cell phone cyberbullies had the ability

to manipulate and control the day-to-day lives of their cyber-victims. As a result, cell phone

cyber-victims regularly spoke of anxiety and depression symptomology, as well as feelings of

anger, fear, ostracism, and humiliation. The average child in our society generally prefers a safe, orderly, predictable, and organized world, on which they can count and in which unexpected, unmanageable, and other dangerous things do not happen; in any case, however, the child will have a reliable adult to count on who will shield the child from harm (Maslow, 1943, p. 378). Although neither school professionals nor parents can shield young people from harm for an entire 24-hour day, a child needs to know where to find a dependable source of comfort and counsel. It is important that both school professionals and parents are equally reliable as well as dependable when addressing matters related to cell-phone cyberbullying.

Social, Emotional, and Physical Security are Compromised

Maslow (1954) spoke of some basic human needs in his hierarchy of needs model. He suggested that individuals advance through the following stages: physiological needs, security needs, social needs, belongingness and love needs, esteem needs, and self-actualization needs. Using this model, Maslow concluded that if any of the stages are compromised, one cannot achieve his or her fullest potential, otherwise known as self-actualization. In fact, Maslow theorized that an individual who perceives himself or herself to be in chronic and extreme danger—thereby compromising their safety, security, and stability needs—will view practically everything as less important, even necessary physiological needs, for the sake of safety alone (Maslow, 1943, p. 376). Unfortunately, when cell phone cyberbullying transcends technology into the real world, there is no refuge (Wendland, 2003). Therefore, it is only logical that the participants in this study sacrificed attending certain classes, cut multiple days of school, and, in one case, transferred to a new school to secure various needs on Maslow's hierarchy.

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Parents as a Resource

Carl Rogers, a 20th-century clinical psychologist, is perhaps best known for his person-centered approach to psychotherapy. In this model, Rogers speaks of conditions that provide a psychologically suitable climate for clients to understand their experience and enable them to strive for meaningful personal fulfilment. The counselor is not the absolute all-knowing expert who knows what is best for clients who blushingly follow the edicts of their counselor. The clients are groomed to find their own way. The primary focus of this model emphasized that the two individuals—counselor and client—are in psychological contact, and the client experiences a sense of unconditional positive regard and empathetic understanding from the counselor (Rogers, 1957, p. 101). The counselor must also fully receive the client while the client must experience being fully received, including the experience of being understood and accepted (Rogers, 1961, p. 29).

In understanding the findings of this research study with regard to the participants' overwhelming identification of their parents as a source of comfort in times of social, emotional and physical instability, Rogers' theory seems to resonate. Children need to feel love from their parents and parents need to groom their children to make good decisions. When children fail to invoke well-managed decision making, they need to know that their parents have an unconditional positive regard for them. The two, parents and children, must experience being fully received by each other, to trust each other, to learn and grow from each other.

Implications

When I initially proposed this study, I was confident that attendance and learning would be impacted by cell phone cyberbullying. It was not until I had spent hundreds of hours researching every facet of the phenomenon that it occurred to me that victims of cell phone

cyberbullying must first experience significant emotional distress, both personally and socially, before data would indicate any tribulation in attendance or learning. A few themes emerged that I did not anticipate while progressing through this research study. These themes appeared to point to both the origin of the phenomenon and recommended safeguarding measures for those experiencing the phenomenon.

The first theme that utterly surprised me was that the students appeared to be experiencing cell phone cyberbullying to a higher degree at home than they were in school. I originally proposed this study after observing countless students using cell phones throughout the day in the hallways and common areas of the high school where I am employed. A few parents even texted their children from the counseling office to remind them of an impending meeting with their counselor or teachers while their child was in class. I thought it would only be natural that students would be susceptible to cyberbullying if they had access to their phones throughout the day. To my complete surprise, bullies tended to favor evening hours over school hours as a time for harassment. Likewise, the victims of cell phone cyberbullying in this study tended to be academically motivated and managed to stay focused on their responsibilities as students. Those participants who were impacted during school hours tended to either be victims of their cyber world and real world colliding, where cyber-harassment would transcend technology and spill into their lives during school hours, or they would be self-inflicted victims of an anxiety-driven need for instant information. In the case of the former example, the social, emotional, and even physical security of participants was compromised. In the case of the latter example, this was usually a circumstance of a compulsive need to monitor and, if necessary, control one's online image or identity. It is recommended that school officials and parents take note of both when addressing the matter of cell phone cyberbullying.

The second theme that emerged in this study and was unexpected was that the participants had a high regard for their parents when it came to matters of cell phone cyberbullying. In fact, they often elected to go to their parents before seeking help elsewhere. While the participants found the school's helping professionals such as counselors, social workers, and psychologists to be valuable resources, they trusted their parents more to help them solve problems associated with cell phone cyberbullying and perceived them to be a valuable partner in coping with and managing the trauma in progress and beyond.

Education professionals and parents are advised to take note of this valuable finding as the data suggested that an established positive relationship between parents and children seems to provide relief when experiencing this phenomenon. School and community leaders are advised to establish encouraging directives for relationship-building between parents and children as part of bullying and cyberbullying workshops. Likewise, a school's helping professionals should also be able to manage connecting parents with students in a collaborative effort to control and resolve personal and social trauma associated with the emotional distress of cell phone cyberbullying.

Limitations and Recommendations

Limitations

This qualitative phenomenological research study was limited in four specific dimensions. The first area of concern was its geographic restriction. This study focused on graduates of a suburban high school in upstate New York. Nonetheless, physical geography was a limitation regardless of geographic location because the focus of the research was on cell phone-enabled technologies, including those supported by both telephone systems and internet service providers. Telephone and internet-supported communication technologies have the

unique ability to establish a telepresence from one person to another, regardless of the geographic location of either party, as long as the technology is supported in the area of both the transmitter and the receiver. Therefore, a study limited to any physical geographic location as opposed to the meta-galactic openness of cyberspace will only provide a fractional representation of the phenomenon. Expanding research without considering geography could perhaps enable researchers to make meaningful progress in future studies.

This study was also limited by the purposeful selection of research participants who were adult graduates of the research site. Thus, minors under the age of 18 were automatically excluded from being research participants. Adult participants were invited to this study for two primary reasons. First, this study had the potential risk that a participant may knowingly or unknowingly provide me with information about a criminal act that occurred or was in progress. Furthermore, gatekeepers responsible for allowing access to research participants may have been deterred from cooperating if demands, whether real or perceived, were put on their staff or organization to include students (Shenton, 2004, p. 65).

Of particular interest to this study was the potential for gatekeeper or parental influence leading to access restrictions on a study of minor students under the age of 18 during data collection. Secondary to this concern was the apprehension that the use of current students could present a potential conflict of interest due to both academic and referential influences. Therefore, I elected to use recent graduates of the research site as opposed to current students to avoid both legal hurdles and ethical dilemmas.

This particular research site and student population grossly lacked both racial and cultural diversity. Less the 17% of the potential research participants identified themselves as being of a race other than Caucasian or European descent. There is little research on racial and cultural

influences on cyberbullying and even less on cell phone cyberbullying. This being said, it is possible that a more diverse sample of participants may yield results not found in this study. The lack of racial and cultural diversity should be considered in future studies on cell phone cyberbullying.

The last area of concern was that of my own personal bias and how that bias could have influenced this research study. With any research, the researcher certainly impacts the interpretation of the data, but to a greater extent with qualitative data. I carefully assumed an observing role as a phenomenological researcher while serving as interviewer, facilitator, and exegetist of raw qualitative data. I was mindful in following Moustakas' (1994) suggestion for keenness for phenomenological researchers. Accordingly, Moustakas prescribed that "presumably the researcher has set aside biases and has come to a place of readiness to gaze on whatever appears and to remain with that phenomenon until it is understood, until a perceptual closure is realized" (p. 73). In assuming this posture throughout data collection and analysis, I was able to unpack the phenomenon through the triangulation of data and coding, to understand better what it was like for participants to live the experience (Polkinghorne, 1989, p. 146) of cell phone cyberbullying.

Recommendations

Theoretical/research recommendations. Few researchers have conceived the contemporary reality that cell phones appear to be the weapon of choice for the modern-day bully (Bullying by mobile phone and cell phone, 2014; Taylor Michigan Police Department, 2007). Even fewer have attempted to research the matter, making it difficult to review all-inclusive data to address and possibly remedy the situation. Innumerable gaps continue to exist in the research arena of cell phone cyberbullying. Research has suggested that minors as young

as age eight are being cyberbullied via cell phone (D'Antona, Kevorkian, & Russom, 2010, p. 521; Smith et al., 2008, p. 376). I considered the study of minors early in my initial research; however, the aforementioned legal and ethical dilemmas persuaded me to use adult graduates of the research site as participants. Future researchers may elect to conduct an ethnographic study gaining access through gatekeepers, both school administrators and parents, as well as gaining the confidence of participant students, in order to gain a real-time sense of how cell phone cyberbullying continues to impact students' attendance, academics, and social and personal life in school. An ethnography may even be best suited for a very young researcher who has the ability to "go native" in order to clearly understand the research topic as it applies to that culture-sharing group or individual's representative of the group.

The themes and subthemes that emerged in this study all suggested a specific avenue of approach that requires investigation by future researchers. Forthcoming studies could examine and define why young people use their cell phones in excessive amounts or even re-examine what measure is acceptable in defining excessive cell phone use by modern standards, bearing in mind the ever-evolving use of technological applications available on cell phones. Forthcoming studies could also offer understanding of how social, emotional, and physical security are compromised by excessive cell phone use and how these micro details are sinuously connected to the greater macro complexity of harassment, victimization, and abuse via cell phone-integrated technologies.

Lastly, future researchers may choose to address a larger theoretical angle in the research by examining how the emergence and popularity of online identities—which tend to be superficial, insincere, and at times deceitful, embellished by cell phone applications and technologies—can influence the social and personal lives of students in school. Examining this

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larger theoretical angle may, in fact, lead to a greater degree of understanding of social norms that exist in cyberspace and the way those cyber-social norms affect today's youth. Conversely, researching this larger theoretical angle may objectively produce more research questions than it answers.

Practical recommendations. Educators, parents, and government officials are perhaps more aware than ever before about the dynamics and issues surrounding bullying of all varieties in our post-Columbine world. In my experience, students are often expressive in saying that anti-bullying education is overemphasized and that school officials often lack judgment in both the selection of content and the delivery of preventive anti-bullying education in response to school safety. Elementary and middle-school students are likely the most appropriate audiences to address the findings of this study. Local school districts and state education departments may consider health teachers, school nurses, and pupil personnel services (school counselors, school psychologists, and school social workers) as viable options to push in curriculum that addresses the findings of this study to age-appropriate students. I would even suggest that the findings of this study could be presented as a series of classroom discussions to address the modern-day complexities encompassing peer-on-peer harassment. School leaders should also consider raising awareness of these findings at opportune community gatherings such as back-to-school night, parent-teacher conferences, or grade-level meetings with a brief seminar before such events. Lastly, the findings indicated that school staff often lacked an understanding about cyber and cell phone cyberbullying. To address this delinquency, a qualified clinical professional in each school district ought to address these findings with teachers and staff during a superintendent's conference or other professional day as a matter of student health, safety, and welfare.

Conclusion

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to describe and understand the shared experiences of five students in a medium-sized public high school in northern Westchester County, New York, who were victims of cell phone cyberbullying and the impact this phenomenon had on the victims' attendance, academics, and social and personal life in school. This study engaged me both intellectually and emotionally as bullying has been prominent in my life and the lives of my loved ones. It is the depraved memories of my own childhood, as well as the images I continue to see on my television, computer, and iPhone screens, that kept me motivated to complete this research study.

It is our mission as leaders in education to protect the children in our charge. Children are unable to learn effectively if they do not feel safe. Therefore, the safety and security of our children are a priority above all else. Leaders in education and leaders in the community are best advised to consider the results of this study in an effort to improve the climate of cell phone cyberbullying in their locality. Understanding the dynamics of the phenomenon of cell phone cyberbullying and its impact on victims' attendance, academics, and social and personal life, as it occurs both in school and at home, will necessitate a collaborative effort on the part of school and community leaders and constituent parents.

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APPENDIX A: CONSENT FORM

Cell Phone Cyberbullying's Impact on Victims'
Attendance, Academics, and Social and Personal Life in School
A Phenomenological Qualitative Study
Doctoral Dissertation
Nathan Joseph Heltzel
Liberty University
School of Education

You are invited to be in a research study of Cell Phone Cyberbullying's Impact on Victims' Attendance, Academics, Social and Personal Life in School. You were selected as a possible participant because you experienced this phenomenon in high school. I ask that you read this form and ask me any questions you may have before you agree to participate in the study.

This study is being conducted by Nathan Heltzel, a doctoral candidate at Liberty University's School of Education.

Background Information:

The purpose of this study is to describe and understand the shared experiences of students exposed to cell phone cyberbullying and the impact this phenomenon has on the victim's attendance, academics, social and personal life in school.

Procedures:

If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to do the following things:

In the first stage of research, you will be asked to participate in an interview session via Skype. Your interview will be audio recorded and transcribed by the primary researcher. You will also be asked to participate in a focus group activity conducted via Second Life. After the individual interviews and focus group, you will be asked to submit journal writings of any thoughts that you may have related to your experience to the researcher. You will be using Twitter to accomplish this within a month following your interview and focus group. Throughout the process, you will use a pseudonym of your choice and only the primary researcher will know your identity.

Comprehensively, you should expect to meet with the researcher online one time for about one hour for the individual interview, one time in an online focus group for about one hour, and submit online journal entries of your thoughts using Twitter before and after the individual interview and focus group interview. Twitter limits your micro-blog to 140 characters per tweet. Therefore, your thoughts should be clear and concise. Posting a tweet usually takes about two minutes of your time per post and the total time dedicated to postings should last approximately ten to fifteen minutes through the duration of this study. Although I request that you tweet at least one time before and after both the individual interview and focus group interview, you may tweet as often as you need to or want to in order to share your thoughts with me and other research participants.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:

This study includes three primary risks. The first risk is that the content of this study may bring back depraved memories that you have long since put behind you. On the other hand, it is possible that the content of this study brings you to the actualization that the experience you lived was far more significant than you first imagined it to be. In either case, an unfavorable and unwelcome psychological and / or physiological response is possible. I will provide you with the contact information for proper clinical support if you become aware of either of these and report them to me or if I suspect either as being evident.

The second risk factor involved in this study is the possibility that you knowingly or unknowingly provide me with information regarding a criminal act; most likely a cyber-crime currently in progress such as cyber stalking, a crime involving a minor or other abusive actions in progress. I am bound by both the mandatory reporter laws of New York State and an ethical obligation to Liberty University to report such criminal activity to the proper law enforcement authorities. While the questions I will ask you during the individual interview and the online focus group does not attempt or intend to provoke responses related to illegal activity, your answers may require reporting if they deviate from the topic being discussed.

Lastly, there is a possible risk that you could be "outed" by your peers if your confidentiality is inadvertently compromised. You will be required to use a pseudonym in order to avoid this situation.

There are no tangible benefits to participating in this study.

Possible Benefits to Society:

On a local level, understanding the significance of this phenomenon and its possible impact on student attendance and related learning difficulties could be essential to raising local test scores. It may also be critical to promoting a safe and healthy learning environment in schools. The findings of this study could also help state education department officials steer professional development objectives toward school professionals taking a positive and active role in cyberbullying situations. Nationally, the findings of this study could help various organizations and agencies understand how cell phone cyberbullying impacts attendance, academics, social and personal life in school and the residual societal influences at work and community gatherings.

Compensation:

Participants will be compensated $50 for their time upon full completion of their part in the individual interview, focus group interview and journal entries.

Confidentiality:

The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report I might publish, I will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a research participant. Research records will be stored securely and only the researcher will have access to the records.

A pseudonym of your choice will be used throughout this research and the primary researcher will never use your legal name in any writings related to this research or dissertation defense.

Interview data stored on digital audio recordings will be transcribed and digitally removed as soon as transcription is complete. Only the primary researcher will have access to the audio recordings and transcripts. The transcripts will be stored in a locked safe in the researcher's primary residence until the transcripts are completely analyzed and reported in the dissertation defense.

As with any study, confidentiality has some limits. So long as the interview responses and journal writings do not require mandatory reporting to proper law enforcement authorities, your information will not be disclosed or publicized to any outside source.

While I encourage confidentiality and the use of pseudonyms at all times within focus groups, I cannot guarantee confidentiality due to the collaborative nature of a focus group.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University or the high school you formerly attended. If you decide to participate, you are free to abstain from answering any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

How to Withdraw from the Study:

For a variety of reasons, a participant enrolled in a research study may decide to withdraw from the research. Please email Nathan Heltzel at nheltzel@liberty.edu at any time if you wish to terminate your participation in this study for any reason. As a result, Nathan Heltzel will not use any information obtained from you or about you in this study.

Contacts and Questions:

The researcher conducting this study is Nathan Heltzel. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact him at (845)-987-4565 or nheltzel@liberty.edu . Nathan Heltzel is being advised by Dr. Tamika Hibbert. You may contact Dr. Hibbert at (347)-885-2340 or tshibbert@liberty.edu .

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd, Suite 1837, Lynchburg, VA 24515 or email at irb@liberty.edu.
You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent:

I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

☐ Please check this box acknowledging your consent to digital voice recordings of both the individual interview and focus group interview.

☐ Please check this box authorizing Nathan Heltzel to access any of your Briarcliff High School student records that may be related to this study.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Investigator:_____ Date: _____

IRB Code Numbers: 1835 *(After a study is approved, the IRB code number pertaining to the study should be added here.)*

IRB Expiration Date: April 1, 2015 *(After a study is approved, the expiration date (one year from date of approval) assigned to a study at initial or continuing review should be added. Periodic checks on the current status of consent forms may occur as part of continuing review mandates from the federal regulators.)*

APPENDIX B: INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS

Katie Individual Interview

Before we begin, I would like to start by referring you to the copy of the definition of cell phone cyberbullying that I have provided to you for the purposes of this study. I will now read it aloud. For the purpose of this study, cell phone cyberbullying will be defined as actions that use mobile phone technologies with or without internet service to support the deliberate, repeated and hostile behavior by an individual or group that is intended to harm another or others. This behavior can be achieved through one or more of the following, which includes, but is not limited to intimidation, control, manipulation, humiliation, falsely discrediting, putting down or embarrassing another or others (Belsey, 2005; Cell Phone Safety, 2013; Creswell, 2007, p. 103).

Do you understand the definition of cell phone cyberbullying for the purposes of this study?

Yes

Do you feel comfortable speaking with me today about your lived experience within the phenomenon of cell phone cyberbullying?

Yes

Can you tell me, as much as you are comfortable sharing with me right now, what have you experienced in terms of cell phone cyberbullying?

Umm, cell phone cyberbullying . . . the experience I remember the most was and maybe I'll remember more as I'm talking, but umm I guess was in eleventh grade, like cell phones, I had an iPhone and that was really something back then, but it was my boyfriend's best friend in eleventh grade and he got real mad at me and decided he was going to text me non-stop and

started calling me a cunt and blah blah blah and started a whole lot of drama within our group of friends.

What contexts or situations have typically influenced or affected your experiences when you were cyberbullied via your cell phone?

Umm he said at that time, he was dating this girl and it was not working out 'cause I would not drive him somewhere to meet her. The real reason was, I was in a fight, you remember I dated Dave for like four years? Anyway, so I was in a fight with him and Chris was in a fight with him too and I refused to get back at Dave by sleeping with Chris and he got mad at me and started doing all that and it got really ugly.

To your knowledge, did any of the following people ever know at any time about your involvement in cell phone cyberbullying?

Parent or Guardian Yes

Other family member No

If yes, please specify, i.e. grandparent, aunt/uncle, sibling, cousin

Friend Yes, all of them

Clergy member No

School bus driver No

Teacher No

School Counselor Yes, two of them

School Social Worker Yes

School Psychologist Yes

School Nurse No

School Administrator No

If yes, please specify, i.e. dean, assistant principal, principal

Coach No

Club advisor No

Other school staff member No

If yes, please specify, i.e. librarian, secretary, security guard

Other person(s) not listed above No

Did you tell this person(s)? Yes

Why or why not?

Because I trusted them. I even showed the school psychologist all of the harassing text messages and she called Chris in in an attempt to mediate the situation. Chris was like, she's such a liar, I never did that! The school psychologist was holding the text message transcript in her hand and got really mad at Chris for lying. He got so belligerent that she kicked him out of her office. What really threw me over the edge was it started off as cyberbullying by text messages to me, but then he placed some soft, umm maybe it was like food or something underneath the handle of my car door . . . just really weird things that he would do and it just kept escalating from there. He started lying to my friends, our friends both in person and via text at night and spreading rumors about me over the internet and he texted lies to Dave about things that I would do to him.

Were you satisfied with their response?

Umm, yeah it was continuous so I mean I don't really know, it was what it was at the time. I honestly don't know if I was satisfied, I don't remember.

Did telling them stop the activity?

I think it got worse. So, I know you're studying cell phone cyberbullying, but when a similar incident occurred in the past with computer based cyberbullying and I didn't tell anybody, like it was really hard for me, and I think when this happened I wasn't really used to being harassed like that, like by peers, like I've always had good friends and stuff like that, but I just kind of freaked out when this happened and I feel like if I hadn't told her and I hadn't told anyone else that it may have just stopped and gone away. I just felt so alone and so defeated in way, you know?

When is cell phone cyberbullying occurring via cell phone in your experience?

Umm, I think that in my experience it occurred nonstop, because cell phones have the internet and you can't get away from the internet. They used to be different but now those two things are the same. Most of it happens after school, at night, stuff like that, kind of like a little bit of a latch key kid type of thing like when kids just don't know what else to do.

Which associated technologies available on cell phones are used to cyberbully via cell phone?

Phone call Does my family count? Then yes!

Voice mail No, too much evidence (laughter)

Text message using short message service

By one person Yes

By two or more people at the same time with the intent to invoke a text war Yes

Text message using multimedia message service

Still photograph No

Video recording No

Voice recording No

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Hyperlink to a website with the intent to harass, threaten, intimidate, humiliate or blackmail you Yes

Combination of any of the above Yes, websites and texting, and it got real ugly real fast.

Taking a still photograph(s) of you without your consent No

Video recording you with your consent No

Electronic mail Yes

Internet chat room No

Smartphone application Yes

Please specify which app is used

Facebook Messenger, like does cyber stalking count, 'cause this kid used to Facebook message me constantly, like for years telling me he wants pictures of my feet and that he'll pay me hundreds and hundreds of dollars for it, non-stop and I said you need to stop messaging me. This was scary because I heard that people with fetishes like that can also be really violent and obsessive and it was constant!

Where does the cell phone cyberbullying take place?

Home

Before school No

After school Definitely yes

After a reasonable bedtime during night hours For sure, yes

Weekends Yes

School

On the bus or while being transported or walking to/from school No

Breakfast or before first bell Not really

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While class is in session Yes

Between classes Yes

Lunch Yes

School-sponsored activities after school hours, i.e., clubs and sports Not in my experience

Other dates, times or locations not listed above. Please Specify.

It can happen anywhere, like with the services on them, especially now there is just so much more opportunity to communicate with each other with cell phones.

Did you use your cell phone more than three hours per day?

Umm probably, I know in twelfth grade I like literally broke my phone on purpose 'cause I just didn't want anyone to contact me period. I just wanted to be free and didn't want anyone to know where I was ever. My parents loved that idea.

If yes, does this time include use during the regular school day?

Yes

If yes, did you ever use your cell phone in class and what experiences came of that?

I only had a limited number of texts allowed each month and here I am getting cyberbullied on texts that I only have a limited number of and instead of doing math problems in class I'm calculating my phone bill. I definitely was not paying attention from time to time in class.

Were you ever intentionally late to class to avoid the person or people involved in your experience? Approximately how late were you on any given occasion?

Did you ever intentional miss a class to avoid the person or people involved in your experience?

So you remember when I had U.S. History in eleventh grade? He (Chris) was like not the sole reason why I never went, but he definitely made me not want to go, that's for sure, but during that time that was just a really good excuse, now I remember, it was just a really bad time to begin with, that is when I was in and out of the hospital. Chris was like you're such an asshole (Katie now lets out a stress reducing scream) Ahhhhhh ugggg, it's ok…

Was it a specific class on a regular basis?

Yes, U.S. History

Did you ever intentionally miss an entire day of school or multiple days of school to avoid the person or people involved in your experience?

Umm, ahh noo, I don't think so, I just avoided places I think because I was feeling really humiliated and I'd try not to be around where he was, so I would not avoid school all together but I would avoid a class here and there especially when things were being said about me behind my back. Phones really help people be secretive and talk about you behind your back.

Do you believe your grades or standardized test scores were affected in any way due to your cell phone cyberbullying experience?

Yes

If yes, please specify.

That was just a really shitty year. It was total social damage control all the time and I was just tired . . . just tired of defending myself . . . so nothing was on my mind other than social damage control. SATs, Regents, college, nothing mattered to me. . . .

Did you ever personally experience a negative impact on learning as a result of cell phone cyberbullying?

Yes

If yes, please explain.

I definitely think that certain events contributed to me being tired in school and not sleeping. The harassment, the defamation, being known as a slut when I was not and am not!

Did you ever experience any psychological or health related complications that you are aware of as a result of your cell phone cyberbullying experience?

Umm, I think that at that time, my junior year was probably the worst year of my entire life and I was severely depressed and the cyberbullying I endured by cell phone was definitely an escalator if not the cause. But I think it added on to my anxiety.

If yes, please explain. For example insomnia, enuresis, headaches, abdominal pain, and other anxiety or depression-related issues.

Umm, again, I pretty much had all of that . . . everything and it just escalated. I was in and out of Westchester Medical Center's outpatient non-stop, I was in like your office non-stop, so it's kind of hard to separate one from the other, the chicken or the egg, was I crazy before cel phone cyberbullying or did the cyberbullying make me crazy?

Did you have friends before the experience of cell phone cyberbullying?

Yes, I think that was the biggest problem, that like with Dave we probably dated for a very long time and broke up before I went to college, and he still thinks we're getting married, but that is a whole other issue, ummm but, I think how he responded to it is one of the like, main reasons why I just was like, I, I can't, I, I'm done, like this is . . . and it did go on for a while and it always makes me think about when all of that was going on and how he responded to that and why he never really stood up for me and it just like destructed my whole social circle completely, umm and I don't know, that was probably the biggest thing with it.

Did you have friends after?

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Yes, but like I said, it, it took a while, it took a long time.

Did your experience affect any peer or familial relationships?

No. (Laughing) I didn't have any family relationships back then . . .

If so, with whom?

How did this experience impact you personally? Umm, it again it just like made me really humiliated and I was just like really taken back by it and I was just unsure of all of the social issues that were going on as a result of it and I guess in the long term it just opened my eyes to how and what small things can really do to people and stuff. Or what seems small from the outside can really have such an effect on people who are suffering and who are already going through so much, you know, that could just really shake up everything . . . but . . .

How did this experience impact you socially?

Well, I almost broke up with Dave over it for good because Chris was lying to both of us, ohhhh and we all had the same friends so that is what happens when you date someone for too long, you end up having all the same friends . . . but anyway, so it really started to tear apart our friendship group because this one is friends with this one and this one doesn't know what to do and it was just kind of a disaster in terms of that.

Did you ever fear physical or emotional harm at school as a result of implicit information sent to your cell phone? Physical harm?

No Emotional was every day.

Do you believe the teachers involved in your experience were aware that cell phone cyberbullying had an impact within their classroom?

No

Why or why not?

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Back then everything was just going so fast and I mean things with cell phones were coming out so fast, things on the internet were being posted anonymously and I don't think that, I mean there was definitely a knowledge of it, but I don't think there was a clear understanding. I think if they got it, they understood it through AIM, like AOL instant messenger you know, I don't think they understood it through cell phones.

If you believe that teachers were aware of the phenomenon, do you believe they sufficiently addressed it?

Umm, I think cell phones are tricky, I think AIM is tricky, but I think cell phones are even harder because it's like, they are personal items and what are you gonna do as a teacher? I don't know.

Did you feel there was any support for victims and observers or corrective action and education for the bully?

Do you remember the school social worker in the middle school? She was only there for a year but I think she left before you came, but she handled an issue with cyberbullying so horribly, that had to do with me, that just turned me off to the idea that anyone could or would understand. I mean I was in seventh grade and she basically blamed the whole thing on me and told me that sometimes bridges need to be burned and she was, she was just insane, I don't know. Umm, but, yeah so I think that that, maybe that experience, I just felt like all right, yeah, I guess there is a knowledge of this at that time, but an understanding. . . . I don't know if it was all there.

Do you believe that school leaders understand cell phone cyberbullying?

No, I think that if anyone understands it, it's gonna be teachers more than them because maybe teachers have more of a connection with students than a Dean or Principal.

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Can they do anything about it?

Umm, they could say don't have your cell phone on during the day but kids do. I don't know what the laws are now and obviously they're changing all the time, but like I don't know if they could do too much because a lot of this plays out at home and I don't know where education can come in there except to educate students to make the right decisions.

Did your experience with cell phone cyberbullying impact the way you feel about school? Please expand and elaborate beyond yes or no.

Umm, no I think that school for me a place where I had some support at a time when I had no support at home or outside of school so in a really weird way you guys were like my safe place. A lot of this bullying, really cell phone bullying was taking place after school at home.

Is there anything else that you would like to share or discuss with me about this phenomenon?

Umm, I think, I think it's going to get worse before it gets better. I think with things like Snapchat and all of that, especially with that because now kids are sending pictures, explicit pictures of themselves and their bodies, and other kids are snapping them and screen-shoting them and I don't know, I feel like there's going to be a lot of legal problems with child pornography and such with cell phone cyberbullying, but you know, that's a whole other story. . . .

Are there any relevant or important points of interest and understanding that you feel need to be clarified or elaborated?

Umm, no, not really.

Zoe Individual Interview

Before we begin, I would like to start by referring you to the copy of the definition of cell phone cyberbullying that I have provided to you for the purposes of this study. I will now read it aloud; For the purpose of this study, cell phone cyberbullying will be defined as actions that use mobile phone technologies with or without internet service to support the deliberate, repeated and hostile behavior by an individual or group that is intended to harm another or others. This behavior can be achieved through one or more of the following, which includes, but is not limited to intimidation, control, manipulation, humiliation, falsely discrediting, putting down or embarrassing another or others (Belsey, 2005; Cell Phone Safety, 2013; Creswell, 2007, p. 103).

Do you understand the definition of cell phone cyberbullying for the purposes of this study?

Yes

Do you feel comfortable speaking with me today about your lived experience within the phenomenon of cell phone cyberbullying?

Yes

Can you tell me, as much as you are comfortable sharing with me right now, what have you experienced in terms of cell phone cyberbullying?

Yeah, umm, ok, well my experience was not like the gruesome stuff you hear about on television or in the news, typical girl stuff, I guess like friends, or people who you thought were your friends can get really passive aggressive or even aggressive when their face is not involved. They tend to be more curt with you, I don't know, there's just a, umm, a tone-ness lost in translation and people have more freedom to say what they want over text message rather than in person, but I think people in my experience have been crueler over text message rather than in

person. It's so much easier for you to be mean to somebody when there isn't a face that you're like, looking at. . . . So like I've had friends say things to me like over text message or like boyfriend or whatever and it's easy for you to say something over text, but like they would never say it in person. So it's like a weird. . . . like you know, shock to the system, like why would someone say that to me?

What contexts or situations have typically influenced or affected your experiences when you were cyberbullied via your cell phone?

I definitely had issues with kids in high school because I moved here when I was in like sixth grade and you know, it's hard to break into social circles and make new friends. But you know, people get your number and then they start texting you, and I don't know, they hear things about you and then they send them to you, stuff like that. I've got a lot of trust in my friends now that they would not just hand my number out, but you know, sometimes I would get a text message from a random person and I'd usually ignore it, but I got random messages from people who I barely knew, and it's like how did you get my number? It's like weird, but it's different for us with privacy issues and things, because like it's also just easier to find people now. Like sometimes you wouldn't text people to communicate, you would Facebook message them because you didn't have their number, so like I would be on Facebook messenger and you're all like friends with these people on Facebook and you can still contact them but like a cell phone number is much more personal than when you messaging someone on Facebook. So like it's more socially acceptable to talk to somebody on Facebook who you don't know as well rather than to text them. It has like a different stigma. Like, for example, I don't know, like people joke about texting rules and like how you're supposed to talk to people, like you know, just like the jargon you use and such over text message and how it implies certain things, umm but I would

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say that like umm, if I were talking to somebody new to me in high school, I would talk to them on Facebook messenger, like before I would talk to them you know using their phone number, because I don't have their phone number whereas Facebook was so easy because all you have to do is accept my friend request. And your information is like on the internet anyway so, it's really easy for me to find out a little bit about you and then start messaging you based on that rather than your cell phone number. . . . it's more personal, you have to like actually ask them for that rather than, like, I don't know, so say like, based on what was happening in my experiences, much more bullying occurred over Facebook messenger because people who you don't even know or like barely know can be your "friend" and start messaging you because they probably don't have your number. 'Cause like, there were people who I was friends with on Facebook in high school, who like, I was not friends with inside the high school, like personally friends, but I was their "friend" on Facebook although I didn't really like them very much. Like, people were just random friends with people on Facebook and maybe you just met them in passing or whatever and they "friend" you on Facebook, but you didn't necessarily expect to talk to them, but maybe more so it wasn't socially acceptable to talk to them on the phone or on text message or even in person, but like it was totally ok to message them on Facebook. So a lot of the time it would be these acquaintances who you knew on Facebook and that's where the shit would go down. It happened on Twitter too.

To your knowledge, did any of the following people ever know at any time about your involvement in cell phone cyberbullying?

Parent or Guardian No

Other family member Yes, my brother

If yes, please specify, i.e. grandparent, aunt/uncle, sibling, cousin Brother

Friend Oh Yeah!

Clergy member No

School bus driver No

Teacher No

School Counselor Yes

School Social Worker No

School Psychologist No

School Nurse No

School Administrator Definitely not!

If yes, please specify, i.e. dean, assistant principal, principal

Coach No

Club advisor No

Other school staff member No

If yes, please specify, i.e. librarian, secretary, security guard

Other person(s) not listed above No

Did you tell this person(s)? Yes

Why or why not?

Because some of the things people would say to me, like I was shocked, like why would

you say that to someone? That's the problem, they don't want to say it to your face, they just say

it over messenger or something I really didn't know how to deal with it because sometimes they

would know things about me that I thought very few people knew and all of the sudden it's like,

public knowledge you know? Like, why do people care what I do or who I'm with or dating or

not dating or hanging out with or whatever, I don't know, it's like a drain on your emotions

because if they know who else knows and how do they know and like, who can you trust? And then you start to wonder what, like your real, like identity if you can call it that, is . . . like who am I?

Were you satisfied with their response?

Well, at the time I was just like, venting and it's like the kind of thing where I don't know if there are any like real answers, you know? It's like the way things are and you just have to adjust to it, umm I don't know, the information age right?

Did telling them stop the activity?

No, (laughter) you can't stop the internet and phones just like make everything so much easier. . .

When is cell phone cyberbullying occurring via cell phone in your experience?

It never really happens during the day, but it was very easy for me to avoid text messages because I was not on my phone all the time, but at night would be like where the stuff would go down. Especially like, ahh, yeah I'd say most of the time it's night time and usually it's late at night, like midnight and that's when it's the worst too because you know you're just winding down from the day and all of your studies and it just comes out of nowhere. You know, this happens in college too, but it was much worse in high school 'cause kids in high school are immature and because kids are shitty (laughing). I don't know any other way to say it, but they want to hurt you in a way that it like, hits close to home. . . . I don't know.

Which associated technologies available on cell phones are used to cyberbully via cell phone?

Phone call No

Voice mail No

Text message using short message service

By one person Yes

By two or more people at the same time with the intent to invoke a text war

Text war? No, two or more people, absolutely.

Text message using multimedia message service

Still photograph No

Video recording No

Voice recording No

Hyperlink to a website with the intent to harass, threaten, intimidate, humiliate or blackmail you No

Combination of any of the above No

Taking a still photograph(s) of you without your consent No

Video recording you with your consent No

Electronic mail No

Internet chat room No

Smartphone application Sometimes

Please specify which app is used Twitter, tumbler

Where does the cell phone cyberbullying take place?

Home Yes

Before school No

After school Yes, at night

After a reasonable bedtime during night hours Yes

Weekends Yes

School Yes

On the bus or while being transported or walking to/from school No

Breakfast or before first bell No

While class is in session

Sometimes, but I had my phone off in class for the most part

Between classes Yes

Lunch Yes

School-sponsored activities after school hours, i.e., clubs and sports No

Other dates, times or locations not listed above. Please Specify No

Did you use your cell phone more than three hours per day?

Oh my god yes, it's like a fifth limb and I really hate to say that because everything is on your phone. You can email people and everything, and I was in charge of four clubs at school so I had an email account for each club which I absolutely hated, so I was always on my phone for that, I listened to music on my phone in like art class and stuff to help me concentrate, people were texting me though out the day, um I had the internet on my phone so I didn't have to take my computer out, so it's like I loved it in the sense that it's so convenient, but it was also a double edge sword and I need it and hate that I do because I hate being attached to it still. My friends would complain and it would start issues and fights, like they would say "you took so long to text me back" or my parents would want me to check in every couple of hours after school or they would think something bad happened to me, so it was like a lifeline really.

If yes, does this time include use during the regular school day?

Yes

If yes, did you ever use your cell phone in class and what experiences came of that?

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I almost never had my phone on in an academic class, sometimes I would need to have it on if I was expecting an important email and I needed to know something ASAP, so like I was anxious and worried and would not pay attention to what was going on in class because I needed that email more than anything at that moment.

Were you ever intentionally late to class to avoid the person or people involved in your experience?

No

Approximately how late were you on any given occasion?

Did you ever intentional miss a class to avoid the person or people involved in your experience?

Sometimes I would get upset and I would just need a break, but it didn't happen often.

Was it a specific class on a regular basis?

No

Did you ever intentionally miss an entire day of school or multiple days of school to avoid the person or people involved in your experience?

Well, people message certain things certain ways and if they want to be idiots, I couldn't let that stop me from showing my face in school because they couldn't even show their face when messaging me.

Do you believe your grades or standardized test scores were affected in any way due to your cell phone cyberbullying experience?

Umm, I would say, I wouldn't say like a standardized test, but like maybe other tests where if I'm in a text fight with someone or if I'm dealing with messaging drama on Facebook,

you see, communication related anxiety or implications of not communicating back right away could mean something it doesn't.

If yes, please specify.

Did you ever personally experience a negative impact on learning as a result of cell phone cyberbullying?

Yes, like from being anxious about not hearing from people or like knowing what is happening outside the classroom, you know, like I could miss something important, like about friends or what is being said, said about me or whatever.

If yes, please explain.

In that sense, of course it is distracting; of course you're going to miss something like in class. Learning is going to be affected when you're like trying to dodge getting busted for texting instead of like taking notes or listening to lecture.

Did you ever experience any psychological or health related complications that you are aware of as a result of your cell phone cyberbullying experience?

Yes

If yes, please explain. For example insomnia, enuresis, headaches, abdominal pain, and other anxiety or depression-related issues.

Well really I'm a self-inflicted victim of cell phones. I use to always have to look at a screen to get that instant gratification or like I always had to check notifications and was worried about "likes" on a picture or like on Facebook "likes" on a post, I definitely was not sleeping enough, but more than anything the anxiety of not knowing what was being said to who or in what context.

Did you have friends before the experience of cell phone cyberbullying? Yes

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Did you have friends after?

Yes, but relationships with some friends were broken. Like, you can see someone's true colors, just like they can say whatever over text or Facebook messenger and they can't immediately see that you're hurt, but when you're in front of a person saying mean things, you can, like see their pain almost, like it should hurt you in a way to feel bad that you hurt this person, but when you're just texting them you don't see the hurt in their face so it's like "oh, I got them" like you feel good because you don't see how upset I was.

Did your experience affect any peer or familial relationships? Yes

If so, with whom?

Cell phones have really created that environment where it's just really hard to do nothing. My family, well my parents really use to get mad for constantly checking my phone to see what is happening on Facebook or whatever. I can't blame them, technology took me over, I needed to be on my phone all the time.

How did this experience impact you personally?

I feel like it takes away from, you know, I just feel like people can't interpersonally communicate anymore, like face to face, like people are more inclined to text because it's easier for them to text you rather than to meet with you. Like I remember trying to talk to this one boy and it was very hard to track him down. He was comfortable texting with me, but didn't want to talk to me in person. So it was very easy to be comfortable talking to someone and opening up because you're not face to face because there were no real like emotions involved or feelings, it's all just like words and everything can only be implied, because you don't know what the tone is. There's a lot, I don't really like texting because I don't really know what people are really saying, I like to feel people out, but like without being able to like see someone you don't really

know what they mean by it, they can be vague, and then you're left with, well what does that even mean? It's just texting culture, like oh my god, I could go on for hours, so if you were to say just like the word "hi" versus "hey," "hi" would be more formal, I just want to be friends with you, whereas "hey," "hey" is more casual, but if you add like a second "y" to the "hey" it implies something completely different. It sounds ridiculous but it's so true and so confusing and stressful.

How did this experience impact you socially?

It's amazing, I would be there talking to my friends about breaking down a text from a boy, like what does this actually mean, like the meaning behind it, because we would add certain letters or punctuation and all of that could imply something different and then I'm left with well maybe it just means what it means and it means what it's supposed to mean and my friends would say no, there is like a meaning behind it. So with texting, it is very easy to overthink it and over react and there is a texting culture where texting "okay" could mean different things if you added a period or if you didn't. It just never made any sense to me, but like you know it does. So if you were texting a friend or whatever and they could be kind of like pissed off and they text back "ok." with like a period at the end, you can tell they're mad at you because that period means they're being more forceful rather than just sending "k" without anything else. Just the same, if you end a text message with "lol" or "ha ha" it is light hearted, but if you don't, you're being very stern . . . there is definitely a texting jargon though and if you didn't back then or don't abide by it now, it can cause trouble. There are rules that you have to follow.

Did you ever fear physical or emotional harm at school as a result of implicit information sent to your cell phone?

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Um, well when you get a constant stream of social media, you dissect it. It depends on if the person sending it was sober when they sent it. You can tell, and it's always late at night. It would be more distressing like if I got a text like that during the day, but mostly stuff goes down at night so you would have to weigh out what it really meant coming from a drunk person.

Do you believe the teachers involved in your experience were aware that cell phone cyberbullying had an impact within their classroom?

No, they didn't really understand.

Why or why not?

I don't think people of a higher generation get it now or then just like because it's constantly evolving even at my level. Facebook has even changed over the last eight years. Even like the latest apps, they don't know, like Snapchat or whatever, like even if they did understand what was going on, they didn't understand the social implications that went along with it.

If you believe that teachers were aware of the phenomenon, do you believe they sufficiently addressed it?

No

Did you feel there was any support for victims and observers or corrective action and education for the bully?

No

Do you believe that school leaders understand cell phone cyberbullying?

No, but even if they did get it, so much of what is done in cell phone cyberbullying and on cell phones and on the internet is implied, so like someone would not say something mean, like straight out, it was implied and you read between the lines, so it's not straight out said.

Can they do anything about it?

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If I have to explain things to you, like a school leader, like you know, a principal, then it is just not worth my time to explain all of, like everything. People aren't going to open up to a principal or authority figure.

Did your experience with cell phone cyberbullying impact the way you feel about school? Please expand and elaborate beyond yes or no.

No, it was what it was.

Is there anything else that you would like to share or discuss with me about this phenomenon?

Umm well, I would say that there is a hierarchy of what people used to communicate via cell phone. I never really called my friends, I still don't, we just don't do that unless you need to talk to someone urgently, like I would only text, like my close friends I would text them. If it was somebody, I used Facebook a lot on my phone and Instagram and there's something called Snapchat, I don't know if you are aware of that, but that's like a very weird type of application, like people can send pictures and videos and stuff and they're supposed to get deleted, but you can screen shot it, so people could still have a picture of you, umm but then there is Twitter and Facetime, but unless I'm calling my parents, that's really the only time when I ever used a voice call or left voice mails in general and other kids were the same unless it's like really important. I'd say phone calls are much more professional and formal, whereas texting is just so easy and you can get in touch with somebody like really fast and with Facebook you can see if somebody is online too, so like you can see if someone is on the messenger app and you can see if they read your message you sent them and then like you know they saw it and know they would get right back to you, so I don't know. But you know, it's a big kind of privacy thing though too 'cause people can totally see where you are and that you're connected to Facebook and that you're

online and I didn't and still don't want people just start talking to me when I'm in class or trying to be by myself.

Are there any relevant or important points of interest and understanding that you feel need to be clarified or elaborated?

I feel like if we didn't have cell phones, or the internet or whatever, I would be a completely different person, because it's like, it has a lot of social implications, and like by being on your phone and being on Facebook to see what other people are doing, you mimic what they are doing. I don't know, like people care more about what you're doing, which is kind of weird 'cause like people I don't know very well "like" what I'm doing or "comment" on what I'm doing and I feel like I have to document the moment or it didn't happen and it all happens on cell phones, the messaging, the posting, the pictures, the video, the likes, the popularity. Like, I feel like there are these new weird rules on social interaction that like have to do with like what you do on the internet and like how you act with these people in person, 'cause like I would have a normal conversation with someone on text, that I could have had in person, but it was over text message, and then you see this person in person, and they act all weird like you never had this conversation with them, and I'd be like why are you being so awkward with me, but it's like people are way more comfortable talking over text, again because you don't see emotions or whatever, but it's easier for you to talk to me out of your comfort zone on text rather than in person 'cause you can't see my changes in like, I don't know, tone or feelings or whatever. So there started to be these weird social rules and constraints about what you can and cannot do, but I don't like that, but I have to follow these weird rules, otherwise you're an outcast. Like people who aren't on Facebook, like why aren't you on Facebook? That's just weird, so…

Charles Individual Interview

Before we begin, I would like to start by referring you to the copy of the definition of cell phone cyberbullying that I have provided to you for the purposes of this study. I will now read it aloud; For the purpose of this study, cell phone cyberbullying will be defined as actions that use mobile phone technologies with or without internet service to support the deliberate, repeated and hostile behavior by an individual or group that is intended to harm another or others. This behavior can be achieved through one or more of the following, which includes, but is not limited to intimidation, control, manipulation, humiliation, falsely discrediting, putting down or embarrassing another or others (Belsey, 2005; Cell Phone Safety, 2013; Creswell, 2007, p. 103).

Do you understand the definition of cell phone cyberbullying for the purposes of this study?

Yes

Do you feel comfortable speaking with me today about your lived experience within the phenomenon of cell phone cyberbullying?

Yes

Can you tell me, as much as you are comfortable sharing with me right now, what have you experienced in terms of cell phone cyberbullying?

My freshman year sucked overall, there were good moments here and there, but basically it was me and a senior who I really disliked, whenever I would text her something or like put it in writing she would share that conversation with other people. We started as like friends from track, but then it was more like I hated her and wished she left sooner. She would never put anything in writing or on text to me that she felt could have gone against her, but she would say it in person when there was no one else around.

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What contexts or situations have typically influenced or affected your experiences when you were cyberbullied via your cell phone?

I don't like when if I put something in writing to a person and whether they answer in writing or in person, that is fine, but to do what she did, I hated it. Basically, you defined cell phone cyberbullying as controlling and some other things, but basically, I felt like she was controlling over me.

To your knowledge, did any of the following people ever know at any time about your involvement in cell phone cyberbullying?

Parent or Guardian Yes, I told my mom everything that happened. It wasn't just her, there was also a coach my freshman year that would, not like this, but do other things, and I really disliked coach.

Other family member

If yes, please specify, i.e. grandparent, aunt/uncle, sibling, cousin Father and brother

Friend Yes

Clergy member No

School bus driver No

Teacher No

School Counselor Yes

School Social Worker No

School Psychologist No

School Nurse No

School Administrator No

If yes, please specify, i.e. dean, assistant principal, principal

Coach Yes

Club advisor No

Other school staff member No

If yes, please specify, i.e. librarian, secretary, security guard

Other person(s) not listed above

Well, umm teammates? They all knew and the boys got weird after coach told me not to talk to the girl's team.

Did you tell this person(s)?

Yes

Why or why not? I thought the coach would be better than he was when I went over this person, but he was on her side against me, but my parents were on my side.

Were you satisfied with their response?

Obviously not with the coach, but my mom, yes.

Did telling them stop the activity?

Umm, telling the coach did nothing, telling my parents, or if anything, telling my coach probably made it worse, but telling my parents, they spoke to the director and it stopped after there. Umm, the coach though made it worse at first. There was this new student who I wanted to welcome, but the senior who I was having problems with threatened me in front of the entire team, which I was surprised she did this, and said don't speak to her, but, but, but she didn't say it as calmly as I did. She pointed her finger in a way to interrupt me as if I was going to say something, which I wasn't, which surprised me because it was in front of the entire team and then I told the coach the next day and he's like "I have a problem with you speaking to my girls' team". I was just speaking to her and asking like where she came from like that and explaining

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about the running team and asking what grade she is in and the captain was like over there. So at first the captain interrupted me, and I thought it was odd that she would interrupt me but it was expected given that she said these other things about me from our text messages and two days later she asked me not to speak to her. But there was a lot more than that toward to very end.

When is cell phone cyberbullying occurring via cell phone in your experience?

Umm do you mean controlling people? It never stops. Once someone has control over you and like the way you live, you can't ever stop thinking about it. I just hate her for what she did to me. Like, I really hate how she controlled me and my life.

Which associated technologies available on cell phones are used to cyberbully via cell phone?

Phone call Yes

Voice mail No

Text message using short message service

By one person Yes

By two or more people at the same time with the intent to invoke a text war No

Text message using multimedia message service

Still photograph No

Video recording No

Voice recording No

Hyperlink to a website with the intent to harass, threaten, intimidate, humiliate or blackmail you No

Combination of any of the above No

Taking a still photograph(s) of you without your consent No

Video recording you with your consent No

Electronic mail No

Internet chat room No

Smartphone application No

Please specify which app is used

Where does the cell phone cyberbullying take place?

Home No

Before school Yes

After school Yes

After a reasonable bedtime during night hours Yes

Weekends Yes, at practice

School

On the bus or while being transported or walking to / from school No

Breakfast or before first bell Yes

While class is in session No

Between classes No

Lunch Yes

School-sponsored activities after school hours, i.e., clubs and sports All the time at
practice

Other dates, times or locations not listed above. Please specify. No

Did you use your cell phone more than three hours per day?

I don't exactly keep track of how long I use the phone for, I'm not constantly using it,

only if I need to, but I keep it on me all day in case I need to use it.

If yes, does this time include use during the regular school day? Yes

If yes, did you ever use your cell phone in class and what experiences came of that? No

Were you ever intentionally late to class to avoid the person or people involved in your experience?

Yes, I would always hope never to have contact with her, but that didn't always work because she would always somehow find me and say something bad.

Approximately how late were you on any given occasion?

A few minutes here and there.

Did you ever intentional miss a class to avoid the person or people involved in your experience?

Well, luckily she was a senior, so we didn't have any classes together, but even if we did, as much as I hated her, I would never miss a class to avoid her.

Was it a specific class on a regular basis?

Did you ever intentionally miss an entire day of school or multiple days of school to avoid the person or people involved in your experience?

No, but it wasn't just that, I definitely hated what went on, and it wasn't just them who did this to me, it was another student with something that has to do with money. So my freshman year, I became friends with a girl, so it was a whole group, and everyone thinks there all friends, and then we started texting each other more and more often, so I met her around late October and I sort of suspected something around Thanksgiving, but I was still friends with her and basically we would text a lot and I thought I could trust her because she was a friend and she said she needed to buy something online and her parents would not let her use their card so she asked if she could use my debit card. I texted her the numbers and told her to only use it once… plus she

told me she would give me the money as soon as she got paid. I told her she could use it for one purchase and immediately noticed a lot more than one . . . and very expensive! The total purchases went into the, not each individual one, but all of, if you add all of the purchases it was well into the hundreds of dollars. She ordered to the school to avoid her parents, and tried to say that I agreed to pay which I didn't know anything, so like, I don't know how she was able to do it, so then the post office suspected something, so the postal police confiscated it, because it was fraud, so they used that as evidence against her. As soon as I noticed fraud on my debit card multiple times, I said making it evident that it was her, by Valentine's day, I never had any contact with her again.

Do you believe your grades or standardized test scores were affected in any way due to your cell phone cyberbullying experience?

Umm, yes.

If yes, please specify.

I think it affected my grades for the worse, although I don't know how much better I could've done, but every time I was trying to do an assignment, my mom would interrupt me asking "Do you recognize this charge?" I would say no and I would stop doing the work and focus on what happened. So finally I told my mom I can't do any work if this is going to keep happening. So if I'm not doing homework because of this, how am I able to do tests because of this? Plus other people found out that I didn't want to know. Kids would text me about asking for gifts.

Did you ever observe or personally experience a negative impact on learning as a result of cell phone cyberbullying?

Yes.

If yes, please explain.

But what I mentioned was just one of many things that went on. I thought that I had friends in August, but the more we shared on texting, the more by September I hated her.

Did you ever experience any psychological or health related complications that you are aware of as a result of your cell phone cyberbullying experience?

Yes

If yes, please explain. For example insomnia, enuresis, headaches, abdominal pain, and other anxiety or depression-related issues.

I felt like I could not control my life, other people controlled me. Like the incident when I was told not to speak to the girls' team, after everything that was crappy that I had to deal with, it doesn't sound bad what I did, but I don't know why I did, but like for dinner, normally since I'm not able to have milk, like normally I don't because I can't have it, I was thinking. . . . I don't care what happens to me, I'm going to drink milk, luckily nothing did, surprisingly but I didn't care about myself and I was depressed and people controlling me, like I was depressed all the time.

Did you have friends before the experience of cell phone cyberbullying? Yes

Did you have friends after?

No, not those friends. I ended up transferring to a new high school sophomore year. Plus I changed my phone number since other people found out about the girl who is friends with money.

Did your experience affect any peer or familial relationships?

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Well, my family knew everything that was going on, my mom was never upset with me, but upset that this happened. . . . but what those kids did was wrong. Umm, the money incident, I didn't really want to be friends with that girl after I found out she's just friends with money.

If so, with whom? (Answered in previous question)

How did this experience impact you personally?

Yeah, because during the semester . . . during the second semester of freshman year, that is when I started thinking of going to another school to get away from those two people.

How did this experience impact you socially?

Well, considering that towards the end, through late march, that I was not allowed to speak to the girls' team, I had almost no contact with my teammates and I had to transfer because of everything.

Did you ever fear physical or emotional harm at school as a result of implicit information sent to your cell phone?

Umm, Not physically, but mentally. The coach at my old school filed a Title IX complaint against me. That was the last straw, luckily he got fired for falsely putting the complaint.

Do you believe the teachers involved in your experience were aware that cell phone cyberbullying had an impact within their classroom?

Oh, I don't know . . . certain teachers do, like the younger cool teachers.

Why or why not?

I did drop a class because of the stress.

If you believe that teachers were aware of the phenomenon, do you believe they sufficiently addressed it?

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No, because nobody would listen to me and my side of the story. They just believe the girl who said things about me from texting but the girl who is friends with money got arrested.

Did you feel there was any support for victims and observers or corrective action and education for the bully?

I never felt good in that school. The girl who, ahh, is . . . is friends with money thankfully got arrested . . . um, but the girl who was on my track team was friends with the coach and also the director and stood up in front of the team and said I don't like the fact that people consider me a bully, but I felt good because I knew something was done after I was barred for so long. Like I'm not one to have people go through things like that, but after what I've been through, I liked that.

Do you believe that school leaders understand cell phone cyberbullying?

At least the athletic director does.

Can they do anything about it?

Umm, I don't know, I think, I think even though she said that at first I felt differently towards her, like I didn't hate her, but when I saw her, I know I do and I wouldn't do good around her.

Did your experience with cell phone cyberbullying impact the way you feel about school? Please expand and elaborate beyond yes or no.

Yes, it's not just me that hates her, it was everyone on the team, basically all the freshman, like, I wouldn't say everyone hated her, but the majority of the team hated her.

Is there anything else that you would like to share or discuss with me about this phenomenon?

Umm, I don't know. I just didn't know how it was going to be at my new school, like, I was scared that things would be like they were at my old school, but they weren't. After what I went through, it was so much better, like my new coach was so much better and like he wanted to bond unlike the other one.

Are there any relevant or important points of interest and understanding that you feel need to be clarified or elaborated?

Umm . . . I don't know, I would, but, my mom also knows what happened, but she is not here or available, so I don't know if you want to talk to her too to find out from her also, but I think that's it.

Annette Individual Interview

Before we begin, I would like to start by referring you to the copy of the definition of cell phone cyberbullying that I have provided to you for the purposes of this study. I will now read it aloud; For the purpose of this study, cell phone cyberbullying will be defined as actions that use mobile phone technologies with or without internet service to support the deliberate, repeated and hostile behavior by an individual or group that is intended to harm another or others. This behavior can be achieved through one or more of the following, which includes, but is not limited to intimidation, control, manipulation, humiliation, falsely discrediting, putting down or embarrassing another or others (Belsey, 2005; Cell Phone Safety, 2013; Creswell, 2007, p. 103).

Do you understand the definition of cell phone cyberbullying for the purposes of this study?

Yes

Do you feel comfortable speaking with me today about your lived experience within the phenomenon of cell phone cyberbullying?

Yes

Can you tell me, as much as you are comfortable sharing with me right now, what have you experienced in terms of cell phone cyberbullying?

Well, umm, yeah . . . like this is so weird to talk about but you were there from the beginning pretty much. Ok, so umm I had this, this, well boyfriend senior year who was older. He was a college guy and like I really thought I was like in love and I really like thought he loved me and he said he did and everything but like that didn't turn out to be true. We texted a lot, I mean like all the freakin time 'cause he was away in college and could only be free during certain hours of the day. We would get in text fights about how he loved me more and how I did

or didn't love him enough or who I was talking to when he tried to call me or why I didn't answer at like the exact time he called or where I was or who I was with or what I meant by my last text or why like I didn't say I love you at the end of a text, it was always something, but when you think you're in love and stuff you put up with the stupidest shit. Anyway, we use to Skype at night a lot, 'cause it's got a bigger screen than Facetime and it was free and we could see each other, that was like our thing you know, our time, together and it was fun, I even use to clean my room, well the part that he could see on camera anyway so like he would be impressed or whatever, so stupid. . . . Anyway, one day he was all bitching about a test or something that he failed and how stressed he was and how I didn't really love him anymore and I never show how I love him or whatever and I'm like, *really*!?! And how am I supposed to like show you I love you more when you're like a thousand miles away? So anyway, one way or another, he suggested I strip for him on camera and stuff and really, I thought about him recording it and I even asked if he was recording it and he yelled at me like asking how I could think that of him and how he would do that 'cause Skype didn't record at the time or at least people didn't know how to do it and see you really don't love me and all this shit. So like I was totally lost in the moment and wanted to show him I loved him and so I took my shirt off and he wanted more and, and god this is so embarrassing, he told . . . he told . . . he told me to take my bra off . . . sorry, I need a minute. . . . So I took it off and there I was topless and he was finally happy. I was so humiliated and horrified that he was doing this to me but at the same time I was doing it to myself and I, I knew that, but I, I wanted it to stop but I couldn't, I didn't know how, how like to, how to make it stop. He had what he wanted and I was under his spell I guess, love drunk . . . you know. What I didn't know was the little asshole was taking pics of me with his cell. It really wasn't until I had a fight with him weeks later that he got all crazy when I told him I needed a break. He just

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texted me a picture of myself topless and then another and another and another and told me he would show everyone if I didn't take back what I just said about breaking up with him. I was so shocked that I couldn't catch my breath and I didn't know where to turn or what to do and I guess I just went to the one adult I knew would not get mad at me and that was you.

What contexts or situations have typically influenced or affected your experiences when you were cyberbullied via your cell phone?

Well, let's see, I think if we were not in say a long distance relationship, like we would have been able to talk in person more and things wouldn't have gotten so carried away with misunderstandings 'cause like most of our talking if you want to call it that was texting really and you can't get every nuance from a text you know, it is really easy to misunderstand a text and he was a super sensitive guy with every little thing anyway so anything would set him off.

To your knowledge, did any of the following people ever know at any time about your involvement in cell phone cyberbullying?

Parent or Guardian Yes, when you told them!

Other family member No, god no.

If yes, please specify, i.e. grandparent, aunt/uncle, sibling, cousin

Friend No, nobody knew . . .

Clergy member No

School bus driver No

Teacher No

School Counselor Yes, of course

School Social Worker No

School Psychologist No

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School Nurse No

School Administrator Ugggh, No!

If yes, please specify, i.e. dean, assistant principal, principal

Coach No

Club advisor No

Other school staff member No

If yes, please specify, i.e. librarian, secretary, security guard

Other person(s) not listed above Well, do the police count?

Did you tell this person(s)?

Yes, I told you, you told my parents and they told the police.

Why or why not?

I told you 'cause like I was so freaking out after the he threatened to blackmail me. I didn't know what else to do.

Were you satisfied with their response?

Well, I didn't want, well I didn't know what I wanted, but I didn't want my parents involved but I guess I didn't know how bad, like really how bad it really was until it stopped and it was like being born again, you know . . . it was really like I could come up for air for the first time. . . . I was so, like pushed down, like suffocated in a way and manipulated. I was trapped in a box and yeah, it was like a serious mind game, but you could feel it all the time like bricks were strapped to my chest and he was pushing them down on me and his face was like, you know a cartoon character face that could get really big and shout at you and I would cringe like a little mouse and put my arms up to hide but I was still being bogged down with the weight of his shit!

Did telling them stop the activity?

Well, you know he got arrested, so really it was his stupidity and insecurity that stopped it . . . he just took it to that level and he did it to himself. So stupid, none of that needed to happen. He was so selfish and insecure.

When is cell phone cyberbullying occurring via cell phone in your experience?

At night, late at night, I mean, really, you know, like it can, well really it can happen any time and did. We fought over text all day pretty much every day but the really bad shit all happened at night.

Which associated technologies available on cell phones are used to cyberbully via cell phone?

Phone call Ummm, yeah I guess so

Voice mail Sometimes, yes

Text message using short message service

By one person Yes

By two or more people at the same time with the intent to invoke a text war Not with me

Text message using multimedia message service

Still photograph Yes

Video recording Yes

Voice recording No

Hyperlink to a website with the intent to harass, threaten, intimidate, humiliate or blackmail you No

Combination of any of the above Yes, photograph and video

Taking a still photograph(s) of you without your consent Yes

Video recording you with your consent Yes

Electronic mail Yes

Internet chat room No

Smartphone application No

Please specify which app is used

Where does the cell phone cyberbullying take place?

Home Yes

Before school No

After school Yes

After a reasonable bedtime during night hours Yes

Weekends Yes

School No

On the bus or while being transported or walking to/from school No

Breakfast or before first bell No

While class is in session No

Between classes Yes

Lunch Yes

School-sponsored activities after school hours, i.e., clubs and sports No

Other dates, times or locations not listed above. Please specify.

It happened all the time.

Did you use your cell phone more than three hours per day?

Did you say twenty-three? (Laughing) Yes.

If yes, does this time include use during the regular school day?

Of course, we texted a lot. It really became my world. If I wasn't looking at that screen it didn't matter, you know, the world around me was like bone dry and nothing else mattered except for that next text from him and if I didn't answer right away, well then boy was he pissed.

If yes, did you ever use your cell phone in class and what experiences came of that?

I did, I hid it in my backpack and sent a few texts here and there when the teacher wasn't looking and I spent a lot of time trying to figure out how I was going to send the next text instead of listening to what was being said.

Were you ever intentionally late to class to avoid the person or people involved in your experience?

Not to avoid him obviously, he was in college, but . . . umm, well I was not sleeping much after all of this happened, like I'd stay up at night thinking . . . about it . . . so I was late to first period a lot! Sometimes second too.

Approximately how late were you on any given occasion?

Did you ever intentional miss a class to avoid the person or people involved in your experience?

No

Was it a specific class on a regular basis?

Did you ever intentionally miss an entire day of school or multiple days of school to avoid the person or people involved in your experience?

No, unless I was too tired from being up texting the night before with him before things happened or like worrying after . . . and then I'd sleep in.

Do you believe your grades or standardized test scores were affected in any way due to your cell phone cyberbullying experience?

Umm, there were definitely days where I wasn't myself and I'm sure my grades suffered, but not big tests or anything, that was always a red line for me.

If yes, please specify.

Did you ever personally experience a negative impact on learning as a result of cell phone cyberbullying?

Like I said, I'm sure there were days when I was not myself.

If yes, please explain.

Like, I guess after everything went down with my mom and the police I was just horrified and I was really worried about if I did something wrong like the whole thing was my fault and how much trouble I'd be in with my mom and how stupid I was that really caused me a lot of grief.

Did you ever experience any psychological or health related complications that you are aware of as a result of your cell phone cyberbullying experience?

Are you kidding me? Where do you want me to start?

If yes, please explain. For example insomnia, enuresis, headaches, abdominal pain, and other anxiety or depression-related issues.

All of that, especially the anxiety and depression. My mom started taking me to a counselor twice a week at night after all of that went down and we talked about meds but that never happened 'cause I was able to sort it out but yeah, headaches and stuff, and I was especially sick to my stomach after he sent those pics to me so you can't even imagine what that is like, it's like, like your life is over and you'll never be wanted by anyone again, not anyone, not a college, not a job, not a boy, no one, like who would want that? That is what I felt like, it was life shattering and I remember being so scared that no one would want me again. You really

don't know, nobody does, but then you wake up one day and realize that what's done is done and you're still here and every day is a new day and it will get better.

Did you have friends before the experience of cell phone cyberbullying?

Yes

Did you have friends after?

Yes, it was amazing how much my friends new something was wrong but didn't know what, they still don't and can't know, but they knew it was major bad shit with him 'cause they knew from Facebook that we broke up and I told them anyway but, they knew that when he was done and we broke up that something bad must've happened 'cause I was just a mess but they were there for me even though I shut a lot of them out for a long time when I was with him.

Did your experience affect any peer or familial relationships?

Yes, both, like I said, he manipulated me in so many ways.

If so, with whom?

My friends, my family, everyone, I had to be attached to that phone or else. . . .

How did this experience impact you personally?

God, where do I start? I think, wait, I know this will never happen to me again, I'll never let a guy do this to me again. I just don't know, you know, I don't know how I'll trust, I mean, I'm not paranoid or anything, but like, you know, I'm not a fool anymore either and I'm just not going to do something for someone 'cause it makes them happy and I'm not just going to put up with the attitude again either. It was all about him, you know, all the freaking time, his mood, you know, like if he was in a bad mood just to be in a bad mood, well then I was going to pay for it, like I was his punching bag and I think he liked it and I put up with it even though he

supposedly loved me and whatever, he did bad things to me and made me feel like crap and that will never happen again ever ever ever again never.

How did this experience impact you socially?

Well, I think I'm not going to get into a long distance relationship again and I'm not going to rely on texting a guy as much as I did with him. You just can't text and that's it, you know, there is too much lost in mixed messages on text and that's how stuff gets going and texting is like adding fuel to the fire and once it goes, it goes and you can't stop it so I think I try to talk to people as much as I can, you know, face to face now.

Did you ever fear physical or emotional harm at school as a result of implicit information sent to your cell phone?

Well, never physical, but emotional, yes.

Do you believe the teachers involved in your experience were aware that cell phone cyberbullying had an impact within their classroom?

No

Why or why not?

Well, they just don't get it, I don't know, do they even know this stuff happens? I don't think so.

If you believe that teachers were aware of the phenomenon, do you believe they sufficiently addressed it?

No

Did you feel there was any support for victims and observers or corrective action and education for the bully?

Well, I was forced to go to counseling with my mom and he got arrested so there.

Do you believe that school leaders understand cell phone cyberbullying?

Can they do anything about it?

No, not at all, not like this.

Did your experience with cell phone cyberbullying impact the way you feel about school? Please expand and elaborate beyond yes or no.

Well, my experience happened with a kid who didn't go to my school and anything related to school was secondary in my opinion. This was about me and my life and saving it. I don't know how that girl made it through this whole thing but here she is and she is doing all right, but it wasn't easy you know.

Is there anything else that you would like to share or discuss with me about this phenomenon?

No, I just think kids need to know that this kind of thing can happen and I never thought it would like happen to me and stuff, I mean, this doesn't happen to girls like me but it did and it can and it will. Parents are, well at least mine were blind to it and I'm like if your kid is looking at a freaking screen twenty four hours a day there is a problem you know, it's like, like it's not their fault and I'm not blaming them but I just wish they knew or I knew or whatever, it's in the past but I wish, I mean I don't think it had to happen or could've been avoided or whatever, whatever. . . .

Are there any relevant or important points of interest and understanding that you feel need to be clarified or elaborated?

Umm no, I'm good.

Orlando Individual Interview

Before we begin, I would like to start by referring you to the copy of the definition of cell phone cyberbullying that I have provided to you for the purposes of this study. I will now read it aloud; For the purpose of this study, cell phone cyberbullying will be defined as actions that use mobile phone technologies with or without internet service to support the deliberate, repeated and hostile behavior by an individual or group that is intended to harm another or others. This behavior can be achieved through one or more of the following, which includes, but is not limited to intimidation, control, manipulation, humiliation, falsely discrediting, putting down or embarrassing another or others (Belsey, 2005; Cell Phone Safety, 2013; Creswell, 2007, p. 103).

Do you understand the definition of cell phone cyberbullying for the purposes of this study?

Yes

Do you feel comfortable speaking with me today about your lived experience within the phenomenon of cell phone cyberbullying?

Yes

Can you tell me, as much as you are comfortable sharing with me right now, what have you experienced in terms of cell phone cyberbullying?

So when I was in middle school I had a speech impediment, and ahh . . . I really had a rough time in school with that issue and ahh . . . it translated to outside of school via the texts on the phone, via Facebook, you know 'cause you can get that on your phone and on my computer at home a little, but not much and I, ahh . . . I had jokes made about my delay in speech and kinda like making fun of that, but that wasn't the end, it was just the beginning you know. Umm, it was an issue and it was addressed, the principal was notified and kids were reprimanded, but

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for a few months I kinda kept it to myself and eventually I kinda told my parents after they saw

some things on my text messages and on my Facebook, so it was happening both on my phone

and on my computer, yeah they were checking both, you know, they saw that kids were giving

me a hard time you know.

What contexts or situations have typically influenced or affected your experiences when

you were cyberbullied via your cell phone?

Umm, it's kinda like one of those things where you are away from school, you're at

home, weekend or week night and there would be an exchange of text messages from kids that

obviously didn't like me and to be honest I didn't like back and I kinda just took it, you know,

for a little bit . . . when it was through my phone, but when it was in person there was more,

more like real bullying going on, and I would do more to stand up for myself when it was in

person, but I would, I would get some of these, these you know text messages and I would

ignore them . . . by, umm, just like trying to brush them off, but it got to a breaking point you

know, like after several weeks. . . .

To your knowledge, did any of the following people ever know at any time about your

involvement in cell phone cyberbullying?

Parent or Guardian Yes

Other family member Yes, cousins, aunts and uncles, so it was quite a few people.

If yes, please specify, i.e., grandparent, aunt/uncle, sibling, cousin

Friend

Yes, because when it happened in person it was around me and two of my friends, but we

were all young and they didn't really stand up for me, they kinda, well they laughed at me when

it was happening but they didn't fight for me or anything. . . . I guess they were just protecting themselves, which, whatever, you gotta do what you gotta do I guess.

Clergy member No

School bus driver No

Teacher No

School Counselor Yes

School Social Worker No

School Psychologist No

School Nurse No

School Administrator Yeah, the principal.

If yes, please specify, i.e. dean, assistant principal, principal

Coach No

Club advisor No

Other school staff member

Yeah, I guess the teachers who broke up the fights in the hallway.

If yes, please specify, i.e. librarian, secretary, security guard

Other person(s) not listed above No

Did you tell this person(s)?

I, I, I, I don't know, I know it had the principal's attention, my parents told a school official, they may have gone, I think directly to the principal, I don't know. And then from there, the kids were pulled into a room.

Why or why not?

Ahh, I was just trying to let time pass so it would go away, but . . .

Were you satisfied with their response?

Yeah, I was, at that time the bullying stopped and the principal was very receptive, ahh timely, so I was very happy, but I was honestly just at a point where I was sick of the whole situation.

Did telling them stop the activity?

Ahh . . . Umm, at the time, yes.

When is cell phone cyberbullying occurring via cell phone in your experience?

Ahh, it's hard to pinpoint a specific time, I definitely think either weekends or weeknights just because, for my, in my experience, regular bullying happens when you're a kid, and when you're a kid, you're in school, so when you're in school teachers are really sitting on your cell phone, so it's really hard to bully somebody via text or via phone when you're in class so definitely like weeknights . . . that's when it happens . . . umm, like after school.

Which associated technologies available on cell phones are used to cyberbully via cell phone?

Phone call No

Voice mail No

Text message using short message service

By one person Yes

By two or more people at the same time with the intent to invoke a text war Yes

Text message using multimedia message service

Still photograph No

Video recording No

Voice recording No

Hyperlink to a website with the intent to harass, threaten, intimidate, humiliate or blackmail you No

Combination of any of the above No

Taking a still photograph(s) of you without your consent No

Video recording you with your consent No

Electronic mail No

Internet chat room No

Smartphone application No

Please specify which app is used

Where does the cell phone cyberbullying take place?

Home Yes

Before school No . . . not really.

After school Yes, absolutely, definitely.

After a reasonable bedtime during night hours

Yes, late into the night. That was the worst.

Weekends Ahh, yes, for sure.

School Umm, not as much as after school.

On the bus or while being transported or walking to/from school No

Breakfast or before first bell No

While class is in session No

Between classes No

Lunch No

School-sponsored activities after school hours, i.e., clubs and sports

Umm, sometimes in sports, like at practice.

Other dates, times or locations not listed above. Please specify. No

Did you use your cell phone more than three hours per day?

Ahh, yeah as I recall, whether it be internet surfing, texting, phone calls.

If yes, does this time include use during the regular school day?

That is tough, teachers were really on top of us, especially in class, especially in middle school and that is when my experience was the worst.

If yes, did you ever use your cell phone in class and what experiences came of that?

Like I said, class was tough so I never chanced it, but I wouldn't assume that that doesn't happen, I mean, I know it did, just not with me, it happens to the best of us.

Were you ever intentionally late to class to avoid the person or people involved in your experience?

Ahh, yeah, I played a lot of hooky, I pretended sick just to not go to school to avoid this one kid, and I was definitely, I like did not want to go to school because I was honestly scared of this kid . . . umm for a few weeks.

Approximately how late were you on any given occasion?

I mean, I wasn't missing whole classes, I was you know, take a day here, take a day there . . . ahh, and it ended up being three or four days, but I wasn't sick or anything, I just didn't want to deal with it.

Did you ever intentional miss a class to avoid the person or people involved in your experience?

Never one single class, because especially in middle school we were teamed and so I would just take a day.

Was it a specific class on a regular basis? No

Did you ever intentionally miss an entire day of school or multiple days of school to avoid the person or people involved in your experience?

(This question was skipped in this interview because it was previously answered and addressed by the participant.)

Do you believe your grades or standardized test scores were affected in any way due to your cell phone cyberbullying experience?

No, not drastically.

If yes, please specify.

I was generally an A minus student that, that, during that like, whatever you call it, during that semester, umm I don't really remember what they call it in school anymore (laughing), umm during that few months it was like a B average, so I was still able to keep my eye on the prize.

Did you ever personally experience a negative impact on learning as a result of cell phone cyberbullying?

Yes

If yes, please explain.

I think it did effect my learning experience in school to some degree because I didn't want to go to school, so that does affect your experience, you should want to go to, to school, at least for some of your classes, and I didn't want to . . . umm.

Did you ever experience any psychological or health related complications that you are aware of as a result of your cell phone cyberbullying experience?

Ahh, umm, nothing too serious. . . . can you, do you have an example?

If yes, please explain. For example insomnia, enuresis, headaches, abdominal pain, and other anxiety or depression-related issues.

Umm, yeah, I was definitely anxious for sure and mad, really mad sometimes 'cause at one point it got to be racially charged, which made me not like myself, like I didn't want to be me, or who I am, I wanted to be White, which is, which looking back is, is, is like messed up. So depressed . . . umm, I, you know I, I like never saw a doctor but yeah, how can you not call it depression?

Did you have friends before the experience of cell phone cyberbullying?

I had two really close friends who were there, yeah, they saw what happened, I'd call them friends, but they really didn't stand up for me, and I think that was because the main kid that was doing this was picking out people that were smaller and weaker than him, at least in my case, I was smaller than this guy, so my friends were like afraid to like stand up to him, but at the same time they were supportive of me, umm so I could talk to them about it, and, umm, well it was so long ago now, you know.

Did you have friends after?

Oh yeah, for sure, just different friends.

Did your experience affect any peer or familial relationships?

If so, with whom? No

How did this experience impact you personally?

Well, a lot of the cell phone activity and the texting after school and the bullying that was side by side with it during school was in large part, now that I'm talking about it and thinking about it more, because of my ethnicity and that was tough in the moment, but I think it's something that made me stronger, it helped me later on, I mean it paid dividends later on in life. I

mean I'm happy that it's over, but looking back, it was a learning experience, you know, the long game.

How did this experience impact you socially?

It's tough to remember, but people started making fun of me as a Mexican, when I'm not even a Mexican, I'm Puerto Rican, it somehow started that I'm Mexican or close enough to that, that people just started calling me a Mexican and made the long mower jokes, like mow my lawn, umm what else, umm ah ah ah illegal something, like things associated with being from South America and Central America, um yeah and it was that and it was at times a high anxiety situation and, and, and it was, when someone calls you Mexican, it somehow, someway has a derogatory term, especially if you're not, and a derogatory feeling, even though you might be calling someone something that they might be, it definitely has, like when you call somebody who's Jewish, a Jew, like the people I've talked to it definitely has a derogatory feeling and all you're doing is calling them what their religion is, it's just an abbreviation, but it still has these undertones. . . . And it really messed with me, people called out, "oh you're a Mexican!" and I wasn't even a Mexican and I knew that but it was like people were so young and so stupid that it was like "oh you're Spanish so you're a Mexican".

Did you ever fear physical or emotional harm at school as a result of implicit information sent to your cell phone?

Yeah, I did and that is when I'd get into trouble 'cause I couldn't ignore it like I could the texting. You can do your best with texting, even though that gets to you to, but when someone is in your face you can't ignore that.

Do you believe the teachers involved in your experience were aware that cell phone cyberbullying had an impact within their classroom?

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No

Why or why not?

They were, and I'm sorry, mostly they were there for a paycheck., and my mom was a, a principal, she is a retired principal at a school on 225th Street in Manhattan, so she can eat pseudonym high school teachers for breakfast, and, and umm pseudonym town people too, she dealt with the worst kids in Manhattan and their parents.

If you believe that teachers were aware of the phenomenon, do you believe they sufficiently addressed it?

No

Did you feel there was any support for victims and observers or corrective action and education for the bully?

Umm, not really in my experience, no.

Do you believe that school leaders understand cell phone cyberbullying?

I don't think they understood it when I was in school, but that was at the beginning of this technology madness and now it's like you know, blowing through the roof and kids who are eight or ten years old have a cell phone, and a nice one too! I had like a flip phone with a thousand text messages and in the middle of every month, 'cause some of these kids would bomb my phone with this Mexican shit, my dad would say "shut your phone off, you have no more text messages," so I think now, I hope they are on top of it, 'cause every kid has a cell phone now and we did for the most part, but now everyone is vulnerable to cyberbullying and my cousin tells me they can just do whatever whenever, like you guys have no rules now with cell phones and we did, we had rules, you guys would take them away, and those kids are getting cyberbullied all day. Like for me, I could only get cyberbullied when I got home, but even then the parents were

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strict and monitored access and how much you could text or use in data and now, I, I, I don't think parents or teachers or the principal is on top of it, but they better be, its unlimited. Because now it can happen at any day at any time. As a society we're walking around with Facebook in our pockets and, and um Twitter and all of these outlets, if unchecked, can bully somebody and they do. You know, there . . . it's just tough, it is. It's tough for school leaders.

Can they do anything about it?

They just have to watch the texting and the applications, but texting by far and away, it is not even a close call. That is where it is happening now, back then too, but now, now it's unlimited.

Did your experience with cell phone cyberbullying impact the way you feel about school? Please expand and elaborate beyond yes or no.

Yeah, for sure, I didn't like school, I didn't like middle school, because the only thing I can remember from that time is being bullied about my speech and being called a Mexican. You know looking back at that period when going into high school I tried to you know, blend in with the White community, so I did not try to ahh, flash or show my Hispanic pride, if I had any. You know, I wouldn't be wearing a shirt that had, you know a Puerto Rican flag, whereas now I would! I, I, I don't care! Whereas in high school it was different, I was and I tried to put that behind me, I still associated with being Hispanic, but I was not going to do that in my opinion, so I kinda let time take its course and just you know, eventually like, you know I never really forgave thogh the people who did it, I never became friends with them, but the people that, weren't calling me a Mexican, I tried to make friends and tried to like make as many friends as I could, so I could put that behind me and it would never come back again, and I would have more friends behind me so like during high school I tried to just fit in with the white crowd and I don't

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really do that anymore, ahh, and especially when I went, I went to college in Manhattan, it's, it's the exact opposite of pseudonym high school, whereas the White man isn't supreme, it's actually he's the minority, most of my friends, actually, I take that back, so like when I say White kid, I mean like spoiled Jewish or Italian kids from like a suburb, because I had a lot of friends in or at my college who were from Poland, Russia, dude, so like I guess you call them White, right? But, they're like very humble people, very humble people they're not, they don't come from a lot or they don't show it, but up in pseudonym high school you have a vanilla town and a lot of the white people there are, you know, they, they think they're a certain somebody, I didn't have that at my college, it was a completely, you know that kind of kid didn't go to my college, that kind of kid went to NYU, went to Columbia, went to some private school in Connecticut, they don't come to my college, it's just true and all the friends I've made at my college came from middle-class families and people who are just getting by and some people were poor, but back home it's just, it's a different umm, economic status, and it shows in their children. . . . I just don't like some of the people I was raised with.

Is there anything else that you would like to share or discuss with me about this phenomenon?

Cell phones just came out, I mean, like were getting popular when I was dealing with this. I started playing baseball, started making more friends, I would say in middle school I didn't have a lot of friends, maybe enough to count on one hand or two, but that was it, it wasn't, there was a point in time, like I would say seventh or eighth grade that where the texting was really bad and it started to flow into school from recreational weekend and week night shit, and I didn't have a lot of friends. Umm, but in high school, by my mom helping out and by letting time run its course and just making friends where I could, I just, put it in my rear view… Umm, and

people just grew up. People from tenth grade up just grew up and you know and I was on three different teams and became good friends with everyone on the team so it defiantly got better and then by senior year, yeah, I had a good group of friends. It's crazy how time flies, you blink and you're twenty-two. But high school for me was trying to be who I wasn't, I was trying to be like this typical white guy, or ahh, at least Caucasian living in Westchester (County New York) and I'm not, I'm Hispanic, I'm Puerto Rican, that's who I am and I ran from that, and ahh, I, I have a regret about that, I don't live like that anymore, ahh, I'm, I'm proud of who I am.

Are there any relevant or important points of interest and understanding that you feel need to be clarified or elaborated?

There was always that kid who called me a Mexican, I'll remember, that's how it all started, so while I had friends, we hung out, we had a good time, we did things, went to Mets games or whatever, there was always some kid calling me a Mexican and that was just there lingering and it was just annoying, just like anytime, you know like, like I would, I would be playing umm you know basketball with a group of friends, this is coming back to me actually now, now that I think about it, umm and I would foul somebody hard, I would hit 'em by accident and they'd yell "what are your doing you fucking Mexican!?!", like those kind of things happened, or we were playing Halo on XBox, and um, we would be, it was like a team and whereas we would have TV's, computers, cell phones, whatever going on at the same time and we would talk during the game and they would be like "Kill the fucking Mexican." You know, that was the worst, from what I remember nobody called me a spic, it was just a Mexican, like mow my lawn, umm, yeah and just like, I'm not Mexican, and I knew that at the time and I told them that but it's just like you're talking to a, and I was the same age so you're talking to a, an eighth grader, but to them, it's all the same, Puerto Rican, Mexican, Spanish, you're lower than

us. You know, I'm here and you're below me. That was like the mentality, and, and, and I don't like that and it kind of empowered me to be a part of rich towns in the country (upstate New York), it's not just that high school, it's just something that people who have it pretty good, have a tendency to take advantage of the minorities.

APPENDIX C: FOCUS GROUP TRANSCRIPTS

FOCUS GROUP 1

Does everyone in the focus group feel comfortable speaking with me today and interacting as a group with regard to your personal lived experience within the phenomenon of cell phone cyberbullying?

Zoe – Yes

Charles – Yes

Orlando - Yes

Have you ever been physically bullied?

Zoe – Like in person? Ahh, maybe, well . . . I guess yes if you're talking about peer on peer harassment, like things being said about me behind my back, and like breaking relationships, you know?

Charles – Nothing with physical bullying, but everything else was mentioned during the last interview.

Orlando – Yes, but it was a very different experience because I was smaller at the time and because I was Hispanic and there was racial connotations going on there, but there were a few kids in my grade in seventh grade who were picking on me and they were bigger guys. There were jokes made about my size and about my speech at the time and being Spanish and it went on for a few months until my mom got involved. My mom went right to work on it, she brought the principal in, I was brought in, my mom was no joke . . . the kids were brought in, witnesses, and we found a solution to the problem at that time. The bullies were reprimanded, they got in trouble, they got detention and all that stuff, but umm, it definitely took a while to recover from. I look at pictures of myself from that time in my life and I just looked sad inside.

Have you ever been cyberbullied through traditional means, i.e., by computer?

Zoe – Umm, I guess, indirectly, like when I said, when I had my first interview with you I said like, indirectly, like not directed like at me with like a name, but like maybe something was said at me with a name, but it was implied that it was about me, so…

Charles – It's kind of hard not to. Facebook makes it so easy. Especially when someone doesn't want you to be their friend or friends with their friends, you can lose a lot.

Orlando – Umm, yeah, Facebook has definitely created problems for me and yeah, if you count video games through the internet, like when you play on teams, there is always trash talk and it can get serious and spill over into real life conversation. Like for me it was the video game Halo online.

Zoe – How could I forget about Facebook? Ugh, yeah, me too. . . .

How does cell phone cyberbullying compare to traditional bullying or cyberbullying via computer?

Charles – Umm, through the cell phone it's easier to happen because as cell phones become more popular they're like more portable, so it's easier to bully more people at the same time.

Zoe – Umm, I would say yeah, because phones now are pretty much computers. They have all the same applications that I would be using on my computer so yeah I guess I would say you can do the same stuff with your phone and it probably would be easier to have, I mean I don't have my computer with me all the time, you know it's a pain in the neck… plus I have to open it and turn it on but your phone's always on.

Orlando – Well, I think that with . . . when you have the cyberbullying verses cyberbullying with the cell phone, you can be harassed at any time of day and your phone is

always on you. I mean there's this urge to always check your Facebook, your Twitter, your Instagram and you don't know what you're walking into and with a cell phone it's always right there, you're going to read it almost as fast as it is posted no matter where you are. I mean really, has anyone ever thought of how many people can be affected by this non-stop barrage of social media? I mean, if you go through a few weeks of, like you break up with a girl and then you just want to be away and keep your distance and move on, but she's posting this, these updates and like, that is the same thing. She's having a great time posting pics with other guys and you're crushed and alone. Like five or six years ago, well maybe like ten years, you just had your computer at home. So if you were being cyberbullied, it would happen when you decided to go home and check your computer, 'cause it wasn't going to happen at school, unless it was a person, and it wasn't going to happen to you if you were on the road with your mom. It used to be more of an effort and also your internet, like if you were online, using dial-up service, no one could get a phone call and my mom needed the phone, so that type of bullying, it was tough, if someone wanted to bully me behind a veil, they didn't have many opportunities, today it's endless. Kids today, they would rather be on the phone than on the computer. You don't need the computer. It's easier to be on the phone, you can get everything on the phone, so it's just right there. If you get a Twitter message or a Facebook message or whatever, it comes in as a text to your phone and you're alerted instantly just like a text, so you check it.

Did you know the bully(s) before your experience?

Zoe - Yes

Charles - Yes

Orlando - Yes

If yes, in what context?

Zoe – Well for me it was always friends or people who I thought were friends, like, but maybe not looking back you know, like I guess you're in such a socially awkward like time in your life where every relationship is so fragile and like so important to you and probably at that time you think everyone is your friend just like because they just talk to you and stuff and the reality is that they're not. . . . Like they're not your friend and you think they are and you're so emotionally attached to being like popular and it's really a numbers game, like how many friends can I stack up in my corner, you know. I think it just hurts a lot when you're younger, like now I could care less if somebody backstabs me or spreads drama on Facebook. But I guess now, like I'm much more capable of handling it . . . whatever it is. Back then, your social status can be flipped upside-down in a matter of days by the right person spreading the wrong rumors.

Charles – Yeah, I was in the same situation where I thought they were my friends. I guess I trusted people too much back then. That's what my mom tells me. It's hard when people control you and you can't do anything. You just hope for the best.

Orlando – Yeah, I had multiple situations so let's see. . . . I, I, I pretty much knew everyone, except when I would get a bunch of text messages at the same time. . . . I kind of knew the group who was doing it at the time and I knew some of the individuals obviously 'cause of what they would say on the text or by the name on my phone, but yeah . . . like I said last time, a lot, and no offense to anyone here, a lot of them were spoiled rich White kids.

In your experience, what does cell phone cyberbullying mean?

Zoe – Umm, I would say anything done, like anything done on the internet, but I think a lot of it is just like an attitude to. Like, just like, like sexual harassment is considered an attitude, I think cyberbullying is an attitude. Like it doesn't necessarily have to be directed at you, but if it's like a tone or something, umm I think that can be construed as cyberbullying. Really

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anything done on an electronic device where you feel anxious or threatened in anyway like, that is cyberbullying to me, it is what it is and if I feel threatened then maybe you, like the person doing it you know, they should be cautious of that.

Charles – Umm, I was really thinking the same thing. But she said the internet, but not just the internet because like cell phones just make it easier with texting, 'cause she said anything with technology and I agree with that because they're too afraid to do it in person.

Orlando – It's bullying using a cellular device. It means phone to phone through any application available on the phone at that time and it, it means, well, you, if you have a phone, you better be ready for anything, 'cause people don't care as much when they can hide behind a phone, they're gonna be mean, I mean real mean to you, you know what I'm saying?

Zoe – Yeah, I would agree with that, I would say the same.

Does it impact school attendance?

Zoe – Not me per se, but maybe other people that I've known.

Charles – Umm, a little different than her, not me but I know others who have done that.

Orlando – Definitely, I would cut class and school entirely for a while.

Period by period?

Zoe – Not in my experience

Charles – Me neither

Orlando - Yes

Day to day?

Zoe – Not in my experience

Charles – Nope, me neither

Orlando – (Laughing) Yes, of course!

Over many weeks, months or even years?

Zoe – No, not in my experience

Charles – No

Orlando - No

Why does cell phone cyberbullying impact or not impact school attendance?

Zoe – I think it like just depends on like the person. I mean like if you are strong and can handle it, then like you can blow it off. Like, some people can't do that though. I know like people that really let it like get to them and like let it build up and they get crushed. When they get to a point where like, they don't know what to do next, like they're just going to shut down. You know, like school is essentially where all of, you know like your social life is. If you're an outcast, what else, like where else do you go. I think phones are like a multiplier, meaning like, rumors move fast, they move faster on like online, but like when the internet is in your back pocket, like, you can't . . . you can't stop it or do anything. You are at the mercy of those around you. . . . So . . .

Charles – It was never a thought for me to skip school. I think you have to be more than a little depressed or mad not to come to school.

Orlando – I guess for me I was just anxious and self-conscious. I didn't like who I was, you know, ethnically. I just tried to surround myself with as many people as possible and play sports and blend in, but sometimes you can't avoid it, so you just do what you gotta do.

Did your experience with cell phone cyberbullying impact learning?

Zoe – Yeah, well you know obviously your mind is elsewhere so your gonna sit there and like daydream about what is going on, on your phone, especially like in high school where you're not allowed to have your phone out, you know, there is this continuous texting argument

going back and forth and if I don't answer in a certain amount of time then that sends a whole new message, like an unintended message that can really like escalate the situation. Honestly, my phone in general just like makes me anxious, like just knowing that it's there and I can't look at it, that makes it so I can't focus.

Charles – Yes, I mean like that example that was given before with the older student which I hate and the incident with the fraud, it wasn't always when I was in class, but it affected me not only when I would do tests, every time I would do homework, every time I would try to do something, I would always get a call or an email from my mom about the charges on the card or I would think about what people were saying about me, about me being stupid and I would get mad.

Orlando – I mean my grades dipped a little bit and maybe that's when, that's when my mom noticed and maybe that's when we went to the principal or whatever, but I, I mean, I don't think it ever got really bad, like I don't remember failing.

What grade were you in when you experienced cell phone cyberbullying?

Zoe – Most of my experience was in seventh, eighth and ninth grade. I mean, I was like the new girl.

Charles - I was in ninth grade.

Orlando – My experience was mostly in eighth and ninth grade.

Why do kids cyberbully using cell phones?

Orlando – It's easy . . . it is too easy. It is right there in your pocket or book bag at all times and you don't have to logon to a computer . . . and you know the other kid is packing the same way, so I, I, I mean no offense, but that is like asking why my father reads a newspaper and I open up an app on my phone. . . . It's just easier.

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Charles – Maybe because they don't like the way they were raised so they think they can get back at others. Like, depending on how they were raised, like the person with the fraud, she never talked about her family and I love my family, so maybe she thought it was ok to do what she did because she wasn't raised properly.

Zoe – Yeah, I mean like it is just easier and that is definitely a factor. But . . . just bullies in general have like self-esteem issues and just like and they need to put other people down to make themselves feel better so just like yeah, whatever is going on in their home or in their life is not going the way that they want and umm, hurting someone in a way where you can't see their face and how it's affecting them, 'cause you're on a phone and it's easy access, it's an easy way to make somebody feel, like a bully feel better about themselves. So yeah, it's like a learned behavior maybe, but it's also like what's going on in the home, like that would never be acceptable in my house to like bully someone else 'cause like my parents taught me like what that feels like, you know what I mean? To like hurt somebody? I agree, it's all about what's going on in your home and how you're taught to behave in a social situation, but I also grew up, where like kids now, like are born with like a phone in their hands, whereas I didn't have a phone when I was real young and we didn't have Facebook, so like kids are being born into this and being put on Facebook by a younger age than I ever was I think now it might be like the nature of these kids and the nurture.

Based on your personal experience, what types of events can cause cell phone cyberbullying to start?

Zoe – Hmmm, There is no reason. Like, kids have always been kids. They're like mean to each other. Cyberbullying is just like another way to be mean and a cell phone just makes things like easier, you know, like to accomplish your goal of like ruining someone's life.

Orlando – I agree with Zoe, there is no reason. It just . . . it just happens . . . and if it happens to come in your direction . . . well, buckle up! Mine came out of nowhere.

Charles – I think you have to be smart and think about what you're saying and who you're saying it to. Things can get turned around on you if you're not careful about what you say and what you do on your phone.

What dimensions, incidents and people intimately connected with the experience stand out for you?

Zoe – For me it was mostly like middle school girls and because I was like the new girl, I didn't like fit in, especially because girls here have sooooo much money, it's like disgusting sometimes. I think for me it was a time when I was like socially vulnerable and not you know, like not very confident because I was like trying so hard like to fit in into a new school and everything. In high school, it was like fitting in, but different because boys were involved to, like I was just beginning to explore what boys meant to me and what to say like and how to say it and it wasn't easy to figure out that some things can mean something they really don't. So . . .

Charles – Really it was the girl I hate because she said things about me that were not true and I thought we were friends. I thought because we ran together at practice that she liked me and I could trust her but that is when I learned to be careful on texting. Also the person with the fraud. I used to be embarrassed about it, but now I think it is important to let kids know not to give out their debit card to people they barely know.

Orlando – I was thinking about our conversation on Skype and I think I'm partially to blame for it actually . . . so what happened was there was this Cinco de Mayo . . . ahh, I don't know probably like seven years ago, eight years ago and . . . on that day I decided to . . . something happened that I became prideful on that day . . . and I was like, it was almost like I

was a Mexican and I felt happy like part of a group and everybody was celebrating the day and I was like saying happy Cinco de Mayo and it was me and everybody in my class . . . and after that Cinco de Mayo where I was all like prideful saying like happy Cinco de Mayo, I think people started saying and thinking I was a Mexican and it just turned three-sixty on me, like mow my lawn, but it started as we were all celebrating the day or something and then from there it just went the other direction. Yeah . . . that's what started it. In the halls, on line, the mass text messages, the comments, everything!

What are the primary thoughts or feelings that emerge from this experience?

Charles – I really felt stupid for texting the fraud my debit card number. She lied to me. All I can say about the other person is I hate her for what she did to me.

Zoe – I think it like was a learning lesson, like a life lesson, like superficial people don't have anything, like I mean a way to meet their needs other than like making other people around them, like you know, feel crappy about themselves. I mean really if I had to like pinpoint it, I'd say there was definitely anxiety at some point about how to handle things, but like, it again like depends on like who you are.

Orlando – Well they, they called me the Mexican. Yeah, so I had that nick name as the Mexican kid and I remember it being a bad time, being afraid to see certain people because of what they might say to me. You know, umm I, I, I didn't really, I felt, I don't know like I felt I was . . . on an island, just completely isolated from everybody else. Umm, and I just felt slighted . . . like I was being wronged . . . and I lived with it for so long and I wish I didn't let people call me a Mexican because I'm not and I knew that and it, it, it hurt, a lot! But how do you explain that to middle and high school kids? There is no rational, there is no, umm you know moral compass. There is just none of that.

How did your experience affect you in high school?

Orlando – I mainly just tried to avoid situations from escalating and just kind of like, take it and let time take its course.

Charles – I ended up changing schools freshman year. It ruined me at my other school. It seemed that everything and everyone turned against me. The coach, my teammates, everyone. Plus my mom was getting upset every time a new charge showed up on my debit card.

Zoe – I didn't have an experience like that, but like I definitely had issues in high school, most of it was because boys were new to me and cell phone lingo was new to everyone, I think… Like anyway, there was just a certain way to like talk and respond and things like happened late at night and you're like trying to focus on school but at the same time you're trying to like figure out your personal and social like identity. So I think that honestly I came out on the other side of like high school ok, but not without some emotional nicks and bruises.

Does your experience in high school continue to affect you today? Please expand and elaborate beyond yes or no.

Zoe – I would say no . . . because like I think I have a good head on my shoulders and I don't really care what people think about me and I surround myself with people who care about me, so I'm not going to let past experiences like bother me, if anything, maybe it made me a stronger person, so . . .

Charles – I wouldn't say the same as Zoe, but for me, it's about how much time passes, as time passes, like I can't give a specific time as to how much time I need to get over a certain thing, but like, I guess it depends on what happens and how much time. Like it got so much better after a long time passed, so today, it doesn't affect me, but I do think about it and I think I have to learn from it. That's what my mom says.

Orlando – Definitely, I'm more prideful today about who I am as a Puerto Rican and I'm comfortable with that and if someone has an issue with that than that's on them you know. Like Charles said though, it was a matter of time passing back then and I guess just listening to myself and thinking about this maybe I still have issues about it.

Zoe – Yeah, I would agree with that. Like my brother was physically bullied, whereas I've only experienced cyberbullying, so like I think the blunt force trauma of physical bullying affected my brother way more than it affected me, just like people, the way he acts around people and stuff.

What coping mechanisms or strategies are used to deal with this trauma or manage this experience?

Zoe – I would say that, I think parents need to be way more involved for one thing and I believe that kids should not have phones and be on Facebook and Instagram and all of these other things at such a young age you know like because I never had them. I think that introducing them to kids and putting a child on the internet under the age of eighteen is like, you're opening them up to scrutiny, and not only to people who are their friends, like anybody can find you on the internet, umm I think the first step would be to have the parents involved and the parents monitoring what's going on on Facebook 'cause you can get in trouble on your phone, you can be taking pictures and sending them to people and things can get misconstrued, so I think that yeah, like number one, parents need to be involved and umm, like building a, umm, like a safe environment for kids to like be around and teaching them that you don't need to like have a phone to be cool or like be like connected to people. You know, meet up with people in person. I really think it's like a social like, like, like ahhh, I don't know, I'm not finding the right words, but like ahhh, like a change in like the way society interacts with one another, which

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like I don't really know if that can change because things have moved in such a way that's like toward technology, but umm, like I guess coping with it and just like really understanding that like words don't mean anything, I don't know, it's just like you have to find the strength within yourself to like realize these people don't like care about you like, enough to say nice things and what they say about you doesn't matter, it's like more about the way you feel about yourself. But like that's hard to teach, so I don't really, I don't know, I guess it's like a firm family, I don't know, just like the family really has to, just has to really be involved and I feel like the family structure has moved away from the kids and the kids are more independent and don't really, the parents are less involved in their lives and I think that like up to the age where they're eighteen or moving away to college that the parents should be in a child's life and really guiding them and the people that like, the kids that don't have that guidance really get themselves in trouble and they can't reach out to their parents for help, whereas if you lived in a safe household, you should feel that you can go to your parents, so like I know I can go to my parents for help and vent to them when I'm in trouble, and they understand what I'm going through, but like kids who don't have that obviously are going to get into trouble and go to other people for their problems and then their problems get advertised on the internet, like you don't really want that! So…

Charles – Umm, I agree with everything with her and normally my first thoughts were that if someone did something to me I would get back at them but depending who it is, I would say possibly telling someone you're close with who you know would be against anything physical or who tells you good advice can maybe help you talk to the other person so they get the message not to hurt you like that again.

Orlando – It's tough, because especially when you're young, sometimes you just don't know what to do . . . you don't know to go to your parents, you're just keep . . . you take it . . .

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umm, and you just, I guess you have to be . . . you know, self-aware enough to kind of like talk to the people around you, but sometimes you just take it and hold it and there's just going to be a ticking time bomb and it will, will explode. So . . . you know, you either go to friends, if you have any and try to stick with them if you're being cyberbullied . . . and you know, power in numbers, umm . . . so you know, if you can maintain a strong social presence through friends, then you're less likely to get bullied. It's like, if that doesn't work, then you just have to go to your parents and tell them the situation. . . . I mean that is why they're your parents, they're going to help you out.

Zoe – I agree, I agree, yeah it just goes back to what I was saying with the kids, like I was not allowed to hang out with my friends in town like alone and like I didn't have a phone until late in middle school and I was upset by that, but looking back I really like thank my parents for not introducing me to those things, like not allowing me to be on Facebook at such a young age and I feel like I'm a totally different person and I like relied more on my parents for guidance rather than like surfing the internet on my phone or gluing my face to a screen to lie see what everyone else was doing.

Charles – I'm just thinking when Zoe said people shouldn't be exposed to cell phones and stuff at such a young age because . . . well like if she was, how would it have been different for her?

Zoe – I think I would have got into some trouble, I really think I would have got into some trouble because like, like you can't, your parents can't see what's really going on on your phone. Like your phone is pretty much like . . . you can do whatever you want on it. You know, it's pretty much like a mini-computer. Like, knowing what I know now and how personality made me, like the stages when you're growing up and going through puberty or whatever and

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you like boys and whatever, I feel like I could have got into some really bad trouble. Not like intentionally, but just like you have this thing that . . . ohh, your parents can't see . . . and it's like I can do anything I want on it, and I think, yeah, I think I wouldn't have been as focused and I would have been focused on other things instead of school and making friends that were good for me. So like looking back, I was like upset that I didn't have a cell phone, but now I'm like, I wouldn't go back, I guess the reason I was able to do so well in school and in relationships in general was because I didn't have a phone or unrestricted access to the internet and my social decisions were my own like decisions based on like the values my family taught me, not what some, like, ahh internet website or social network taught me. 'cause like now when you see this constant threat on Facebook or Instagram, both available on phones now, like you see the clothes that people are wearing and all of this other stuff, it makes you feel like you're left out or less popular or whatever and like young girls don't need to see that. They need to focus on who you are as a person rather than molding yourself to what other people are doing. So . . .

Charles - Yeah, I wouldn't say just a cell phone, because I got my first cell phone in seventh grade and most of my friends in school had Facebook on their phones too, and under the age considered eighteen, so I'm thinking because that they're almost seventeen that they would be allowed to have Facebook, but I avoided it until I was eighteen. I feel like I put more restrictions on myself than what my parents put on me.

Zoe – Yeah, you can lie about your age really well, like most people who were in like my year of high school, it says that they're like twenty-four right now and I'm like ok . . . you were really young went you went on Facebook, but it's just like, I don't know, especially like the place where I grew up in, people just seemed to have money coming out of their eyeballs and it just didn't seem to make sense where all of this money is coming from and you see these girls

who don't wear the same thing every day, like don't repeat an outfit, like you only see them during the day and then you see them like on Facebook, like on your phone and it's like, you can never leave it and because your phone is in your back pocket it's always, like really, it's always on top of you. Like based on the way I dressed when I was younger and looking at my younger cousin, she's in like ninth grade now, but when I was in middle school I did not, like she definitely dresses more provocatively than I ever did or do now. So like it's just interesting, like the change, it's not just like the parents, it's like what's going on online and like the advertisements and all this other stuff and what girls are supposed to look like, it's almost like the media is kinda like cyberbullying you, they track your "likes" and "pins" and send to your phone what they want to mould you into. So it's not just people bullying each other, it's the companies and the advertisements on your phone on top of you. So…

Focus Group 2

Does everyone in the focus group feel comfortable speaking with me today and interacting as a group with regard to your personal lived experience within the phenomenon of cell phone cyberbullying?

Katie – Yes

Annette - Yes

Have you ever been physically bullied?

Annette – Does my sister count? Then yes . . .

Katie – No, I've never been physically bullied.

Have you ever been cyberbullied through traditional means, i.e., by computer?

Annette – Yes, we spoke last time about my experience with my ex-boyfriend. He took . . . cell phone pictures of me during a Skype session and, and threatened to use them against me. I guess I don't know if that counts, but, but I was Skyping on a laptop before he started texting me about the pictures.

Katie – Yeah, Well . . . Umm . . . There was an issue in high school, where I was friends with this guy . . . only friends . . . and . . . his girlfriend was a very, very, very, very jealous individual . . . and you know, she was threatening me . . . and she was, you know pretty much doing all of the stuff that you can possibly do to someone online without getting physical . . . the rumors, calling me a whore . . . a, a, a slut . . . turning some of my friends against me saying I was stealing her boyfriend and being all paranoid. Soooo it ended with the cops being called… with the cops being called on this girl, because she was threatening to come to my house and basically beat the crap out of me, so . . . it's just one of those things where obviously, it's not bullying in the traditional sense, but she took it almost . . . basically to that point in order to get a

message across, but like hi . . . I was friends with your boyfriend before you even knew who he was so, a yeah.

How does cell phone cyberbullying compare to traditional bullying or cyberbullying via computer?

Katie – Umm, I think that like traditional bullying via computer can obviously be as hurtful, but it . . . before cell phone technology it was in that one location where with cell phone technology and bullying, umm . . . the bullying can now reach anybody at any time, umm so there is really no safe place I guess. Umm, my personal experience with cyberbullying with cell phone technology in my own experience is was again that, umm that bullying that did happen at umm home, it happened at school, it happened, umm really anywhere where your phone is accessible so it's really any place at any time.

Annette – Yeah, exactly, I agree. . . .

Did you know the bully(s) before your experience?

Katie – Yes

Annette - Yeah

If yes, in what context?

Annette – Well, in senior year it was my boyfriend. Freshman year, I just remembered, I was actually pretty good friends with this person and thought that everything was completely ok and then she just got really weird.

Katie – Yeah in the instance of being cyberbullied, I was good friends with the person I was being cyberbullied by before it happened.

In your experience, what does cell phone cyberbullying mean?

Annette – Pretty much anything that is meant to provoke or insult someone or pretty much hurt them in any way through internet technology using your cell phone or whatever you would use on your computer or tablet or whatever it is because your cell phone is your computer now. It is really easy to be a bully anytime anywhere now. . . .

Katie – I think you just feel destroyed, humiliated, umm or umm ah provided with some sort of fear based on umm comments, whether a single time or continuous, umm threat or attack made through cell phone technology.

Does it impact school attendance?

Katie – Yeah, absolutely.

Annette – Most definitely, yeah.

Period by period?

Katie – Oh, yeah. . . .

Annette – I mean, I lost a lot of sleep. Like sleepless or late nights. Also, you can always start school in this amazing mood and then get a text message from someone and then be like ok. . . . I can't do this today. . . . I know I've done that, and I've snuck out the back, I told you! (Laughing)

Day to day?

Katie – I think that now it's like, that can happen, umm in the situation that I was explaining to you, I think that, uhh, just a few years ago it was a little bit different, umm, because the cell phone technology although was still there and the threats were obviously umm, comments were hurtful, that now, I, I, I see it happen, I feel like every day where I'll notice like a mood change or somebody skipping school and it will be the result of some form of cell phone cyberbullying.

Annette – Umm, for me at least, I was pretty consistent, if I had a bad night of sleep or a fight with my ex-boyfriend, it would mostly be the morning, because I think, you know it depends aside from all of that on the self-esteem of the person and their self-worth. Do I think it can affect people, yes it can, but again, I think it depends on the self-esteem of the person, because if the person can walk away being the bigger person than, you just have to be positive and it helps if your family has your back.

Over many weeks, months or even years?

Annette – Yeah, I think in my situation, no . . . however, I think that obviously that cyberbullying and Snapchat and yada yada yada, if it goes as far as a girl sending a picture to another person then yeah I do think that someone could miss weeks of school if certain material was to get out as a form of cyberbullying.

Katie – Umm, I've, I've seen instances of it happening because this said person has sooo many issues going on already, so I think sometimes it just adds on to the situation that is already at hand and it can cause that. But if someone is perfectly ok . . . with no issues, at least to their personal knowledge, then you know it might not happen. In some instances it does and some it doesn't, I think it just depends on the level of their own sanity and the level of, level of said bullying that is being reached by the other person.

Why does cell phone cyberbullying impact or not impact school attendance?

Katie – Umm, I think it's because just like ahh . . .any other illness, and umm, you can't prepare for it and it just happens and when it does, umm you're just blahh.

Annette – Exactly, it can be your day, your week or whatever. You don't know when or where or who. (Laughing) I'm not sure we're that much different than you were in high school

Heltzel. It's just things move faster here and it's easier to get a point across to a larger audience and maybe that is where it hurts so much?

Katie – Oh my god! So true!

Did your experience with cell phone cyberbullying impact learning?

Annette – Yeah, definitely.

Katie – Umm, I don't think that, umm it was so extensive as a result, but I do think that there was some impact . . . yeah.

What grade were you in when you experienced cell phone cyberbullying?

Katie – Ahh, yeah, eleventh.

Annette – Freshman year for me and then senior year with my ex-boyfriend.

Why do kids cyberbully using cell phones?

Katie – Yeah, they never get off their freakin cell phones! You know, the obvious, (laughing) I mean. . . .

Annette – There are a lot of people now who are not as stupid to bully you over a cellular device because, phones, well, cell phones can be tracked, phone numbers can be reached and like, stuff like that can easily be found out, but as far as computers go, it is much more complicated to find them, like an IP address on a computer . . . so obviously people will use their "go to" phones for the simple fact that it's easy and it's right there, but if you have someone who's slightly more intelligent than your typical idiotic teenager, then they're obviously not going to use a cell phone.

Katie – Umm, I sort of think like almost the exact opposite I guess, umm, I feel like a lot of the technology on umm, cell phones, especially things like Snapchat and there's this new app

out that like fourteen year olds are using and it really scared me when I learned about it, where they can type in their zip code and meet up for sex or something. . . .

    Annette – Hot or Not, Hot or Not! That is it!

    Katie – Yeah, that's it!

    Annette – Hot or Not . . . ewww . . .

    Katie – It's like you give your zip code and that's where they meet and you can remain nameless. . . . I don't know, it really freaked me out, so I think that with all of those new technologies, kids aren't thinking about that much if things can be traced, and they're on their phones nonstop basically regardless of whether they should be or not, soo. . . . I, I think that especially with this faceless harassment and even without it, they're texting each other all day long because that's what they want to be doing and the more they're not supposed to be doing it, the more they're harassing each other during the day doing it, umm you know they can't pull out a computer and if there is no wi-fi available in school, and many schools have lost the wi-fi and some haven't, but they're not going to pull out their laptop or whatever, they're going to pull out their cell phone and it's going on all day long so a kid that is being harassed or bullied it's just non-stop regardless and the second you tell, you become a tattle tale and then the whole cycle continues so I definitely think it's becoming a bigger and bigger problem with cell phones especially and I think it's getting absolutely worse.

    Based on your personal experience, what types of events can cause cell phone cyberbullying to start?

    Katie – Well, I think anything. . . .

    Annette – Yeah, definitely!

Katie – I think that if somebody wants to bully you, if it's in them, if umm, you know obviously we talked about me being the victim of bullying, but we then don't talk about the deeper problems of the actual bully. . . . I think they're so messed up in their own world that really anything can cause someone to, to bully, really anything can really spark them or provoke them.

Annette – My input in probably any of that is pretty much that I agree that, that absolutely anything can cause cell phone cyberbullying, but when it comes down to certain people . . . people who were bullied their entire lives that were for example being different or something, some of them are going to bully other people that conform to the norm and then other people are going to do it vice versa. But, regardless of absolutely anything, there doesn't need to be a reason to bully, people are going to do it anyway.

Katie – Yep!

What dimensions, incidents and people intimately connected with the experience stand out for you?

Katie – Umm, I think that there were a lot of friends connected to it, umm, ahh, yeah, I mean I was hospitalized and I'll never forget that. Ahh, friends who could have stopped it or been there for me. It taught me a lot about, umm, human nature. I mean if they're not going to stand up for you, then you know where you stand and where they stand as your friend. It can tear apart friendships that don't need to be torn apart. It's really about how my peers reacted to the cyberbullying in one sense. And that is pretty much going to stay with me for the rest of my life.

Annette – Wow, I feel the same exact way. . . . I'll never forget what my ex-boyfriend did to me, like how could I have been that juvenile? I totally lost my trust in people for a very long time and I remember feeling just gutted, like hollow and empty. It was by far the worst

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thing that has ever happened to me and to think I loved him!?! I felt just stupid and hollow and void and dumb and alone. . . . Like even though my mom was there for me.

What are the primary thoughts or feelings that emerge from this experience?

Annette – Wondering why I was with someone like that in the first place or friends with other people in other bullying things in my life at all.

Katie – It's definitely that, umm I guess in my situation the bullying was provoked by something so umm, so minimal that it's like wow, I can't believe I was friends with somebody like that, umm because that could happen basically because of nothing and going back to the why do people bully, well you know, that was, looking back now you know, that was actually inevitable when you realize you were bullied by a bully, but yeah, I guess I ask myself why would I ever have been friends with them and I guess looking back at it now and thinking I'm so glad I was a teenager or I mean a teenager now being bullied with the technology that is there now because that would be so much harder.

How did your experience affect you in high school?

Katie – Umm, it broke a lot of friendship circles and relationships and umm, and broke a lot of trust.

Annette – Umm, I guess it didn't affect me as much academically as it did emotionally 'cause I tried really really hard throughout high school not to let petty, petty non-sense effect my learning, but regardless of any of that it's going to affect someone no matter what.

Does your experience in high school continue to affect you today? Please expand and elaborate beyond yes or no.

Katie – Umm, yeah I mean I think that it really does make me, umm reflect about how much certain things, again through cell phones because they're always there with you and it's

written out right in front of you, how much that can affect a person in general. I guess it affects

me because it makes me reflect about how much social circles were torn because of it, umm and

I guess I just really look at kids and stuff and think of how much they have to endure, I know

today some girl was freaking out and umm, I saw her look at her cell phone afterword in class

and I said "listen is like everything ok?" and she was not having it and you could just tell she got

a text and I sort of remembered back to this, especially like because we're now talking about it, I

sort of remembered like getting a text and that actually throwing off your day and I guess it just

made me more aware watching her.

   Annette – I mean, of course my ex-boyfriend and all of that will never leave me, I mean

it will always be there what he did so I have trust issues . . . I do . . . I, I, I admit it. I guess, it's

time to move on, like, it's not worth it, I'm twenty years old, I'm out of high school and it's time

to grow up.

   What coping mechanisms or strategies are used to deal with this trauma or manage this

experience?

   Katie – Umm coping strategies. . . . I think talking about it, umm was probably the

biggest one because it's really easy to feel umm completely alone especially when it's

cyberbullying especially because it's faceless and there's no name attached to it so you're,

you're thinking this is how the entire world feels, because you have no idea who sent it, umm

and if it's from somebody you know, still it's good to talk to somebody or have some kind of

support system you know, whether it's friends or some sort of adult just to have somebody there.

I also think, umm for coping strategies, I don't know I guess to talk to somebody that's not going

to be, umm be careful who you talk to, 'cause I think a lot of times people with, like the person

who is being bullied gets addressed as the person who is having the problem, because I guess

they are dealing with all of the effects of being bullied, so I think talking to someone who

realizes that they are not the one with the problem, umm yeah I guess definitely a support system

is the biggest one thing to have rather than doing it on your own.

Annette – I usually vent through my music or through friends or concentrate on work or

school, like school, like when all of that with my ex-boyfriend was unfolding was my escape

believe it or not. It's funny, these conversations are really the first time I've talked about this

stuff in a long time and it feels good but at the same time I think I want to help other people by

talking about this, like I want to get myself back together and go back to school, you know?

APPENDIX D: JOURNAL ENTRY RESPONSES

@NATHAN_HELTZEL: Participants, please tweet your initial thoughts about cell phone cyberbullying and how it has impacted you and / or your generation.

"Orlando" @17SpSports17: cyberbullying has a big impact on me becuz my younger cousin has been experiencing it lately. I can see the negative impact.

"Zoe" @Zoe_G: Somehow I always get caught in the middle of other ppls problems on FB cuz im friendly and they think im taking their bf.

"Charles" @ECWXC: I hate how people who you think are your friends try to take advantage of you or are just using you to get something they want. I hated 9th

"Annette" @mourning_dawn: Many girls are negatively impacted by bullying via cell phone in that they can be persuaded to do things they don't want to.

"Katie" @KatieBHS: you can't get away from the internet and really your phone is a part of you, the 2 were always connected 2 me.

@NATHAN_HELTZEL: Participants, Please post your thoughts or feelings following your individual interview on Skype.

"Charles" @ECWXC: My problems really reached a breaking point when things on text came into my "real world".

"Orlando" @17SpSports17: Wth the advent technology, cyber bullying has taken on a whole new level. Students now have cellphones where they can be constantly bullied.

"Zoe" @Zoe_G: after hearing myself tlk about wat i go through, maybe i need 2 select me friends betr since they drag me into 2 mny problms

"Katie" @KatieBHS: Junior year was the worst year of my life. Cellphone cyberbullying may not have caused the stress but def escalated it

"Annette" @mourning_dawn: it's amazing how the implications of a text message speak more than the words actually typed.

@NATHAN_HELTZEL: Participants: Please share your thoughts following your focus group conversation.

"Annette" @mourning_dawn: Its crazy how u can start school in an amazing mood & then get a text message that instantly ruins your day. U can't get away

"Orlando" @17SpSports17: One thing parents need to consider b4 giving their child cellphone is the potential their child being cyberbullied. Parents must be aware.

"Katie" @KatieBHS: I disagree that schools can't do more, I think they can and should. Kids need direction from those they trust.

"Charles" @ECWXC: 2 much responsibility is put on parents 2 raise us rite. @ sum point we need to take responsibility 4 r own cel-cyber action

"Zoe" @Zoe_G: If I had been exposed to cell phones at any younger of an age, I wouldn't have been able to be the strong person I am today

@NATHAN_HELTZEL: Participants, this account will be closed for good on 05/16/14 in conclusion of this study. Please post any final thoughts you may have.

"Orlando" @17SpSports17: Cyberbullying is so rampant because kids today have cellphones that they are constantly using.

APPENDIX E: RESOURCES FOR PARTICIPANTS

Thoughts of the past may surface upon completion of this study. While these thoughts may not demand professional counsel, you may seek to understand them better. Please refer to the following online resources:

http://cyberbullying.us/

http://stopcyberbullying.org/index2.html

Please refer to the following website if cell phone cyberbullying continues to be prominent in your life.

http://www.helpguide.org/mental/cyber-bullying.htm

http://www.cyberbullyhelp.com/

http://www.deletecyberbullying.org/what-to-do-if-youre-a-victim/

Here are the names and contact information for some of the psychologists and licensed clinical social workers in our area. I have already advised them of this study and they are prepared to help you if you feel the need to seek professional counsel. You will be responsible for paying any costs associated with future counseling.

Audrey Gelfand, Ph.D.
87 Dalmeny Road
Briarcliff Manor, New York 10510
(914) 282-8705

Joseph Malikian, Ph.D.
359 East Main Street #3A2
Mount Kisco, New York 10549
(914) 666-3546

Donna Schinik, L.C.S.W.
311 North Street
White Plains, New York 10605
(914) 589-7060

Nicholas Singman, L.C.S.W.
1 Neperhan Road - Suite 208
Tarrytown, New York 10591
(914) 265-1069

APPENDIX F: REFLEXIVITY LOG

April 2, 2014

I finally made it through IRB! I never thought I would get to this point so I'm really eager to proceed. I reached out to eight potential participants through purposeful sampling today. So far three have got back to me and agreed to participate while one declined.

April 3, 2014

Two more participants have agreed to contribute to the study. One more suggested they would think about it, while the last potential participant is on study abroad in college and does not think she has the time in the next month or so, which is when I would like to conduct the data collection. I have spent the last two and a half years building my research manuscript so I know the phenomenon well. I am curious to learn how the lived experiences of my research participants compares to the broad general scope of research that I have examined with regard to school attendance, academics, social and personal life in school.

April 4, 2014

I've emailed the five potential research participants a copy of the consent forms and received all five forms back. I am ready to start interviews and will establish the Twitter micro-blog account tomorrow.

April 5, 2014

I established the Twitter account today and prompted participants to share their thoughts about cell phone cyberbullying prior to their individual interview. I'm scheduled to meet with my first participant on April 7th. It should be interesting to have my first interview to see if all of my research lines up with what participants are reporting. It is important for me to let the research

come to me and not try to go to the research. In other words, let the essence of participants lived experiences provide the data.

April 7, 2014

I met with Katie tonight. It was certainly an experience. My how she has grown in the two years since I last spoke with her. She is a completely different young lady with deep insight. I can only hope that the rest of my interviews go as well. Much of what she shared with me supports the research. Skyping seemed to work well for both of us. It came to my mind that I can't imagine doing this over the phone as I would have missed a lot of non-verbal cues in understanding her experience.

April 10, 2014

I met with Charles tonight. It is hard to understand Charles, but Skype helped as I was able to read his lips a little bit and observe his affect. He was not as open as I hoped he would be at first. Never-the-less, once he settled into the interview he revealed more and more about his experience. Each participant is different and each interview will be different. I'm very familiar with each participant's experience. Therefor it will be challenging if I have another interview like this because I don't want to contaminate the data by coercing the participant to share more than they are willing to even if I think it will help.

April 12, 2014

I met with Zoe this morning on Skype. Zoe always was very mature and put together. Her experience reminded me that cellphone cyberbullying does not have to be the cloak and dagger material we read about on the internet, rather it can be what a participant believes to be harassment and/or victimization. Zoe also helped me understand a lot about cell phone culture.

April 13, 2014

I spoke with Annette this morning . . . all I can say is wow! That was a crazy interview and I'm overwhelmed that she was able to not only share here entire experience, but get through the interview as well. I'm even more surprised that she even agreed to be a research participant. Even though she is speaking under a pseudonym, I understand how difficult and private this experience was for her. It is hard to battle my instinct as a researcher to connect the dots at this point, but I will hold off. Annette's interview was difficult however. I'm truly humble that she thinks so highly of me as both a counselor and a researcher that she would share this story.

April 16, 2014

Orlando and I were finally able to connect on Skype. He also had a pretty gut wrenching story. He was very angry when speaking about his experience and rightly so. He internalized a lot of his experience as his fault, which obviously it is not. I've now had personal interviews with all five of my research participants. While each story is unique, there are many similarities as well. I feel like the research is worthwhile and I'm already understanding a little bit more about the phenomenon through the lived experiences of the participants.

April 21, 2014

Participants have been Tweeting journal entries. Interestingly enough, their perspective on this matter is very deep. Their comments relate to others they are close with, their own experience and thoughts they have on current issues within the phenomenon of cellphone cyberbullying.

April 22, 2014

I offered research participants two dates for focus groups. One on Saturday, April 26th and the other on Saturday, May 3rd. Participants will be allowed to pick the date that works well for them.

April 26, 2014

I just had my first focus group via secondlife this morning with Zoe, Charles and Orlando. I invited the three of them into my voice enabled office which is on voice enabled land. The participants collaborated well and Charles seemed to open up a little more with the group. Collectively they brought up some great points of interest and even seemed to bring to light research points that I overlooked. Things really seem to be coming together.

May 3, 2014

I met with focus group number two this morning on secondlife which consists of Katie and Annette. The two paired very well and although I did not intentionally pair them. They also seemed to connect well and share ideas, although not always, they did disagree on a few points, which I thought was a good thing. I found it difficult throughout the data collection process to stick to the approved questions, but in order to stay true to the study I must and I did.

May 5, 2014

I tweeted the participants to prompt them for one last tweet on any additional thoughts or feeling they might want to share before I shut the account down at the end of the week.

May 10, 2014

I have shut down the twitter account and ceased data collection. I am very proud of my participants for their efforts to enhance the research in this phenomenon. They were very timely in following through on all of my requests and stuck to their appointments. I am now ready to triangulate the data and follow the research methodology to examine all aspects of the phenomenon of cellphone cyberbullying's impact on attendance, academics, social and personal life in school.

APPENDIX G: MEMBER CHECK CERTIFICATION

I have read the transcripts of my individual interview, my comments in the focus group interview and my micro-blog entries on Twitter. I have also read Nathan Heltzel's examination and denotation of my statements and have clarified and elaborated on their meanings if necessary. I concur with all assessments of my statements and agree that the transcripts of my individual interview, my comments in the focus group interview and my micro-blog entries on Twitter are correct and precise.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

April 1, 2014

Nathan Joseph Heltzel
IRB Approval 1835.040114: Cell Phone Cyberbullying's Impact on Victim's Attendance, Academics, Social and Personal Life in School: A Phenomenological Qualitative Study

Dear Nathan,

We are pleased to inform you that your above study has been approved by the Liberty IRB. This approval is extended to you for one year. If data collection proceeds past one year, or if you make changes in the methodology as it pertains to human subjects, you must submit an appropriate update form to the IRB. The forms for these cases were attached to your approval email.

Please retain this letter for your records. Also, if you are conducting research as part of the requirements for a master's thesis or doctoral dissertation, this approval letter should be included as an appendix to your completed thesis or dissertation.

Thank you for your cooperation with the IRB, and we wish you well with your research project.

Sincerely,

Fernando Garzon, Psy.D.
Professor, IRB Chair
Counseling

(434) 592-4054

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