

DID HE REALLY POST THAT?!
AN EXAMINATION OF
SOCIAL MEDIA APPROPRIATENESS

by

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to examine college-aged students' judgements about the appropriateness of social media posts, including the attributes used to make those judgements. Two hundred and eighty-six students ($N = 286$) in large Communication classes at the University of Delaware completed two analogous versions of a survey asking them to evaluate the appropriateness of six different fictitious Facebook posts with the topics of health, money, and relationships.

Results indicated that the individual effects of tone (positive or negative), topic (health, money, or relationship), and set (one or two) all played a significant role in respondents' evaluation of the appropriateness of Facebook posts. Negative posts were judged most harshly on attributes "too intimate," "personal," "dramatic," "dirty laundry," and "don't need to know." Positive posts were judged the most favorably on the single attribute "happy." The tone \times topic interaction effect was significant in most cases.

Chapter 1

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Imagine the following scenario: You come home from a long day of work, pour yourself a tall glass of your favorite drink, and take a seat on the couch. You take out your iPhone and instinctively open the Facebook application, which automatically brings you to your newsfeed. You scroll through your Facebook friends' posts and see the usual business, consisting of a gallery of your next-door-neighbor's photos of her new baby, some fun recipes that your aunt shared, and maybe a cat video or two. Then, you're hit with a wall of text from a girl with whom you played softball in middle school and had completely forgotten existed until this moment. You read on, learning that she has been struggling with heroin addiction for the past year and is now going to rehab. Not only that, but you also learn that she has stolen thousands of dollars from her mother, has cheated on her boyfriend with multiple other men and is very sorry for her actions. She finishes off the post stating that she is ready to make a change in her life.

How do you feel now knowing this information? On one hand, you might think, "Good for her!" and continue scrolling through your newsfeed. On the

other hand, reading this lengthy post you might feel uncomfortable knowing such intimate information about this person that you have not actually seen or spoken to in years and years. This post might seem more appropriate for a conversation between only this girl and her closest friends and family, not her entire list of over one thousand Facebook friends.

Scenarios like the previous one are all too common in our daily lives. When we have big news to share, how do we choose to share it most often? Perhaps we call our parents or tell our roommates over dinner. We might even write about it in a monthly letter to our grandparents. However, it seems as though it is second nature to grab our iPhones or open our laptops, scroll a quick message, maybe add a photo, and post away. Instantaneously, everyone we've ever known, including hundreds of thousands of people within three degrees of separation, are aware of the news (Gross & Acquisti, 2005). The "likes" and approving comments roll in, and the big news is validated and praised repeatedly.

Sounds great, right? But what about the hundreds of mere acquaintances or even people we have never met in person who are on the receiving end of this post? Our Facebook profiles are filled with minute details of our everyday lives, making them essentially a "digital combination of a billboard and a scrapbook...a tabloid magazine and a family photo album" (Abril, 2007). On the contrary, *Wired* writer Mary Choi (2016) conducted various interviews with teenagers from across the United States about their experience with digital media and found that

oversharing is not at all socially accepted, and even considered “taboo,” or “awkward,” which actually equates to “socially unsanctioned behavior.”

Accordingly, the goal of this thesis is to distinguish between social media posts that people find to be inappropriate and appropriate, as well as to determine what exactly they find to be appropriate or inappropriate about them. First, I will provide a theoretical backbone for my reasoning, then I will explain my methods for collecting and analyzing data. Next I will discuss my findings and the implications of said findings and, finally, I will suggest areas for further research as well as mention the limitations of this study.

Social Media and its Effects on Communication

As of 2017, there are 2.072 billion active Facebook users who log onto the platform for a variety of purposes, including to pass time, to maintain relationships, to make new friends, to keep up with trends, to gather information about news or social events, and the list goes on (Quinn, 2016; Statista, 2017). Although posting on Facebook satisfies various needs for the person sending the message, what happens when a person grossly overshares and essentially oversteps a boundary that exists so clearly with face-to-face communication? This boundary virtually disappears online when messages and photos are posted publicly. How does one discern what is appropriate to post on Facebook and share

with hundreds of friends and what should be reserved for face-to-face communication?

People are active communicators, meaning that they have the ability to select the interpersonal or mass communication channel that they think will provide the gratification they are looking for, while simultaneously being aware that “functional alternatives” exist to fill the same needs (Perse & Courtright, 1993). For instance, a high school student can call her extended family and friends to tell them that she got into her top college choice, but she can also post this information on Facebook to let everyone know about the news simultaneously with just one post. In this case, posting on social media serves as a functional alternative for speaking on the phone. With the saturation and prevalence of social media in everyday life, one can argue that social media engagement can serve as a functional alternative for multiple other channels, including telephone calls, writing letters, and face-to-face communication. Posting on social media certainly seems easier, but the repercussions of doing so when the content is considered inappropriate in the eyes of the message recipients can be detrimental to the poster’s relationships with social media followers and friends, as will be further explained later.

With any communication channel comes a set of normative images, in other words what is accepted as appropriate conduct for the specific medium (Lichtenstein & Rosenfeld, 1983). Although posting on social media does fill

needs similar to those of interpersonal communication and acts as a functional alternative to face-to-face conversation, the normative images of each medium are completely different. Danah Boyd (2015, p. 57), author of *It's Complicated: The Social Lives of Networked Teens*, describes "being in a networked public" as "unlike gathering with friends in a public park," and further describes the social norms that she discovered through 166 different formal interviews with teenagers that are associated with a physically public space versus a virtually public platform such as Facebook.

It would be wildly inappropriate to stand up during your biology seminar and announce to all two hundred students in your lecture hall that you finally reached your weight loss goal, yet on social media posting a status with this exact message seems completely usual and normal. Most of us can spot inappropriate conduct in face-to-face interaction, but what is the normative or unspoken rules of conduct for social media? One of the primary goals of this research is to attempt to explain just that.

As most social media users observe on a daily basis, behavior and norms on social media are inconsistent with behavior and norms in face-to-face interaction. A Facebook friendship could be costlier than it is rewarding, but the same relationship in person may be more rewarding than costly, making for a difficult situation to assess. Early theory on disclosure was unable to account for the costs and rewards of online friendship and was also unable to give us a clear

definition of behavior and norms on social media. According to Altman and Taylor's Social Penetration Theory (1973, p. 6), "people assess interpersonal rewards and costs, satisfaction and dissatisfaction, gained from interaction with others, and that the advancement of the relationship is heavily dependent on the amount and nature of the rewards and costs." If these costs outweigh the rewards, the relationship could be in jeopardy. A person generally does not disclose intimate personal information right away, but rather only shares the outer layers of him or herself that lie above the central core that represents the true self, which may be more private than the accessible peripheral layers (Tang & Wang, 2012). Although the previous claim may be true in person, it likely is not true for some friendships on Facebook where intimate details are often exposed publicly.

Communication Privacy Management Theory

Sandra Petronio's Communication Privacy Management Theory (CPM; 2002) serves as the backbone for my research in normative behavior when disclosing information. Petronio's CPM contains the following five suppositions:

- (1) There is a concentration on private information;
- (2) To illustrate a separation between private information and public relationships, a boundary is utilized;
- (3) Private information is controlled, meaning that it is "owned" or

“co-owned”;

(4) There are rules to regulate the aforementioned boundaries;

(5) Disclosure and privacy are dialectical.

CPM was proposed before the growth of social media and is most obviously relevant to face-to-face interaction or perhaps more personal mediated interaction such as telephone conversations. It is necessary to determine if these suppositions operate in the same manner in regard to online interaction. Let us take a moment to break them down.

(1) There is a concentration on private information. Yes, we can easily say that people do in fact share private information on their social media accounts. People share anything from mundane topics such as the weather that day or a great apple crumble recipe to quite intimate topics such as details about his or her sex life or financial hardships.

(2) To illustrate a separation between private information and public relationships, a boundary is utilized. Online, this boundary could consist of privacy settings, or opting to post publicly to all friends versus sending information in a private message. In other words, a social media user can set a boundary for who can see his or her posts by accepting or denying friend requests. At the same time, he or she can opt to post to his or her entire newsfeed of

hundreds of people or select certain individuals to share information with in a separate chat that is inaccessible to all other friends.

(3) Private information is controlled, meaning that before it is shared, it is “owned” by the social media user. Social media users completely control what is posted to their accounts. However, if a piece of private information is shared publicly on a newsfeed, hundreds of people become the “co-owner” of this information. This vast amount of co-ownership would only happen in face-to-face interaction if a person shared private information to hundreds of individual people. The latter behavior is particularly abnormal in person, whereas the former is completely normal on Facebook.

(4) There are rules to regulate boundaries. On social media, these rules consist of sending, accepting, and denying friend requests, and even “defriending” someone after the initial friend request was accepted. Once a user sends a friend request to another user, he or she is asking for permission to break the boundary between the two people online. McBride and Bergen (2008) describe friendship as “intimate yet voluntary,” making unwanted disclosures particularly difficult to study, even if the two social media users are “friends” online. Once the second person accepts the first person’s friend request, this boundary is virtually eliminated between these two people. Denying the request signifies that the user does not want to eliminate the boundary. Both parties have some extent of control over the boundaries of communication.

For a friendship to function properly, a balance between openness and closedness must be operative (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996). Online, people tend to lean toward the side of openness and forget to maintain some level of privacy, resulting in a slew of “reluctant confidants,” or unwilling message recipients (Petronio, 2002, p. 117). Regarding online friendship, research has shown that reciprocal disclosures are one of the most important aspects of developing an online friendship (Henderson & Gilding, 2004). However, we see that these disclosures are often not reciprocal, but very much one-sided.

(5) Disclosure and privacy are dialectical. Petronio (2002, p. 12) states that “CPM concentrates on the forces pulling between and with the needs of being both private through concealing and public through revealing.” One could argue that when it comes to posting on Facebook, the scale is tipped toward revealing and away from concealing. Many people tend to treat their Facebook pages as forums to be as public as they please, often revealing information far more private than would be revealed had the same conversation occurred face-to-face.

Now, let us refer back to Supposition 3 and delve further into what it means to be a “co-owner” of a piece of private information. When private information is disseminated to another person, the sender and receiver of the information are now co-owners, meaning that both are within the boundary of this private information (Petronio, 2002). On social media, hundreds of people become co-owners of any information posted to the newsfeed. Now we have

arrived at what occurs when someone stumbles upon a post on social media that contains information that he or she does not necessarily want to co-own, making them a “reluctant confidant.”

Message recipients become reluctant confidants “when the boundary of accessibility is pushed too far and private information is disclosed to an unwilling party” (McBride & Bergen, 2008). Of course, everyone has the right and ability to simply not look at certain users’ profiles and posts, but unless actively avoiding specific people, posts will likely appear on the general newsfeed simply because they are friends with the poster. When posting on social media, “we not only have to consider the individual who is revealing or concealing, but we also must focus on how the decision affects other people” (Petronio, 2002, p. 2).

This brings us to Jones and Archer’s (1976) concept of “personalistic disclosure,” or the idea that the message recipient has been singled out to receive the information because he or she is particularly trustworthy. When reading a Facebook post, this could make the recipient feel cognitive dissonance because, clearly, he or she is not being singled out to receive the information if the post is public. Petronio’s CPM focuses heavily on the actions of the discloser, and less so on the receiving end of the interaction. In her work, Bazarova (2012) discusses this major shortcoming of CPM, which is the lack of emphasis on the receiver’s perception of the disclosure and associated privacy rules. This perception allows

the receiver to make judgements and form opinions about the discloser, leading to the formation of an impression.

Impression Formation

Upon first meeting someone, we form an image of that person in our mind consisting of various beliefs about him or her, otherwise known as an impression (Pavitt, 2007). This impression can change as we get to know this person better and interact with him or her more often. Previously stated, people have a plethora of friends on their Facebook profiles, ranging from closest friends to extended family members to people from childhood that the user has not seen or spoken to in a decade. In the case of closest friends and those with whom we interact face-to-face on a regular basis, impressions are already established. Regarding those with whom we interact exclusively or almost exclusively online, however, a significant amount of impression formation occurs when reading posts from these particular Facebook friends.

Social networking sites allow users to broadcast their own intimate and private information while receiving updates about others' lives, thoughts, and opinions. This disclosure of personal information on a public forum makes it difficult to discern where the boundary between private and public lies, simultaneously making it difficult to understand how people make judgements and form impressions of others based on intimate disclosure online (Bazarova,

2012). On a daily basis, people constantly observe and make judgements about the behavior of others (Afifi, 2009). We can also assume that this action can be directly transferred to people making judgements about others' behavior on social media, including posting, liking, and commenting. *Wired* writer Mary Choi (2016) discovered in her interviews that "social media is real life, with its own arcane rules and etiquette." According to two of the girls interviewed by Choi, there is an especially important unspoken rule about likes and comments, that if a friend posts a "selfie," it is imperative that you like or comment on the photo to avoid harm to the friendship.

Pavitt (2007) explains that there are four steps to the process of forming an impression about someone else. First, the behavior is observed. Second, we attempt to figure out why the person is behaving in such a manner. Third, if the person is the cause for such behavior, we are able to form an impression of this person. Finally, we make an evaluation about the person based on this impression that we have just formed.

Because many social media users maintain certain friendships primarily online and may even have friendships that exist online entirely, Pavitt's (2007) impression formation process can be directly transferred to the way we form impressions on social media. When scrolling through a Facebook newsfeed, we observe many posts from anyone with whom we are friends or follow. One example of a post that we have all most likely seen: a photo of a new haircut. We

will refer to this poster as Sarah. Any content that is posted is meant to be observed by others, so Sarah posted this photo so her friends will see it. We then may think, “Why did Sarah post this photo? Did she want affirmation through likes and comments?” We may not think through this process every time we see a post, but both social and personal motivation behind the action of posting to social media certainly exists (Jimenez, 2012). Next, we can form an impression about Sarah based on her post featuring her new haircut. In this case, if we decided that Sarah posted this photo because she wanted others to like the photo and comment on it, she could be fishing for compliments and seeking attention. Finally, we now might evaluate Sarah as attention-seeking and vain. This impression formation process can be applied to virtually any post online, just as it can be applied to any face-to-face interaction.

Part of the process of forming an impression of a person is judging the appropriateness of their behavior. Therefore, when thinking about impression formation online, judging the appropriateness of the observed post or posting habits is critical. Due to the amount that social media is ingrained in our daily lives, these impressions of others formed online are often carried over into our face-to-face interactions with the same people. However, very little research has been done in this area at this point in time. One of the goals of this thesis is to help us understand more about the impressions people might form about others when they observe their online posting behavior.

Implications of Publishing Private Information - Private Facts Torts

As previously discussed, social media is a commonplace arena to observe the private lives of others. In media law, torts concerning invasion of privacy are legal remedies for harms to a person's private life and personal space. These invasions of privacy can be broken down into four distinct categories, including, "intrusion into seclusion," "appropriation of name or likeness," "placing a person in a false light," and "public disclosure of private facts" (The Law Shelf, 2018). More specifically, "private facts" refer to, "information about someone's personal life that has not previously been revealed to the public, that is not of legitimate public concern, and the publication of which would be offensive to a reasonable person," and is the only tort where there are potential legal consequences for publishing *true* information (Digital Media Law Project, 2014). Private facts torts provide a framework for thinking about the sorts of things that people might find inappropriate on social media or in any kind of message. In this thesis, I use them as a guide for the examples used in the study, as well as a guide for the topics that I think would lead to judgements about appropriateness. According to Trager et al. (2010, p. 248), private facts cases include "financial condition, medical information, and domestic difficulties."

The law recognizes the above topics as too harmful to be publicly discussed, yet we see posts about these topics all the time on Facebook and other

social media platforms. Even though the content might be truthful, it is still potentially damaging. For this study, I attempted to find Facebook posts with topics that match the topics in these private facts torts to assess the appropriateness of the messages in the eyes of college students. The posts used in this thesis deal with self-disclosure, so legally there can be no ramifications for the poster. However, due to the nature of the topics and the content of the posts, this thesis still examines social media posts that people find inappropriate.

Chapter 2

METHODS

Initial Survey

As the first step in conducting this study, I conducted an initial pretest survey to determine if my impressions concerning the appropriateness of social media posts were consistent with those made by others. I was also interested in learning whether posting on social media about topics relevant to private facts torts resulted in judgements about appropriateness, which characteristics people attribute to these posts, and what specifically about social media posts people find inappropriate. To answer these questions, I first gathered 22 posts from my personal Facebook and Instagram accounts that initially struck me either as inappropriate in some way, or that I considered completely appropriate and normal to post. To protect the anonymity of the poster, I excluded the photos attached to any posts and used only the caption portion of the post in my survey. I asked the respondents to read each post and rate them on a 7-point Likert scale of 1 to 7, with options ranging from completely inappropriate to completely appropriate, and then had them explain their response in an open-ended text box.

This survey was sent to 22 college-aged respondents via email, and I received 17 usable responses. The mean and standard deviation for each question, as well as keywords from each open-ended response are displayed in Table 1.

The characteristics that appeared repeatedly in the explanations of responses for posts that were rated low on the appropriateness scale included “too intimate,” “too personal,” “dramatic,” “don’t need to know,” “too much information,” “too lengthy,” “attention-seeking,” “annoying,” “dirty laundry,” “inappropriate language,” and “offensive.” On the other hand, explanations of responses to posts that were rated higher on the appropriateness scale included characteristics such as “sweet,” “happy,” “to-the-point,” “exciting,” “informative,” “supportive,” and “inspirational.”

Pretest

My pretest included twelve different fictitious social media posts, using as source material posts included in the previously discussed initial survey, followed by a series of measures for each post to be discussed below. There were four posts from each topic area that appear in the aforementioned private facts torts, including financial concerns, health matters, and domestic issues or happenings (Trager et al., 2010). Two posts from each group were positive in tone and two were negative. The statements accompanying the posts were presented along with the four previously-mentioned questions intended to measure the extent to which

research participants judged the fictitious posts as appropriate and realistic. Each was accompanied by a 7-point Likert scale asking the participants the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the survey item. A complete list of the survey items accompanying each of the posts is shown below:

	Completely disagree	Mostly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Mostly agree	Completely agree
This post is appropriate	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This post is realistic	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This post is suitable for social media	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This post could appear on my newsfeed	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

There was a second portion of the pretest to gauge the extent to which respondents thought appropriateness judgements in general on social media are related to various attributes. Respondents looked at 18 different attributes that were included in the explanations for appropriate judgments made by the participants in the initial survey and rated how strongly they believed appropriateness judgements were related to them on a 7-point scale, ranging from not at all related to completely related. These attributes were gathered from the open-ended explanation responses in the initial survey as described above.

In the pretest survey there were 42 total participants from two different sections of a public speaking course. Eighteen students from one class took the survey with the attributes section appearing first and the posts section appearing second, and 24 students from the other class took the survey with the posts

appearing first and the attributes appearing second. For the class that took the survey with attributes first, there were 16 males and 8 females. There were 0 freshmen, 9 sophomores, 11 juniors, and 3 seniors. For the class that took the survey with posts first, there were 11 males and 7 females. There was 1 freshman, 6 sophomores, 8 juniors, and 3 seniors. Respondents in both classes received extra credit in exchange for their participation.

Pretest Results

Table 2 displays mean, standard deviation, and *t*-test results (with 40 degrees of freedom) for the appropriateness judgements for each of the 12 posts in both orders.

The positive posts concerning appropriateness yielded a mean of above 5 with only one exception (money 4, attributes first, $M=4.81$). In contrast, every appropriateness judgement for the negative posts yielded a mean of less than 4, with only two exceptions (health 2; $M=4.56$ and health 3; $M=4.14$). Examining *t*-tests for order effects, three were significant at .05. Order 1 (posts first) judgments were consistently more extreme than the judgements in Order 2 (attributes first), with judgements being higher for posts that were positive in tone and lower for posts that were negative in tone.

Table 3 exhibits means and standard deviations for each of the 12 posts averaged across the two orders, in regard to appropriateness judgements.

The positive posts were judged as significantly more appropriate than the negative posts in every case, even though appropriateness judgments for negative posts were often more intermediate than low. Next, I conducted three 2 (tone) \times 2 (order) analyses of variance, one for each topic. In all three topics, the tone effect was significant; health, $F(1, 164) = 49.07, p < .001$; money, $F(1, 164) = 87.25, p < .001$; relationship, $F(1, 164) = 184.83, p < .001$. In addition, for money, the tone \times order effect was significant, $F(1, 164) = 10.27, p = .002$, showing some differences in judgments among the versions for each tone. The three main effects for order and two other interaction effects were not significant.

Table 4 displays means, standard deviations, and t -test results (with 40 degrees of freedom) for the realism judgements for each of the 12 posts in both orders.

In regard to realism judgements, M1 had one order mean below 4 and R2 had both order means below 4, meaning that they were seen as less realistic than average. Most posts were seen as at least moderately realistic. Regarding t -tests for order effects, 7 were significant at .05 and 1 more at .10. Order 1 (posts first) were always higher in realism judgments. A possible explanation for this could be that reading attributes first tempers judgements for posts.

Table 5 exhibits means and standard deviations for each of the 12 posts averaged across the two orders, in regard to realism judgements.

We can conclude that positive posts are always judged as significantly more realistic than negative posts are. Perhaps this indicates that people expect positive posts to appear on social media rather than negative ones. I did three 2 (tone) \times 2 (order) analyses of variance, one for each topic. Here, the tone effect was again significant for all three topics; health, $F(1, 164) = 25.21, p < .001$; money, $F(1, 164) = 53.53, p < .001$; relationship, $F(1, 164) = 84.30, p < .001$. For money, both order, $F(1, 164) = 4.03, p = .046$, and the interaction, $F(1, 164) = 6.89, p = .01$, were significant, due to the positive post first having a higher mean than the positive attributes first. For relationship posts, order, $F(1, 164) = 4.26, p = .041$, was significant, as Order 2 (attributes first) had higher means than Order 1 (posts first).

Table 6 shows means and standard deviations for attributes in both orders.

There was no significant difference in the order effects. After the pretest we eliminated attributes with a mean of less than 4.5 (sweet, offensive, to the point, exciting, too long, supportive, too much information), because they did not seem judged as relevant, so we will use 11 of original 18 for the final version of the survey.

Survey

The final survey was administered in two different sets, each one containing six of the original posts with one positive and one negative post for

each of the three topics. Splitting the posts in two groups systematically counterbalanced the results and reduced respondent fatigue. The survey items consisted of the eleven attributes that yielded a mean of 4.5 or greater in the pretest survey, including, “too intimate,” “informative,” “too personal,” “dramatic,” “inspirational,” “uses inappropriate language,” “annoying,” “dirty laundry,” “don’t need to know,” “attention-seeking,” and “happy.” Each survey item was accompanied by a 7-point Likert scale, asking the participants the extent to which they would use the given item to judge the appropriateness of each Facebook post. Each respondent was asked to report his or her gender, year in school, ethnic background, and student ID number to receive extra credit.

Survey participants consisted of 286 students in two large Communication classes at the University of Delaware. Of the respondents, 84 were male, 201 were female, and 1 was other. There were 112 freshman respondents, 67 sophomores, 49 juniors, and 58 seniors. When asked about ethnicity, 242 identified as White, 13 identified as Black or African American, 0 identified as American Indian, 19 identified as Asian, 1 identified as Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, and 11 identified as other. 68 respondents indicated that they use Facebook 0-2 times per week, 206 indicated that they use Facebook at least 3 times per week, and 12 indicated that they do not have a Facebook account. If participants reported that they used Facebook at least three times a week, they were directed to one of two versions of the survey and asked to evaluate six fictitious Facebook posts on

various attributes. If participants reported that they used Facebook 0-2 times per week or that they did not have a Facebook account, they were directed to the end of the survey. Respondents in both classes received extra credit in exchange for their participation, regardless of their Facebook usage.

Chapter 3

RESULTS

Upon completion of data collection, I analyzed the means and standard deviations for each of the eleven attributes, as displayed in Appendix D. Additionally, I conducted eleven 2 (tone) \times 3 (topic) \times 2 (set) ANOVA, one for each attribute, as displayed in Appendix E, resulting in twelve conditions to analyze for each attribute. Based on the final sample size of 206, post hoc statistical power estimates as calculated on G*Power3 for ANOVAs including topic were .30 for a small effect size, .95 for a medium effect size, and almost 1.0 for a large effect size. Power for the other ANOVAs were estimated at .23 for a small effect size, .90 for a medium effect size, and almost 1.0 for a large effect size.

Overall Effects

Tone effect is significant for all attributes except “informative” ($p = .245$). Every other attribute yielded a significance of $p < .001$. This indicates that tone (positive versus negative) mattered most of the time when respondents evaluated the appropriateness of a Facebook post. Overall, posts that were negative in tone were usually judged as much more inappropriate than posts of the same topic that

were positive in tone. Posts that were positive in tone for “happy,” a blatantly positive attribute, were judged as the most appropriate for social media in comparison to all other attributes.

Topic effect is significant for all attributes except “inappropriate language” ($p = .054$). Every other attribute yielded a significance of $p < .001$. This indicates that topic (health, money, or relationship) mattered most of the time when respondents evaluated the appropriateness of a Facebook post. Overall, the topic that almost always yielded the highest mean was relationship, followed by money, and then health. Regarding the especially negative attributes, respondents usually had the strongest feelings about their evaluation of relationship-related posts.

Topic \times tone interaction effect is significant for all attributes except “happy” ($p = .514$), indicating that the combination of the tone and topic (health, money, or relationship) of the post mattered for every attribute with the exception of one when respondents evaluated the appropriateness of a Facebook post. Overall, the reason for the strong interaction between tone \times topic for most attributes is that the difference in means between positive and negative is largest concerning relationship-related posts, followed by money, then health.

Set effect is significant for all attributes except “informative” ($p = .274$) and “happy” ($p = .726$). Every other attribute yielded a significance of $p < .05$. This indicates that set (one or two) mattered most of the time when respondents

evaluated the appropriateness of a Facebook post. Many of the interactions in which set is involved are also significant. However, because set was randomly assigned to eliminate respondent fatigue, meaningful conclusions cannot be drawn from the significance of the effect of set. Specific wording of each post in either set will have impacts for which we are unable to account.

Tone, Topic and Set Effects on Attributes

Below is a breakdown of the analysis of the effects that tone, topic, and set for each of the eleven attributes. Because set was randomly assigned, it will not be discussed in too much detail below.

Too Intimate

Appendix D, Table 7 displays the means and standard deviations for the attribute “too intimate.” Tone ($p < .001$) and topic ($p < .001$) effects are significant for the attribute “too intimate,” as displayed in Appendix E, Table 18. The overall mean for the negative posts across all three topic conditions is $m = 4.64$ and the overall mean for the positive posts and all three topic conditions is $m = 2.40$. This suggests that tone plays a large role in respondents’ judgements of posts being too intimate because negative posts were judged as much more intimate than positive posts. The mean for health is $m = 3.31$, the mean for money

is $m = 3.19$, and the mean for relationship is $m = 4.04$, showing us that the topic of relationship is a bit higher than the topics of health and money.

The tone \times topic interaction is also significant ($p < .001$). Negative health-related posts were judged as moderately too intimate ($m = 4.19$), and positive health-related posts were judged as not very intimate ($m = 2.45$). Negative money-related posts were judged as moderately too intimate ($m = 4.19$), and positive money-related posts were judged as not very intimate ($m = 2.18$). Negative relationship-related posts were judged as much too intimate ($m = 5.64$), and positive relationship-related posts were judged as not very intimate ($m = 2.58$). The reason for the strong interaction between tone \times topic is that the difference between positive and negative is larger for relationship than for health and money.

The mean for the main effect for set is $m = 3.50$ and it is significant ($p < .001$). The tone \times set interaction is significant ($p = .001$).

Informative

Appendix D, Table 8 displays the means and standard deviations for the attribute “informative.” Tone ($p < .001$) and topic ($p < .001$) effects are significant for the attribute “informative,” as displayed in Appendix E, Table 19. The overall mean for the negative posts across all three topic conditions is $m = 3.88$ and the overall mean for the positive posts and all three topic conditions is $m = 4.01$. This suggests that tone does not play a large role in respondents’ judgements of posts

being informative. The mean for health is $m = 3.99$, the mean for money is $m = 3.60$, and the mean for relationship is $m = 4.26$, showing us that the topic of relationship is only slightly higher than the topics of health and money.

The tone \times topic interaction is also significant ($p = .007$). Negative health-related posts were judged as moderately informative ($m = 3.88$), and positive health-related posts were also judged as moderately informative ($m = 4.09$). Negative money-related posts were judged as moderately informative ($m = 3.76$), and positive money-related posts were also judged as moderately informative ($m = 3.44$). Negative relationship-related posts were judged as moderately informative ($m = 4.02$), and positive relationship-related posts were judged as moderately informative ($m = 4.48$). The reason for the interaction effect is because the positive tone was higher for health and relationship and the negative tone is higher for money.

The mean for the main effect for set is $m = 3.95$ and it is not significant ($p = .245$). The topic \times set interaction and the tone \times topic \times set interactions are significant ($p < .001$, $p < .001$).

Personal

Appendix D, Table 9 displays the means and standard deviations for the attribute “personal.” Tone ($p < .001$) and topic ($p < .001$) effects are significant for the attribute “personal,” as displayed in Appendix E, Table 20. The overall

mean for the negative posts across all three topic conditions is $m = 5.23$ and the overall mean for the positive posts and all three topic conditions is $m = 3.79$. This suggests that tone plays a role in respondents' judgements of posts being personal because negative posts were judged as much more personal than the positive posts. The mean for health is $m = 3.79$, the mean for money is $m = 3.80$, and the mean for relationship is $m = 4.29$, showing us that the topic of relationship is slightly higher than the topics of health and money.

The tone \times topic interaction is also significant ($p < .001$). Negative health-related posts were judged as moderately personal ($m = 4.70$), and positive health-related posts were judged as not very personal ($m = 2.90$). Negative money-related posts were judged as somewhat too personal ($m = 4.95$), and positive money-related posts were judged as not very personal ($m = 2.64$). Negative relationship-related posts were judged as much too personal ($m = 6.11$), and positive relationship-related posts were judged as not very personal ($m = 2.72$). The reason for the stronger interaction between tone \times topic is that the difference between positive and negative is smaller for health and money than the analogous difference for relationship. Also, health showed a slightly smaller difference than money.

The mean for the main effect for set is $m = 3.96$ and it is significant ($p < .001$). The tone \times set interaction and the tone \times topic \times set interactions are significant ($p = .002$, $p = .029$).

Dramatic

Appendix D, Table 10 displays the means and standard deviations for the attribute “dramatic.” Tone ($p < .001$) and topic ($p < .001$) effects are significant for the attribute “dramatic,” as displayed in Appendix E, Table 21. The overall mean for the negative posts across all three topic conditions is $m = 4.86$ and the overall mean for the positive posts and all three topic conditions is $m = 2.63$. This suggests that tone plays a large role in respondents’ judgements of posts being dramatic because negative posts were judged as much more dramatic than positive posts. The mean for health is $m = 3.35$, the mean for money is $m = 3.71$, and the mean for relationship is $m = 4.13$, showing us that the topic of relationship is slightly higher than the topics of health and money.

The tone \times topic interaction is also significant ($p < .001$). Negative health-related posts were judged as moderately dramatic ($m = 4.15$), and positive health-related posts were judged as not very dramatic ($m = 2.57$). Negative money-related posts were judged as moderately dramatic ($m = 4.79$), and positive money-related posts were judged as not very dramatic ($m = 2.63$). Negative relationship-related posts were judged as very dramatic ($m = 5.71$), and positive relationship-related posts were judged as not very dramatic ($m = 2.70$). The reason for the stronger interaction between tone \times topic is that the difference between positive

and negative is smaller for health and money than the analogous difference for relationship, with health being slightly smaller than money.

The mean for the main effect for set is $m = 3.73$ and it is significant ($p < .001$). The tone \times topic \times set interaction is significant ($p = .001$).

Inspirational

Appendix D, Table 11 displays the means and standard deviations for the attribute “inspirational.” Tone ($p < .001$) and topic ($p < .001$) effects are significant for the attribute “inspirational,” as displayed in Appendix E, Table 22. The overall mean for the negative posts across all three topic conditions is $m = 1.76$ and the overall mean for the positive posts and all three topic conditions is $m = 4.13$. This suggests that tone plays a large role in respondents’ judgements of posts being inspirational because negative posts were judged as much less inspirational than positive posts. The mean for health is $m = 3.36$, the mean for money is $m = 2.65$, and the mean for relationship is $m = 2.89$, showing us that the topic of health is higher than the topics of money and relationship.

The tone \times topic interaction is also significant ($p < .001$). Negative health-related posts were judged as not at all inspirational ($m = 1.64$), and positive health-related posts were judged as somewhat inspirational ($m = 5.06$). Negative money-related posts were judged as not at all inspirational ($m = 1.55$), and positive money-related posts were judged as moderately inspirational ($m = 3.75$).

Negative relationship-related posts were judged as not very inspirational ($m = 2.12$), and positive relationship-related posts were judged as moderately inspirational ($m = 3.58$). The reason for the stronger interaction between tone \times topic is that the difference between positive and negative is smaller for relationship than the analogous difference for the other topics. Here, health shows a clearly larger difference than money.

The mean for the main effect for set is $m = 2.97$ and it is significant ($p = .004$). The tone \times set, topic \times set, and tone \times topic \times set interactions are significant ($p = .002, p < .001, p < .001$).

Inappropriate Language

Appendix D, Table 12 displays the means and standard deviations for the attribute “inappropriate language.” Tone ($p < .001$) effect is significant while topic effect ($p = .054$) for the attribute is not, as displayed in Appendix E, Table 23. The overall mean for the negative posts across all three topic conditions is $m = 2.44$ and the overall mean for the positive posts and all three topic conditions is $m = 2.02$. This indicates that tone does not play much of a role in respondents’ judgements of posts using inappropriate language, as the mean for negative posts using inappropriate language is only slightly higher than the mean for positive posts using inappropriate language. The mean for health is $m = 2.07$, the mean for

money is $m = 2.39$, and the mean for relationship is $m = 2.22$, showing us that the means are similar regardless of topic.

The tone \times topic interaction is also significant ($p < .001$). Negative health-related posts were judged as not using much inappropriate language ($m = 1.96$), and positive health-related posts were also judged as not using much inappropriate language ($m = 2.18$). Negative money-related posts were judged as not using much inappropriate language ($m = 2.86$), and positive money-related posts were also judged as not using much inappropriate language ($m = 1.91$). Negative relationship-related posts were judged as not using much inappropriate language ($m = 2.50$), and positive relationship-related posts were also judged as not using much inappropriate language ($m = 1.97$). The reason for the interaction effect is because the positive tone was higher for money and the negative tone is higher for money and relationship.

The mean for the main effect for set is $m = 2.23$ and it is significant at ($p = .019$). The topic \times set and tone \times topic \times set interactions are significant ($p = .001$, $p = .002$).

Annoying

Appendix D, Table 13 displays the means and standard deviations for the attribute “annoying.” Tone ($p < .001$) and topic ($p < .001$) effects are significant for the attribute “annoying,” as displayed in Appendix E, Table 24. The overall

mean for the negative posts across all three topic conditions is $m = 4.01$ and the overall mean for the positive posts and all three topic conditions is $m = 2.54$. This suggests that tone plays a role in respondents' judgements of posts being annoying because negative posts were judged as more annoying than the positive posts. The mean for health is $m = 2.67$, the mean for money is $m = 3.68$, and the mean for relationship is $m = 3.45$, showing us that the topic of health is lower than the topics of money and relationship.

The tone \times topic interaction is also significant ($p < .001$). Negative health-related posts were judged as moderately annoying ($m = 3.07$), and positive health-related posts were judged as not very annoying ($m = 2.27$). Negative money-related posts were judged as moderately annoying ($m = 4.48$), and positive money-related posts were judged as not very annoying ($m = 2.87$). Negative relationship-related posts were judged as moderately annoying ($m = 4.51$), and positive relationship-related posts were judged as not very annoying ($m = 2.49$). The reason for the stronger interaction between tone \times topic is that the difference between positive and negative is smaller for health than the analogous difference for the other topics. Here, health is smaller than money.

The mean for the main effect for set is $m = 3.26$ and it is significant at ($p < .001$). The topic \times set and tone \times topic \times set interactions are significant ($p < .001$, $p < .001$).

Dirty Laundry

Appendix D, Table 14 displays the means and standard deviations for the attribute “dirty laundry.” Tone ($p < .001$) and topic ($p < .001$) effects are significant for the attribute “dirty laundry,” as displayed in Appendix E, Table 25. The overall mean for the negative posts across all three topic conditions is $m = 3.94$ and the overall mean for the positive posts and all three topic conditions is $m = 1.99$. This suggests that tone plays a large role in respondents’ judgements of posts containing dirty laundry because negative posts were judged as containing much more dirty laundry than the positive posts. The mean for health is $m = 2.42$, the mean for money is $m = 3.07$, and the mean for relationship is $m = 3.38$, showing us that the topic of health is lower than money and relationship.

The tone \times topic interaction is also significant ($p < .001$). Negative health-related posts were judged as not containing much dirty laundry ($m = 2.91$), and positive health-related posts were also judged as not containing much dirty laundry ($m = 1.94$). Negative money-related posts were judged as containing a moderate amount of ($m = 4.03$), and positive money-related posts were judged as not containing much dirty laundry ($m = 2.09$). Negative relationship-related posts were judged as containing a somewhat large amount of dirty laundry ($m = 4.97$), and positive relationship-related posts were judged as not containing much dirty laundry ($m = 1.94$). The reason for the stronger interaction between tone \times topic is that the difference between positive and negative is smaller for health than the

analogous difference for the other topics. Additionally, money was larger than health.

The mean for the main effect for set is $m = 2.95$ and it is significant at ($p = .042$). Interaction effects including set are not significant.

Don't Need to Know

Appendix D, Table 15 displays the means and standard deviations for the attribute “don't need to know.” Tone ($p < .001$) and topic ($p < .001$) effects are significant for the attribute “don't need to know,” as displayed in Appendix E, Table 26. The overall mean for the negative posts across all three topic conditions is $m = 4.88$ and the overall mean for the positive posts and all three topic conditions is $m = 2.97$. This suggests that tone plays a large role in respondents' judgements of posts containing information that we don't need to know because all negative posts were judged as containing more information that we don't need to know than the positive posts. The mean for health is $m = 3.58$, the mean for money is $m = 4.28$, and the mean for relationship is $m = 3.81$, showing us that the topic of money is higher than health and relationship.

The tone \times topic interaction is also significant ($p < .001$). Negative health-related posts were judged as containing a moderate amount of information that we don't need to know ($m = 4.19$), and positive health-related posts were judged as containing a somewhat small amount of information that we don't need to know

($m = 2.97$). Negative money-related posts were judged as containing a somewhat large amount of information that we don't need to know ($m = 5.19$), and positive money-related posts were judged as containing a moderate amount of information that we don't need to know ($m = 3.37$). Negative relationship-related posts were judged as containing a large amount of information that we don't need to know ($m = 5.30$), and positive relationship-related posts were judged as containing a somewhat small amount of information that we don't need to know ($m = 2.56$). The reason for the stronger interaction between tone \times topic is that the difference between positive and negative is smaller for health than the analogous difference for the other topics.

The mean for the main effect for set is $m = 3.91$ and it is significant at ($p < .001$). The topic \times set and tone \times topic \times set interactions are significant ($p < .001$, $p < .001$).

Attention-Seeking

Appendix D, Table 16 displays the means and standard deviations for the attribute "attention-seeking." Tone ($p < .001$) and topic ($p < .001$) effects are significant for the attribute "attention-seeking," as displayed in Appendix E, Table 27. The overall mean for the negative posts across all three topic conditions is $m = 4.84$ and the overall mean for the positive posts and all three topic conditions is $m = 3.60$. This suggests that tone plays a role in respondents' judgements of posts

being attention-seeking because negative posts were judged as more attention-seeking than the positive posts. The mean for health is $m = 3.63$, the mean for money is $m = 4.50$, and the mean for relationship is $m = 4.51$, showing us that the topic of health is lower than money and relationship.

The tone \times topic interaction is also significant ($p < .001$). Negative health-related posts were judged as moderately attention-seeking ($m = 4.09$), and positive health-related posts were judged as slightly attention-seeking ($m = 3.17$). Negative money-related posts were judged as somewhat attention-seeking ($m = 4.97$), and positive money-related posts were judged as moderately attention-seeking ($m = 4.04$). Negative relationship-related posts were judged as very attention-seeking ($m = 5.51$), and positive relationship-related posts were judged as slightly attention-seeking ($m = 3.59$). The reason for the stronger interaction between tone \times topic is that the difference between positive and negative is smaller for health and money than the analogous difference for relationship. Once again, the difference between positive and negative for money was larger than the difference between positive and negative for health.

The mean for the main effect for set is $m = 4.21$ and it is significant at ($p < .001$). The topic \times set and tone \times topic \times set interactions are significant ($p = .001$, $p < .001$).

Happy

Appendix D, Table 17 displays the means and standard deviations for the attribute “happy.” Tone ($p < .001$) and topic ($p < .001$) effects are significant for the attribute “happy,” as displayed in Appendix E, Table 28. The overall mean for the negative posts across all three topic conditions is $m = 1.64$ and the overall mean for the positive posts and all three topic conditions is $m = 6.08$. This suggests that tone plays a large role in respondents’ judgements of posts being happy because all positive posts were judged as much happier than the negative posts. The mean for health is $m = 3.74$, the mean for money is $m = 3.74$, and the mean for relationship is $m = 4.22$, showing us that the topic of relationship is higher than the topics of health and money.

The tone \times topic interaction is not significant ($p = .514$). Negative health-related posts were judged as not at all happy ($m = 1.45$), and positive health-related posts were judged as very happy ($m = 6.00$). Negative money-related posts were judged as not at all happy ($m = 1.56$), and positive money-related posts were judged as very ($m = 5.93$). Negative relationship-related posts were judged as not at all happy ($m = 1.93$), and positive relationship-related posts were judged as very happy ($m = 6.30$). The reason that the interaction between tone \times topic is not significant is that the difference between positive and negative is large and almost equal for all topics. This indicates that respondents found negative posts to be not very happy and positive posts to be quite happy, and the topic didn’t matter.

The mean for the main effect for set is $m = 3.90$ and it is not significant ($p = .726$). The tone \times set, topic \times set, and tone \times topic \times set interactions are significant ($p = .042, p < .001, p = .006$).

Differences Between Sets

Since two sets were used to eliminate respondent fatigue, reported below is the differences between positive and negative for each of the two sets of posts given in the final survey.

Too Intimate:

For set 1, the difference between positive and negative was highest for relationship-related posts, then money, then health. For set 2, the difference between positive and negative was highest for relationship-related posts, then health, then money. For “too intimate” in set 1, the difference was greatest for relationship and least for health, but in set 2, the difference was greatest for relationship and least for money. Table 29 in Appendix F shows the difference between positive tone and negative tone for the three topics in each set.

Informative:

For set 1, the difference between positive and negative was highest for money-related posts, then health, then relationship. For set 2, the difference

between positive and negative was highest for money-related posts, then relationship, then health. For “informative,” the difference was greatest for money and least for relationship in set 1 and greatest for money and least for health in set 2. Table 30 in Appendix F shows the difference between positive tone and negative tone for the three topics in each set.

Personal:

For set 1, the difference between positive and negative was highest for relationship-related posts, then money, then health. For set 2, the difference between positive and negative was also highest for relationship-related posts, then money, then health. For “personal,” the difference was greatest for relationship and least for health in both sets. Table 31 in Appendix F shows the difference between positive tone and negative tone for the three topics in each set.

Dramatic:

For set 1, the difference between positive and negative was highest for relationship-related posts, then money, then health. For set 2, the difference between positive and negative was also highest for relationship-related posts, then money, then health. For “dramatic,” the difference was greatest for relationship and least for health in both sets. Table 32 in Appendix F shows the difference between positive tone and negative tone for the three topics in each set.

Inspirational:

For set 1, the difference between positive and negative was highest for health-related posts, then money, then relationship. For set 2, the difference between positive and negative was highest for health-related posts, then relationship, then money. For “inspirational” in set 1, the difference was greatest for health and least for relationship, but in set 2, the difference was greatest for health and least for money. Table 33 in Appendix F shows the difference between positive tone and negative tone for the three topics in each set.

Inappropriate Language:

For set 1, the difference between positive and negative was highest for relationship-related posts, then money, then health. For set 2, the difference between positive and negative was highest for money-related posts, then relationship, then health. For “inappropriate language” in set 1, the difference was greatest for relationship and least for health, but in set 2, the difference was greatest for money and least for health. Table 34 in Appendix F shows the difference between positive tone and negative tone for the three topics in each set.

Annoying:

For set 1, the difference between positive and negative was highest for money-related posts, then relationship, then health. For set 2, the difference between positive and negative was highest for relationship-related posts, then money, then health. For “annoying” in set 1, the difference was greatest for money and least for health, but in set 2, the difference was greatest for relationship and least for health. Table 35 in Appendix F shows the difference between positive tone and negative tone for the three topics in each set.

Dirty Laundry:

For set 1, the difference between positive and negative was highest for relationship-related posts, then money, then health. For set 2, the difference between positive and negative was also highest for relationship-related posts, then money, then health. For “dirty laundry,” the difference was greatest for relationship and least for health in both sets. Table 36 in Appendix F shows the difference between positive tone and negative tone for the three topics in each set.

Don't Need to Know:

For set 1, the difference between positive and negative was highest for money-related posts, then relationship, then health. For set 2, the difference between positive and negative was highest for relationship-related posts, then money, then health. For “don't need to know” in set 1, the difference was greatest

for money and least for health, but in set 2, the difference was greatest for relationship and least for health. Table 37 in Appendix F shows the difference between positive tone and negative tone for the three topics in each set.

Attention-seeking:

For set 1, the difference between positive and negative was highest for relationship-related posts, then money, then health. For set 2, the difference between positive and negative was highest for relationship-related posts, then health, then money. For “attention-seeking” in set 1, the difference was greatest for relationship and least for health, but in set 2, the difference was greatest for relationship and least for money. Table 38 in Appendix F shows the difference between positive tone and negative tone for the three topics in each set.

Happy:

For set 1, the difference between positive and negative was highest for relationship-related posts, then money, then health. For set 2, the difference between positive and negative was highest for health-related posts, then money, then relationship. For “happy” in set 1, the difference was greatest for relationship and least for health, but in set 2, the difference was greatest for health and least for relationship. Table 39 in Appendix F shows the difference between positive tone and negative tone for the three topics in each set.

Chapter 4

DISCUSSION

This thesis aimed to discover which types of social media posts people find to be inappropriate and which types people find to be appropriate. Additionally, I wanted to discover just what about the posts influences people's opinion. Respondents were asked to evaluate one of two sets of six Facebook posts, each containing one positive and one negative post with subject matter pertaining to health, money, or relationship matters.

It was interesting to observe how tone, topic, set and different combinations of the three had various effects on the respondents' judgement of appropriateness concerning Facebook posts. Tone effect was significant for all attributes with the exception of "informative," which could suggest that respondents do not care about the tone in which information is conveyed if the content is meant to be informing them of something. Topic effect was significant for all attributes with the exception of "inappropriate language," which could indicate that respondents find posts that contain inappropriate language to be unsuitable for social media no matter what the topic of the post is. Set effect was significant for all attributes except "informative" and "happy," but since two sets containing analogous posts were randomly assigned, we cannot speculate too

much about the effect of set. The specific relevant issue and wordings of each of the two posts for each of the tone × topic conditions will always have idiosyncratic impacts that cannot possibly be accounted for in this type of situation. This is relevant not only to the main effect for set but also for all the interactions in which it enters.

Posts that were negative in tone were judged as much more inappropriate for attributes “too intimate,” “personal,” “dramatic,” “dirty laundry,” and “don’t need to know,” than for the other attributes. This suggests that respondents find posts to which they label those attributes as the most inappropriate for social media out of the eleven attributes in this study. On the other hand, for the attribute “happy,” the opposite is true. Posts that were positive in tone for “happy” were judged as the most appropriate when compared to the negative posts for the same topic. This finding suggests that respondents prefer to see positive posts that contain happy messages on their Facebook newsfeeds. Additionally, it is worth noting that of the three attributes that have differing results for the topic × tone interaction than the others, two, “happy” and “informative”, are the only positives among the eleven.

As far as topic goes, relationship was almost always rated the highest, followed by money, and then health. Respondents have the strongest feelings about their judgements of relationship-related posts, especially concerning particularly negative attributes, such as “too intimate,” “personal,” “dramatic,”

“dirty laundry,” and “attention-seeking.” This could mean that people feel rather negatively toward posts concerning relationship, and perhaps relationship-related posts are the most inappropriate for social media. Money was rated highest in “annoying” and “don’t need to know,” indicating that people just do not see the purpose of disclosing information about money on Facebook. Finally, health was rated particularly highly in “inspirational,” indicating that people are more inspired by health-related posts than money and relationship-related posts, and not as bothered by health-related posts than money and relationship-centered posts.

There was a strong tone \times topic interaction for most attributes, and the difference in means between positive and negative is largest concerning relationship-related posts, followed by money, then health. In practical sense, this gives further evidence that respondents were most sensitive to the difference between positive and negative posts relationship-related posts, followed by money, and then health.

It is worth noting that some sets were not consistent with the difference between positive and negative posts being the highest for relationship-related posts, followed by money, then health. At times, the difference between positive and negative for health was larger than the difference in tone for money. This means that the specific wordings of the posts really do matter in some cases.

Moreover, it is worth mentioning that the preponderance of negative attributes among the eleven used in the final survey is overwhelming. Only two of

the eleven attributes derived from the pretest were positive (happy and inspirational) and only one attribute was neutral (informative). There is no way to know for sure whether people attribute negative characteristics more than positive ones, or if the preponderance of negative attributes is merely an artifact from the posts chosen for the initial survey.

In turn, this might indicate a preponderance of negative posts over positive when it comes to posts that seem exceptionally disclosive. There is no way to know because a formal content analysis of posts was not conducted. However, there is a possibility that people are more likely to use negative attributes than positive attributes when thinking about and judging social media posts. This phenomenon could be an example of the negativity effect, which occurs in judgement formation when much more weight is given to negative information in contrast to positive information (Kellermann, 2009).

Further, this study brings up various implications of other areas of communication research that were previously mentioned in this thesis. These findings are relevant to Communication Privacy Management Theory in that they are in direct conflict with CPM's boundary regulation rules and the disclosure/privacy dialectic. The boundary between private and public information that exists in face-to-face conversation is blurred if not completely destroyed in most of the fictitious Facebook posts presented to respondents, leading the average respondent to deem many of the posts, especially the negative

ones, inappropriate for Facebook. This is likely because they felt they were a reluctant confidant because the information seemed “too intimate,” “dramatic,” et cetera. Further, message receivers are not just reluctant confidants, but are reluctant co-owners, meaning that they now are aware of and “own” information that they did not necessarily want or need to know. As co-owners of this information, the receivers now have the ability to do what they wish with the information, be that keep it to themselves or further disseminate the information.

Some social media users seem to post whatever they want, be it personal, private information or not, so that their entire friend list can view the post and make judgements about it. Findings in this study are also relevant to research in impression formation in that people certainly judge social media posts (and sometimes rather harshly), so this online judgement could be transferred to relationships with the poster offline. Perhaps judgements made online could even carry more weight in the overall impression formation than judgements of a person’s actions or statements made face-to-face, since online judgment allows for more time for the receiver to digest the disclosure more thoroughly than if the disclosure were to happen in a face-to-face context in the form of a quick passing comment.

Thinking back to relevance of the private facts torts to social media appropriateness judgments, my findings are consistent with the suggestion that the discussion of certain topics, especially when the tone of the disclosure is negative,

can be considered offensive, or at least off-putting, to a reasonable person. This thesis specifically tested for the topics of health, relationship, and money, which directly coincide with the topics of financial condition, medical information, and domestic difficulties that can be included in private facts cases (Trager et al., 2010). A primary intention of the private facts tort is to protect a person's dignity, but by disclosing such personal information in a public forum the poster is ultimately endangering his or her own dignity due to the heavy impact that posting such things has on impression formation (Trager et al., 2010).

Finally, there are various practical implications of this research. Some suggestions I would give to social media users are to think about what you do and do not wish to disclose on social media, keeping in mind that others are making judgements about you based on what you post. Whether the disclosure is positive or negative, what you post can have a major impact on judgements others make about your online presence that can be transferred to their in-person impression of you. Certain topics are perceived as "taboo" for social media, especially if the subject matter is negative, so avoid posting personal information about health, money, and relationships whenever possible.

To the reluctant confidants on the receiving end, I suggest attempting to withhold harsh judgement based on what you see others post on Facebook as much as possible. The discloser may not be aware of how much of an impact their posts can make on the impressions others form about them, but hopefully more

research will be done on this topic and Facebook users will begin to refrain from sharing so much private and personal information publically.

Limitations

One major limitation of the pretest is that we did not ask participants if they even had a Facebook profile. We also did not ask about the ethnic background of participants, which could have potentially uncovered some cultural differences in our results. Another limitation of this study is the rather homogeneous participant pool. We used a convenience sample, so most of the participants were of similar backgrounds and age. With access to a larger pool of participants, a broader range of opinions are likely to be accessed.

The initial survey posts and subsequent posts used in this research are not based on any type of true random sample of what is on Facebook and other social media platforms, so there is a chance that my findings could be artifacts of what I happened to choose. Initially, I looked at my own Facebook profile and simply chose posts that I personally thought could be seen as particularly appropriate or inappropriate. However, some of the effects are so general across all twelve posts, especially concerning the positive/negative tone difference and the fact that topic almost always mattered, that it is hard to imagine that the findings are not valid.

Finally, another statistical analysis method exists that may have been more accurate when looking at the interaction effects across tone, topic, and set. The ANOVA analysis used in this thesis can be problematic because an observed

difference between categories, in this case, topics, might only reflect the differences between specific idiosyncratic cases, meaning that the findings are not necessarily generalizable (Jackson & Jacobs, 1983). Treating topic as a fixed effect is technically invalid, and it should be treated as a random effect. There are a large number of possible topics for posts and an infinite number of post wordings for each topic, so treating topic as a fixed effect is technically invalid. Topic should be treated as a random effect because there are so many possible combinations of topics and wording that the sample chosen cannot possibly be generalizable to all Facebook posts that exist and will exist in the future.

Future Research

Areas of future research could include a variety of different demographic samples than simply college students in large communication classes. Replicating the study with various age groups, including middle-aged adults, high school kids, or even senior citizens, would probably yield results that are quite different than what was yielded in this study. It would be interesting to see if different age groups think certain topics are appropriate, while other ages think the same topics are not. Another demographic difference that could be tested is gender. In testing this we could potentially discover if women find certain topics to be inappropriate that men do not, and vice versa. Additionally, one could delve further into the ethnic background and cultural norms of participants to check for cultural differences including social media usage and politeness.

It would also be interesting to test for individual differences in various social media users to discover if certain personality characteristics, such as narcissism and attention-seeking, affect the likelihood of posting inappropriate content. However, it may be difficult to gather such information because self-reporting of negative behavior, such as disclosing inappropriate information on social media, is not likely to reflect the actual amount or severity of the negative behavior.

In a future study, this research could also be expanded to include other social media platforms, such as Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat. There could potentially be subtle nuances or even blatant differences in the norms across platforms concerning tone and topic. Some topics may be completely acceptable to post on one platform and not at all for another. However, knowing what is and is not considered appropriate for Facebook should be a part of models for representing how people decide what/when to post. An unspoken “threshold” exists to address this issue, in which the quantity of “likes” received on particular post determines if that post is successful or not (Carr et al., 2018). Perhaps affirmation is a necessary component in the judgement of the appropriateness of a post.

Some other areas that could be explored include examining if there is a difference between friends in person and friends on Facebook, accepting Facebook friends to be polite versus actually wanting to be friends, and posting

about oneself versus someone else posting about another person. With social media expanding and changing almost daily, there are a plethora of appropriateness studies that can be done that stem from this specific study.

Conclusion

Facebook and other social networking sites have completely altered the meaning of interpersonal disclosure, transforming the once fairly private and intimate exchange into something arguably as impersonal as shouting your deepest and darkest secrets at a crowded street fair for all the world to hear. Personal information that was previously shared with just a few close friends and family members is now routinely posted to Facebook pages and Instagram accounts, subsequently becoming accessible to hundreds (or in some cases thousands) of people. Although social media followers do include our closest circle of friends and family, also included in this group are middle school classmates, third cousins, the man and woman that live down the hall, and perhaps people whom we have never even met in person; the threshold to qualify as someone's friend on social media, especially Facebook, is quite low (Gross & Acquisti, 2005). The audience is vast when Facebook posts are concerned, and this fact seems to be overlooked when people disclose personal information that was one reserved for interpersonal conversation on their pages. Social media platforms and all of the nuances that come along with using them certainly "raise

a variety of issues as we try to understand them, their place in our lives, and their consequences for our personhood and relationships with others” (Baym, p. 2).

We are aware that a switch from interpersonal exchange to public posting has certainly occurred, making it a social norm to post intimate information on Facebook and other social networking sites, but little research has been done to attempt to explain this phenomenon. Mary Choi (2016) explains that we have a hard time putting words to the rules of social media as a whole, but if you “ask [teens] targeted questions and they’ll break down a palimpsest of etiquette in rote, exhaustive detail...to them the rules are a birthright.”

This thesis aimed to provide insight about which topics college students found to be inappropriate on Facebook, and what specifically they found inappropriate about the posts specifically, as well as to gather some empirical evidence to support the aforementioned unspoken rules of social media. Posts were judged most harshly on attributes “too intimate,” “personal,” “dramatic,” “dirty laundry,” and “don’t need to know,” indicating that Facebook users find posts that they label those ways as the most inappropriate attributes for posts for social media. Positive posts were judged the most favorably on the single attribute “happy,” indicating that Facebook users consider happy posts to be the most appropriate attribute for post for social media. If more research is done in this area, perhaps we will see a little more positivity on our Facebook newsfeeds in the near future.

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APPENDIX A

INITIAL SURVEY TABLES

Table 1 – Initial Survey Open-ended Attributes

Question	Mean	Std. Deviation	Attributes
1	4.52	1.29	annoying, weight, money, no one cares, don't need to know
2	3.70	1.63	dangerously underweight, unhealthy, personal, weird, braggy, private
3	5.00	1.49	proud, lengthy, personal, odd
4	6.22	1.00	cute, happy news, not inappropriate, harmless celebration
5	3.11	1.64	too much information, personal, long and in-depth
6	3.83	1.89	too intimate, too much detail about personal relationships, personal, dramatic, no one cares
7	2.11	1.57	offensive, derogatory, passive aggressive, antagonistic, rude, intolerant, too far, not appropriate
8	4.35	1.41	personal, strange, positive, oversharing, acceptable, unnecessary, attention-seeking
9	6.50	1.25	informative, normal, practical
10	6.22	1.17	exciting, happy, personal issue, fine if person in photo is okay with post
11	4.67	1.65	lengthy, too long, melodramatic, self-involved, appropriate
12	5.50	1.30	personal, touching, inspirational, too in-depth, long
13	6.67	0.84	short, sweet, friendly, happy, to the point
14	2.11	1.18	money, too personal, drama, immature, relationship drama, inappropriate language
15	5.61	1.38	grieving, showing support, appropriate
16	3.44	1.38	too personal, attention-seeking, unnecessary, mundane, odd/weird
17	2.11	1.18	disgusting, overshare, too personal, gross
18	4.22	1.56	too personal
19	1.69	0.79	passive aggressive, too personal, offensive, attention-seeking, too much information
20	2.94	1.68	no need to share, dirty laundry, too much information, personal, admitting to theft

21	2.00	1.84	dirty laundry, too much information, personal drama, aggressive, rude, attention-seeking
22	4.41	1.46	weird, no one cares, personal, nothing wrong with it, money shouldn't be discussed on SM

APPENDIX B

PRETEST SURVEY TABLES

Table 2 - Pretest Appropriateness Judgements						
Topic	Tone	Order	Mean	SD	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Health 1	Positive	Posts first	5.58	1.67	0.76	0.45
		Attributes first	5.23	1.34		
Health 2	Negative	Posts first	4.56	1.68	1.84	0.07
		Attributes first	3.69	1.38		
Health 3	Negative	Posts first	4.14	1.62	0.66	0.51
		Attributes first	3.83	1.36		
Health 4	Positive	Posts first	6.33	1.12	1.83	0.07
		Attributes first	5.52	1.60		
Money 1	Negative	Posts first	3.78	1.90	1.23	0.23
		Attributes first	3.15	1.43		
Money 2	Positive	Posts first	6.56	0.68	2.34	0.03
		Attributes first	5.83	1.17		
Money 3	Negative	Posts first	3.78	1.70	-0.27	0.79
		Attributes first	3.90	1.17		
Money 4	Positive	Posts first	5.67	1.36	1.94	0.06
		Attributes first	4.81	1.44		
Relationship 1	Positive	Posts first	6.53	0.93	2.96	0.01
		Attributes first	5.38	1.44		
Relationship 2	Negative	Posts first	2.50	1.58	-1.09	0.28
		Attributes first	3.02	1.51		
Relationship 3	Positive	Posts first	6.58	0.94	2.23	0.03
		Attributes first	5.65	1.58		
Relationship 4	Negative	Posts first	2.70	1.64	-1.09	0.28
		Attributes first	3.21	1.42		

Topic	Tone	Order	Mean	SD
Health	Positive	Posts	5.38	1.48
Health	Positive	Attributes	5.87	1.46
Health	Negative	Posts	4.06	1.56
Health	Negative	Attributes	3.96	1.47
Money	Positive	Posts	6.14	1.04
Money	Positive	Attributes	5.18	1.46
Money	Negative	Posts	3.42	1.66
Money	Negative	Attributes	3.85	1.40
Relationship	Positive	Posts	5.87	1.36
Relationship	Positive	Attributes	6.05	1.41
Relationship	Negative	Posts	2.80	1.54
Relationship	Negative	Attributes	2.99	1.52

Table 4: Pretest - Realism Judgements							
Topic	Tone	Order	Mean	SD	t	Sig. (2-tailed)	df
Health 1	Positive	Posts first	5.39	1.53	0.35	0.73	40
		Attributes first	5.23	1.43			40
Health 2	Negative	Posts first	5.11	1.46	2.47	0.02	40
		Attributes first	4.02	1.38			40
Health 3	Negative	Posts first	4.78	1.84	0.96	0.35	40
		Attributes first	4.38	0.82			40
Health 4	Positive	Posts first	6.33	1.08	1.84	0.07	40
		Attributes first	5.60	1.39			40
Money 1	Negative	Posts first	4.86	1.70	2.37	0.02	40
		Attributes first	3.79	1.23			40
Money 2	Positive	Posts first	6.69	0.46	3.36	0.01	40
		Attributes first	5.77	1.09			40
Money 3	Negative	Posts first	4.58	1.30	1.00	0.32	40
		Attributes first	3.90	1.17			40
Money 4	Positive	Posts first	5.72	1.24	2.14	0.04	40
		Attributes first	4.94	1.13			40
Relationship 1	Positive	Posts first	6.39	0.93	3.24	0.01	40
		Attributes first	5.25	1.25			40
Relationship 2	Negative	Posts first	3.83	1.91	0.50	0.62	40
		Attributes first	3.58	1.36			40
Relationship 3	Positive	Posts first	6.67	0.62	2.8	0.01	40
		Attributes first	5.77	1.24			40
Relationship 4	Negative	Posts first	4.25	2.00	0.24	0.81	40
		Attributes first	4.13	1.34			40

Topic	Tone	Order	Mean	SD
Health	Positive	Posts	5.3	1.46
Health	Positive	Attributes	5.92	1.31
Health	Negative	Posts	4.49	1.50
Health	Negative	Attributes	4.55	1.35
Money	Positive	Posts	6.17	0.99
Money	Positive	Attributes	5.28	1.23
Money	Negative	Posts	4.25	1.58
Money	Negative	Attributes	4.37	1.20
Relationship	Positive	Posts	5.74	1.25
Relationship	Positive	Attributes	6.15	1.12
Relationship	Negative	Posts	3.69	1.60
Relationship	Negative	Attributes	4.18	1.64

Attribute	Order	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	Sig (2-tailed)
Too intimate	Posts first	5.17	1.34	1.03	0.31
	Attributes first	4.75	1.26		
Informative	Posts first	5.06	1.84	0.53	0.60
	Attributes first	4.79	1.35		
Too personal	Posts first	5.11	1.45	1.20	0.24
	Attributes first	4.58	1.38		
Dramatic	Posts first	5.11	1.68	0.07	0.95
	Attributes first	5.08	1.10		
Sweet	Posts first	4.33	1.94	1.23	0.23
	Attributes first	3.67	1.60		
Inspirational	Posts first	4.67	2.03	0.32	0.75
	Attributes first	4.50	1.32		
Inappropriate language	Posts first	4.83	1.69	0.75	0.46
	Attributes first	4.46	1.53		
Annoying	Posts first	4.72	1.67	0.49	0.63
	Attributes first	4.50	1.29		
“Dirty laundry”	Posts first	4.72	1.74	0.72	0.48
	Attributes first	4.33	1.74		
Don't need to know	Posts first	4.50	1.98	-0.32	0.75
	Attributes first	4.67	1.37		
Offensive	Posts first	4.28	2.35	0.31	0.75
	Attributes first	4.08	1.72		
To-the-point	Posts first	3.67	2.06	-0.71	0.48
	Attributes first	4.04	1.37		
Exciting	Posts first	4.00	2.17	-0.45	0.65
	Attributes first	4.25	1.39		
Lengthy	Posts first	3.78	1.67	-0.73	0.47
	Attributes first	4.08	1.06		
Attention-seeking	Posts first	5.22	1.70	0.64	0.52
	Attributes first	4.92	1.38		
Supportive	Posts first	4.61	1.98	1.58	0.12
	Attributes first	3.75	1.57		
Too much information	Posts first	4.39	1.91	-0.06	0.95
	Attributes first	4.42	1.18		
Happy	Posts first	4.72	2.16	0.69	0.50
	Attributes first	4.33	1.49		

APPENDIX C

FINAL SURVEY POSTS

Tone	Topic	Set	Post
Positive	Health	1	As of this morning I have officially reached my weight loss goal! 30lbs down and feeling great! New year, new me!
Negative	Money	1	I still cannot believe that I'm coming out of college with 80K in student loans. On top of my \$200 monthly car payment and \$650 rent payment and not to mention utilities, how am I supposed to make this work??
Positive	Relationship	1	We are happy to announce that we are ENGAGED! A big thank you to everyone who helped him pick out the ring, made sure my nails looked nice, and most importantly kept this huge secret from me! 346 days until I get to call my handsome fiancé my husband!
Negative	Health	1	Does anyone know how to stop food poisoning?? I've already thrown up 4 times today and have the worst stomach cramps of my life, help!!! :(
Positive	Money	1	Just checked the mail to find that I've received a full scholarship to my dream school, University of Delaware! So incredibly thankful for this opportunity - Class of 2021 here I come!
Negative	Relationship	1	If a boy hits you once, turn and walk away or you might completely mess up your life, end up in rehab, have the majority of your friends abandon you and ultimately find yourself in a deep downward spiral. Take it from me, I would know!
Positive	Health	2	I can't believe I can finally say that I am CANCER FREE!! What a whirlwind of a year this has been. From the lowest point of my diagnosis to this moment right now, I can honestly say that I am so thankful to be here.
Negative	Money	2	Anyone know how to make some money ASAP?? I'm out \$350 from a speeding ticket and a parking ticket all in one afternoon. What a shitty day, I cannot afford this.
Positive	Relationship	2	Coming June 2018: The newest member of our family! We cannot wait to welcome our baby girl into the world, we love you so much already!!
Negative	Health	2	As if heart failure wasn't enough, the doctor says my father's kidneys are now failing. This month cannot

			possibly get any worse. Please send your thoughts and prayers.
Positive	Money	2	Just won \$200 off a scratch ticket! It must be my lucky day :)
Negative	Relationship	2	Good riddance to the guy who called me fat, made me cry, and controlled my life. Shoutout to you for always lying to me and pretending that you really cared when in actuality all you care about is yourself. I couldn't be happier now that a cheater like you is out of my life. Onto bigger and better things.

APPENDIX D

SURVEY TABLES – MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS

Table 7 – Means and Standard Deviations for Attribute “Too Intimate”

Tone	Topic	Set	Mean	Std. Deviation
Negative	Health	1	4.52	1.89
		2	3.86	1.91
		Total	4.19	1.92
Negative	Money	1	4.94	1.83
		2	3.44	1.88
		Total	4.19	1.99
Negative	Relationship	1	5.88	1.46
		2	5.39	1.75
		Total	5.64	1.63
Negative	Total	1	5.10	1.82
		2	4.19	2.02
		Total	4.64	1.98
Positive	Health	1	2.56	1.51
		2	2.33	1.46
		Total	2.45	1.49
Positive	Money	1	2.27	1.38
		2	2.09	1.52
		Total	2.18	1.45
Positive	Relationship	1	2.70	1.69
		2	2.46	1.65
		Total	2.58	1.69
Positive	Total	1	2.51	1.54
		2	2.29	1.55
		Total	2.40	1.54
Total	Health	1	3.53	1.97
		2	3.10	1.88
		Total	3.31	1.92
Total	Money	1	3.61	2.10
		2	2.77	1.83
		Total	3.19	2.01
Total	Relationship	1	4.23	2.24
		2	3.84	2.24
		Total	4.04	2.25
Total	Total	1	3.79	2.12

		2	3.22	2.03
		Total	3.50	2.09

Table 8 – Means and Standard Deviations for Attribute “Informative”

Tone	Topic	Set	Mean	Std. Deviation
Negative	Health	1	3.36	2.00
		2	4.40	1.44
		Total	3.88	1.81
Negative	Money	1	3.88	2.08
		2	3.64	1.74
		Total	3.76	1.92
Negative	Relationship	1	4.21	2.06
		2	3.82	2.16
		Total	4.02	2.11
Negative	Total	1	3.81	2.07
		2	3.96	1.81
		Total	3.88	1.95
Positive	Health	1	3.44	1.84
		2	4.75	1.37
		Total	4.09	1.75
Positive	Money	1	4.20	1.87
		2	2.69	1.59
		Total	3.44	1.89
Positive	Relationship	1	4.24	1.83
		2	4.72	1.56
		Total	4.48	1.71
Positive	Total	1	3.96	1.88
		2	4.06	1.79
		Total	4.01	1.83
Total	Health	1	3.40	1.92
		2	4.57	1.42
		Total	3.99	1.78
Total	Money	1	4.04	1.98
		2	3.17	1.73
		Total	3.60	1.91
Total	Relationship	1	4.23	1.94
		2	4.29	1.91
		Total	4.26	1.92
Total	Total	1	3.88	1.98
		2	4.01	1.80
		Total	3.95	1.89

Table 9 - Means and Standard Deviations for Attribute “Personal”

Tone	Topic	Set	Mean	Std. Deviation
Negative	Health	1	4.99	1.72
		2	4.41	1.74
		Total	4.70	1.75
Negative	Money	1	5.55	1.58
		2	4.36	1.71
		Total	4.95	1.75
Negative	Relationship	1	6.27	1.14
		2	5.95	1.39
		Total	6.11	1.28
Negative	Total	1	5.59	1.59
		2	4.87	1.78
		Total	5.23	1.72
Positive	Health	1	3.06	1.62
		2	2.74	1.67
		Total	2.90	1.65
Positive	Money	1	2.60	1.60
		2	2.68	1.77
		Total	2.64	1.68
Positive	Relationship	1	2.79	1.56
		2	2.66	1.71
		Total	2.72	1.63
Positive	Total	1	4.01	1.60
		2	3.57	1.71
		Total	3.79	1.66
Total	Health	1	4.01	1.93
		2	3.57	1.89
		Total	3.79	1.92
Total	Money	1	4.07	2.17
		2	3.52	1.93
		Total	3.80	2.07
Total	Relationship	1	4.42	2.25
		2	4.16	2.30
		Total	4.29	2.28
Total	Total	1	4.17	2.12
		2	3.74	2.06
		Total	3.96	2.10

Table 10 – Means and Standard Deviation for Attribute “Dramatic”

Tone	Topic	Set	Mean	Std. Deviation
Negative	Health	1	4.59	1.76
		2	3.71	1.89
		Total	4.15	1.88
Negative	Money	1	5.12	1.59
		2	4.46	1.71
		Total	4.79	1.68
Negative	Relationship	1	5.61	1.67
		2	5.82	1.49
		Total	5.71	1.58
Negative	Total	1	5.10	1.72
		2	4.62	1.91
		Total	4.86	1.83
Positive	Health	1	2.71	1.71
		2	2.43	1.61
		Total	2.57	1.66
Positive	Money	1	2.76	1.79
		2	2.50	1.55
		Total	2.63	1.67
Positive	Relationship	1	3.12	1.92
		2	2.28	1.48
		Total	2.70	1.76
Positive	Total	1	2.86	1.81
		2	2.40	1.54
		Total	2.63	1.70
Total	Health	1	2.64	1.97
		2	3.07	1.87
		Total	3.35	1.94
Total	Money	1	3.94	2.06
		2	3.48	1.90
		Total	3.71	1.99
Total	Relationship	1	4.31	2.19
		2	3.95	2.31
		Total	4.13	2.25
Total	Total	1	3.96	2.09
		2	3.49	2.06
		Total	3.73	2.09

Table 11 – Means and Standard Deviations for Attribute “Inspirational”

Tone	Topic	Set	Mean	Std. Deviation
Negative	Health	1	1.44	1.08
		2	1.83	1.20
		Total	1.64	1.15
Negative	Money	1	1.61	1.11
		2	1.50	1.13
		Total	1.55	1.12
Negative	Relationship	1	2.23	1.63
		2	2.01	1.25
		Total	2.12	1.45
Negative	Total	1	1.75	1.33
		2	1.77	1.21
		Total	1.76	1.27
Positive	Health	1	4.80	1.42
		2	5.32	1.53
		Total	5.06	1.50
Positive	Money	1	4.85	1.71
		2	2.67	1.61
		Total	3.75	1.99
Positive	Relationship	1	3.49	1.73
		2	3.67	1.57
		Total	3.58	1.65
Positive	Total	1	4.73	1.74
		2	3.89	1.91
		Total	4.13	1.84
Total	Health	1	3.14	2.10
		2	3.57	2.22
		Total	3.36	2.17
Total	Money	1	3.22	2.17
		2	2.08	1.51
		Total	2.65	1.95
Total	Relationship	1	2.88	1.79
		2	2.89	1.65
		Total	2.89	1.72
Total	Total	1	3.08	2.03
		2	2.85	1.92
		Total	2.97	1.98

Table 12 - Means and Standard Deviations for Attribute “Inappropriate Language”

Tone	Topic	Set	Mean	Std. Deviation
Negative	Health	1	2.04	1.56
		2	1.88	1.67
		Total	1.96	1.61
Negative	Money	1	2.12	1.77
		2	3.60	1.96
		Total	2.86	2.00
Negative	Relationship	1	2.58	1.99
		2	2.41	1.68
		Total	2.50	1.84
Negative	Total	1	2.24	1.78
		2	2.64	1.92
		Total	2.44	1.86
Positive	Health	1	2.17	2.12
		2	2.18	2.18
		Total	2.18	2.14
Positive	Money	1	1.83	1.62
		2	1.98	1.86
		Total	1.91	1.74
Positive	Relationship	1	1.87	1.71
		2	2.06	1.98
		Total	1.97	1.85
Positive	Total	1	1.96	1.83
		2	2.07	2.01
		Total	2.02	1.92
Total	Health	1	2.11	1.86
		2	2.03	1.94
		Total	2.07	1.90
Total	Money	1	1.98	1.70
		2	2.80	2.07
		Total	2.39	1.94
Total	Relationship	1	2.21	1.88
		2	2.23	1.85
		Total	2.22	1.86
Total	Total	1	2.10	1.81
		2	2.35	1.98
		Total	2.23	1.90

Table 13 – Means and Standard Deviations for Attribute “Annoying”

Tone	Topic	Set	Mean	Std. Deviation
Negative	Health	1	3.80	1.92
		2	2.35	1.53
		Total	3.07	1.88
Negative	Money	1	4.71	1.80
		2	4.26	1.74
		Total	4.48	1.78
Negative	Relationship	1	4.15	1.99
		2	4.89	1.74
		Total	4.51	1.91
Negative	Total	1	4.22	1.93
		2	3.80	1.99
		Total	4.01	1.97
Positive	Health	1	2.93	1.86
		2	1.60	1.11
		Total	2.27	1.67
Positive	Money	1	2.71	1.82
		2	3.04	1.66
		Total	2.87	1.75
Positive	Relationship	1	2.91	1.72
		2	2.06	1.51
		Total	2.49	1.67
Positive	Total	1	2.85	1.80
		2	2.23	1.56
		Total	2.54	1.71
Total	Health	1	3.36	1.94
		2	1.98	1.39
		Total	2.67	1.82
Total	Money	1	3.71	2.07
		2	3.65	1.80
		Total	3.68	1.94
Total	Relationship	1	3.51	1.95
		2	3.39	2.16
		Total	3.45	2.05
Total	Total	1	3.52	1.99
		2	3.00	1.95
		Total	3.26	1.98

Table 14 – Means and Standard Deviations for Attribute “Dirty Laundry”

Tone	Topic	Set	Mean	Std. Deviation
Negative	Health	1	3.15	1.94
		2	2.67	1.74
		Total	2.91	1.85
Negative	Money	1	3.95	2.00
		2	4.12	1.82
		Total	4.03	1.91
Negative	Relationship	1	5.04	2.03
		2	4.90	1.89
		Total	4.97	1.96
Negative	Total	1	4.03	2.12
		2	3.86	2.03
		Total	3.94	2.08
Positive	Health	1	2.15	1.53
		2	1.74	1.19
		Total	1.94	1.38
Positive	Money	1	2.08	1.49
		2	2.10	1.45
		Total	2.09	1.47
Positive	Relationship	1	2.11	1.49
		2	1.78	1.28
		Total	1.94	1.37
Positive	Total	1	2.11	1.48
		2	1.87	1.32
		Total	1.99	1.41
Total	Health	1	2.64	1.81
		2	2.20	1.56
		Total	2.42	1.70
Total	Money	1	3.02	1.99
		2	3.11	1.93
		Total	3.07	1.96
Total	Relationship	1	3.52	2.28
		2	3.25	2.23
		Total	3.38	2.26
Total	Total	1	3.05	2.06
		2	2.85	1.97
		Total	2.95	2.02

Table 15 – Means and Standard Deviations for Attribute “Don’t Need to Know”

Tone	Topic	Set	Mean	Std. Deviation
Negative	Health	1	5.15	1.88
		2	3.24	1.68
		Total	4.19	2.02
Negative	Money	1	5.51	1.71
		2	4.87	1.84
		Total	5.19	1.80
Negative	Relationship	1	5.17	1.84
		2	5.43	1.71
		Total	5.30	1.78
Negative	Total	1	5.28	1.82
		2	4.48	1.97
		Total	4.88	1.93
Positive	Health	1	3.74	1.76
		2	2.20	1.34
		Total	2.97	1.74
Positive	Money	1	2.96	1.70
		2	3.77	1.95
		Total	3.37	1.87
Positive	Relationship	1	2.78	1.48
		2	2.35	1.47
		Total	2.56	1.49
Positive	Total	1	3.16	1.70
		2	2.77	1.75
		Total	2.97	1.73
Total	Health	1	4.44	1.95
		2	2.72	1.60
		Total	3.58	1.98
Total	Money	1	4.24	2.13
		2	4.33	1.97
		Total	4.28	2.05
Total	Relationship	1	3.92	2.05
		2	3.81	2.21
		Total	3.81	2.13
Total	Total	1	4.20	2.05
		2	3.61	2.05
		Total	3.91	2.07

Table 16 - Means and Standard Deviations for Attribute “Attention-Seeking”

Tone	Topic	Set	Mean	Std. Deviation
Negative	Health	1	4.42	1.88
		2	3.78	1.94
		Total	4.09	1.93
Negative	Money	1	5.25	1.64
		2	4.68	1.86
		Total	4.97	1.77
Negative	Relationship	1	5.45	1.66
		2	5.58	1.68
		Total	5.51	1.68
Negative	Total	1	5.03	1.78
		2	4.64	1.97
		Total	4.84	1.89
Positive	Health	1	3.90	1.82
		2	2.43	1.49
		Total	3.17	1.82
Positive	Money	1	3.89	1.91
		2	4.19	1.84
		Total	4.04	1.88
Positive	Relationship	1	4.06	1.90
		2	3.13	1.80
		Total	3.59	1.91
Positive	Total	1	3.95	1.87
		2	3.24	1.86
		Total	3.60	1.90
Total	Health	1	4.16	1.86
		2	3.10	1.86
		Total	3.63	1.93
Total	Money	1	4.57	1.90
		2	4.43	1.86
		Total	4.50	1.88
Total	Relationship	1	4.73	1.92
		2	4.28	2.13
		Total	4.51	2.03
Total	Total	1	4.48	1.91
		2	3.93	2.04
		Total	4.21	1.99

Table 17 – Means and Standard Deviations for Attribute “Happy”

Tone	Topic	Set	Mean	Std. Deviation
Negative	Health	1	1.44	1.06
		2	1.47	1.09
		Total	1.45	1.07
Negative	Money	1	1.60	1.12
		2	1.51	0.83
		Total	1.56	0.98
Negative	Relationship	1	1.64	1.34
		2	2.22	1.45
		Total	1.93	1.42
Negative	Total	1	1.56	1.18
		2	1.71	1.19
		Total	1.64	1.18
Positive	Health	1	5.81	1.39
		2	6.19	1.34
		Total	6.00	1.38
Positive	Money	1	6.26	1.30
		2	5.60	1.56
		Total	5.93	1.47
Positive	Relationship	1	6.34	1.23
		2	6.25	1.21
		Total	6.30	1.22
Positive	Total	1	6.14	1.33
		2	6.02	1.40
		Total	6.08	1.37
Total	Health	1	3.66	2.51
		2	3.83	2.66
		Total	3.74	2.59
Total	Money	1	3.93	2.64
		2	3.55	2.40
		Total	3.74	2.52
Total	Relationship	1	4.09	2.68
		2	4.35	2.42
		Total	4.22	2.55
Total	Total	1	3.89	2.61
		2	3.90	2.51
		Total	3.90	2.56

APPENDIX E

SURVEY TABLES – ANOVA

Table 18 – ANOVA for Attribute “Too Intimate”

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Tone	1561.91	1	1561.92	560.87	0.000
Topic	197.46	2	98.73	35.45	0.000
Set	92.65	1	92.65	33.27	0.000
Tone * Topic	96.14	2	48.07	17.26	0.000
Tone * Set	33.49	1	33.49	12.02	0.001
Topic * Set	13.25	2	6.63	2.38	0.093
Tone * Topic * Set	16.56	2	8.28	2.97	0.052
Error	3341.77	1200	2.79		
Total	5308.970	1211			
R Squared = 0371					
Adjusted R Squared = 0.365					

Table 19 – ANOVA for Attribute “Informative”

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Tone	4.414	1	4.41	1.35	0.245
Topic	84.602	2	42.30	12.97	0.000
Set	3.9	1	3.90	1.20	0.274
Tone * Topic	32.599	2	16.30	5.00	0.007
Tone * Set	0.138	1	0.14	0.04	0.837
Topic * Set	216.312	2	108.16	33.16	0.000
Tone * Topic * Set	61.327	2	30.66	9.40	0.000
Error	3914.38	1200	3.26		
Total	4320.41	1211			
R Squared = 0.094					
Adjusted R Squared = 0.086					

Table 20 – ANOVA for Attribute “Personal”

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Tone	1937.80	1	1937.80	744.01	0.000
Topic	87.87	2	43.94	16.87	0.000
Set	52.03	1	52.03	19.97	0.000
Tone * Topic	146.37	2	73.19	28.10	0.000
Tone * Set	24.65	1	24.65	9.47	0.002
Topic * Set	5.27	2	2.63	1.01	0.364
Tone * Topic * Set	18.57	2	9.29	3.57	0.029
Error	3125.458	1200	2.61		
Total	5355.59	1211			
R Squared = 0.416					
Adjusted R Squared = 0.411					

Table 21 – ANOVA for Attribute “Dramatic”

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Tone	1532.879	1	168.06	538.49	0.000
Topic	144.619	2	72.31	25.40	0.000
Set	62.34	1	62.34	21.90	0.000
Tone * Topic	103.62	2	51.81	18.20	0.000
Tone * Set	0.01	1	0.01	0.01	0.946
Topic * Set	3.61	2	1.81	0.64	0.530
Tone * Topic * Set	39.85	2	19.92	7.00	0.001
Error	3415.96	1200	2.85		
Total	5264.60	1211			
R Squared = 0.351					
Adjusted R Squared = 0.345					

Table 22 – ANOVA for Attribute “Inspirational”

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Tone	1687.29	1	1687.29	821.52	0.000
Topic	103.34	2	51.67	25.16	0.000
Set	17.02	1	17.024	8.29	0.004
Tone * Topic	198.40	2	99.20	48.30	0.000
Tone * Set	19.59	1	19.59	9.54	0.002
Topic * Set	138.40	2	69.20	33.69	0.000
Tone * Topic * Set	93.50	2	46.75	22.76	0.000
Error	2460.54	1198	2.05		
Total	4736.54	1209			
R Squared = 0.481					
Adjusted R Squared = 0.476					

Table 23 – ANOVA for Attribute “Inappropriate Language”

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Tone	53.79	1	53.79	15.70	0.000
Topic	20.03	2	10.02	2.92	0.054
Set	19.00	1	19.00	5.55	0.019
Tone * Topic	71.95	2	35.98	10.50	0.000
Tone * Set	5.67	1	5.67	1.65	0.199
Topic * Set	49.10	2	24.55	7.16	0.001
Tone * Topic * Set	43.40	2	21.70	6.33	0.002
Error	4112.66	1200	3.43		
Total	4377.51	1211			
R Squared = 0.061					
Adjusted R Squared = 0.052					

Table 24 – ANOVA for Attribute “Annoying”

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Tone	667.08	1	667.08	227.32	0.000
Topic	236.13	2	118.07	40.23	0.000
Set	75.83	1	75.83	25.84	0.000
Tone * Topic	78.01	2	39.01	13.29	0.000
Tone * Set	4.12	1	4.12	1.40	0.237
Topic * Set	121.02	2	60.51	20.62	0.000
Tone * Topic * Set	74.96	2	37.48	12.77	0.000
Error	3521.49	1200	2.94		
Total	4764.56	1211			
R Squared = 0.261					
Adjusted R Squared = 0.254					

Table 25 – ANOVA for Attribute “Dirty Laundry”

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Tone	1186.61	1	1186.61	426.78	0.000
Topic	217.89	2	108.94	39.18	0.000
Set	11.54	1	11.54	4.15	0.042
Tone * Topic	213.27	2	106.64	38.35	0.000
Tone * Set	0.59	1	0.59	0.21	0.644
Topic * Set	14.88	2	7.44	2.68	0.069
Tone * Topic * Set	0.99	2	0.50	0.18	0.837
Error	3333.67	1199	2.78		
Total	4938.13	1210			
R Squared = 0.325					
Adjusted R Squared = 0.319					

Table 26 – ANOVA for Attribute “Don’t Need to Know”

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Tone	1126.21	1	1126.21	387.90	0.000
Topic	99.32	2	49.66	17.10	0.000
Set	98.49	1	98.49	33.92	0.000
Tone * Topic	116.14	2	58.07	20.01	0.000
Tone * Set	10.70	1	10.70	3.68	0.055
Topic * Set	203.38	2	101.69	35.02	0.000
Tone * Topic * Set	57.48	2	28.74	9.90	0.000
Error	3484.05	1200	2.90		
Total	5185.65	1211			
R Squared = 0.328					
Adjusted R Squared = 0.322					

Table 27 – ANOVA for Attribute “Attention-Seeking”

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Tone	480.79	1	480.79	149.91	0.000
Topic	218.73	2	109.37	34.10	0.000
Set	86.33	1	86.33	26.92	0.000
Tone * Topic	65.29	2	32.64	10.18	0.000
Tone * Set	8.79	1	8.79	2.74	0.098
Topic * Set	45.55	2	22.78	7.10	0.001
Tone * Topic * Set	56.25	2	28.12	8.77	0.000
Error	3848.72	1200	3.21		
Total	4795.60	1211			
R Squared = 0.197					
Adjusted R Squared = 0.190					

Table 28 – ANOVA for Attribute “Happy”

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Tone	5932.55	1	5932.55	3737.29	0.000
Topic	37.88	2	18.94	12.00	0.000
Set	0.19	1	0.19	0.12	0.726
Tone * Topic	2.11	2	1.05	0.67	0.514
Tone * Set	6.56	1	6.56	4.15	0.042
Topic * Set	24.46	2	12.23	7.74	0.000
Tone * Topic * Set	16.48	2	8.24	5.22	0.006
Error	1893.15	1199	1.58		
Total	7943.681	1210			
R Squared = 0.762					
Adjusted R Squared = 0.759					

APPENDIX F

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SETS

Table 29 – Difference in Set for Attribute “Too Intimate”

Set	Topic	Positive	Negative	Difference
1	Health	2.56	4.52	1.96
1	Money	2.27	4.94	2.67
1	Relationship	2.70	5.88	3.18
2	Health	2.33	3.88	1.53
2	Money	2.09	3.44	1.35
2	Relationship	2.46	5.39	2.93

Table 30 – Difference in Set for Attribute “Informative”

Set	Topic	Positive	Negative	Difference
1	Health	3.44	3.36	0.08
1	Money	4.20	3.88	0.32
1	Relationship	4.24	4.21	0.03
2	Health	4.75	4.40	0.35
2	Money	2.69	3.64	0.95
2	Relationship	4.72	3.82	0.90

Table 31 – Difference in Set for Attribute “Personal”

Set	Topic	Positive	Negative	Difference
1	Health	3.06	4.99	1.93
1	Money	2.60	5.55	2.95
1	Relationship	2.79	6.27	3.48
2	Health	2.74	4.41	1.67
2	Money	2.68	4.36	1.68
2	Relationship	2.66	5.95	3.29

Table 32 – Difference in Set for Attribute “Dramatic”

Set	Topic	Positive	Negative	Difference
1	Health	2.71	4.59	1.88
1	Money	2.76	5.12	2.36
1	Relationship	3.12	5.61	2.49
2	Health	2.43	3.71	1.28
2	Money	2.50	2.46	1.96
2	Relationship	2.26	5.82	3.56

Table 33 – Difference in Set for Attribute “Inspirational”

Set	Topic	Positive	Negative	Difference
1	Health	4.80	1.44	3.36
1	Money	4.85	1.61	3.24
1	Relationship	3.49	2.23	1.26
2	Health	5.32	1.83	3.49
2	Money	2.67	1.50	1.17
2	Relationship	3.67	2.01	1.66

Table 34 – Difference in Set for Attribute “Inappropriate Language”

Set	Topic	Positive	Negative	Difference
1	Health	2.17	2.04	0.13
1	Money	1.83	2.12	0.29
1	Relationship	2.58	1.87	0.71
2	Health	2.18	1.88	0.30
2	Money	1.98	3.60	1.62
2	Relationship	2.06	2.41	0.35

Table 35 – Difference in Set for Attribute “Annoying”

Set	Topic	Positive	Negative	Difference
1	Health	2.93	3.80	0.87
1	Money	2.71	4.71	2.00
1	Relationship	2.91	4.15	1.24
2	Health	1.60	2.35	0.75
2	Money	3.04	4.26	1.22
2	Relationship	2.06	4.89	2.83

Table 36 – Difference in Set for Attribute “Dirty Laundry”

Set	Topic	Positive	Negative	Difference
1	Health	2.15	3.15	1.00
1	Money	2.08	5.04	1.87
1	Relationship	2.11	5.04	2.93
2	Health	1.74	2.67	0.93
2	Money	2.10	4.12	2.02
2	Relationship	1.78	4.90	3.12

Table 37 – Difference in Set for Attribute “Don’t Need to Know”

Set	Topic	Positive	Negative	Difference
1	Health	3.74	5.15	1.41
1	Money	2.96	5.51	2.55
1	Relationship	2.78	5.17	2.39
2	Health	2.20	3.24	1.04
2	Money	3.77	4.87	1.10
2	Relationship	2.35	5.43	3.08

Table 38 – Difference in Set for Attribute “Attention-Seeking”

Set	Topic	Positive	Negative	Difference
1	Health	3.90	4.42	0.52
1	Money	3.89	5.25	1.36
1	Relationship	4.06	5.45	1.39
2	Health	2.43	3.78	1.35
2	Money	4.19	4.68	0.49
2	Relationship	3.13	5.58	2.45

Table 39 – Difference in Set for Attribute “Happy”

Set	Topic	Positive	Negative	Difference
1	Health	5.81	1.44	4.37
1	Money	6.26	1.60	4.66
1	Relationship	6.34	1.64	4.70
2	Health	6.19	1.47	4.72
2	Money	5.60	1.51	4.09
2	Relationship	6.25	2.22	4.03

APPENDIX G
IRB DOCUMENTS



RESEARCH OFFICE

210 Halliher Hall
University of Delaware
Newark, Delaware 19716-1551
Ph: 302/831-2136
Fax: 302/831-2828

DATE: January 26, 2018

TO: Ashley Bostwick
FROM: University of Delaware IRB (HUMANS)

STUDY TITLE: [1188031-1] Social Media Appropriateness

SUBMISSION TYPE: New Project

ACTION: DETERMINATION OF EXEMPT STATUS
DECISION DATE: January 26, 2018

REVIEW CATEGORY: Exemption category # (2)

Thank you for your submission of New Project materials for this research study. The University of Delaware IRB has determined this project is EXEMPT FROM IRB REVIEW according to federal regulations.

We will put a copy of this correspondence on file in our office. Please remember to notify us if you make any substantial changes to the project.

If you have any questions, please contact Nicole Farnese-McFarlane at (302) 831-1119 or nicolefm@udel.edu. Please include your study title and reference number in all correspondence with this office.



RESEARCH OFFICE

210 Hullihen Hall
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Ph: 302/831-2136
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DATE: April 4, 2018

TO: Ashley Bostwick
FROM: University of Delaware IRB

STUDY TITLE: [1188031-2] Social Media Appropriateness

SUBMISSION TYPE: Amendment/Modification

ACTION: DETERMINATION OF EXEMPT STATUS
DECISION DATE: April 4, 2018

REVIEW CATEGORY: Exemption category # (2)

Thank you for your submission of Amendment/Modification materials for this research study. The University of Delaware IRB has determined this project is EXEMPT FROM IRB REVIEW according to federal regulations.

We will put a copy of this correspondence on file in our office. Please remember to notify us if you make any substantial changes to the project.

If you have any questions, please contact Nicole Farnese-McFarlane at (302) 831-1119 or nicolefm@udel.edu. Please include your study title and reference number in all correspondence with this office.