

Facing the Idea That Facebook Faces us Towards Narcissism

Presented to the Faculty

Liberty University

School of Communication and Creative Arts

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the

Master of Arts

Communication Studies

by

Adam T. Forsberg

April 2014

Thesis Committee

Faith E. Mullen, Ph.D., Chair

Date

Lynnda S. Beavers, Ph.D.

Date

William L. Mullen, Ph.D.

Date

Copyright © 2014
Adam Timothy Forsberg
All Rights Reserved

This is dedicated to:

My parents, for your Godly example and for teaching me to always work hard and with integrity.

Acknowledgements

I cannot even begin to thank my committee enough for their support throughout this entire process. My chair, Dr. Faith Mullen, always went the extra mile to make sure that I was on the right track. She was available to talk anytime I needed, whether it was about my thesis, classwork, or anything else in life. If it had not been for her graduate and undergraduate communication courses my academic career would not be where it is today. Dr. Lynnda Beavers has been extremely helpful throughout my writing process, supporting me by providing academic and professional advice. Dr. William Mullen taught courses that helped me understand how to tackle such a big project and specifically how to conduct good research. These faculty members have become a major encouragement to my academic, professional, and spiritual life, I am extremely grateful for the courses that they have taught, and for their continuous support during this project.

I would also like to take a moment to thank and acknowledge two faculty members who have played an instrumental role in my time at Liberty University. Dr. Don Alban Jr. and Mrs. Carla Sloan are the reason why I enrolled in Graduate School. Thank you for allowing me to be a part of the Graduate Student Assistant team, for allowing me the opportunity to develop as a teacher, providing great advice along the way, and for your support throughout this thesis process.

Finally, I would like to thank my parents. Their continuous support of my academic and professional pursuits has been a great encouragement to me. Thank you for believing in me and for your daily demonstration of hard work, Godly character, and integrity.

Abstract

Since its creation in 2004, Facebook has experienced tremendous growth and success, allowing users to communicate and share their life with people all over the world. Facebook is used to share information with others and allows users to show their friends what is happening in their lives. Erving Goffman developed face management theory as a way to explain how and why people preserve and maintain their public self image. This study applies Goffmans theory of face management to develop an understanding of how Facebook is used and specifically whether Facebook use influences narcissistic tendencies in its users. The researcher surveyed 299 participants in order to answer four research questions pertaining to narcissism and facework. The researcher's observation suggests that narcissism may be present in Facebook posts; however, it is not often perceived by users. Additionally, this study shows that participants use corrective facework, not preventative, as a primary motivation for editing posts on Facebook. The study concludes by providing limitations and recommendation for future research.

Key Words: Facebook, Narcissism, Face Management, Goffman, Ting-Toomey, Social Media, Social Networking.

Facing the Idea That Facebook Faces us Towards Narcissism

Table of Contents

Chapter 1- Introduction.....	1
Chapter 2- Literature Review.....	4
Review of Face Management Literature.....	4
Review of Narcissism Literature.....	14
Review of Computer Mediated Communication, The Internet, and Social Media Literature.....	24
Chapter 3- Research Questions & Methodology.....	43
Research Questions.....	43
The Survey.....	44
Chapter 4- Results & Discussion.....	47
Results.....	47
Discussion.....	62
Response to Research Question #1.....	62
Response to Research Question #2.....	64
Response to Research Question #3.....	70
Response to Research Question #4.....	74
Chapter 5- Limitations, Recommendations for Future Research.....	78
Works Cited.....	84
Appendix A.....	Appendix

Chapter 1- Introduction

With billions of people alive in the world today, communication between so many people might seem impossible, but with the technology that is now available nothing could be further from the truth. If a person ever wanted to have access to communication with over 1/7th of the world's population, the social media website Facebook is the website to visit (Newsroom). This communication tool can be extremely valuable because it allows for the rapid spread of ideas and information around the world; however, there are also several downsides to this communication tool. While Facebook is valuable and has a lot to offer, it also has several negative, unintended consequences for our society (Cain).

Facebook has only been around since 2004, so it is a relatively new method of communication, but despite this newness, several scholarly studies have been done in which communication through Facebook has been examined (Carlson). These studies have examined communication problems that Facebook has caused. Examples of current research on this topic include a study by Lim, et. al., that gave evidence that there may be a link between juvenile delinquency and Facebook use, and a study performed by Heisler and Ellis, who suggest that mothers form their identity around their social networking use. These studies provide a framework for research on Facebook, but much work is still to be done on this topic.

While experts have examined Facebook and narcissism (such as psychiatrist Keith Ablow's observations of his patients and their tendencies), much more research needs to be done on this topic. Ablow's research suggests that there is a link between Facebook and narcissistic tendencies but never gets into what that link exactly is, he merely states that there is a link. This study and the others previously listed are beneficial to the discipline of communication studies because it

helps show how communication through Facebook works; however, they ultimately fall short and do not encapsulate important aspects of Facebook communication.

This original research study is significant because it researches Facebook usage through the lens of face management theory and will look for what specific aspects of Facebook use (if any) encourages narcissism among users. This study was built on previous work done by other communication scholars but takes their research one step further, delving deeper into how social media communication influences its participants. The purpose of this study was to evaluate Facebook usage through the face management theory in an attempt to understand if Facebook usage influences narcissistic tendencies in its users.

This topic is extremely relevant to anyone in the communication studies field today because of how many people use Facebook and how much it has impacted the way in which our world communicates. As mentioned above, several scholars have already conducted research on Facebook, and the most important and influential studies will now be reviewed. These studies provide a gateway into the research section of this paper by laying a foundation of the most impactful research to date.

After reviewing current literature that has been written about these topics, four research questions were developed to guide this study. These questions guided the study and helped draw conclusions from the survey data. The research questions that were used are:

RQ #1: Do young adults perceive the Facebook posts/activity of others as narcissistic?

RQ #2: Do young adults perceive their own Facebook posts/activity as narcissistic?

RQ #3: Do young adults use “preventative facework” as their main motivation for posting new information on Facebook?

RQ #4: Do young adults use “corrective facework” as their main motivation for editing information that they put on Facebook?

These questions will be answered by analyzing the results and responses of undergraduate students who participated in an original research study. Before the questions can be answered, current literature regarding the subjects of face management, narcissism, and computer mediated communication will be reviewed.

The research study that will be further described has been performed with participants who mainly reside in the United States. This is important because a lot of research that has been done on this topic has been conducted in other parts of the world. This research provides valuable insight and information for the communication discipline because the information is gathered from participants who reside in the United States, whereas many other studies have been performed in other parts of the world. Another reason why this study is valuable to the communication discipline is the vast amount of people who currently use social media websites. When one-seventh of the world uses something, that thing, whatever it is, is automatically important to study simply because of how many individual lives it affects (U.S. & World). The research that has been performed has been done in hopes of gaining a better understanding of communication that takes place through the medium of Facebook.

Chapter 2- Literature Review

Plenty of research has already been performed on face management theory, narcissism, and the internet/social media. Face management is a foundational theory of interpersonal communication, narcissism has drawn interest for a long time, and the internet/social media is a relatively new concept that has gained great popularity over the past two decades. Specific studies and research for each of these three categories will now be discussed in order to provide a framework for original research that was conducted. Some of the literature overlaps and discusses topics that fall into more than one category; for example, some research articles discuss face management and the internet and others discuss narcissism and the internet. When this occurs, each article is placed in the category that has the most related content, meaning that if an article discusses narcissism and the internet, but focuses more on the internet aspects, that article is placed under the category of the internet and not narcissism. Research and literature about these three topics (face management, narcissism, and the internet) will now be reviewed in order to present the current research trends that are out there. To begin, face management will be defined and reviewed.

Face Management Literature

Face management theory was first developed by Ervin Goffman and was further developed by Stella Ting-Toomey. After face management was developed by Goffman it was extended further when Penelope Brown and Stephen Levinson created politeness theory (which focused on face needs and desires), but for the purposes of this paper and its research questions, only Goffman's and Ting-Toomey's research will be evaluated. Goffman defines face as "the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact" (Goffman 5). He also simplifies and explains this definition by saying that face

is a person's public self-image (Baldwin, Perry, and Moffitt). A person is said to maintain his face when his communication patterns present an image that is internally consistent as viewed by himself and others (Goffman). Face management theory focuses on these face maintenance and restoration acts, called facework, which is defined as "communicative behaviors that people use to regulate their social identity and to support or challenge other's social dignity" (Ting-Toomey and Kurogi 188). In this definition, "social identity" refers to what Goffman defined as "face," a person's public self image (Baldwin, Perry, and Moffitt). He proposed that in general, people support each other and their attempts at face maintenance and restoration (Goffman).

Goffman also believed that people actively participate in facework, which he defined as, "the supporting and maintaining of our own and other's publically presented self-image" (Baldwin, Perry, and Moffitt 108). He asserted that there are two forms of facework that people engage in, preventative and corrective. Preventative facework involves minimizing face loss. Examples of this include changing the topic of an uncomfortable conversation or using a disclaimer when entering a situation that may be face threatening, such as, "This may be a dumb question, but..." (Baldwin, Perry, and Moffitt 108). On the other hand, corrective facework deals with restoring face when it is lost. This can be done with an apology, a joke to lessen a face-threatening act, or an excuse for the face threatening transgression (Baldwin, Perry, and Moffitt). Ting-Toomey and Kurogi put these concepts together, including Goffman's original research and concept of face, and put together what we now know as the face management theory (Baldwin, Perry, and Moffitt). A short summation of the face management theory is that it is a way to describe how people maintain their public identities (Baldwin, Perry, and Moffitt).

Face management theory introduces another important concept, communicator reward valence (Burgoon and Hoobler). This term describes the process by which a person's nonverbal

communication is evaluated by others. All of a communicator's nonverbal characteristics are combined and evaluated by other people. The person evaluating these nonverbal messages then decides whether the communicator's nonverbal behavior should be regarded positively or negatively. This interpretation and evaluation yield a net valence for the nonverbal actions of the communicator. People whose nonverbal valence is seen as positive (effective nonverbal communicators) are generally viewed in a positive light, and people whose nonverbal valence is seen as negative (ineffective nonverbal communicators) are generally viewed negatively (Burgoon and Hoobler).

Goffman was the first person to popularize this theory and the concepts of face in the United States; however, according to Ting-Toomey, his work was developed after consulting Chinese and American Indian publications. In one of the publications, researcher Hsien Chin Hu noted that the idea of face was connected to two Chinese words, one, the word for "the kind of prestige that comes from personal success," and the other, the word for "the regard bestowed upon an individual by a group based on his or her moral reputation" (Ting-Toomey n.p.). It was also noted that face is a psychological concept and that it regulates all interactions, public, private, and personal that people encounter in their daily lives (Ting-Toomey).

Brown and Levinson's politeness theory was created as an extension of face management, but Ting-Toomey states that face management theory is still more important and more influential. Ting-Toomey states in the Encyclopedia of Communication that it ironically "goes beyond" politeness theory, even though face management was developed first. According to Ting-Toomey, face management theory is superior to politeness theory because facework encompasses more aspects of human communication and is more complex in nature. She claims that politeness focuses on the face of other people, while face management discusses concepts about the face of

others, as well as self-face, and the combination of the two, mutual-face (Ting-Toomey). Because of this explanation given by Ting-Toomey, the rest of this thesis will only discuss concepts of face management theory.

Cupach and Canary, researchers of interpersonal conflict, remind us that face management is quite often a two way street. Americans tend to want to do things on their own because of their relatively individualistic society, but managing face is not something that involves only one individual. Face management is a cooperative occurrence because people depend on others for face support. An example of this is when one person insults another, and then apologizes for it. When a person insults another person and then apologizes, “he or she saves your face at the expense of their own. In turn, your graceful and ungrudging forgiveness saves your partner’s face” (Cupach and Canary 112). This example illustrates the idea that saving face is not something that always involves a single person, but how it frequently involves multiple people who try to save face for each other (Cupach and Canary).

Now that a basic framework has been laid for face management theory, several important articles about these subjects will be brought up. These articles involve the concepts of face management that were previously discussed and show how they have been used in research and will also highlight current trends of research involving these communication concepts.

Kampf and Blum-Kulka wrote an article with important findings in the study of face management. In this study, the apologies and face saving strategies of children were studied and yielded information that can be applied to many other aspects of communication. The data for this study were collected by observation of apology events between Israeli preschool children (ages 4-6) engaged in natural peer interactions. Researchers observed 57 apology events which were taped, transcribed and then analyzed for their content and structure (Kampf and Blum-Kulka).

When analyzing the interactions between the children, researchers realized a very important aspect of face management that continually occurred. They noticed that each face threatening act could be categorized into five different categories: lack of consideration, mistakes and misunderstandings, breach of expectations, talk offenses, and accidents. The most common face-threatening act that occurred in this study was lack of consideration, and the least common was accidents. By observing these categories, researchers noticed that each one (except for accidents) relates to the social world of the children, meaning that the violations all had to do with intentional social interactions. The study also found that the nature and severity of the violation had no effect on the form of apology that was given for committing a face-threatening act (Kampf and Blum-Kulka).

Kampf and Blum-Kulka argue that these results are important because they can also be applied to communication between people of other ages, including adults. Face-threatening acts that occur between adults also happen more frequently due to social blunders committed, rather than accidents. The only major difference that was found between adults and children who encountered face-threatening acts is that adults are more able to recognize a formal apology than children are (Kampf and Blum-Kulka). This means that formal apologies are even more important in adult friendships because when they are not given, the face threatening act stands out even more, causing the offender to lose even more of his public self-image.

In an article written by Heisler and Ellis, the way in which mothers create an identity with their children is described using the concepts of face and face management. They discuss how emotionally draining the transition into parenthood (and specifically motherhood) is for so many young adults. These new parents face a variety of pressures that they had never faced before, which can greatly increase their stress levels. This stress can either be minimized or multiplied by

the families of the new parents. The study found that this family influence either supports new parents or makes their new jobs even more difficult (Heisler and Ellis).

The authors then go on to describe what a mother actually is (and specifically, what a “good mother” is). This is important for this article because women often view their public self-images/worth by how well they measure up to what a “good mother” is. Women often perform face management techniques in order that they feel like a good mother and look like a good mother to people on the outside. The concept of identity as a good mother is what is discussed in the remainder of the article. Two surveys were given to 81 women, ages 24-59, who all had at least one child. The first survey that was distributed asked mothers questions specifically about being mothers, messages they send and receive, and facework that they perform on a daily basis. The second survey that was administered asked questions about the participants’ beliefs about motherhood, face needs, and behavior (Heisler and Ellis).

The results of the survey demonstrated the high level of importance that mothers put on saving face. In the first survey, participants reported to researchers that they did not seek to maintain a “good mother” face for other people. What really intrigued the researchers on the second survey was when participants said that the reason why they engaged in facework behaviors was that they wanted acceptance and approval of other people (Heisler and Ellis). These findings showed that the mothers had a very high value of looking good in front of others, even though they did not consciously admit it. The authors stated a possible reason for this occurrence, which is that the mothers did not realize that they cared so much about saving face. This study shows how important public self-image is to mothers. This research makes is important because it evaluates a mother’s need to communicate a “good mother” identity to other

people who watch her parenting techniques in other words, it shows how important face saving is to individuals (Heisler and Ellis).

McLaughlin, Cody, and O’Hair performed research about how people account for behavior that they have performed and now have to justify. They said that people often have to give an account as to why they were late to work, why they missed an exam in school, or for any number of things. They state that sometimes people give account for their behavior even when nobody asks for one, for example, giving an explanation for returning a library book two months late. In this specific research study, they attempted to determine how people justified their behavior and why they did so. They set out to determine which face saving techniques participants used and why they used those specific ones (McLaughlin, Cody, O’Hair). Participants were asked to recall specific events in which they justified their behavior, and then answer open ended questions as to why they responded in the way that they did.

The results showed that participants were most likely to give excuses when justifying their behavior to others. They found that this was the case because people are, “more likely to attribute causes of their own behavior to environmental constraints rather than their own predispositions (McLaughlin, Cody, O’Hair 222). They also found that when a person felt particularly guilty about their actions, they tended to make concessions as a failure-managing technique. Overall, whenever people had to justify their actions, they used face management/saving techniques to preserve their public self-image, as well as the self-images of the person who was questioning their behavior (McLaughlin, Cody, O’Hair).

Chen, Ryan, and Chen studied how Chinese and American students save face and solve conflicts. This study specifically looked at how American students (who come from an individualistic culture) and Chinese students (who come from a collectivist culture) save face and

handle interpersonal problems. Their study involved 50 American students and 48 Chinese students who were all asked questions regarding how they deal with various forms of conflict. In this situation, the participants were told that they were the leader in this situation, and that they had to figure out how to best handle the conflict that had arisen (Chen, Ryan, Chen).

One of the questions that participants were asked was how they would initially begin dealing with a conflict when they were the leader of a small group. The American students' top three choices were that they would first attempt to explain the situation and make it more clear for everyone involved; second, they would give their own personal assistance to solving the problem; and third, they would ask for other group members' assistance (Chen, Ryan, Chen). The study showed that Chinese students would first, ask for other group members' assistance; second, try to give their own assistance; and then third, attempt to explain the situation (Chen, Ryan, Chen). The researchers noted that the individualistic tendencies of the American culture and collectivistic tendencies of Chinese culture influenced the way in which the conflict was handled. American students were quick to try to solve the conflict and save face for the other group members in a way that did not ask for the help of others first. The opposite was true for the Chinese students; they attempted to save the face of others by first looking for input from others, rather than individually trying to solve the conflict (Chen, Ryan, Chen).

The findings from this study show that people tend to save face, their own and others, in ways that are consistent with their own culture. People from individualistic cultures tend to save face by way of their own effort, and people from collectivistic cultures tend to save face in a way that involves input from others (Chen, Ryan, Chen).

Another article that researches and analyzes the specific aspects of the face management theory was written by Siira, Rogan, and Hall, who discuss the different ways that people from

different cultures attempt to save face. The article helps readers develop an understanding of various face management techniques that are used in differing countries and cultures. The research that was performed focuses mainly on the conflict aspect of two cultures, but the conclusion section gives important insight into face management theory. This information helps readers develop a greater understanding of how the theory works and practical examples of it in the workplace.

After studying the ways that groups work together in the workplace, the authors draw several conclusions about face management in the workplace. The findings of this study showed that Finns and Americans alike had a higher concern for the face needs of others than they did for the face needs of themselves (Siira, Rogan, and Hall). It is interesting that people from both nationalities had similar experiences and results because the Finnish culture is more of a collectivistic culture than the United States. This study also found that “collectivistic cultures (as a whole) have a greater concern for supporting other-face during conflict than do individualistic cultures, that individualistic cultures did report a greater concern for other-face than for self-face” (Siira, Rogan, and Hall 102).

This study also noted differences in face management that occurred between males and females. The authors discuss that other studies have suggested that males are more instrumental or active, less emotional, and have less consideration for the feelings of others than do women (Siira, Rogan, and Hall). This study put these findings to the test and the results indicated that Finnish females were more concerned with other and self-face needs than Finnish males. On the other hand, American males had the highest self-face concern out of all four groups that were studied. The authors believed that this was because the whole ideology of male behavior in America is that males are expected to be assertive and to express their manliness in conflict situations.

Because of these cultural expectations of masculinity, males in this study attempted to rise to those expectations to save face by acting in ways that males “should” act, according to the standards set by the culture (Siira, Rogan, and Hall).

Face management theory has been looked at through the lens of public relations as well, which gives interesting insight into the theory. Catrin Johansson summarizes the theory by stating that the key aspects of face management are the same key aspects as public relations, or: “relationships, identification, and image” (Johansson 275). While most of this article goes on to discuss how face management can affect public relations efforts, the article spends time discussing how people try to protect their face by using those three aspects. She summarizes the theory by saying that people want to look good in their relationships with others, so they identify themselves with certain brands, products, movements, etc., in order to portray a certain image. People are constantly trying to keep up this image and to keep their relationships with others right; hence we have what Goffman called face management (Johansson).

Also, Johansson’s findings indicate that one way people manage their public self-images is through a concept known as framing. She references the work of Bateson in 1972 and said that frames are essential to understand the motives behind communication. The article states that when people know the background and context of communication, they can better ascribe correct meanings to that communication. People put their communication with others into a particular frame and then work to maintain their self-image within those frames. Problems can occur when people “misframe” events because when events are “misframed” people who try to protect a public self-image are protecting one that was never real in the first place, leading to misconceptions and actions based on the wrong premises/framing (Johansson).

Now that face management theory has been defined and described and research that has been performed using the theory has been discussed, readers should be able to understand the concepts of face and how important a person's public self-image is. Face management does a more than adequate job of explaining how and why specific social interactions take place within human communication. Further along in this literature review the concept of face management will be explored when it is paired with computer mediated communication and/or social media. Now that face management theory has been thoroughly examined and explored, the next section of literature will be discussed. The following pages will discuss narcissism by defining it and reviewing research that has been performed on this topic.

Narcissism Literature

A challenge that can arise in interpersonal communication and other forms of communication happens when people become narcissistic in their thoughts and actions. Narcissism is traditionally defined as being egocentric, or having a strong love of, or desire for one's own body (Narcissism Merriam-Webster). More specifically, it is an "excessive love or admiration of oneself," or "a condition characterized by self-preoccupation, lack of empathy, and unconscious deficits in self-esteem" (Narcissism American Heritage).

When studying narcissism, it is important to understand the distinction between a selfish and a self-centered person. While these terms may seem similar, there are distinct differences that set them apart. A person who is narcissistic will generally show characteristics of self-centeredness, rather than selfishness. C. S. Lewis discusses the differences between these two terms in his book, *Surprised by Joy*. Lewis states,

"It is no doubt for my own good that I have been so generally prevented from leading [a settled, calm Epicurean life], for it is a life almost entirely selfish. Selfish, not self-centered;

for in such a life my mind would be directed towards a thousand things, not one of which is myself. The distinction is not unimportant. One of the happiest men and most pleasing companions I have ever known was intensely selfish. On the other hand I have known people capable of real sacrifice whose lives were nevertheless a misery to themselves and to others, because self-concern and self-pity filled all their thoughts. Either condition will destroy the soul in the end. But till the end, give me the man who takes the best of everything (even at my own expense) and then talks of other things, rather than the man who serves me and talks of himself, and whose very kindnesses are a continual reproach, a continual demand for pity, gratitude, and admiration” (Lewis 143-144).

Lewis’ explanation shows that people who are selfish will do everything they can to get what is best for themselves, but their every thought is not about how great they are. On the other hand, self-centered (narcissistic) people only think about themselves, and (in Lewis’ opinion) are not enjoyable to be around, as he states that he would rather spend time with a selfish person than a narcissist who cannot stop thinking and talking about himself (Lewis). While the terms selfish and self-centered are similar and may seem to be the exact same thing, Lewis explains that they are in fact very different, and a distinction between the two must be made in order to think about and examine the terms properly (Lewis).

According to Panek, Nardis, and Konrath, in 1988 Robert Raskin and Howard Terry performed studies in which they measured narcissism by way of the Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI). They stated that the NPI has seven components, and that by testing for these they would be able to determine precisely how narcissistic a person is. The seven components that are a part of the NPI are; “exhibitionism (showing off), entitlement (believing that one deserves the best), exploitativeness (taking advantage of others), superiority (feeling better than others),

authority (feeling like a leader), self-sufficiency (valuing independence), and vanity (focusing on one's appearance)" (Panek, Nardis, and Konrath). They stated that when people show high levels of these components, they are considered to be narcissistic. This is important to understand because the NPI lays a good foundation for what narcissism actually is and gives a means by which it can be measured. The NPI is frequently used in research to determine how narcissistic a person actually is. A multitude of studies and research methods use the NPI to collect data because it has proven to be an effective tool for the measurement of narcissism. Several of the studies that will be reviewed in this section use the NPI as a basic tool for their research. Now that a groundwork for narcissism has been discussed and a common tool for measuring it has been discussed, research about American narcissism and then narcissism in general will be reviewed.

Individualism has been ingrained in American citizens since the founding of our country and, while different from narcissism, is one explanation for why Americans show higher amounts of narcissism than people from other countries. Wilbur W. Caldwell makes the case for this in his book, *American Narcissism: The Myth of National Superiority*. He defines individualism as "the notion that the interests of the individual are paramount, and that individual autonomy must be maintained through liberties of initiative, thought, and action" (Caldwell 55). He goes on to state this ideology/thought process has become the American way, and that America began to shift towards narcissism when it was combined with the natural rights theories that came along during the enlightenment era (Caldwell). This idea of self-reliance became incorporated into every aspect of American culture, social, political and economic, until it even became a part of American thoughts regarding democracy (Caldwell). What started as a desire for freedom began a revolution in American thinking, lead Americans as a whole down a road of self-reliance, individualism, and eventually into a pattern of narcissism that is seen today (Caldwell).

In the book, “The Culture of Narcissism,” author Christopher Lasch discusses how and why he believes the trend of American culture has become increasingly more narcissistic since the sixties. The book states that the early 1900s were extremely hard on Americans, especially with major events taking place such as the Great Depression, World Wars One and Two, and political turmoil in the sixties. After all of these negative national events have taken place, Americans began to preoccupy themselves purely with personal matters. Lasch states, “Having no hope of improving their lives in any of the ways that matter, people have convinced themselves that what matters is psychic self-improvement: getting in touch with their feelings, eating healthy food, learning how to relate...” (Lasch 2). He then writes that these things are harmless in and of themselves; however, the danger occurs when the defining rhetoric of society says that these are the only important issues in life. People begin to live in and for the moment, which is dangerous because it leads to a whole generation of people who lose their sense of historical time, spending all their time on superficial things that don’t matter in the long run and are not beneficial to others in society (Lasch).

This has become an epidemic of sorts in modern day America. In their book, *The Narcissism Epidemic*, Jean M. Twenge and W. Keith Campbell claim that American culture strongly encourages self-admiration because we have the idea that it will improve lives. The problem is that, “self-admiration as American culture promotes it [is] a general feeling of self-love that does not distinguish between a healthy sense of self-worth and the unhealthy narcissism that can instead result” (Twenge and Campbell 14). They go on to discuss and refute five common myths that people often think about when they hear the term “narcissism.”

The first myth is that narcissism is just “really high” self-esteem. Narcissists generally do have high self-esteem (see myth #2), but there are differences between self-esteem and

narcissism, namely, that narcissists think they are smarter, better looking, and more important than the average person, but do not usually believe that they are more moral, caring, or compassionate than the average person. People that have high self-esteem have positive views of themselves, but also are also more loving and moral than narcissists, and do not feel the need to gloat over everything that goes well for them or everything that they are good at (Twenge and Campbell).

The second myth that is brought up is that narcissists are insecure and have low self-esteem; however, research that has been performed on this topic shows that this is not true. Twenge and Campbell performed word association tests in which participants had to respond by saying “me” or “not me” as they were shown various words. After testing narcissists and non-narcissists, it was found that deep down, narcissists actually think they are awesome. Narcissists were more likely to respond with “me” when words such as “good,” “wonderful,” “great,” and “right” were displayed. These results showed that narcissists did not try to cover up low self-esteem but, in reality, actually had very high self-esteem (Twenge and Campbell).

A third popular myth about narcissism is that narcissists actually are greater, better looking, and smarter than the average person. If this is true, then narcissism may not be quite so bad because narcissists actually would be better than the average person; therefore, their narcissism could be justified in some sense. However, after studying IQ tests, creativity tests, and tests revolving around beauty, Twenge and Campbell found that narcissists are not smarter, more creative, or better looking than the non-narcissists who were also researched (Twenge and Campbell).

The fourth myth that Twenge and Campbell found to be commonly believed is that some narcissism is healthy. Americans often think that some narcissism is healthy because they believe

that the alternative is self-hatred. This, however, is a false dilemma fallacy. “Just as obesity researchers are not saying that Americans should all become anorexic, we’re not suggesting self-hatred” (Twenge and Campbell 29). What this myth comes down to is the question of who narcissism is actually hurting. The authors state the Americans often think that a little narcissism doesn’t hurt anyone so it is okay, but people often fail to realize that narcissism is not beneficial to individuals or society. Narcissism is not beneficial because our deepest joy in life does not come from contemplating how great we are but rather from connecting with the outside world, getting away from ourselves, and spending time with others (Twenge and Campbell). Twenge and Campbell do acknowledge that some narcissism may help a person perform better (for example, boosting confidence right before a public performance) but still hold to the idea that there are other ways to become confident without having so much attention on oneself (Twenge and Campbell).

Finally, the fifth myth is the idea that narcissism is merely physical vanity. The authors acknowledge that physical vanity plays a major role in narcissism but also state that narcissism involves many more aspects than just significant admiration of one’s physical body. “Narcissists are also materialistic, entitled, aggressive when insulted, and uninterested in emotional closeness” (Twenge and Campbell 30). While physical vanity can be a major factor of narcissism, it is not the defining characteristic of the mindset, as narcissism is an occurrence that has dimensions.

These five myths are common thoughts that people often have about narcissism. As we have seen from the refutations of these five myths, narcissism is complex and incorporates multiple aspects. Narcissism is a growing trend in America but just because these myths sound good and are talked about in popular culture does not mean that they are valid (Twenge and Campbell).

Narcissism has many complexities and is not easily categorized into simple statements and phrases.

In regards to the concepts brought up by the first two myths, other research has been performed in an attempt to determine the relationship between narcissism and self-esteem. Baumeister, Bushman, and Campbell wrote an article describing whether narcissism and violence are a result of low self-esteem or of threatened egos. Their research shows the complexity of human interaction and communication, as they noted that there are no simple links between narcissism and aggression; people are complicated, simple answers are often just that- too simple (Baumeister, Bushman, Campbell). Their findings did indicate that “aggression is most likely [to occur] when people with a narcissistically inflated view of their own personal superiority encounter someone who explicitly disputes that opinion” (Baumeister, Bushman, and Campbell 28). According to this research, people who are narcissistic will become aggressive to defend their high view of themselves. The authors admit that they were not exactly sure why narcissistic people responded with violence but suggested that it may be a way to discourage other people from expressing similar criticisms, which interestingly enough can be viewed as a face-saving strategy (Baumeister, Bushman, and Campbell).

Another aspect of narcissism is the paradoxical nature that people who have this trait exhibit. Morf and Rhodwealt describe a narcissist as a person who is “self-aggrandizing and self-absorbed, yet easily threatened and overly sensitive to feedback from others” (Morf and Rhodwealt 177). They go on to say that narcissists show exhibitionistic behavior and demand attention from others, but at the same time, respond quickly to perceived threats to their self-esteem. The response to these threats often comes in the form of rage, defiance, shame, and humiliation towards the person delivering the perceived threat (Morf and Rhodwealt). This is an

ironic paradox because people who show narcissistic tendencies come across as people who have it all together and are the best, however, the slightest threat to that image tends to make those people rather defensive. The article concludes by discussing how narcissistic cognition, affect, and motivation interrelate and determine how people act, feel, and behave (Morf and Rhodwealt). This affirms the previous assumptions that people are complex and not easily understood and/or categorized.

Because of the nature of narcissism, people who are narcissists often have little idea of how destructive their own personalities can be. Dr. Les Carter states, “[Narcissists] have such a strong need to feel special that they do not recognize the extent (or sometimes even the presence) of their dysfunctional behavior” (Carter 85). Whenever this (or any other flaw) is brought to the attention of the narcissist, they tend to become angry and defensive, turning negative attention back on the other person involved in the conversation. Dr. Carter calls this “boomerang communication” because “just as a boomerang reverses its path and heads back toward the thrower, so confrontations with a narcissist tend to land back on the one who confronts” (Carter 85). This shows why narcissism can be such a detrimental, self-fulfilling quality for a person to have; severe narcissists push away any help that is offered to them because they do not see any flaws in themselves (Carter).

As Carter has just shown, the effects of narcissism can be devastating to individuals’ communication habits. Because of the overwhelming amount of research that has shown these negative effects, Neville Symington addresses the importance of recognizing “narcissistic currents” in peoples’ personal lives. He states that the most important thing that people can do is to recognize the narcissistic currents, events, and patterns that are in their own lives. “None of us,” Symington writes, “are free from narcissism, and one of the fundamental aspects of the

condition is that it blinds us to self-knowledge” (Symington 19). He then goes on to state that when people casually say, “I’m so narcissistic,” they do not really recognize their condition; “to recognize narcissism in oneself is profoundly distressing” (Symington 19-20). True narcissism profoundly affects every aspect of a person’s life.

Extreme instances of narcissism can be classified as a mental disorder called narcissistic personality disorder. Narcissism has been described in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM) as a lack of empathy towards other people. This adds difficulty to defining/diagnosing narcissism because having a lack of empathy is also shared with other personality disorders (Bornstein and Widiger). In order for mental health workers to classify someone as having narcissistic personality disorder, the person must show a combination of signs, including “a grandiose sense of self-importance,” being preoccupied with fantasies of unlimited success and power, requiring excessive admiration from other people, and believing that he is special and can only be understood by other special or highly important people (Bornstein and Widiger, n.p.). When a person begins to live out a pattern of behavior that can be defined by this list, mental health workers may diagnose a person as having narcissistic personality disorder in order to speed up the therapy and treatment process (Bornstein and Widiger).

Another extreme example of the effects of narcissism is highlighted in research performed by David R. Champion, in which he examines whether there is a correlation between narcissism and male sexual aggression. He writes that much research attempts to paint a broad picture of behavior, rather than examining individuals and developing a deep understanding as to why people act in certain ways. In an attempt to minimize over-generalization this research aimed to further understand the actions and thinking patterns of individual men and then draw conclusions

from that knowledge, rather than just surveying a large number of men and drawing information from that data pool (Champion).

The findings of this study showed that “narcissism was a poor predictor of sexual aggression, but proved to be a strong attendant condition. Sexual aggressors tended to be more narcissistic than non-aggressors” (Champion 107). The study revealed that sexual violence was only one of the many potential behaviors that narcissistic men may exhibit. Men who are sexually aggressive are generally narcissistic; however, narcissistic men are not all sexually aggressive. This is important to note, but unfortunately, does not add any support for helping to prevent sexual violence (which was one of the purposes of this study). The important thing for communication scholars to understand is that narcissism may display itself in many forms, but so far research has not been able to efficiently estimate the way in which narcissism is displayed, whether it be sexual aggression, excessive boasting, or other means (Champion).

While the previous examples and instances of narcissism (documented mental disorders and sexual aggression) are extreme and not commonplace, seeing how severe patterns of narcissism can lead to such major problems shows how big of a problem it can become. Not every narcissistic person is sexually aggressive or narcissistic to the level of a documented mental disorder, but it is essential to see the devastating effects that unchecked/unmonitored narcissism can have in the lives of people.

After reviewing the concept of narcissism it is evident how much of a problem it can be to individuals and to society as a whole. Narcissism was first defined and differentiated from other similar concepts, and then research about narcissism was reviewed. In the following section of literature review, concepts of narcissism will be reviewed as they are directly related to computer

mediated communication and/or social media and how this influences human communication patterns and tendencies.

Computer Mediated Communication, The Internet, and Social Media Literature

Now that research about face management and narcissism has been reviewed, this final section of the literature review will discuss aspects of communication that revolve around the internet. Some of the research in this section relates back to face management and/or narcissism, but these articles are included in this section because their main theme is the internet, social media, or computer mediated communication.

In our technology-centered world, the way that people communicate is constantly changing and adapting. Communication is being done through electronic means more than ever, and this is almost always thought of as a great thing and an advancement of civilization. While many people think the advancement of technology as a means of communication is not always bad, there can be downsides to these so called advancements. A major channel that people now use to communicate is the social networking website Facebook. This website was created in 2004 and currently has over one billion users (Newsroom). That means that approximately one-seventh of the world's population has an account on this social networking website (U. S. & World). It is particularly intriguing to consider that all of this growth has occurred in less than ten years, which is a fairly short period of time. While Facebook is a relatively new means of communicating, traditional communication theories still apply to this form of communication.

Just because Facebook is a new means of communication does not negate the relevance of traditional communication theories; for instance, concepts of face management can easily be applied to this medium of communication. The concepts discussed in this theory directly relate to communication through social media and specifically, Facebook.

Before Facebook was created, people used computers to communicate. This communication was not referred to as social networking but simply computer mediated communication (CMC). The interesting thing about CMC is that “it emerged as an unintended byproduct of linking large computers to one another for security and information redundancy. In addition to data, operators found they could send simple messages to one another” (Walther 5). This was seen as a great asset to productivity because people could simply send messages to one another and focus on the content of those messages rather than getting distracted by interpersonal concerns (Walther). Little did early scholars know how much CMC would change with the growth of the internet and the development of social network sites. Today CMC can lead to less productivity and more distraction due to the comprehensiveness of social networking sites such as Facebook.

In their book *Laws of Media*, Marshall and Eric McLuhan claim that, “all of man’s artefacts [sic]- whether language, or laws or ideas and hypotheses, or tools, or clothing or computers- are extensions of the physical human body or the mind” (McLuhan and McLuhan 93). They state that man has always been a tool-making being and that these tools are used in the same way that his senses would be used, meaning that these tools can be looked at as actual parts of people. They go on to write that artifacts such as computers are not neutral or passive but, instead, are “active utterance[s] of the human mind” (McLuhan and McLuhan 99). This is a different opinion of computers and computer-mediated communication from that of most previous scholars, who simply view computers as a channel of communication and nothing more. Marshall McLuhan often said that the medium is the message (McLuhan and McLuhan). The McLuhans address the main challenge of the internet age in their writings as well. They state that the biggest challenge with computer-mediated communication and the media is that what used to be private information (defined as “hidden ground”), is now open, available, and familiar to the public. What used to be

private, personal information has now become public and potential common knowledge due to computers (McLuhan and McLuhan).

In order to gain a full understanding of Facebook and the trends of its users, it is important to understand why the website is even used in the first place. Research has shown several main reasons why people use Facebook. Adam Joinson of the University of Bath surveyed 137 Facebook users and asked them to generate phrases or words that described why they used the website. The answers were coded by Joinson and revealed eight categories of reasons for why the participants used Facebook. The eight reasons that participants used Facebook (starting from the most prevalent reason) are keeping in touch with others, maintaining passive contact (virtual people-watching), reacquiring lost contacts, general communication with friends, photography related, easy of use related, perpetual contact (seeing what new things people post and what friends are up to, and making new contacts (Joinson).

It is important to note that there are many challenges that arise when attempting to study Facebook. These problems often arise due to the nature of the website, that it is ever changing and always being updated, improved, and revised (DiCapua). Social networking websites developed extremely fast and have stayed with that fast pace, always being changed in some form or another. In Facebook's short history, it has grown from a social networking website on a few college campuses to a worldwide phenomenon involving a billion people (DiCapua). Facebook is very different now from it was when it first began, and it will be very different in the following years to come. While this is not a bad thing (because change keeps people interested, active, and involved in the website), it does make researching the site more difficult and provides opportunities for continuous research to be done on the topic.

Other research that has been performed has indicated reasons for how and why Facebook is used. Researchers from Michigan State University found that undergraduate students were the demographic age group with the highest number of Facebook friends. They also found that on average, people who had their Facebook accounts for longer periods of time had a higher number of Facebook friends (Lampe, Ellison, Steinfield). Their research also found that there was a strong correlation between the number of Facebook friends a person has and the amount of “profile fields” that are used. Profile fields are the categories of information that people can write about, for example, favorite movies, favorite TV shows, other social networking profile names, etc. This research shows that the more friends a person has, the more likely they are to fill out a higher number of these categories (Lampe, Ellison, Steinfield). While people with more friends may fill out more categories, the research states that it doesn’t necessarily mean that they are posting more information because a lot of “profile fields” may only be minimally filled out. This study suggests that there is only a small correlation between the number of Facebook friends a person has and the amount of information that is posted. Ultimately this study shows that more friends on Facebook leads to a larger breadth of information posted to the profile but not necessarily any more depth (Lampe, Ellison, Steinfield).

Cheryl Coyle and Heather Vaughn discovered through their research that the main purpose for Facebook and other forms of social media is to keep in touch with friends, not meet new people or develop new relationships. They found that most communication that occurs is trivial communication, communication with fairly unimportant message content (Coyle and Vaughn). Their research showed that the highest categories for Facebook use were because participants wanted to keep in touch with friends (41% of participants), because it is fun and entertaining (17% of participants), to post or look at photos (12% of participants), and simply because

participants were bored (12% of participants) (Coyle and Vaughn). This research study also showed that even though technology is rapidly changing, people are not changing in their basic social motivations. This study revealed that even though technology may seem superficial on the surface, “social networking sites are used to retain existing networks” (Coyle and Vaughn 16). Results also showed that “social networking sites are exploding around individuals abilities to be creative and expressive,” meaning that the medium by which messages are sent may change, but the message ultimately relies on the individuals sending it in order to be received as an effective means of communication (Coyle and Vaughn 16). Creative and expressive messages may enhance communication and the popularity of social networking websites; however, the basic reasons for communication does not change due to improving social media. The study shows that people use Facebook to enhance relationships that are already developed through face-to-face interactions (Coyle and Vaughn).

Lesia Stern and Kim Taylor surveyed over 400 college students in order to understand the specific purposes for which Facebook was being used. They had students self-report and answer survey questions about their Facebook use and tendencies. The study found that, “despite the negative press surrounding social networking sites... students are using Facebook for positive and appropriate networking” (Stern and Taylor 16). Participants reported that their profiles were accurate in the way that they portrayed themselves because inaccurate information is public and would lead to participants being publically “called out” by their Facebook friends who know them in real life. Results also showed that participants spent an average of 10 minutes per day on the website and that those minutes were most commonly spent sending messages and viewing photos (Stern and Taylor). The study also revealed that participants did not use Facebook as a way to further develop romantic relationships. The main reason for this was that participants “did not

want their dating attempts to be public” (Stern and Taylor 17). Romantic endeavors become public on Facebook and participants acknowledged that they did not want to have to deal with potential public embarrassment (Stern and Taylor).

Regarding negative Facebook interactions, this study showed that there was only a small number of negative interactions. The biggest concern that was brought up among participants was the idea of “stalking.” Because of a concern for this behavior, some students indicated that they had strict control of their privacy and monitored whom they accepted as a “friend” closely. These privacy efforts limited information posted on Facebook to true friends, people the participants actually knew well in real life (Stern and Taylor). Although some students were careful about whom they accepted as a “friend,” the study also noted that others were not so selective and had a tendency to accept friends request from people they didn’t know. This behavior happened because participants indicated that “Facebook is a social networking site where people ‘gather’ to meet one another, and [they] did not want to appear rude or standoffish” (Stern and Taylor 17).

Another way that Facebook has been used is to build bridges between groups of people that may be unfamiliar or even hostile with each other. Asaf Bar-Tura conducted research to understand the way in which Facebook breaks down cultural barriers between teenagers of differing religions. Inner-city Jewish and Muslim youth were invited to participate in a bowling night, sponsored by a group called the Jewish Muslim Community Building Initiative. Students were invited through Facebook when the organization created a Facebook event. The study showed that Facebook provided a lot of value before the event commenced. Instead of simply arriving at the event with prejudiced and preconceived ideas about teens from the other religion, Facebook allowed the teens to see what common interests were shared, despite their differing religions (Bar-Tura). In addition to common interests, the teenagers were able to see that students

of other faiths experience similar life experiences, including being annoyed by siblings, lots of homework, and the difficulties of friendships and relationships (Bar-Tura). This study showed how influential Facebook can be for positive purposes, as it helps break down barriers, prejudices, and general presumptions about people who are different.

In addition to these bridge-building, barrier-breaking findings, Bar-Tura also discussed what Facebook users actually mean when they RSVP on Facebook for events. People who indicate on Facebook that they will attend an event only actually attend 50% of the time, people who click “maybe” usually do not attend the event but feel uncomfortable saying “no,” and people who decline events advertised on Facebook generally have little to no interest whatsoever of attending (Bar-Tura).

Not all research that has been done on Facebook has yielded positive results. Some researchers believe that a link exists between Facebook and narcissistic tendencies of its users (Ablow). These researchers believe that it is dangerous for people to believe that they are worth “being followed” by a large number of people, as if they were a celebrity of some sorts. They believe that all of this new power found through technology contributes to a culture of narcissism (Ablow).

The internet has brought about new ways in which narcissism has been displayed. *The Handbook of Narcissism* has an entire chapter dedicated to narcissism and the world wide web. This chapter states that there are four main features of the internet that set it apart from other forms of communication. These four are anonymity, public content, instantaneous communication, and deliberate communication (Campbell and Miller). The handbook states that each of these four features has potential impact on narcissists and that narcissists respond to each feature differently from how the average person would.

The internet has the potential to be anonymous if the user so chooses. Fake screen names and profiles can make a person anonymous while on the web. Due to the anonymity of the internet, narcissists are more likely to have display increased socially unacceptable behavior. This unacceptable behavior often comes out in the form of aggression through cyber-bullying, specifically after the narcissist's ego has been threatened (Campbell and Miller). While the internet can provide a high level of anonymity, it also has the potential to make people's lives more public, especially when it comes to social media websites. Because of the high level of information that can be made public on the internet, narcissists are more likely to increase their self-promotion while on the internet. This self-promotion often comes out by the narcissist's attempts to appear attractive and well liked on social networking Web sites (Campbell and Miller).

Another unique feature of the internet that Campbell and Miller mention is that the internet makes communication instantaneous. People can write comments, post pictures, buy items, or do any number of things in an instant, all with a few simple clicks on a keyboard. Communication can happen quickly and does not often have immediate consequences. This can cause internet users to increase their risk-taking tendencies, which explains why habits such as online gambling can become such a problem (Campbell and Miller).

Communication on the internet can also be very deliberate, even more so than face-to-face interactions. Internet communication can be so deliberate because sending and responding to messages can be delayed and carefully thought out before sending. People do not often get this privilege in everyday interpersonal communication, as responses and interactions in face-to-face environments happen immediately. Because internet communication can be delayed and deliberate, when narcissists are using the internet, their communication can often be increasingly

manipulative of others. This tends to come out when narcissists choose usernames and email addresses, as they often choose self-enhancing titles (Campbell and Miller).

In summary, this chapter in *The Narcissism Handbook* discusses why communication over the internet is different from face to face communication, specifically because of the anonymity, public content, instantaneous communication, and deliberate communication that occurs on the internet. People who generally show narcissistic tendencies in life tend to take advantage of these differences and act in narcissistic ways on the web as well (Campbell and Miller).

Researchers Lim, Vadrevu, Chan, and Basnyat studied how juvenile delinquents in Singapore strategically interacted with each other through Facebook. Researchers noted that very few studies have been performed on this topic (especially with this participant subject group), and also noted that Singapore was the chosen place of study because it was highly urbanized and had readily adopted the use of the internet at very high rates (Lim, et al.).

For this study, juvenile delinquent youths ages 13-18 were selected through four different agencies: a counseling center, a low security residential rehabilitation home, a high security residential rehabilitation home, and a counseling center for youths who had come from a residential rehabilitation home and were attempting to reenter society. Once an undisclosed number of youths were gathered, they were interviewed with a series of semi-structured questions about how they used technology in their everyday lives for interactions with their family and with their peers. Questions were also asked about their daily computer usage habits and the gratifications that they derived from these uses. Several questions also centered on how the participants used mobile devices to update and share information on Facebook (Lim, et al.).

The study revealed important information about face management. First, the study found that for participants who were involved in gangs, failure to maintain face on social networking sites

led to alienation from their gang, and in extreme circumstances, retaliation from others within the gang. Researchers realized that gang members were “supposed” to post information about upcoming fights and gang meeting places on their Facebook wall and that those who did not do this received negative consequences. It was also found that gang members (in order to save face) would post on Facebook when they were attending gang activities, even when they knew that they would not show up at the event. This allowed members to give an excuse retroactively for not showing up, while at the same time minimizing the retaliation that would come from not showing up to the gang activity. Researchers noted that that this form of deception was often used by “non-delinquent” youths as well (Lim, et al.). This study revealed that people generally attempt to save face on Facebook by saying that they will attend an event that they have no intention to attend in the first place. These actions get people out of giving an excuse for their absence and allow people an alibi of sorts because a person can then say that he or she meant to attend the event, but simply forgot (Lim, et al.). This article is beneficial because it allowed the authors to draw conclusions about face management on Facebook for people in the general population by simply interviewing at-risk youths and analyzing their online communication habits.

In the article “Narcissism or Openness? College Student’s Use of Facebook and Twitter,” McKinney, Kelly, and Duran discuss the fine line between being open and being narcissistic while using social media. The article focuses on the social networking websites of Facebook and Twitter specifically because of their high numbers of active users. In order to help define the difference between narcissism and mere self-disclosure, researchers had 233 undergraduate students complete a questionnaire. The questions on the survey asked participants about how open they were about posting information and the attitudes that they had regarding those posts. The survey also determined how heavily each participant used social media websites and determined

the level of usage that each participant was involved with on social media websites. The level of usage was determined by looking at how often participants used each website and what they used it for, for example, posting tweets, finding out information about friends, posting pictures, and other categories such as number of friends and/or followers (McKinney, Kelly, and Duran).

The results of the study are very interesting and a little unexpected. Researchers found that narcissism was unrelated to the frequency of using Facebook to post about himself/herself but was related to the self-reported number of Facebook friends that participants indicated. People who used Facebook for sharing content and information with others were not found to be narcissistic as a result of Facebook, but people who used Facebook in order to “collect” the most amount of friends tended to exhibit more narcissistic tendencies (McKinney, Kelly, and Duran). It was also discussed that behavior relating to posting information about oneself to a wide circle of friends is becoming more socially acceptable with the increase of Facebook usage, and this tendency in a sense changes the traditional definition of narcissism (McKinney, Kelly, and Duran).

One other thing that is worthy of mentioning about the results of this study is that the survey revealed that participants reported a greater likelihood of disclosing personal information on Facebook, as opposed to disclosure in a face-to-face setting. This led researchers to conclude that there must be something different about interaction of Facebook in comparison to face-to-face interactions and that norms for disclosure on social networking websites are generally based on what other people have already disclosed (McKinney, Kelly, and Duran). This means that always talking about oneself in person may be viewed as narcissism, but posting multiple pictures of oneself on Facebook is not narcissistic because everyone else is already practicing this release of information (McKinney, Kelly, and Duran). This is important for future research that will be

performed on this topic because similar actions are judged differently just by whether they are performed in face-to-face interactions or through social networking websites.

Malikhao and Servaes wrote an important article about social media and narcissism. The research for this writing was about how youths in the millennial generation cope with life in a digital age of nonstop connectivity. This generation was studied specifically because they are the first generation in which its members have spent their entire lives in a fast paced, technology-driven world, and researchers wanted to see what effects technology had on a generation who knew nothing but technology and instant communication (Malikhao and Servaes).

The article talks about media usage trends that have been found in the millennial generation and identifies issues that emerge out of these particular trends. Some of the most important/interesting trends that researchers of this article found are that 73% of wired American teens use social networking websites, which is nearly a 25% jump since the previous year of the survey (Malikhao and Servaes). Of all who were surveyed, 57% claimed that they use more than one social media website and said that Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn were the most popular sites for this generation to use (Malikhao and Servaes). A few other relevant pieces of information that were discovered in this study are that 81% of adults 18-29 are wireless internet users, roughly half of those users access the internet through a laptop or cell phone, and that African-American adults are the most active users of mobile internet (Malikhao and Servaes). Moreover, among youths ages 12-17, 62% receive their news about current events and politics online; 48% of wired teens have made purchases online; 31% have received health, dieting, or physical fitness information on the internet; and 17% of online teens have received information about drug use and sexual health topics (Malikhao and Servaes). These current trends show how commonly the

internet is used by the millennial generation and the overarching reasons for why the internet is even used in the first place (Malikhao and Servaes).

With social media and the internet being such a relatively new invention, several emerging issues were recognized by researchers. A few of the issues that were discussed in this article included privacy, amount of usage, and multi-tasking/deep thinking.

As far as privacy is concerned when it comes to the internet and social media, there is a limited amount of privacy because the whole purpose of these websites is to put information out in order to connect with friends. Also, once something is posted on the internet there is a permanent record of that information that will never be completely erased. This is referred to as the “tattoo rule” by Jeff Jarvis, meaning that similar to how a tattoo is a permanent marking on the skin, anything posted on the internet is permanent, won’t go away, and will always be remembered by the web (Jarvis). Whether people fully understand this concept of limited/no privacy will greatly impact the information that they post online, and specifically on social media sites in which all of the people that a person is close to can always see every piece of information (Malikhao and Servaes).

The issue with internet usage and social media is that some people are more frequent users than others. Malikhao and Servaes break internet users into three categories, “heavy users” (people who are on the internet for 16+ hours per day), “moderate users” (people who are on the internet for 3-16 hours per day), and “light users” (people who are on the internet for less than 3 hours per day). It is not a good thing for people to spend all of their time online and in front of a computer screen, but having such a wide variety of users makes research especially difficult to do. In order for media usage to be consistently studied, there has to be some sort of understanding

that people who use media frequently will most likely answer questions differently than people who only occasionally use it (Malikhao and Servaes).

Finally, researchers suggest that internet usage leads to lack of deep thinking. Rather than pondering the answer to a question or a series of questions, people will merely look up the answer. While this is convenient and a very quick way of gaining information, in the long run it is believed to limit the amount of information that people can actually store in their brain, and it leads to a general lack of creativity because instead of pondering possible solutions, the “right” answer is always immediately known (Malikhao and Servaes).

All of this information about internet usage contributes to the way people perceive themselves and others and is invaluable for researchers who are looking for a link between social media and narcissistic tendencies. This article does a great job of presenting current media trends in the millennial generation and pressing issues that these trends incite. Current researchers would be wise to take this information into account before they embark on studying and writing on these important concepts any further.

Even though there are several downsides to the openness that occurs on the internet, some people argue that so much public information actually improves the way people work and live. Jeff Jarvis, author of the book *Public Parts*, describes nine reasons that “publicness” benefits people. The reasons that he lists are that publicness builds relationships, disarms strangers, enables collaboration, unleashes the wisdom (and generosity) of the crowd, defuses the myth of perfection, neutralizes stigmas, grants immortality, organizes people, and protects people (Jarvis, 43-60). The reasons listed here can greatly influence positive social interactions and can enhance peoples’ personal and professional lives. While his writing is mainly about the benefits, he does caution people that when they live very open/public lives online, unintended consequences can

occur. To eliminate this, he created the “don’t-be-a-fool rule,” cautioning internet users to be mindful of the information that is posted online (Jarvis 135).

Jarvis’ work discusses another researcher who has historically been in favor of public information, C. W. Mills. Mills argues in his book *The Sociological Imagination* that public information is good because of the distinction that he makes between mass information and public information. Mills states that the traditional idea of public information has evolved and has “[reached] its present-day climax in the idea of a mass society” (Mills 52). While Mills wrote about public and mass communication in 1959, well before the internet, according to his definitions information that people post on Facebook would fall under the classification of public information and not mass communication. Jarvis explains that Mills’ work discusses reasons that public communication is good, and in his opinion, better than mass communication. He says that in mass communication fewer people can express their opinions. Public information does not have to go through gatekeepers who may filter out what they deem unimportant. Also, mass communication does not allow for individual feedback as public information does (Jarvis).

While a limited amount of research has been performed on the link between Facebook and narcissism, researchers have studied the impact of posting images on social media websites. Authors Rose, Mackey-Kallis, Shyles, Barry, Biagini, Hart, and Jack discuss the effects that posting images to social media websites has on users. In their study, they analyzed 125 Facebook users and their photo content that they uploaded to Facebook. Participants self-reported their usage of the photo features on Facebook, and researchers analyzed the information to reveal why Facebook is being used and information about how Facebook photos may influence narcissism. The findings of this study reinforced common understandings of gender roles that are portrayed in the media. Men tended to post pictures that portrayed themselves as independent and dominant,

while females tended to post photos that gave the impression of their being sexy and submissive (Rose, et al.).

While these findings are not groundbreaking in the context of gender roles, they are important when it comes to face management theory and social media communication. These results support the ideas that people attempt to portray themselves in a particular way through their social media accounts. Rather than trying to break the stereotypes of gender roles, Facebook users in this study reinforced these stereotypes in order to preserve their face, their public self-image, that says that they are a “real” man or woman (Rose, et al.).

Several of the previous studies have show that social media usage may influence narcissism in users; however, the possibility of narcissism isn't the only negative influence of heavy social media usage. Other studies that have been performed have shown a possible correlation between Facebook usage and other problems, specifically problems with eating disorders and mental health. Two main studies stand out in this category, one performed by the University of Haifa, and the other done by Sheppard Pratt Health System.

In 2011, the University of Haifa studied the effects that high amounts of time on Facebook have on teenage girls' body image and eating habits. They surveyed 248 girls, ages 12-19, and asked them to provide information about their internet and TV watching habits. They were also asked questions “that examined their approach to slimming, bulimia, physical satisfaction or dissatisfaction, their general outlook on eating, and their sense of personal empowerment” (Latzer, Katz, Spivak, N.p.). The results of this study showed that the more time girls spent of Facebook, the more they tended to suffer from eating disorders and other negative mental health issues, including, “bulimia, anorexia, physical dissatisfaction, negative physical self-image,

negative approach to eating and more of an urge to be on a weight-loss diet” (Latzer, Katz, Spivak N.p.).

There was one condition to this research that is especially important for parents to note, that these problems were also highly associated with parenting practices. The showed that when parents were involved in their children’s media usage (by knowing what they were viewing on the web, what TV shows they watched, and by having discussions about media consumption), a type of “protective shield against eating disorders” was formed around the girls (Latzer, Katz, Spivak N.p.). The study also showed that the opposite is true as well, that when parents were not involved in the media that their children are exposed to, those children were more likely to have eating disorders and have problems with a negative body image. The overall findings of this study show that Facebook can have powerful negative effects on young minds’, however, parents who are involved in the lives of their children can help fix this problem (Latzer, Katz, Spivak).

A study performed by Sheppard Pratt Health System in Baltimore, Maryland, has found similar results. Sheppard Pratt’s Center for Eating disorders surveyed thousands of Facebook users and found out how much this form of social media affects people. Out of all participants surveyed, 51% said that seeing photos of themselves on Facebook made them more conscious of their own weight and body image, 32% said they felt sad when they compared themselves to their friends photos, and 44% indicated that when viewing the Facebook page of their friends, they wished they had the same body and/or lifestyle as that friend (Clemmer). Also, this study found that 80% of participants checked Facebook at least once a day, meaning that all of these negative feelings that people have when viewing Facebook are being continuously brought up due to the constant checking of the site (Clemmer). They found that not only are these eating disorders a problem, but comments provided by participants hinted that narcissism is beginning to play a

negative role in pictures posted online as well. One participant stated, “People get positive attention in the world by losing weight. And you can do it to an even greater extent on Facebook” (Clemmer N.p.). The research shows that these problems are not just those of young people, but that adults in their 20s, 30s and 40s had these very same issues (Clemmer). The article goes on to highlight other issues that Facebook brings about, but most significantly, readers see how Facebook is more than just another website, but one that has great influence on personal lives and mental health.

As the research has shown, Facebook can be a major problem, leading to extremes such as eating disorders and narcissistic tendencies. Because of this previous research that has just been displayed here, research questions were developed as a way to understand further whether there is a connection between Facebook and narcissism, and also, to see how the face management theory ties into this issue. Once these questions are presented, the methodology for the study performed to answer these questions will be displayed and discussed.

The history and current trends of research of face management theory, narcissism, computer-mediated communication/social media provide a good background and framework for new research to be done on the topic. Looking back on all of this research, it is evident that these topics are relevant today, these topics are involved in many aspects of human communication, especially when it comes to the technology and communication through technological mediums.

While a lot of research has been performed on the subjects of face management, narcissism and computer-mediated communication/social media, more research still needs to be done in order for scholars in the communication discipline to understand these concepts at a deeper level. The next phase of this thesis will focus on original research involving these topics.

The next section of this paper will discuss the methodology for the original research that has been performed for this study of face management, narcissism and Facebook. The research questions that were created for this study were developed out of the previous research that has just been reviewed and discussed. The goal of this original research is to understand further young adults' motivation for their Facebook posts and to see if they perceive narcissism in the posts of others.

Chapter 3- Methodology

Research Questions

A lot of research has been performed using face management theory and on the subjects of Facebook, narcissism, but many questions are still left unanswered. This original research study seeks to answer four specific questions regarding these topics. These topics have not been adequately addressed in previous research, and by answering these, the researcher hopes to provide a clearer understanding of computer-mediated communication along with traditional communication concepts will be developed. The four research questions that this study sought to answer are as follows:

RQ #1: Do young adults perceive the Facebook posts/activity of others as narcissistic?

RQ #2: Do young adults perceive their own Facebook posts/activity as narcissistic?

RQ #3: Do young adults use “preventative facework” as their main motivation for posting new information on Facebook?

RQ #4: Do young adults use “corrective facework” as their main motivation for editing information that they put on Facebook?

Even though Facebook is a fairly new form of communicating, several academic studies have been performed on the website and its users. As discussed in the previous literature review, Facebook has a major effect on people and the ways in which they communicate and how people perceive themselves. While these studies have been beneficial, much more research still needs to be conducted in this area of communication. This study is meant to look at the relationship between narcissism and Facebook usage. It will attempt to answer the research questions by discovering the motivation behind Facebook posts and whether others see these posts as narcissistic.

While social media is generally viewed as a positive tool for communication between people, some research has indicated that, in actuality, the constant posts, updates, and photos can actually distract from meaningful communication (Seligman). Communication through Facebook must be evaluated to see if the overall benefits of using it outweigh the negatives of not having an account. Unfortunately, many people do not evaluate their Facebook communication to see whether or not it is actually beneficial. Once the results of survey are analyzed, researchers and participants will be able to further evaluate their communication tendencies and ultimately see the underlying motivation for Facebook posts and see whether others view their communication as narcissistic.

The Survey

This quantitative research study used survey questions to develop an understanding of how Facebook use relates to narcissism in Facebook users. The survey questions were specifically designed to show how often people use Facebook and also the levels of narcissism that people have. The survey was distributed online through SurveyMonkey.com and was opened up to undergraduate students who were enrolled in a basic communication course at a large, Mid-Atlantic university. Each student in the class was given an opportunity to volunteer to be a participant. All students who responded to an initial recruitment email within three days were given the link to take the survey. Once this link was given, the students had another three days to complete the survey and send another response email to the researcher, indicating that they had completed the survey. In order to ensure high participation levels, students were given extra credit to complete the survey.

SurveyMonkey.com was chosen because of the large number of questions that the survey could have, as well as the large number of participants that were anticipated to respond. In addition, the results and participants were guaranteed to be anonymous due to the nature of online

surveys and the secure web link that Survey Monkey provided. The survey itself attempted to get to the root of why people use Facebook in the first place, and then asked participants various other questions to get an overall understanding of their main reasons for using the website.

The survey that was distributed was based on a Facebook survey that was developed by Craig Ross et. al. and had already been used in several other research studies since its creation in 2009. The survey was originally published in the *Journal of Computers in Human Behavior* and was used to understand whether correlation between personality traits and Facebook use was present (Ross, et. al.). This survey was credible to use because it has been used as a survey tool in several studies and continues to be used in various new research studies. The survey fit this study well because in the recommendations for future research in the original publication by Ross et. al., the authors recommend that this survey be used to measure other personality traits such as narcissism (Ross, et. al.). This research study is an extension of the original personality research and does exactly what the original authors recommend, using their tool to help recognize narcissism on social media websites. The survey that was used in this study was a little different from the original published survey (as some questions had to be modified to fit the new audience and research questions of this study), but the majority of questions and the overall structure of the survey are consistent with the original survey that was developed by Ross et. al. in 2009.

In total, the survey had 33 questions that fall into four categories. The first category asked if the participants were 18 years of age or older, and if they actually had personal experience with Facebook; participants consented to their information being used in this research study. The final three categories asked questions about participants' basic use and attitudes toward Facebook, use of basic Facebook functions and applications, and general attitudes about Facebook. Questions were also asked about the specific purpose that participants have for using Facebook, including

asking about things such as logging on to post status, to check messages, to participate in schoolwork related activities, or simply to check what their list of “friends” are currently up to. The results of this study show how often Facebook is used and for what purposes.

The next category of questions asked for information from participants about their use of applications and functions of Facebook. The responses to this section of the survey answer the research questions regarding narcissism and narcissistic tendencies among users by gauging how applications such as friends, comments, and personal messages are used. These questions show the reason behind and purposes of participants’ Facebook presence and use and directly relate back to the research questions about narcissism and face management.

Finally, the last section of the survey asks participants about their general attitudes and feelings towards Facebook. These questions ask about how long participants have had a Facebook account, how satisfied they are with the website, and why they like the website. The final question of the survey asks participants to list any additional thoughts that they have about Facebook. These responses give even further insight into Facebook usage, which helps answer the presented research questions. The results also bring up information and ideas that could be studied in future social media and narcissism research.

Chapter 4- Results & Discussion

Results

The survey in its entirety can be found in Appendix A. The following pages will discuss each individual question and the results of each; however, for a full view of the survey without results or commentary, refer to Appendix A. The first four questions were initial screening questions that made sure participants who took the survey were legally and practically eligible to take part in the survey. Question 1 informed participants that the survey would be used for graduate research and that all results would be completely anonymous. Students were asked to acknowledge that they read this information and still agreed to participate in the study. Question 2 asked if participants had a Facebook account. Of the people who began taking the survey, 296 participants indicated that they had an active Facebook account, and nine stated that they did not have an account. Of those nine, one did not have an account because he did not have enough time and four did not have an account because they were not interested in the website. Four gave other reasons for not having a Facebook account, including two people saying they had an account and lost interest, one stating that it was not healthy for his marriage, and the other did not have a Facebook account because of personal convictions. The third question asked if participants were 18 years of age or older in order to be sure that participants involved in this survey were all legal adults. The fourth and final question of this initial section told students that if they were not 18 years old or older or did not have an active Facebook account, the survey was complete. Participants who were at least 18 years old and had an active Facebook account were asked to continue on with the survey. The total number of people who were 18 years old and had an active Facebook account according to this question totaled 299. In the response to the previous question 296 participants indicated that they have an account. These numbers are different by three, meaning that these questions were

unclear, or that three people who do not have Facebook accounts went on to take this survey. Overall, 299 people went on to take the rest of this survey.

The next few pages of this research will display the results for the remainder of the survey questions. The response to these questions will be given in the actual number of participant responses, as well as in percentages. Two things are important to mention before continuing on to examine these results. The first is that the majority of questions had 299 responses; however, a handful had fewer, with the smallest number of responses to any given question being 291 responses. The second important aspect to note is that the percentages that are given in this section are rounded to the nearest tenth of a percent.

The next section of this survey asked questions to help understand the basic uses of and attitudes towards Facebook, and contained 11 questions. The first question in this section (question 5) asked participants, “On average, how many minutes per day do you spend on Facebook?” A total of 23.6% said 10 minutes or less, 28% said 10-30 minutes, 23.9% said 31-60 minutes, 13.8% said 1-2 hours, 6.4% said 2-3 hours, and 4.4% said that they spent 3 or more hours on the website. Question 5 led into the question that was asked in number 6.

Question 6 asked participants to rate how much Facebook is part of their everyday activity. The question stated, “Facebook is part of my everyday activity,” and asked participants to choose how much they agree with that statement. A total of 6.4% strongly disagreed, 11.5% disagreed, 16.8% were neutral, 39.4% agreed, and 25.9% strongly agreed with the statement.

Questions 7 asked participants to indicate how much they agreed/disagreed with the following statement, “I am proud of my Facebook page.” A total of 1.7% strongly disagreed with the statement, 3.0% disagreed, 33.7% were neutral, 45.1% agreed, and 16.5% strongly agreed that they are proud of their Facebook page.

The next question, number 8, asked participants whether they dedicated part of their daily schedule to Facebook. This question also had participants place their answers on a scale of strongly disagree to strongly agree. The exact wording of this question was, “I dedicate part of my daily schedule to Facebook.” A total of 18.9% strongly disagreed with this statement, 43.1% disagreed, 21.6% were neutral, 13.1% agreed, and 3.4% strongly agreed with the statement.

Survey question 9 asked participants about how they felt when they haven’t logged into Facebook for a while. In response to the question, “I feel out of touch when I haven’t logged on to Facebook for a while,” 15.5% strongly disagreed, 29.0% disagreed, 19.5% were neutral, 31.0% agreed, and 5.1% strongly agreed.

The next survey question, number 10, asked survey participants how much they agreed with the following statement, “I would be sad if Facebook shut down.” A total of 8.42% strongly disagreed with this statement, 22.9% disagreed, 21.2% were neutral, 35.0% agreed, and 12.5% strongly agreed that they would be sad if Facebook were to be shut down.

Question 11 asked users, “Who can see your Facebook posts?” Four options were given to choose from, “Friends Only,” “Friends and Friends of Friends,” “Everyone,” and “Don’t Know.” Altogether, 62.0% indicated that only friends can see their Facebook posts, 18.9% stated that friends and friends of friends could see their posts, 12.5% allowed everyone to see what they post on Facebook, and 6.7% weren’t sure what their security settings were in regards to who could see their posts.

Question 12 asked a similar question, “Who can see your Facebook photos?” The same options were given to participants to select. Altogether, 58.6% said only Facebook friends can see their photos, 24.2% said that friends and friends of friends can see their photos, 10.4% said everyone can see their photos, and 6.7% didn’t know who was able to see their Facebook photos.

The 13th question of the survey was also similar to the previous two questions, but asked, “Who can search for you on Facebook?” The same set of responses from the previous two questions was given for participants to choose from, except for this question the response of “friends” was not an option. A total of 16.5% of participants said that friends of friends could search for them on Facebook, 64.3% said that everyone could search for them, and 19.2% did not know who was able to search for them.

Questions 14 and 15 were related to each other. Question 14 asked participants, “Do you use the Limited Profile List to prevent certain people from seeing certain aspects of your profile?” The Limited Profile List is an option on Facebook that limits what specific information to which particular Facebook friends have access. Question 15 asked the people who said “yes,” the reasons why they used the Limited Profile List.

In response to question 14, 41.7% said that they use the Limited Profile List, 40.7% said that they do not use the Limited Profile List, and 17.6% either did not know what the feature was or were not sure if they were using it.

Question 15 asked “If [you answered] yes [to the previous question], why?” A total of 52.2% answered this question by selecting “I do not use the Limited Profile List,” 31.0% said that they used it “to prevent certain people from seeing more private information,” 10.8% said that they used it “to prevent certain people from “stalking” me,” and 6.1% selected “Other (please specify).” The total number of people who selected “Other (please specify)” was 18. Altogether 12 of the 18 indicated that they chose “other (please specify)” because they did not know what the feature was. Altogether 3 of the 18 people who chose this option did so because they “did not answer yes to the previous question,” which indicates that they misunderstood question 15. Finally, the remaining 3 people who chose “Other (please specify)” said, “I have been stalked and

have been personally bullied and hurt because my profile was once open to ‘public’,” “to prevent specific users from harassing me,” and “to prevent family from knowing all my business without my consent.”

Question 16 was the final question in this first “basic use and attitude” section of the survey. The question stated, “Which of the following pieces of contact information do you have on your profile? (Check all that apply.)” The options that participants were given to choose from were address, phone number, email, and none. A total of 15 participants include their address on the Facebook profile, 65 include their phone number, and 146 list their email. 133 people who took this survey responded that they do not include any of these pieces of contact information on their Facebook profile.

The third section of this survey asked questions in order to gauge participants’ use of basic Facebook functions and applications. This section was made up of 13 questions asked in various formats. The first question of this third section, question number 17, asked participants how many Facebook friends they had. A total of 293 of the survey respondents answered this question. Overall, the average Facebook friend count of all of the survey participants who answered this question was 673. The median number of Facebook friends was 537. The lowest reported friend number was 15. The next three lowest Facebook friend totals were one person who reported having 30 friends, one person who reported 50 friends, and another who reported 60 friends. The highest reported friend number was 3,792. The next three highest friend totals included one person’s reportedly having 3,000, friends, one person reporting 2,023 friends, and 7 people reporting 2,000 friends.

Question number 18 asked participants, “Approximately how many pictures of yourself are you tagged in on Facebook?” Altogether, 293 of the survey participants answered this question.

As a whole, the average number of Facebook pictures that participants were tagged in totaled 540. The median number of photos that users were tagged in was 391. The lowest reported picture count was 0. The next three lowest reported totals were a participant who stated he had 2 total pictures, an individual who had 3 total pictures, and two people who reported being tagged in 5 pictures. The highest reported picture count was 3,341. The next three highest reported totals were two people who reported being tagged in 3,000 photos, one person who was tagged in 2,894 photos, and one person who was tagged in 2,264 photos.

Question 19 asked participants, “Referring back to the previous question, are the majority of these pictures uploaded by you or by others?” Participants only had these options to choose from, and 22.1% chose “uploaded by me,” and 77.9% chose “uploaded by others.”

The 20th question of this survey asked participants, “Which function do you prefer to use, the Facebook Wall or Facebook Messages? Why?” The question was open-ended and did not limit responses to any pre-set choices, but allowed participants to answer how they thought could best describe their opinion. While the survey participants were asked to choose between one or the other, many people indicated that they like both equally and that the wall and message functions are used for different things. In total 296 people answered this question, but one person answered by saying, “I’m not sure what these are...” This person was not counted in the results for this question.

Overall, 11.5% did not choose one function over the other but stayed in the middle and claimed to like both equally, depending on the occasion and reason for posting. Other specific reasons why people did not choose one or the other included, “For a private conversation always Facebook messages because the conversation is one on one and private - social courtesy. For a general post or picture or something of that nature then the Facebook wall. Have to consider the

individual situation and all its variables,” and, “It is nice to see what others are up to from back home or friends around the world. But if I want to have a brief conversation, I would message them and not use the wall.”

Overall, 20.6% reported to prefer to use the Facebook wall, with many people reporting that they did this because they believed this to be easier than sending a message. Other reasons that people gave for their preference of the Facebook wall included, “I like to see what my friends and family are up to,” “I feel if you are going to private message you might as well have their phone number and text them,” “I only use Facebook to publically share stuff with my friends,” “I prefer to use the Facebook wall because I find it less private,” “I like having uplifting comments for other people to see,” “It's especially helpful at college to show people the adventures I have had!” “To let others know what I'm doing, not just one person,” “Wall because everyone can see it,” “Probably prefer the Facebook wall because I like that other people can see it and like it,” “Wall because it makes people feel more special,” “Wall because every can see [my] posts,” “I want everyone to see [my posts]” “Facebook wall, because honestly it's more entertaining and fun to have posts on your wall in response,” and, “I prefer to use the wall because it allows my friends to comment on what I post.”

Altogether 67.9% reportedly prefer to use Facebook messages, with many participants stating that they liked the privacy that personal messages offered. Other reasons that participants gave for preferring to use Facebook messages included, “I prefer Facebook messages because I mainly use Facebook for communication with friends that don't have cellphones. I don't need my friend's friends seeing what I have to tell him or her,” “I do not like making things too public,” “everyone does not need to read my conversations,” “I prefer the Facebook message because I'm able to have conversations with someone without the world knowing and judging my conversations,” “I

help a lot of people with depression and that is a private matter,” “I prefer to use the Facebook messages, because I mainly use Instagram and Twitter for keeping my friends and family members updated with my life, not my Facebook wall,” “Messages because I don’t have texting,” “Messages. It’s more personal, and frankly I don’t feel the need to let the rest of humanity have a say in my conversations with friends, “and “messages because they are private.”

Question 21 asked participants, “How often do you update your Facebook status?” This question was also an open response, allowing participants to answer with a number or with an explanation for why they choose to update their status when they do. Every response to this question was categorized into 10 different categories in order to develop an understanding of how often people actually update their status. The 10 categories that each response was placed into were multiple daily, daily, few per week, weekly, few per month, monthly, every few months, yearly (people who indicated rarely were also put into this category), never, and other. Out of the 294 responses to this question, 9 (3.1%) update multiple times per day, 8 (2.7%) update daily, 35 (11.9%) updated a few times per week, 42 (14.3%) update weekly, 36 (12.2%) update a few times per month, 32 (10.9%) update monthly, 34 (11.6%) update every few months, 46 (15.6%) update yearly or rarely, 45 (15.3%) never update, and 7 (2.4%) indicated other updating frequencies, including mostly around the holidays, whenever something major happens, or “not as much as I’d like.”

Question 22 was written to see what participants do when they make a mistake when making any post on Facebook. The question asked, “When you realize that you make a mistake on a Facebook post, which of the following are you most likely to do?” The survey then listed four answers for participants to choose from, “delete the post”, “edit the post”, “comment on the post admitting your mistake”, and “other (please specify).” A total of 45.9% of participants responded

by saying that they would delete the post, 42.9% said that they would edit the post, 7.14% said that they would comment on the post, admitting their mistake, and 4.0% chose “other (please specify).” The total number of people who selected “other” was 12. The responses to this included 7 people who said it depended on the type of mistake that was made, 2 people who said it depended on how long ago the mistake occurred, 1 person who said “I don’t post anything,” 1 person who said, “No mistaken posts yet,” and 1 other who said that when a mistake is made he copies the post, deletes it, pastes it back into the status bar, corrects the mistake, and then reposts.

Question 23 asked, “How likely would you be to post information to Facebook if you knew that nobody would ‘like’ your update?” Participants were given 5 options to choose from, ranging from “extremely likely” to “extremely unlikely.” Approximately 7.1% chose “extremely likely”, 18.7% chose “somewhat likely”, 19.1% chose “likely”, 34.4% chose “somewhat unlikely”, and 20.8% chose “extremely unlikely.”

Question 24 was similar to question 23, but asked about commenting instead of liking. Participants were given the same 5 choices, and were asked to respond to this question; “How likely would you be to post information to Facebook if you knew that nobody would comment on your update?” In response to this question, 14.6% of respondents said “extremely unlikely”, 22.5% said “somewhat likely”, 30.3% said “likely”, 24.5% said “somewhat unlikely”, and 8.2% said “extremely unlikely.”

Question 25 asked participants, “What is your most preferred function/application of Facebook?” Participants could choose from 9 options, with the last one being, “Other (please specify).” The other 8 options that were given were: photos, notes, groups, events, posted items, marketplace, wall, and messages. Participants overwhelmingly chose photos as their favorite Facebook feature, with a total of 46.9% indicating that this was their favorite part. 17.7% said that

messages were their favorite, 15.0% said the Facebook wall, 6.8% said other posted items, 6.1% said groups, 3.4% said events, and both the notes and marketplace features were each chosen by 0.7% of participants. In addition, 2.7% of survey-takers chose the category of “other (please specify),” and said “news feed” (3 responses), “[being able to] like pages”, “keeping in touch,” “watching Vines [6 second long video] and stalking old friends,” “status updates,” and “wall and messages both.”

Survey question 26 asked participants to answer “yes” or “no” to the following question: “Have you ever deleted a post (photo, status, comment, etc.) that someone made that was negative towards you? If yes, what is an example (please describe in brief, general terms)?” A total of 69.1% said, “no,” and 31% said “yes,” and included examples as to when this has happened. The most common example that given by more than half of participants was that a post was removed because it contained cursing, foul language, or sexually explicit language, and participants did not want this content on their walls for all of their close friends and family to see. The second most common response was that another person posted an embarrassing or unsightly photo of the participant. Other notable examples that were given include: “Someone hacked my account and posted [inappropriate content],” “a negative insult toward my character. [I] deleted it because I don’t want others assuming that was true,” “Someone called me an offensive term in jest, but I still deleted it because I did not want to give off a bad appearance,” “I made a compromising spelling error that I was called names for,” “underage drinking [was] in the picture,” “harassment,” “I deleted a picture once because someone commented that it was basically an unflattering picture of me,” “when multiple people gang up on my opinion,” “my mom always posts stuff on my wall when she meant to just message me,” “I felt publically insulted,” and “I did

not feel the need to let an insult sit on my page for the world to see. If they have something to say, they can either say it to my face or not at all.”

The 27th question of this survey asked, “If you post a status onto Facebook and nobody comments on it or likes it, what are you most likely to do?” Four choices were given to respondents to choose from: “nothing, leave the post up”, “delete the post”, “edit the post”, and “other (please specify).” The overwhelming majority of participants, 84.4%, chose “nothing, leave the post up.” A total of 12.9% chose the next choice, “delete the post,” 1.4% chose “edit the post,” and the final 1.4% chose “other (please specify).” The four people who chose this final option stated their reasons for their choice, including one person who said, “I don’t post,” another who said, “I’ve never deleted a Facebook status, but since I can’t remember the last time I posted something that received no likes, this answer may be biased,” and two who gave very similar responses, one of them being, “If I meant for it to be funny, I’ll delete it. If it’s something factual like a news update or a Bible verse I’ll leave it up.”

Question 28 stated, “How do you generally feel about the posts that your friends make?” Participants were given 5 choices to pick from, ranging from “they are meaningful and express worthwhile information,” to “They are meaningless and express unimportant information.” 4.4% of participants selected “They are meaningful and express worthwhile information,” 41.5% selected “They are somewhat meaningful and express somewhat worthwhile information,” 39.8% said that they were “neutral,” when it came to their friends posts, 10.2% of participants selected “they are not meaningful and do not express worthwhile information,” and 4.1% selected “They are meaningless and express unimportant information.”

The final question in this third section of questions was number 29, which asked, “is the information that your friends post truly important to you?” Survey participants had three choices

to choose from, “yes,” “somewhat important,” and “no.” Out of all of the total responses, 12.2% said “yes,” 71.4% said their Facebook friends’ posts are “somewhat important,” and 16.3% said, “no.”

The fourth and final section of this survey asked questions to assess participants’ general attitudes towards Facebook. The section had a total of four questions, bringing total number of survey questions to 33.

The first question in this section, number 30, asked participants, “Approximately how long have you had your Facebook profile?” Participants were given options in 6 month increments, starting at 6 months and going up to the final option of “3+ years.” A total of 3.4% of survey participants have had their Facebook profile for 6 months, 2.1% have had their Facebook profile for 1 year, 1.4% have had their Facebook profile for 1.5 years, 5.8% have had their Facebook profile for 2 years, 4.5% have had their Facebook profile for 2.5 years, and 82.9% of survey participants have had their Facebook profile for 3 years or longer.

Question 31 asked survey participants, “How satisfied are you with Facebook, overall?” Five options were given for participants to choose from, “not satisfied at all”, “barely satisfied”, “neutral”, “satisfied”, and “very satisfied.” Out of all of the survey participants, 2.1% were reportedly “not satisfied at all,” 6.2% were “barely satisfied,” 27.5% were “neutral,” 55.7% were satisfied, and 8.6% were “very satisfied” with Facebook as a whole.

Question 32 simply asked, “Why do you like Facebook?” and gave participants 6 options to indicate their feelings. The options that were given were: “It is how I communicate with my current friends,” “it provides a distraction from my schoolwork,” “it allows me to communicate with people from my past,” “it allows me to collect information on people I am interested in,” it allows me to show others what I am doing,” and “other (please specify).” Out of all of the

respondents, 26.4% said that they like Facebook because “it is how I communicate with my current friends,” 5.1% said they like Facebook because “it provides a distraction from my schoolwork,” 38.4% said they like Facebook because “it allows me to communicate with people from my past” A total of 11.0% said they like Facebook because “it allows me to collect information on people I am interested in,” 5.8% said they like Facebook because “it allows me to show others what I am doing,” and 13.4% chose “other (please specify).” Altogether 39 selected “other (please specify).” The most common answer that was listed was “all of the above,” including one person who wrote, “all of the above. It’s just become part of my day.” The second most common answer was that people like to use it for photos, either to post their own, or keep up with photos that other people are posting. Other things that people posted include: “It allows me to communicate with people I don’t see on a regular basis,” “I use it for school purposes, such as groups for classes where we can share information and ask each other questions,” “It gives me something to do when there is nothing to do,” “I try to post things that draw others closer to God,” “It reminds me of who I am and where I come from and that I do have people in my life when I forget these things,” and “it gives me networking opportunities.”

Question 33 was the final question of this survey was completely open-ended. This question asked participants, “Do you have any other opinions that you would like to express about Facebook and your experience with it?” The majority of people responded by saying that they did not have anything else to say about the website; however, several people did respond with additional comments. These responses fall under three main types of responses, negative comments about the website, positive comments about the website, and mixed comments about the website. Most participants who left comments in this section were not overly happy with the site. This may be the nature of comments sections, that people who comment may only be people

who have negative experiences with the site; however, it is still important to note that most comments were not positive. The category with the second most responses was the mixed category. In these comments people commented on both the positive and negative aspects of the website, often explaining why they did not feel strongly in either direction. The fewest responses by far were in the positive category. It would be impractical to list all of the responses to this question, but several notable responses for each of these categories will be quoted.

Examples of the negative comments include: “There is too much ‘like if you love your mom’ type nonsense and too many fake sob stories, and it’s a social networking site, not a political platform,” “I am very wary of Facebook as I do not trust the company to keep my private information, private,” “The website changes too much,” “I used to be almost obsessed with it, but now I truly do not have the time nor the strength to care about the trivial and negative things that consume my news feed,” “It is getting really boring and there is honestly just too many things cluttered around the site,” “People like to convince others that their lives are rough. Really all they're doing is making themselves sound selfish, lazy, and spoiled,” “I try to use it as little as possible,” “I honestly wish Facebook didn’t exist. It’s become actually debilitating to my life. It is a necessary evil and an addiction for everyone in my generation,” “Twitter is way better, cause parents don’t know how to use it yet,” “People get friend crazy and add people that they don’t even know and that can be very dangerous,” “Some people devote a lot of time seeking attention from others and how many likes they can get on a post. They are way too concerned with the opinions of others,” “Too many people use it foolishly and seek the approval from others. People reveal things about themselves like insecurities and bitterness that people would not know otherwise,” “There seems to be a lot of spam on Facebook nowadays which is why I mainly use Twitter or Instagram,” “Facebook distorts reality for many people. The world is not as ideal as

Facebook suggests most of the time. Facebook is also shallow, too fast, and ever the more meaningless,” “Every update makes me hate it more and more,” “I haven’t really used Facebook for much more than posting pictures in over 2 years,” and “Some people use it for stupid reasons.”

Examples of the positive comments include: “Facebook is a great social network,” “Facebook is revolutionary. Whether people accept it or not, it and other forms of social media are defining our generation. It will forever change the way we pick up knowledge and interact in our daily lives,” “I keep it for a blast to the past to see how my old OLD friends are doing,” “I feel it’s the best way for the youth and elderly to find old friends and reconnect,” “As long as I’m responsible about using it, it actually simplifies my social life.”

Examples of mixed comments include: “Your experience is what you make of it,” “I think overall it is useless because it causes a lot of meaningless fights. However, in the right hands people can connect with others they wish to see who live far away,” “Facebook is more of a distraction than anything so I put encouraging posts on it and sometimes scroll through my feed, but that’s about it,” “It is a great way to create an image for yourself,” “I like Facebook, but I personally am trying to inch myself away from it because it wastes time and it can sometimes have a negative effect on my mood,” “It has positive uses, but can be addictive and waste people’s time if misused, and can also diminish people’s opportunities for more direct/personal communication,” “It’s not as good as Instagram, but it’s better than Twitter,” and “It’s a great tool if you use it correctly, but it is very easy to spend too much time on it.”

The results of this study help develop an understanding of Facebook, how people use it, and their general attitudes toward it. Now that the raw data has been given, these results will be

discussed, specifically in how they relate to the research questions that were brought up earlier in this writing.

Discussion

This thesis draws on the theory of face management to provide a framework for this study, ultimately seeing if there is some relationship between the two. The following sections will refer to this theory when final conclusions are drawn. The results of this survey brought up many interesting points and help provide answers to the selected research questions.

Response to Research Question #1

RQ #1: Do young adults perceive the Facebook posts/activity of others as narcissistic?

Several of the questions directly relate to this research question. Question 28 relates to this statement as it asked, “How do you generally feel about the posts that your friends make?” Most people responded by saying that the posts of their friends were somewhat meaningful and express somewhat worthwhile information (41.5%), or they did not feel one way or the other about their friends posts, that they were neutral (39.8%). This indicates that for the most part people are not highly interested in the posts of others, but aren’t opposed to reading them either. This suggests that narcissism may not be perceived in the posts of others. Based on the responses to this question, most participants do not find what their Facebook friends post to the site meaningless.

The responses to question 29 may also support the idea that narcissism is not perceived in the posts of others. This question asked participants if the information that their friends posted to Facebook was truly important. The majority of people (71.4%) indicated that posts were “somewhat important.” The other responses were split relatively even between yes and no. This also suggests the idea that narcissism is not perceived in the posts of others because if narcissism were perceived, then it would be more likely for people to say that information that is posted by

friends was not important. This is supported by what C.S. Lewis wrote in *Surprised by Joy*, as he discussed that self-centered/narcissistic people are not enjoyable to be around or spend time interacting with (Lewis). While it is important to understand that Lewis was from a different time period and did not experience the same situations that more recent people have experienced, his statements about narcissistic people can still be generally applied today. Due to what Lewis stated, Facebook users who sense narcissism in the posts of others would be more likely to be less interested in those posts; however, since users find their friends' posts "somewhat important," significant narcissism is most likely not seen in the posts of other Facebook users.

Another survey question that goes along with these findings is number 31. When asked how satisfied participants were with Facebook overall, only 24 people responded by saying that they were not satisfied at all or barely satisfied. The rest of the other participants stated that they were at least neutral in their feelings about the website, with the majority indicating that they were satisfied with Facebook overall. Again, if participants perceived narcissism in the posts of others, it would be logical to believe that they would not be satisfied with Facebook overall (due to what Lewis believed to be true of narcissistic people), but since most are satisfied, high levels of narcissism are probably not seen in the posts of others.

Finally, the last survey question to address this research question was number 33, which asked users for their thoughts about their Facebook experience. The majority of comments did not suggest narcissism was found consistently in the posts of others. One person stated, "It's fun to see what people in your life are up to," indicating that this respondent liked reading about the highlights of life that his Facebook friends post. The largest number of negative comments listed here dealt with the security settings, that it takes up too much time, that it is a "necessary evil," or that other forms of social media are better (Instagram, Twitter, etc.). While a few of these

responses hinted at the narcissism in the posts of others, the majority did not, which adds to the evidence that Facebook users do not perceive narcissism in the posts of others.

These responses to these questions produced a lot of interesting data and results; however, many of the responses did not directly relate to narcissism. After reviewing the results of several of these questions that actually dealt with narcissism, the conclusion can be drawn that the answer to research question #1 is no, young adults do not perceive the Facebook posts/activity of others as narcissistic.

Response to Research Question #2

RQ #2: Do young adults perceive their own Facebook posts/activity as narcissistic?

In response to this research question several survey question results will be discussed. According to question 5, approximately 74% of participants spend between one minute and one hour on Facebook each day, and question 6 shows that over 65% make Facebook a part of their everyday activity. Even though most people make time for Facebook every day, not many people updated their status each day, with less than 6% of participants who said that they updated their status daily or multiple times per day. This question was specifically asking about status updates and not updates of anything else such as photos or videos. The results also showed that only 4% of participants were not proud of their Facebook page. Additionally, over 45% of participants said that they would be sad if Facebook shut down. While these results put together do not show that narcissism is perceived in self-posts, they do indicate that a fair amount of time is spent on the site per day and that people are generally happy with what they are posting and sharing.

When asked who could see Facebook posts and photos, most survey participants indicated that only friends could see what is posted, 62% stating this for posts and 59% stating this for photos. This means that the majority of users do not want anyone except their friends to see what they

post. According to question 14, 60% of the participants limit their profile to others. These responses tell us that in general, people do not want their information visible to the entire world; however, most people are comfortable sharing all of their information with their Facebook friends. When participants who use the limited profile list were asked why they did so, most people answered that they did not want certain people to see more private information. This is interesting because rather than just blocking that person altogether, they decided to allow some information to be shown, just not the most personal information. This relates back to the Narcissistic Personality Inventory, in which the authors state that people who are narcissistic display high levels of exhibitionism (Panek, Nardis, Konrath). The responses to these questions show that participants do not exhibit the high exhibitionism, meaning that it would be difficult to describe these participants as narcissists by Narcissistic Personality Inventory's definition.

The average number of photos that participants had of themselves was 530, with a median of 391. This may seem like quite a few photos; however, most people who participated in this survey (83%) have had a Facebook account for over three years. Also, question 19 showed that 78% of participants said that most of the Facebook photos were not uploaded by themselves, but by other people. When it comes to photos on Facebook, these results point to the idea that narcissism is not perceived in self-posts when it comes to the amount of pictures that are being posted.

It is also important to note that 201 users reported that they preferred to use Facebook messages, as opposed to the 61 who preferred the wall and the 34 who liked both equally. This also suggests that Facebook users are not narcissistic in their posts because as Morf and Rhodwealt suggest, narcissists show exhibitionistic behavior and demand significant attention from others (Morf and Rhodwealt). This explanation of narcissistic behavior suggest that true narcissists would use the Facebook wall to communicate more often than they would use

messages because the wall could get attention from several other people, whereas the message option only allows for feedback and attention from the person to whom the message was sent. Some participants indicated that they liked using the wall because it was a way to show off, or to receive likes/comments, and these people may be described by Morf and Rhodwealt as narcissistic, however, the majority of respondents preferred to communicate using messages because of the privacy that comes along with them.

Also, more participants updated their Facebook status less frequently than participants who updated it on a very frequent basis. Approximately five times more people reported that they never update their status than people who said that they post several times per day. The same findings were true of people who post daily compared to people who never post. This is also further evidence that people do not perceive their own posts are narcissist, simply because there aren't many people who post extremely frequently. The authors of the Narcissistic Personality Inventory state that one of the main ways of seeing how narcissistic a person is is to see how much exhibitionism that person engages in (Panek, Nardis, and Konrath). The purpose of question 21 was to gain an understanding of how much exhibitionism participants showed on Facebook by asking how frequently they update their Facebook status. The majority of users (31%) claimed that they rarely or never posted, and very few (6%) claimed to update their status several times a day or daily. Because so few people post daily, and many rarely or never post, we see that the exhibitionism of these survey participants is low, suggesting that Facebook posts are not narcissistic.

Over 55% of survey participants indicated that they were "somewhat unlikely," or "extremely unlikely" to post information if they knew that nobody would like their update. This may be because, as Adam Joinson discovered, the main purpose of social media is to keep in touch with

others, to communicate generally with people that are known in real life, and to maintain contact through the sharing of information with other people (Joinson). If other people do not read what is posted, then the overall point of Facebook is missed, which may be why the majority of participants stated that they are unlikely to post information if they knew that nobody would like their updates; one of the main purposes for having a Facebook account in the first place is to share information with others.

Surprisingly, nearly 70% of participants indicated that they have never deleted a negative post (photo, status, comment, etc.) that someone else had made. This number seems quite high but indicates narcissism is not present in these particular aspects of Facebook activity because narcissistic users would constantly be monitoring what others post about themselves and would delete things that did not paint a positive picture of them (unless narcissists think that everything posted about them is positive). This is shown in Carter's research, when he states that whenever a flaw or negative information is brought to the attention of a narcissist, the narcissist tends to become angry and defensive (Carter). Participants did not indicate any angry or defensive actions but seemed indifferent about negative posts that were made against them, indicating that they were not displaying narcissistic behavior as Carter describes it.

Additionally, 84% of participants stated that if they posted something on Facebook and nobody liked it, they would do nothing and leave the post up, while only 13% said that they would delete the post. This again most likely goes to show that narcissism is not present (the only exception being that all 84% of respondents who answered this way did so because they believed that their posts were so good and that everyone else was wrong for not commenting- but this is not likely to be the case for this many people).

In addition to these findings only 6% of participants said that they like to use Facebook because “it [allowed them] to show others what [they] are doing.” Most people claimed that they like using the website because it allows them to communicate with current friends and with friends from their past. This does not mean that participants are not keeping up with their past and current friends in ways that are not narcissistic; however, it does mean that most people did not report showing off to others (narcissism) as their main reason for using Facebook. The responses to this question also suggest that narcissism is not present in self-made Facebook posts.

The last question that addresses this specific research question is the last survey question, in which participants could say anything that they wanted to about Facebook and their experience with it. These answers included a lot of complaining about how other people use Facebook; however, very little was discussed about themselves using it in a negative way. For example, the one person who said, “Some people devote a lot of time seeking attention from others and how many likes they can get on a post. They are way too concerned with the opinions of others.” On the other hand, one participant did state that Facebook was a great way to “create an image for yourself”; however, very few comments resembled this attitude. One person noted that Facebook was becoming debilitating to his life, but did not state why this was the case. A few people said that they used to be addicted but barely use it now. Perhaps this is because they recognized narcissistic or other unwanted tendencies in their Facebook communication and made changes to prevent these from becoming commonplace, but no further detail is given to why these users began using Facebook less. It is also important to go back to what Symington says about recognizing narcissism, when he states “None of us are free from narcissism, and one of the fundamental aspects of the condition is that it blinds us to self-knowledge” (Symington 19). Just because people do not admit to narcissistic tendencies does not mean that they are not present,

although, the specific results of this study indicate that narcissistic tendencies are not recognized in each participants' own posts.

In response to question 22, one participant stated that he had “no mistaken posts yet.” While this may or may not be true, especially because we do not have any idea of how long this participant has actually had his Facebook account, this way of speaking portrays narcissism. Even if this participant had not made any mistakes yet, his semantics and overall way of making this statement come across as narcissistic, and portray this user as one who actively displays his narcissism through Facebook.

A participant responded to question 33, the open-ended question asking for any other opinions about Facebook, by saying “It is a great way to create an image for yourself.” This response is interesting because it shows narcissism at its highest level. This user understood that there is nothing stopping Facebook users from completely fabricating their life stories or from overly exaggerating their life events. Because of social accountability this does not often happen to these extremes, but narcissism is still easily performed by users because Facebook is “a great way to create an image for yourself.”

One other thing to note is that just because people do not express narcissism, does not mean that narcissism is not present. It is very possible that a persons narcissistic tendencies can blind them to their narcissism, thus making some Facebook users ignorant of their narcissistic tendencies. While some narcissism has been found in the survey response and the answers to each research question, it is important to understand that because this study was self-reported, narcissism may not have even been evident to participants as they were answering these questions.

Overall, the survey results show that the response to this question is overwhelmingly that people do not recognize narcissism in their own Facebook posts. While a few responses given by participants indicate that some people recognize their use of Facebook as narcissistic, the majority of responses to these survey questions illustrate that most people do not see their own posts as narcissistic. As previously noted, this does not mean that posts are not narcissistic, but that people do not *perceive* their posts as narcissistic.

Response to Research Question #3

RQ #3: Do young adults use “preventative facework” as their main motivation for posting new information on Facebook?

As a brief reminder, “[people] engage in preventative facework when we try to avoid face loss” (Baldwin, Perry and Moffitt 108). One of the initial questions deals with preventative facework, asking participants whether they have a Facebook account or not. Although the majority of participants had a Facebook account, 9 people stated that they did not have an account. The reasons why these people did not have an account were different; however, it should be noted that not having an account could be an indication of preventative facework. Some people said that they did not have an account because it was annoying, a waste of time, not healthy for marriages, or because of personal convictions; however, these all may be rooted in preventative facework. Rather than allowing for the possibility of looking bad in public (through Facebook), people many practice preventative Facework by simply not having an account to begin with. While this was not the case for the majority (296) participants, it is something to take into account when thinking about facework.

Only 60% of participants do not dedicate part of their daily schedule to Facebook. If people were posting to enhance their self-image by using preventative facework, it would follow that

users would make daily time for Facebook in order to be updating preventative information. Furthermore, only 16% of participants indicated that Facebook is a part of their daily schedule. If preventative facework were the main motivation for posting new information to Facebook, survey result would be higher. It is possible that participants still use preventative facework, but do not do so on a daily basis. This is because face management, according to Baldwin, Perry, and Moffitt, is defined as supporting ones social identity, which does not necessarily have anything to do with how frequently a person posts to Facebook (Baldwin, Perry, and Moffitt).

Less than 42% of participants use the limited profile list to prevent certain people from seeing certain aspects of their Facebook profile. Nearly 20% did not know that this feature was even available or were not sure if they were using it. These responses indicate that the majority of people do not use preventative facework in this regard. If they did then it would be probable that more people would be limiting information that others could see in order to prevent face loss from unwanted profile views. The people who did indicate that they used the limited profile did so to prevent certain people from seeing more private information. Almost 40% limit what their friends can see, possibly because of preventative facework. They attempted to avoid face loss by stopping potentially threatening people from having access to more private information. The majority of participants allow all of their friends to see all of the information that they post, indicating that preventative facework may not be their highest priority. Alternatively, people may not limit what others can see because, as Goffman describes, people generally support each other and their other and their attempts at face maintenance and restoration (Goffman). Either way, the responses to these questions suggest that preventative facework is not the primary motivation for users to post on Facebook.

Question 21 would also suggest that most users do not engage in preventative facework as a primary motivation for posting information. This question asked participants how frequently they update their Facebook status. The majority of users (31%) claimed that they rarely or never posted, and very few (6%) claim to update their status several times a day or daily. This means that preventative facework is probably not a primary motivation for posting new information, because effective preventative facework would most likely involve more frequent posts than the majority of participants indicated making. This relates back to the concept Burgoon and Hoobler titled communicator reward valence, which describes how a person's nonverbal communication is evaluated (Burgoon and Hoobler). Participants may not post information to Facebook daily because they know that others are constantly evaluating their communication, determining the overall value/valence of their Facebook communication. Posts may be minimized in order to emphasize the importance of each individual post, attempting to increase their communicator reward valence in the eyes of other Facebook users (Burgoon and Hoobler).

Questions 23 and 24 asked similar questions, but ironically received differing answers. 23 asked participants how likely they would be to post information to Facebook if they knew that nobody would "like" their update, and 24 asked the same thing except instead of liking it asked about how likely they would be to post information if nobody commented on it. In response to 23, the majority of participants indicated that they were "somewhat unlikely" (34%) or "extremely unlikely" (21%) to post information that nobody would "like." In response to 24, 67% indicated that they were "extremely likely," "somewhat likely," or "likely" to post information to Facebook if they knew that nobody would comment on their post. Participants indicated in these questions that they are more concerned about comments as opposed to likes. These findings suggest that people use preventative facework when choosing what to post, intentionally posting updates that

they believe will generate likes, and intentionally not posting items if they believe they will not generate any comment responses. These responses lead to the conclusion that people practice preventative facework in some instances, but not all. This also relates back to communicator reward valence, which describes why people may be mindful of their Facebook communication; because others are always evaluating these actions (Burgoon and Hoobler).

Question 32 asked participants why they liked Facebook, and the overwhelming reason that was given is that Facebook is a great way to communicate with past friends (38%) and with current friends (26%). Most participants did not indicate that they liked the website for ways that involved saving face or showing off to others, but simply said that they liked using the website because it allowed them to keep in touch with others. This also gives indication that people do not use preventative facework while posting, but mainly use their posts to keep up with current and previous friends.

The last question of the survey (which allowed participants the opportunity to discuss any other thoughts, feelings, or attitudes about Facebook) did not give a lot of insight into this idea of preventative facework. A few comments indicate that preventative facework may be used (such as, "It is a great way to make an image for yourself"); however, most comments did not discuss anything that dealt with this. Most people did not have any further comments, and the ones that did focused mainly on the functionality of the site and not anything dealing with or alluding to the practice of preventative facework.

While it is not 100% conclusive, based on the answers to several of these survey questions, the responses to these survey questions show that people do not use preventative facework as their main motivation for posting new information on Facebook.

Response to Research Question #4

RQ #4: Do young adults use “corrective facework” as their main motivation for editing information that they put on Facebook?

As a brief reminder, people engage in corrective facework when they try to restore face after it has been lost (Baldwin, Perry, and Moffitt). When asked how long participants spend on Facebook, the majority (approximately 75%) spend less than an hour on the site per day. This information may be a little bit skewed because many people have Facebook on their phones, which notifies them whenever new content involving them is posted. The innovation of Facebook on smart phones has most likely dramatically decreased overall time on Facebook because participants no longer have to log on with a computer to see if something has been updated, but can simply be notified by the buzzing of a phone in their pockets. Now, people do not have to spend as much time on the website because their phone will let them know whenever any new content is posted. This may limit the time that people have to spend on the site for corrective facework purposes.

Question 19 shows that the majority of pictures that people had of themselves on Facebook were actually posted by other people and not themselves. It would make sense then that people would have to engage in corrective facework when other people post pictures of participants on Facebook because according to Perry, Baldwin, and Moffitt, Goffman believed that people actively participate in facework (Baldwin, Perry, and Moffitt).

When someone else posts pictures of the participants, the participants may want to make sure that the picture is acceptable and not embarrassing. This is generally a passive form of corrective facework, checking to make sure a picture is ok and then leaving it up on Facebook. Participants would then move into active corrective facework if they delete or edit a picture that is posted of

them. This happens because people do not simply let unknown pictures of themselves remain on their wall, they tend to scan these photos and then allow or delete these to make sure they are appropriate to be published on their Facebook wall. Participants were not asked any questions about this, but it would follow that the more pictures of participants that are posted by other people, the more corrective facework that the participants would have to be involved in because according to Goffman's work, people actively engage in face maintenance (Baldwin, Perry, and Moffitt). Therefore, because most pictures of the participants of this survey were uploaded by others, it can be assumed that users are involved in corrective facework because they have to constantly allow or disallow these pictures of themselves on their Facebook profiles.

The responses about uploaded photo's can be further explained by reviewing Cupach and Canary's writings, when they found that face management involves more than one person (Cupach and Canary). This is especially true when it comes to posted photos on Facebook, because there are often at least two people involved, the person posting the photo, and then the people who are actually in the photo. They found that face management is a cooperative occurrence, and this is demonstrated in Facebook photo uploads (Cupach and Canary).

In response to the question, "When you realize that you made a mistake on a Facebook post, which of the following are you most likely to do?" the majority of users admitted to using some form of corrective facework to fix their mistake. The participants were given 3 corrective facework choices to pick from, and also an option of other (please specify) to indicate if they did anything else (specifically if they did not use corrective facework techniques). Only 4% of respondents chose other (please specify) and indicated that they did nothing when a mistake was made. This means that the other 96% of respondents reportedly engage in corrective facework after making an error on a post. This is also supported by the research of Heisler and Ellis, who

found that saving face is an extremely important communication strategy that is frequently used (Heisler and Ellis).

While the previous question showed that participants often use corrective facework in their own posts, other questions showed that corrective facework is used less frequently in content that is posted by others. Question 26 asked participants, "Have you ever deleted a post (photos, status, comment, etc.) that someone made that was negative towards you?" 69% of participants answered, "no," essentially stating that they do not engage in corrective facework when other people post a negative post about them.

It is interesting that people are quick to use corrective facework when they make an error in a post, but are much more hesitant to use it when someone else posts negative posts about them. This may be because people do not want to start conflict with another person by confronting them about their negative post, while it is easier to simply edit a mistaken post that the person has made on their own.

Question 27 asked participants, "If you post a status onto Facebook and nobody comments on it or likes it, what are you most likely to do?," to which 84% of people responded that they do nothing and simply leave the post up. Only 13% said that they would delete or edit the post (which were the corrective facework options). This is interesting because it shows that corrective facework is not a common among users to correct their own mistakes. Another possible reason for this is that participants may ensure that their posts are mistake free before they are ever posted to the site. Previous responses showed that when a mistake is made by the participant himself, then he would use corrective facework by editing the post; however, we see that most people would not use corrective facework techniques if they posted something that other people did not interact with. This indicates that people do not find a lack of response to their post threatening to their

face, but do find erroneous posts face threatening, hence, why people only engage in corrective facework when an error is made on a post that the user himself made. These findings align with what Johansson found in her research, when she stated that people maintain face because they want to feel good about their *relationships* with others, which explains why corrective facework is used when other Facebook users interact with a post and why it is not used when there is no interaction (Johansson).

The last question of the survey, which asks for any other opinions about Facebook, did not yield any responses that are directed to corrective facework. Most of the responses discussed thoughts about the site and its uses.

The final answer to this research question is that corrective facework is the primary motivation for users to edit information that has been uploaded to Facebook; however, it is not used by participants in every situation. It is almost always only used in situations in which mistakes are made by the person who creates a particular post, and when looking through photos that are uploaded by others, making sure that they are acceptable to have on Facebook. The trends and overall responses to the survey questions show that corrective facework is used; however it is the main motivation for editing information.

Chapter 5- Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

While this study is valuable to the discipline of communication studies, there are several things that could have impacted this work in a less than ideal way. This study was completed by participants who self-reported about their Facebook usage. Self-reporting can always be skewed because people are often blind to their own biases. This is especially true for narcissists, as narcissists themselves don't easily recognize their own narcissism. This was discussed in the literature review, which stated "[Narcissists] have such a strong need to feel special that they do not recognize the extent (or sometimes even the presence) of their dysfunctional behavior" (Carter 85). In the future, researchers may want to develop a study in which they observe participants Facebook usage, looking for narcissism in different ways.

Another limitation of this study is that the questions on the survey were not originally created to test for narcissism and may not have been the best tool to see whether narcissism is present in Facebook usage. This particular survey was used because Ross recommended future research in this area. These recommendations stated that this survey should be used to determine whether or not a correlation was present between Facebook and narcissism (Ross, et al.). The recommendations in this study suggested the survey could be used to see if narcissism is present in Facebook users. Because of this recommendation, the Ross' original survey was slightly changed to fit this specific study, but the survey for the most part was kept intact. While this survey was good at determining some narcissistic tendencies among Facebook users, the survey did not specifically answer all of the posed research questions to the fullest extent. To fix this, future researchers could use Ross' study as a starting point, but adapt the questions more specifically to narcissism and to the specific research questions being asked. Overall, the survey was good and the responses provided valuable information to the stated research questions;

however, more questions could be added, and the existing questions could have been changed a little more in order to reflect the nature of this specific study.

Another limitation of this study was the lack of clarity in several of the survey questions. For example, the responses to questions 14 and 15 indicated a little confusion and that there may have been a misunderstanding of these questions. In response to question 14, 120 participants said they did not use the limited profile list, and 52 participants didn't know if they were using it or not. On the other hand, question 15, 155 participants said that they do not use the limited profile list. The "other (please specify)" option seemed to confuse some participants because several people answered by saying, "I don't know" or "I don't use it" in their written response. These responses indicated that the questions and answers to choose from were not worded as clearly as necessary. In the future a pilot test given to some participants beforehand may help work out issues pertaining to the clarity of survey questions.

Also, along the same lines as the previous limitation, just about every participant had a very different idea of how long a "long time" was. For example, Question 21 asked participants, "How often do you update your Facebook status?" Some people answered by saying, "very rarely" and then indicated that "very rarely" actually meant only a few times a week, while to other people they stated "very rarely," and meant that they post updates years apart. These two extremes are polar opposites, and made for a little bit of trouble in interpreting the data. Researchers who use this survey in the future would be wise to specify times or clarify definitions beforehand, or determine a way to assimilate each participant's definition of "very rarely" to mean the same thing.

Another limitation that this study faced is that Facebook has been around long enough that it is starting to lose its popularity (McGlynn). Facebook is becoming more popular among older

people, which allows parents, grandparents, aunts, and uncles to see too much private, personal information for younger Facebook users to be comfortable (McGlynn). This was also noted in several responses, with participants stating that they preferred to use Twitter or Instagram because parents haven't figured out how to use those yet.

Also, Facebook is constantly updating in order to stay current, and a major update has been added since this survey was administered. This update the new "trending" feature which now shows up on every users news feed. This feature allows users to see what is "trending" or currently popular on Facebook. This is very similar to the trending function on Twitter, however, Twitter has trending hash tags, while Facebook shows users trending news articles. In addition, this survey did not ask any questions about the video features of the website. With the creation of Vine and other easy-to-use video services and apps, the amount of video on Facebook has increased recently, so it would be beneficial to understand how this abundance of video has impacted Facebook users.

Some participants also noted that Facebook has too many advertisements, making them want to spend less time on the website. All of this makes for a limitation because of Facebook is becoming less popular, which means that research on this particular website is already becoming outdated (due to how fast technology changes and how quickly new things become old and outdated). The limitation is simply that Facebook is beginning to decline and is not as frequently seen as the "must have" social media platform. In the future, researchers should spend time focusing on other up and coming forms of social media, possibly to see if narcissism is present and is correlated in the use of these.

One other limitation that this study faced was that the participants were not a random sample, but instead, the survey was open to any student who was enrolled in the communication course at

the University and wanted to get extra credit. The amount of people who took the survey was significant, 296 active Facebook users participated (which was significantly more than several of the published studies discussed in the literature review), but these users were not drawn from a random sample. This does not mean that the results are wrong or insignificant, it is just something that should be taken into account when reviewing the findings and results. Additionally, this study was completely anonymous, which is generally a good way to ensure accurate responses; however there are downsides to anonymity as well. Because the survey was anonymous, participants may have rushed through it without really thinking about their responses, as a way to just to get the extra credit for the course. Future researchers of this topic would be wise to develop some sort of accountability for participants, in order to make sure that their responses are true and accurate.

There are several aspects of social media that should be studied in the future. First of all, as mentioned in the limitations of this study, new forms of social media need to be researched. Just as technology is always changing, updating, and improving, social media is doing the same thing to keep up with the new technology. The social media platforms that most participants indicated as their favorite new ones included Twitter, Instagram, and Vine. Further research needs to be done on these platforms, in order to see what (if any) negative effects are a result of using them. This research should include narcissism, attempting to see a correlation between narcissism and its presence among users of these sites.

Another aspect of communication that should be studied is actual levels of narcissism in social media users compared to the amount of time spent on each. This could be done by assessing how narcissistic a person is by using a test such as the Narcissistic Personality Index (NPI) to gauge this amount. Then, researchers could look at time spent on various social media

platforms and the actual uses of these social media. After reviewing all of this, researchers could draw conclusions based on hard data, numbers that reveal how narcissistic a person is and what they actually use social media websites for, instead of simply relying on the self-reporting techniques that this study used.

Additional research could also be done on attitudes about social media in general. The survey that was used for this study was very broad and attempted to gain a general overview of the feelings, attitudes, and uses of Facebook. More research should focus on individual responses to questions such as, “if there were one thing about Facebook that you could change, what would it be?” or “what do you dislike about Facebook?” Allowing for open-ended questions such as these could really be beneficial to researchers because these type of questions will yield specific answers, not merely giving averages and overviews of what the general population thinks about Facebook and social media.

One final issue that should be studied in the future is why people change their social media platforms change so frequently. This would be especially interesting because people continually use new social media platforms that offer things very similar to what Facebook offers. This research could focus on finding out why people are not content with the current, all-encompassing social media services, and specifically why people choose to frequently update the social media platforms that they use.

This study has provided further information and explanation of narcissism, face management, and Facebook. The original definition of narcissism that were stated in the literature review is that narcissism is “an excessive love or admiration of oneself... a condition characterized by self-preoccupation, lack of empathy...” (Narcissism American Heritage). The first two research questions show that Facebook is not always the most positive thing, but also, that people do not

generally perceive narcissism in other peoples Facebook posts or in their own. This does not mean that narcissism is not present (it may or may not be), but narcissism, according to the original definition, is not perceived in Facebook activity.

The third and fourth research questions show that preventative facework is not used by participants as a motivation for posting to Facebook, and that corrective facework is the primary motivation; however, corrective facework is not used by participants in every situation. The reasons why people post information are numerous, but the responses to these research questions develop a further understanding of why people post new information and/or edit the information that is posted. Even though narcissism is not a proven side effect of Facebook use, the responses that participants gave help see the effects that Facebook is having on users. As social media continues to grow, face management will develop along with it, causing people to develop new ways of saving face as this exciting expansion takes place.

Works Cited

- Ablow, Keith. "We Are Raising a Generation of Deluded Narcissists." *Fox News*. FOX News Network, 08 Jan. 2013. Web. 5 Mar. 2013.
<<http://www.foxnews.com/opinion/2013/01/08/are-raising-generation-deluded-narcissists/>>
- Baldwin, John R., Stephen D. Perry, and Mary Anne Moffitt. *Communication Theories for Everyday Life*. Boston: Pearson/Allyn and Bacon, 2004, pp. 106-110. Print.
- Baumeister, Roy F., Brad J. Bushman, and W. Keith Campbell. "Self-Esteem, Narcissism, and Aggression: Does Violence Result From Low Self-Esteem or Threatened Egotism?" *Current Directions in Psychological Science* 9.1 (2000): 26-29. Web. 10 Feb. 2014.
- Bar-Tura, Asaf. "Wall to Wall or Face to Face." *Facebook and Philosophy*. 1st ed. Vol. 50. Culture and Philosophy. Chicago: Open Court, 2010. 231-40. Print.
- Bornstein, Robert. Widiger, Thomas., "Histrionic, Narcissistic, and Dependent Personality Disorders." *Comprehensive Handbook of Psychopathology*. Dordrecht: Springer Science+Business Media, 2004. Credo Reference. Web. 11 February 2014.
- Burgoon, Judee K. and Gregory D. Hoobler. "Nonverbal Signals." *Handbook of Interpersonal Communication*. 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 2002. 240-99. Print.
- Cain, Kevin. "The Negative Effects of Facebook on Communication." *SocalMediaToday.com*. 29 June 2012. Web. 20 Apr. 2013.
- Caldwell, W. Wilber *American Narcissism: The Myth of National Superiority*. New York: Algora Pub., 2006. Print.
- Campbell, Keith W., and Joshua D. Miller. "Narcissism and the World Wide Web." *The Handbook of Narcissism and Narcissistic Personality Disorder: Theoretical*

- Approaches, Empirical Findings, and Treatments*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2011. 371-81. *Google Books*. Web. 23 Jan. 2014.
- Carlson, Nicholas. "At Last -- The Full Story of How Facebook Was Founded." *Business Insider*. 5 Mar. 2010. Web. 20 Apr. 2013.
- Carter, Les. *Enough About You, Let's Talk About Me: How to Recognize and Manage the Narcissists in Your Life*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2005. Print.
- Champion, David R. *Narcissism and Entitlement: Sexual Aggression and the College Male*. New York: LFB Scholarly LLC, 2003. Print.
- Chen, Guo-Ming, Kristen Ryan, and Chaichin Chen. "The Determinants of Conflict Management Among Chinese and Americans." *Intercultural Communication Studies* 9.2 (2000): 163-175.
- Clemmer, Kate. "Body Image Friend or Foe? How Is Facebook Affecting the Way You Feel About Your Body?" *The Center for Eating Disorders at Sheppard Pratt*. Sheppard Pratt Health System, Mar. 2012. Web. 19 Jan. 2014.
- Coyle, Cheryl L., and Heather Vaughn. "Social Networking: Communication Revolution or Evolution?" *Bell Labs Technical Journal* 13.2 (2008): 13-18. *Academic Search Complete*. Web. 28 Jan. 2014.
- Cupach, William R., and Daniel J. Canary. *Competence in Interpersonal Conflict*. Long Grove, IL: Waveland, 2000. Print.
- Di Capua, Ivan. "A Literature Review on Research of Facebook Use." *The Open Communication Journal* 6 (2012): 37-42. *Creative Commons*. Web. 25 Jan. 2014.
- Goffman, Erving. (1967). *Interactional ritual: Essays in Face-to-Face Behavior*. Chicago: Aldine, 1967. Print.

- Heisler, Jennifer M., and Jennifer Butler Ellis. "Motherhood and the Construction of 'Mommy Identity': Messages About Motherhood and Face Negotiation." *Communication Quarterly* 56.4 (2008): 445-467. *Academic Search Complete*. Web. 12 Mar. 2013.
- Jarvis, Jeff. *Public Parts: How Sharing in the Digital Age Improves the Way We Work and Live*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 2011. Print.
- Johansson, Catrin. "Goffman's Sociology: An Inspiring Resource For Developing Public Relations Theory." *Public Relations Review* 33.3 (2007): 275-280. *Academic Search Complete*. Web. 21 Jan. 2014.
- Joinson, Adam N. "'Looking At, Looking Up, or Keeping up With People? Motives and Uses of Facebook.'" Proceedings of Special Interest Group on Computer-Human Interaction, Florence. 2008. 1027-036. Web. 30 Jan. 2014.
- Kampf, Zohar, and Shoshana Blum-Kulka. "Do Children Apologize to Each Other? Apology Events in Young Israeli Peer Discourse." *Journal Of Politeness Research: Language, Behavior, Culture* 3.1 (2007): 11-37. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. Web. 15 Mar. 2013.
- Lampe, Cliff, Nicole Ellison, and Charles Steinfield. "A Familiar Face(book): Profile Elements as Signals in an Online Social Network." Proceedings of Special Interest Group on Computer-Human Interaction, San Jose. 2007. 435-44. Web. 28 Jan. 2014
- Lasch, Christopher. *The Culture of Narcissism: American Life in an Age of Diminishing Expectations*. New York: Norton, 1991. Print.
- Latzer, Yael, Ruth Katz, and Zohar Spivak. *Facebook Users More Prone to Eating Disorders*. University of Haifa, 7 Feb. 2011. Web. 18 Jan. 2014.
- Lewis, C. S. *Surprised by Joy: The Shape of My Early Life*. New York: Harcourt Brace, 1956.

- Print.
- Lim, Sun Sun, Shobha Vadrevu, Yoke Hian Chan, and Iccha Basnyat. "Facework on Facebook: the Online Publicness of Juvenile Delinquents and Youths-At-Risk." *Journal Of Broadcasting & Electronic Media* 56.3 (2012): 346-361. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. Web. 18 Mar. 2013.
- Malikhao, Patchanee, and Jan Servaes. "The Media Use of American Youngsters in the Age of Narcissism. Surviving in a 24/7 Media Shock and Awe – Distracted by Everything." *Telematics and Information* 28 (2011): 66-76. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. Web. 14 Mar. 2013
- McGlynn, Katla. "17 Reasons Why the Kids Don't Like Facebook Anymore." *The Huffington Post*. 27 Sept. 2013. Web. 1 Mar. 2014.
- McKinney, Bruce C., Lynne Kelly, and Robert L. Duran. "Narcissism or Openness? College Students' Use of Facebook and Twitter." *Communication Research Reports* 29.2 (2012): 108-118. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. Web. 19 Mar. 2013.
- McLaughlin, Margaret L., Michael J. Cody, and H. D. O'Hair. "The Management of Failure Events: Some Contextual Determinants of Accounting Behavior." *Human Communication Research* 9.3 (1983): 208. *ProQuest*. Web. 22 Jan. 2014.
- McLuhan, Marshall, and Eric McLuhan. *Laws of Media: The New Science*. Toronto: University of Toronto, 1988. Print.
- Mills, C. Wright. *The Sociological Imagination*. New York: Oxford UP, 1959. Print.
- Morf, Carolyn C., and Frederick Rhodewalt. "Unraveling the Paradoxes of Narcissism: A Dynamic Self-Regulatory Processing Model." *Psychological Inquiry* 12.4 (2001): 177. *Academic Search Complete*. Web. 21 Jan. 2014.

- "Narcissism." *Merriam-Webster.com*. Merriam-Webster, 2011. Web. 10 March 2013.
- "Narcissism." The American Heritage Medical Dictionary. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2007. Credo Reference. Web. 5 October 2013.
- "Newsroom- Key Facts." *Facebook*. Web. 16 Mar. 2013. <<http://newsroom.fb.com/Key-Facts>>
- Panek, Elliot T., Yioryos Nardis, and Sara Konrath. "Mirror or Megaphone?: How Relationships Between Narcissism and Social Networking Site Use Differ on Facebook and Twitter." *Computers In Human Behavior* 29.5 (2013): 2004-2012. *Academic Search Complete*. Web. 21 Jan. 2014.
- Rose, Jessica, Susan Mackey-Kallis, Len Shyles, Kelly Barry, Danielle Biagini, Colleen Hart, and Lauren Jack. "Face It: The Impact of Gender on Social Media Images." *Communication Quarterly* 60.5 (2012): 588-607. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. Web. 17 Mar. 2013.
- Ross, Craig, Emily S. Orr, Mia Sisic, Jamie M. Arseneault, Mary G. Simmering, and R. R. Orr. "Personality and Motivations Associated with Facebook Use." *Computers in Human Behavior* 25 (2009): 578-86. Web. 17 Sept. 2013.
- Seligman, Molly. "Facebook: Friend or Faux?" *Journal of Infant, Child and Adolescent Psychotherapy*. 10.4 (2011): 415-421. *Academic Search Complete*. Web. 8 Apr. 2013.
- Siira, Kalle, Randall G. Rogan, and Jeffrey A. Hall. "'A Spoken Word is an Arrow Shot': A Comparison of Finnish and U. S. Conflict Management and Face Maintenance." *Journal Of Intercultural Communication Research* 33.1/2 (2004): 89-107. *Communication & Mass Media Complete*. Web. 15 Mar. 2013.

- Stern, Lesa A., and Kim Taylor. "Social Networking on Facebook." *Journal of the Communication, Speech & Theatre Association of North Dakota* 20 (2007): 9-20. Web. 27 Jan. 2014.
- Symington, Neville. *Narcissism: A New Theory*. London: Carnac, 1993. Print.
- Ting-Toomey, Stella. "Face Negotiation Theory." *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 2009. Credo Reference. Web. 8 February 2014.
- Ting-Toomey, S., and A. Kurogi. Face Work Competence in Intercultural Conflict: An Updated Face-Negotiation Theory. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, pp. 187-225. Print.
- Twenge, Jean M., and W. Keith Campbell. *The Narcissism Epidemic: Living in the Age of Entitlement*. New York: Free, 2009. Print.
- "U. S. & World Population Clocks." *U. S. & World Population Clocks*. Web. 16 Mar. 2013. <<http://www.census.gov/main/www/popclock.html>>
- Walther, Joseph B. "Computer-Mediated Communication: Impersonal, Interpersonal, and Hyperpersonal Interaction." *Communication Research* 23.1 (1996): 3-43. Web. 27 January 2014

1. By completing this survey, I acknowledge that my responses will be used for a Graduate research study. Your answers will be completely anonymous and will in no way be traced back to you.

I have read the previous statement and agree to participate in this study.

Yes

2. Do you currently have a Facebook account?

Yes

If no, why not?

- Do not have regular computer access
- Do not have the time
- Not interested
- Have never heard of Facebook before
- Other

3. Are you 18 years of age or older?

Yes

No

4. If you answered “Yes” to both the previous questions, please continue with the survey. If you answered “No” to either one (or both), thank you for your time.

- Answered Yes
- Answered No to 1 or more

The first part of this questionnaire is to assess your basic use and attitudes toward Facebook.

5. On average, how many minutes per day do you spend on Facebook?

10 or less

10-30

31-60

1-2 hours

2-3 hours

3+ hours

6. Facebook is part of my everyday activity.

Strongly Disagree

Disagree

Neutral

Agree

Strongly Agree

7. I am proud of my Facebook page.

Strongly Disagree

Disagree

Neutral

Agree

Strongly Agree

8. I dedicate part of my daily schedule to Facebook.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

9. I feel out of touch when I haven't logged on to Facebook for a while.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

10. I would be sad if Facebook shut down.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

11. Who can see your Facebook posts?

Friends Only Friends and Friends of Friends Everyone Don't Know

12. Who can see your Facebook photos?

Friends Only Friends and Friends of Friends Everyone Don't Know

13. Who can search for you on Facebook?

Friends of Friends Everyone Don't Know

14. Do you use the Limited Profile List to prevent certain people from seeing certain aspects of your profile?

Yes No Don't Know

15. If yes, why?

- To prevent certain people from seeing more private information
- To prevent certain people from "stalking" me
- I do not use the Limited Profile List
- Other (Please specify)

16. Which of the following pieces contact information do you have on your profile?
(Check all that apply)

Address Phone Number Email None

This section of the questionnaire is to assess your use of the basic Facebook functions and applications.

17. Approximately how many Facebook friends do you have?
18. Approximately how many pictures of yourself are you tagged in on Facebook?
19. Referring back to the previous question, are the majority of these pictures uploaded by you, or by other?

Uploaded by Me Uploaded by Others

20. Which function do you prefer to use the Facebook Wall or Facebook Messages?
Why?

21. How often do you update your Facebook status?

22. When you realize that you make a mistake on a Facebook post, which of the following are you most likely to do?

- Delete the post
- Edit the post
- Comment on the post admitting your mistake
- Other (Please Specify)

23. How likely would you be to post information to Facebook if you knew that nobody would “like” your update?

- Extremely likely
- Somewhat likely
- Likely
- Somewhat unlikely
- Extremely unlikely

24. How likely would you be to post information to Facebook if you knew that nobody would comment on your update?

- Extremely likely
- Somewhat likely
- Likely
- Somewhat unlikely
- Extremely unlikely

25. What is your most preferred function/application of Facebook?

- Photos
- Notes
- Groups
- Events
- Posted Items
- Marketplace
- Wall
- Messages
- Other (Please Specify)

26. Have you ever deleted a post (photo, status, comment, etc.) that someone made that was negative towards you? If yes, what is an example (please provide in brief, general terms)

Yes No

27. If you post a status onto Facebook and nobody comments on it or likes it, what are you most likely to do?

- Nothing, leave the post up
- Delete the post
- Edit the post
- Other (Please Specify)

28. How do you generally feel about the posts that your friends make?

- They are meaningful and express worthwhile information
- They are somewhat meaningful and express somewhat worthwhile info.
- Neutral
- They are not meaningful and do not express worthwhile information.
- They are meaningless and express unimportant information.

29. Is the information that your friends post truly important to you?

- Yes
- Somewhat important
- No

This section of the questionnaire is to assess more general attitudes of Facebook

30. Approximately how long have you had your Facebook profile?

- 6 months
- 1 year
- 1.5 years
- 2 years
- 2.5 years
- 3+ years

31. How satisfied are you with Facebook, overall?

- Not satisfied at all
- Barely satisfied
- Neutral
- Satisfied
- Very satisfied

32. Why do you like Facebook?

- It is how I communicate with my current friends.
- It provides a distraction from my schoolwork.
- It allows me to communicate with people from my past.
- It allows me to collect information on people I am interested in.
- It allows me to show others what I am doing.
- Other (Please Specify).

33. Do you have any other opinions that you would like to express about Facebook and your experience with it?