

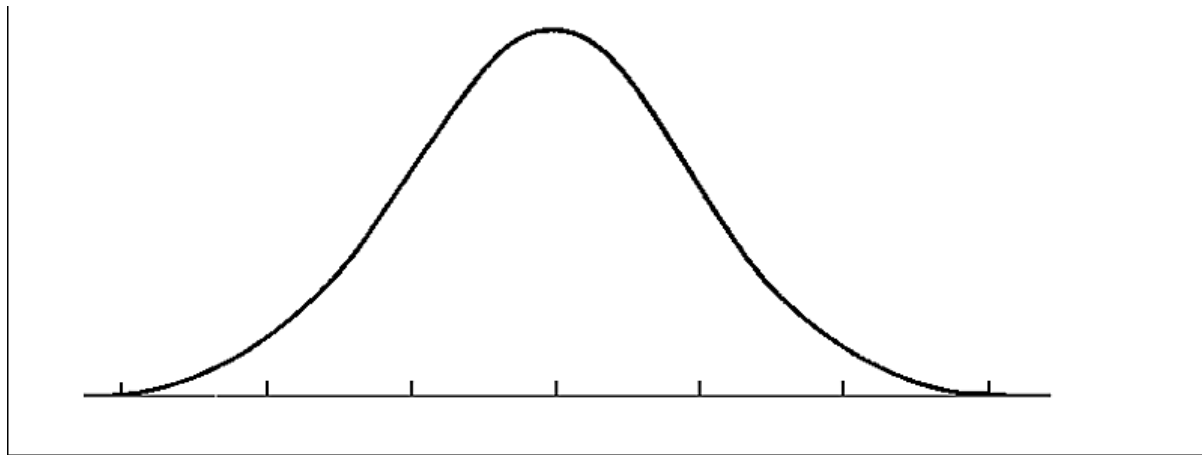
High School on Facebook:
An Ethnography of Social Media &
New Technology Use In High School
Students

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Setting and Method

- College preparatory school
- 21 individual interviews + 2 class discussions
- Survey
- More AP and Honors students

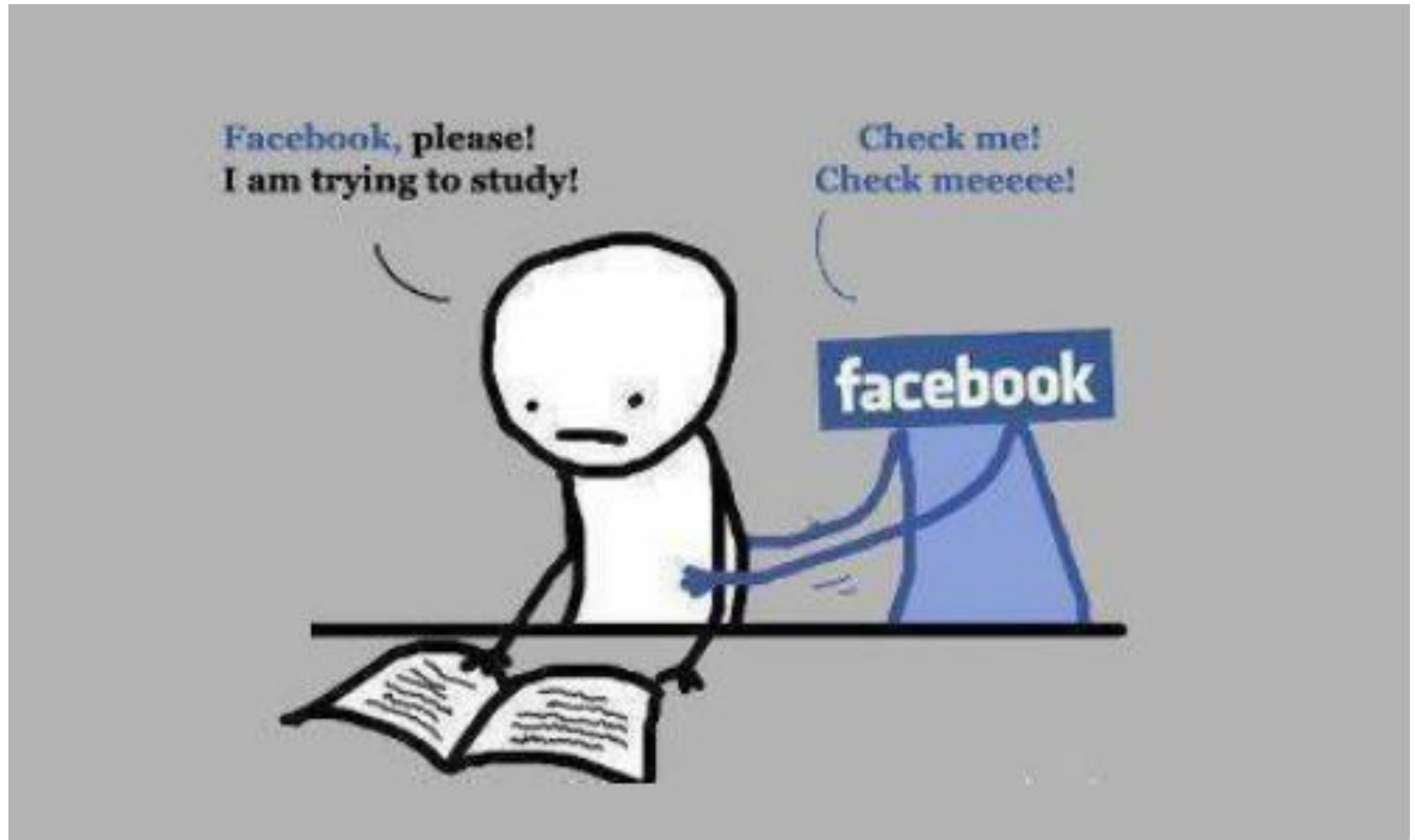
Thesis



Educational Benefits



Time waste, addictive qualities, fatigue



Teachers seeing more tired students

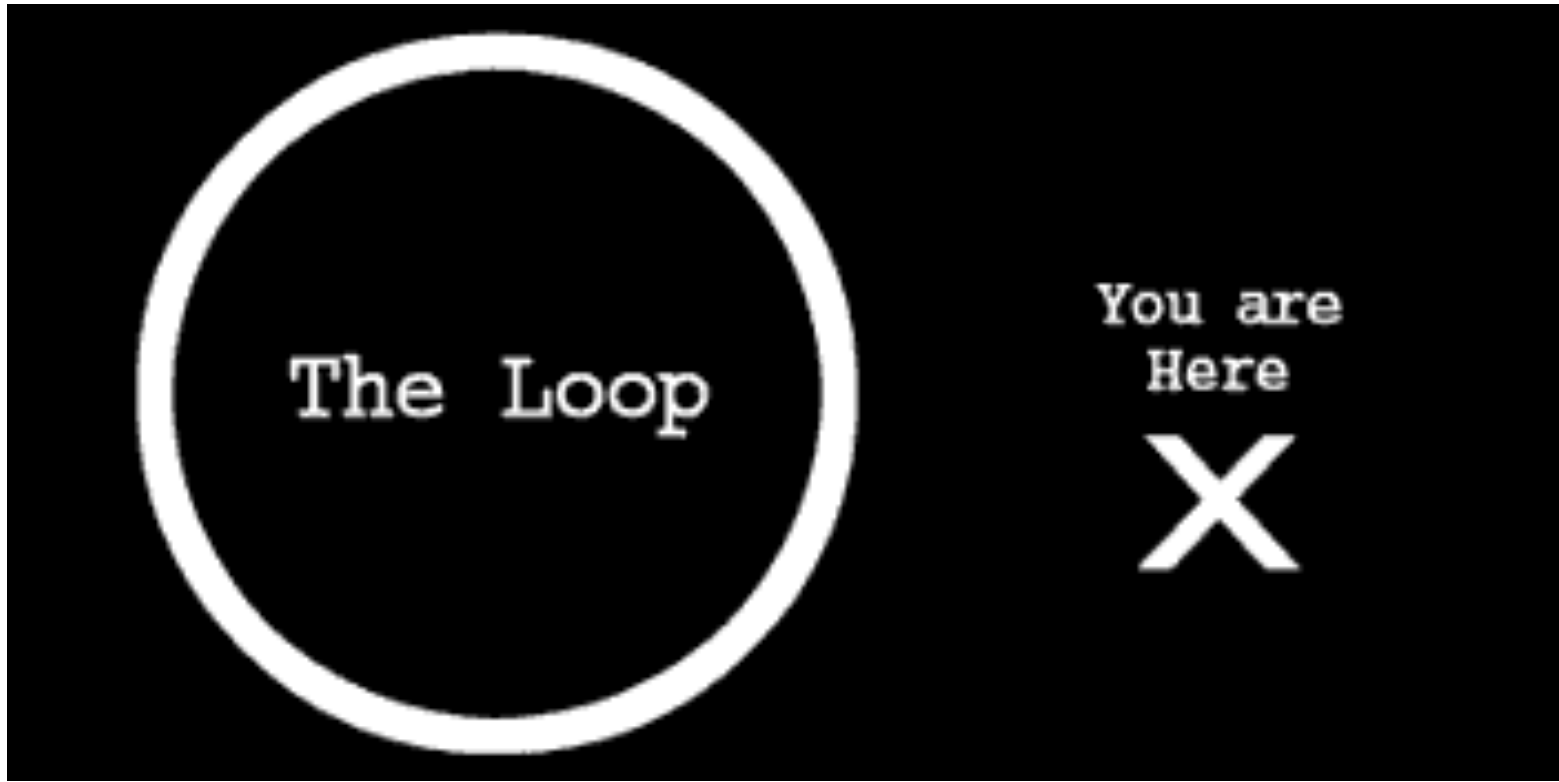


Students (mostly) agree



Quality of Sleep

- This happens to me a lot actually. You get in bed, you turn off the lights, and your phone lights up from across the room. And you really don't wanna get up and get it, but then you're like, "I wonder who it is, I wonder what it's about?" and then you're like, "I'm not gonna get it," and then you end up getting it because it's really annoying, but then it's usually not that important.



- I feel like I'm not like lower than everyone else. I have a Facebook now, so I'm equal to everyone.

- And sometimes you wanna make sure that you're on so many times that you don't miss it. So sometimes they'll have arguments on a comment on a picture, but then they'll delete it, so you'll miss the whole thing. So you'll have to ask someone else about it, but you don't want to do that. You want to know about it already. So – [other student says, “That's why there are screenshots.”] Yes, there's screenshots too. But you want to be the first person to know about it, so you can tell other people. So you want to be on Facebook as much as possible because of that reason.

Wanting but can't break free

- I just can't express enough how much I think Facebook has, like, I don't want to say ruined my life because that sounds so depressing, but it has made my life – it's prevented me from doing a lot more than I could have done with it – because, I don't want to say this around my parents, but they're always like, "Stop going on Facebook. Stop wasting your time and go do other stuff," because they're right! I don't wanna say it. I don't want to admit it, but I'll admit it to you [laughs]. But, yeah, they are right. Without Facebook, and without being consumed on the Internet, and even on Tumblr and Twitter – it's just these things that we go on everyday, and they take up so much of our time that we don't even realize how much time they're using. But with all that time and energy we could be focusing on bigger projects and bigger things that could get us to better schools, better grades, get us, like better social lives, and sleeping hours and amounts of sleep time – just like everything. So, yeah, I just think I lost a lot of stuff because of Facebook, but then what could I do, 'cause with Facebook I needed to contact people, I needed to talk to people, and be in with the, like, social connection or whatever.

Social Comparison & Jealousy



Social Comparison & Jealousy

- I dunno, I guess it is really stressful because when teenagers – especially teenage girls – if they look at other people’s photos and they see that they’re having a “better life” [gestures quotes]– and I say that in quotes because it is not necessarily better, but it seems like it’s better because they’re posting it on Facebook: but just like having fun, or having a better time than them, or looking prettier, or having better stuff. It just kind of puts you down, and you just get kind of jealous about it. Like, “Oh, I wish I could have that life,” or, “Oh, I wish I could be happy like them in their pictures,” you know.
- I guess, just like, I think people are more affected by social networking than they realize it because just like the whole stress thing of what’s happening in other people’s lives compared to yours, and kind of having that comparison always be there. Like, always refreshing and seeing what are all these other people doing, but then look at me and what I’m doing, and it kind of – Even if your life is really great and you’re doing really well, if you look at other people’s stuff – I don’t know – it just tends to make you feel less of yourself. Like you’re not as great, even though you are.

Hyper-focus on self-image

- Photoshop



Likes and Comments



Social Skills



Social Skills

- Teacher: And you asked about interpersonal skills – they suck. You know, try to have a conversation with them. Have them try to talk to each other – I mean, I think the level of conversation, the ability to communicate from the heart sense of what they're truly feeling, sustained eye contact – all kinds of things. When I first started teaching 30 years ago, I used to ask a question in class and 20 hands would go up and all wanted to participate. Now it's five kids all semester. The other kids will sit there and not say anything .

Social Skills

- The “mask” of text and the screen



- I think because in real life if you do something you can't really change it, or take it back, or you don't have time to think about what to say or what to do. But on the Internet, you can like sit there and think about what you wanna type. Or like, if you're typing something and it doesn't sound right, you can delete your mistakes or something. And also, on the Internet, people can't really see what you're doing or what you look like, so it's just personally different. But, I dunno, there's a lot of leeway for – I don't really know how to describe it, but it's a lot easier to take back what you wanna take back, rather than in real life, where it's already out there once it is.

- The conversation that you can have with them and they can have with you functions as something as more comfortable than in real life. It's like if I have more time to think of something nice to say or something to cheer you up, it's like – then that's what will happen.

Avenues for re-design



Thank you