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A History and Evolution of Video-Centric Social Media:
Identifying and Analyzing Addiction, Design Features, and Personal and Relational Impact

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ABSTRACT

A modern phenomenon, video-centric social media sits at the widely unstudied undersection of human-centered design and development and film. Social media engineers thrive in increasing the quantity and quality of the user base, as well as time spent by those online. Thus, video-centric social media platforms incorporate design features meant to promote addiction. Though creating an addicted population is advantageous for application producers, and does provide a few surprising benefits to consumers, sweeping problematic social media behavior yields a myriad of ill effects. Continued motivations for use create a cyclical nature of video-centric social media engagement.

Addictive social media use guided by design features subsequently propels a multitude of alterations and impacts regarding both personal perception and relationship-based dynamics. Sense of self, as well as relational sense, is dramatically altered online and in the real world as video-centric social media usage proliferates. Despite the fact that all demographics have been partially analyzed, prior research has focused heavily on young teens and adolescents.

Though this information has been paramount to the fields of design thinking, media dissemination, and psychology, there is much less of a wealth of demographically available information regarding college students: specifically, those who utilize social media daily in a new generation for academics, professional tasks, and personal entertainment. This work will compile past aforementioned research in a combinatory fashion with new survey and interview data to elucidate a modern landscape of video-centric social media, its enticing design, and personal and relational impacts of a new wave of technology.

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Introduction/Overview

Social Media Definition and Components

Divisive and ubiquitous, social media stands as an identifiable pillar of modern societal relationships and perceptions. In fact, as of 2019, there were over three billion documented worldwide users of social media platforms (Bayer & Ellison, 2020). As a domain, social media can be difficult to summarize due to its interdisciplinary reach. Though the term is often broad, boasting various connotations, social media specifically encompasses any "computer-mediated communication channels that allow users to engage in social interaction with broad and narrow audiences in real time or asynchronously" (Alhabash & Ma, 2017). Social media platforms are internet-based and interactive, as well as user-generated. Additionally, these sites "support asynchronous or non-live social interaction," and are masspersonal, which indicates that they permit users to broadcast communication to large audiences (Alhabash & Ma, 2017).

Albeit online networking forums differ, common threads run throughout central applications. A social media element is a component of the ecosystem understood through a common set of features or affordances across different channels (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). These elements are rooted in how users approach and operate social media. Social media at its core is defined by three elements: the profile, the network, and the stream.

The profile enables users to maintain collections of self-curated attributes (Bayer & Ellison, 2020). It provides an audience-facing digital portrait of a user, often including personal photos, written bios, background images, and previous or current statuses. Now, though, social

media is more content-centric and less profile-centric (Ellison & Boyd, 2013). The network represents social connections through friending or following. It serves as an interface through which to engage with the catalog of accounts, and the accounts' associated people, that users are connected to on social media (Bayer & Ellison, 2020). Prominent features associated with the network are contact lists, following and unfollowing preferences, and account tagging. Finally, the stream element puts forth feeds in which users consume and interact with content created by their networks and the platform and presents high degrees of perceived liveness and associated ephemerality (Bayer & Ellison, 2020). Notable features include photo or video posts, post reactions, post comments, and suggested content or advertisements. Together, these elements compose a social media ecology: a unique set of interaction tools used to meet personal communication goals, including social platforms, face-to-face exchanges, and other channels (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). Social media platforms exhibit an inability to be treated as homogenous. The design features and overall development of TikTok, Instagram, Snapchat, and Facebook carry sets of both injunctive norms and descriptive norms. Injunctive norms encompass the perception of what most people approve or disapprove of, corresponding to social pressure, and descriptive norms, which comment on the perceived frequency and type of others' usage (Alhabash & Ma, 2017). Each application boasts unique design features and related affordances within its ecology, which will be detailed thoroughly below.

A Brief History of Social Media

Albeit modern society is widely reliant on social media, the development of this platform only occurred within the last few decades. The first recognizable site for networking online,

titled SixDegrees.com, launched in 1997, and allowed users to create profiles, list friends, connect with fellow users, and send messages (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). After SixDegrees.com broke into the space, similar networks such as Friendster, Classmates.com, and AOL Instant Messenger (AIM) began to proliferate. MySpace, though, was widely recognized as the true onset of popular social media. The platform differentiated itself by routinely adding features based on user demand, all the while allowing users to personalize their pages (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). Eventually, these platforms became obsolete as platforms on which users could upload and post short videos surged to the forefront of social media popularity. Before now ubiquitous video-sharing platform TikTok, which will be discussed in detail later in this thesis, became a commonplace application, these largely comedy-based video sharing sites included Vine and musical.ly (Vaterlaus & Winter, 2021). Now, modern social media platforms, such as Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram, and TikTok converged into the networking space and replaced older competitors.

Video-Centric Social Media and Domain of Study

Although there is a myriad of social media platforms, including Twitter, which is text-based, this composition will focus on video-centric social media, due to its relevance to film production, history, and proliferation. For the purposes of this work, video-centric social media will include platforms in which video uploads are of central or principal importance to the applications' user experiences, monetary success, and overall operations. Though there are a plethora of global forums which fit these perquisites, encompassed applications within this academic research will include Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram, and TikTok.

Social Media Addiction

Social media addiction, also known as addictive social media use, is a complex, maladaptive, and evolving form of typical behavioral dependency. Encapsulated within the fifth edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, symptoms of social media addiction include tolerance, withdrawal, and hazardous and increased times and amounts of use (Sun & Zhang, 2021). In addition to these maladies, social media addicts often neglect or give up major life roles or activities, undergo repeated attempts to quit or control use, and are afflicted with physical and psychological problems related to their time spent on networking platforms. Each unique addiction and its conglomeration of symptoms can also be associated with negative consequences. These include, but are not limited to, reduced productivity, unhealthy social relationships, and diminished life-satisfaction (Sun & Zhang, 2021). The cyclical relationship between symptoms, consequences, and continued use manifests and repeats in a similar nature to that of a more longstanding or 'typical' addiction.

Research Aims

Albeit modern society is widely reliant on social media, little is conclusively known about aspects including platform design features which are developed to promote addiction, as well as personal and relational impacts and perceptions associated with video-centric social media production and consumption. Broadly, past research has focused on the social media effect, a change in individual-level cognition or behavior that results from social media use; thus far, a disproportionate amount of research thus far has focused on Facebook, leading to concerns

about generalizability (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). Furthermore, social media is dynamic and user driven. Since new populations of users drive design and development changes as well as content restructuring in a rapid fashion, several studies regarding social media now contain disproven or obsolete information, fail to explore the multi-faceted natures of users and effects, and fail to integrate prudent and timely modern inquiries. Conclusively, this work will glean relevant information of social media addiction, design features, and relational affect among young adults: particularly, members of the Donald P. Bellisario College of Communications and the College of Information Sciences and Technology, the areas under which the honors domains of this thesis are housed.

Social Media Affordances, Components, and Motivations

General Social Media Affordances

Social media at large is highly desirable due to its variety of offered affordances. Affordances are resources or opportunities that a platform or environment, such as a social media site, makes available to an individual. They consider not only the material features of the technology, but also, the subjective perceptions and goals of the user (Gibbs et al., 2013). Despite the variance in specific social media platforms and their design specifics, applications classified in this sphere share several foundational and attractive affordances. At its core, social media offers persistence- for example, the fashion in which the channel saves content and synchronizes message exchanges (Bayer & Ellison, 2020). In addition to persistence, all social

media platforms incorporate visibility and association, and editability of their content, as well as visibility and association in regard to users (Gibbs et al., 2013).

Components and Features of Included Video-Centric Social Media Platforms

Throughout the duration of this work, four video-centric social media platforms— TikTok, Instagram, Snapchat, and Facebook— will be discussed and highlighted. Each application fills a unique space as a vendor and possesses identifying aesthetic features and content layout. The newest of these, TikTok, which has drawn over 80 million active daily users in the United States alone as of April 2021, is a short video sharing social media platform (Vaterlaus & Winter, 2021). Both producers and consumers on the application thrive through its tools; central design features include navigation by scrolling, filters, hashtags, the ability to search for a wide range of sounds or music to pair with videos, and the option to make response videos to other users' content. These include duets, or side by side videos, and stitches, in which one user can inject their own video into another's effectively splicing the content. Users are also able to like, comment, share videos to text messaging applications or other sites, and send direct messages to other users through TikTok (Vaterlaus & Winter, 2021). Perhaps most prolific, though, is the application's For You page, which is featured before the Following page that contains video content of mutual friends. In "an endless spooling of material," users can receive instant and abundant feedback and constant stimulation from virtual strangers, regardless of their level of followers (Herrman, 2019). These algorithmically aided challenges, jokes, activities, and trends, stimulated by recommendations for content and supplemental video features, hold aloft the tantalizing promise of a chance for virality.

Instagram is a photo and video sharing application in which users can experience a variety of photo and video content in a continuous stream from followed or recommended accounts. Almost identical to TikTok are Instagram Reels, a video-exclusive component of the application. After gaining popularity, rather than support a chronological stream, Instagram began to reorder users' feeds based on what they might want to see or could have missed during previous browsing visits (Herrman, 2019). This algorithmic sequencing has been honed to reach the peak of the platform's current design and development model.

Snapchat is a social media platform that allows users to send images and videos for a specified amount of time for a receiver or a group of recipients to view before the content becomes permanently inaccessible (Vaterlaus, et al., 2016). Users are also able to utilize filters in their photo and video content and send time-specified chat messages. A Map feature allows Snapchatters to see where their friends are located, and a Spotlight feature that users can access is almost identical to TikTok.

The oldest of the four video-centric applications featured in this work, Facebook is a platform which allows connections to other users through posting on one's 'wall,' or page, privately, publicly, or to friends of friends. The application includes an about me section, status updates, and an opportunity to display videos and photographs (Toma, 2013). Users can also find memberships in community or special interest groups which upload related videos and photos, buy and sell items, and interact with videos on Facebook Watch, a central tab on the application which supports live streaming and specially curated content.

Overall, each of these platforms also offers a unique variation of temporal persistence. Temporal persistence refers to the amount of time that content can be visible on a platform

(Bayer & Ellison, 2020). Several platforms are more permanent, while others laud elements that are ephemeral, shaping users' cognition by setting expectations. TikTok allows users to post 15 second, 60 second, and three minute long videos, with users over 1,000 followers also being able to live stream content. At the time of publication of this thesis, a ten minute video length option is being rolled out to all users. However, TikTok also allows users to post a TikTok Now. Resemblant to trending application BeReal, a user is prompted at a random time of the day to post a Now. This media, which captures what someone is doing 'impromptu,' disappears after the prompt for a Now the next day is deployed. Daily notifications sent for each Now urge users to log more time spent on the application (Herrman, 2019).

Instagram allows users to upload permanent photos and videos to their grid or profile. However, these photos can be archived: saved to potentially revive later but hidden from the public. Additionally, media can be uploaded to a more transient 'story,' which is eradicated from public view after 24 hours yet saved in an archive. Instagram also supports live streaming for all. Snapchat originally became popular due to the fleeting nature of images; now, though, users can exchange photos and videos back and forth to disappear at a time limit of their choosing. Stories work similarly to Instagram's but can be saved to 'Memories' rather than an archive. Facebook, too, uses similar stories, which, in addition to permanent posts, can be published from and linked to one's Instagram page.

Each of the four included video-centric medias are also conducive to active media use (ASMU) and passive social media use (PSMU). ASMU includes posting, while PSMU is associated with browsing and viewing (Bayer & Ellison, 2020). While ASMU shows more support for well-being, including happiness, life satisfaction, and positive affect, PSMU supports

ill-being, including depressive symptoms and mood, depression, and negative affect. PSMU, though, is on average 133% higher than ASMU (Valkenburg et al., 2021).

The above video-centric social media platforms also offer diverse relationship directionalities. Further, the visibility of each user's profile can also vary by site according to user discretion (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). Instagram and TikTok are unidirectional. This means that by default, every user can access another user's profile without prior approval (Alhabash & Ma, 2017). Snapchat and Facebook, however, are dyadic. This relationship necessitates that a user approves another person before they can access the former's profile (Alhabash & Ma, 2017). On TikTok and Instagram, users are able to alter account settings to become a private page, which forges a self-driven dyadic relationship. Users cannot alter their profile privacies, however, on Snapchat and Facebook.

General Motivations for Social Media Use

Albeit there are near-infinite reasons which have been proposed to fuel social media use, six general categories have been established to encompass relevant motivations. These blanket catalysts for use are entertainment (which serves as the primary factor for use of all social media platforms), social interaction, seeking information, instrumental use, self-documentation, and self-enhancement (Alhabash & Ma, 2017). Entertainment stimulates joy and amusement for users; social interaction, be it through follows, likes, comments, or posts, fosters human connection and purports to satiate the human need to belong. Seeking information acknowledges social media as a forum for news and current events, while instrumental use involves social

media and communication as tools. Finally, self-documentation uses networking platforms to record life occurrences, and self-enhancement uses social media to boost one's self-image.

Each specific social media application boasts an emphasis on aspects of the six established motivations for use, as well as yields several more specified and targeted domains which pique users' desires for continued revisitation and reengagement. Facebook focuses interpersonal interconnectivity and social enhancement, playing on the notion of self-presentation, as people find support through prominently displaying their ideal selves. Instagram's motivations include surveilling others, providing documentation, and showcasing coolness and creativity, while Snapchat use is propelled largely by procrastination, keeping in touch with relatives, and seeing what people are up to (Alhabash & Ma, 2017). On all these platforms, users can also archive daily events through story or memory features, so that they can revisit times of significance at later dates. Though TikTok is still relatively new in the domain of social media research, preliminarily, self-presentation, displaying a unique point of view, and putting off real-world tasks all seemingly resonate as motivators for the platform's plethora of users.

Explanatory Theories and Models for Guiding and Typifying Addictive Social Media Use

Addictive social media use and problematic behavior on network platforms can result from a multitude of influences and origins. Thus, there are an immense number of theories which guide social media addiction research and pinpoint causes and developments of social media addiction, which all possess validity and have been reinforced through previous studies and academic experimentation. Each of these theories fall under one of a myriad of perspectives or focus

areas. They can be comprehensive, or combinatory, meaning that use can stem from a single source, or it can cross several, latching on to elements from each. Perspectives included the dispositional difference perspective, the motivational perspective, the neurobiological perspective, the decision-making perspective, and the learning perspective. Focuses encompass the technology use focus and the social network focus. Conclusively, internet theory models including Davis' cognitive-behavioral model of Pathological Internet Use (PIU), Caplan's social skill model of PIU, and the Interaction of Person-Affect-Cognition-Execution (I-PACE) model of specific internet-use disorders guide social media addiction research (Sun & Zhang, 2021).

Theories under the dispositional difference perspective deal with changes in relational interactions, personal perceptions and behaviors, and self-conceptualization, and include the attachment theory, the time perspective theory, and the social cognitive perspective of identity. The attachment theory asserts that social media addiction can stem from individuals' interactions with significant figures. These bonds then shape expectations, cognitions, and behaviors regarding interpersonal relationships on the internet (Sun & Zhang, 2021). In the time perspective theory, users' perceptions of different time dimensions, such as physical time and viewing time, influence their cognitions, emotions, and actions. Meanwhile, the social cognitive perspective of identity means that users engage online to conceptualize a cognitive structure or self-theory. This means that addictive use is fueled by creating a personal frame of reference for interpreting self-relevant information, solving problems, and making decisions (Sun & Zhang, 2021). Often, the profile element is most pertinent under this domain. At its baseline, the social cognitive perspective of identity governs strategies related to construction, maintenance, or reconstruction of a sense of personal identity.

The primary theory under the umbrella of the motivational perspective, which focuses on internal indulgence of the users, is the uses and gratifications theory. This notion asserts that those addicted to relevant platforms seek fulfillment from media and technology use based on individual needs or motivations (Sun & Zhang, 2021). This means that users are aware of their own motives, and they choose in consequence the media that satisfies their needs (Alhabash & Ma, 2017). Aside from this perspective, the self-determination theory finds that human behaviors like excessive TikTok, Instagram, Snapchat, and Facebook use are driven by two main types of motivation to fulfill three basic psychological needs (Sun & Zhang, 2021). These motivation types are intrinsic, or internal, and extrinsic, or external; the psychological needs encapsulate autonomy (or independence), competence (or capability), and relatedness (or proximity). Flow theory, integral in human-centered design and subsequent development, proves that application's actors seek continued use when they are fully immersed in a state of flow, an ease of use which to them, seems automatic. Flow is further defined as a mental state of high involvement, energy, and joy people experience when performing an activity (Sun & Zhang, 2021). Lastly under the motivational perspective, the belongingness theory defines users as self-motivated to establish social connections with others to fulfill their needs to fit in, while the self-escape theory details the situations in which individuals perceive a discrepancy between current situations and expectations and seek to remove self-awareness to eliminate negative reactions or emotions.

Associated with the mind and genetic composition of humanity, the neurobiological perspective of social media addiction encompasses the incentive-sensitization theory and the dual system theory. The incentive-sensitization theory of addiction states that continued problematic social media use is due largely to progressive and persistent neuroadaptations, which are changes in the

neural system responsible for attributing incentive salience to stimuli. Salience refers to prominence or noticeability (Sun & Zhang, 2021). On the other hand, the dual system theory paints a tug of war when decide to engage in or avoid a behavior. This battle, which determines which decisions to pursue or avoid, occurs between two structurally and conceptually different types of brain systems (Sun & Zhang, 2021). These brain systems include an impulsive, mostly automatic reflexive system, and an inhibitory, controlled reflective system: and, more often than not, the impulsive system wins out, triggering users to act nearly subconsciously in opening social media applications.

The decision-making perspective describes the rational addiction theory and the theory of planned behavior. Under rational addiction theory, an increase in an intrinsically rewarding behavior, such as positive feedback from an online network, changes an individual's utility assessment between what is inherently good versus bad. Frequent consumption of social media rewards, such as likes and reassuring virtual comments, reduces one's attention to future negative outcomes and increases one's expectations for future rewards. To an extent, an addiction develops (Sun & Zhang, 2021). The theory of planned behavior proves that people's actions are influenced by their intention to perform a behavior, which is predicted by three key antecedents. A user's attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavior control all work to influence their actual habit of repetitively returning to social media platforms (Sun & Zhang, 2021). In addictive instances, a user's attitude is one of need and desire towards a networking site, their norms involve renewed visitation and interaction online, and their perceived behavior control is higher than their realistic ability to rein in personal actions.

Incorporating a larger framework, the learning perspective, which deals in education, also governs classical and operant conditioning. Classical conditioning of learning associates environmental cues with unconditioned stimuli and the subsequent responses (Sun & Zhang, 2021). This is most famously illustrated through the widely publicized psychological example of Ivan Pavlov and the group of dogs which he trained to salivate as they associated a bell with receiving food. Operant conditioning of learning, on the other hand, employs rewards and punishments to encourage and discourage similar behaviors. This type of conditioning, relevant to addictive social media use and disuse through network feedback and design features, operates under the Stimulus-Response-Reinforcement (SRR) framework. In the SRR framework, a response will be reinforced upon repeated presentation of a rewarding stimulus (Sun & Zhang, 2021). For example, if posting videos receives likes, shares, reposts, and stimulating interaction, users will be then spurred to continue uploading content. The learning perspective expands to assert the social learning and social cognitive theories as well. In the social learning theory, individuals' behaviors are socially learned through observing and interacting with others, while the social cognitive theory deems that learning is a result of reciprocal interaction among the triad of a person, an environment, and behaviors (Sun & Zhang, 2021). Social media streams often lead users to facilitate and perpetuate trends by duplicating content or replicating it with slight personalization or alteration, which furthers each of these closely related theories.

Complimenting theories which delve into rationales for social media addiction are models of focus, which each come with their own sets of principles. Viewing addiction as technology use focused supports the theory of technology frames. This postulates that users hold certain cognitive representations towards various technologies, which further shape their uses of them accordingly (Sun & Zhang, 2021). Models like the Technology Acceptance Model and the

Needs-Affordances-Features (NAF) model of technology use well-exemplify this lens. The Technology Acceptance Model (below, Figure 1) demonstrates that an individual's intention to accept a new technology influenced by two primary factors: perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness (Sun & Zhang, 2021). The NAF model (below, figure 2), displays how individuals' psychological needs motivate their use of certain technologies. The specific features a system offers, in turn, provide affordances that satisfy these basic needs (Sun & Zhang, 2021).

Figure 1: Technology Acceptance Model

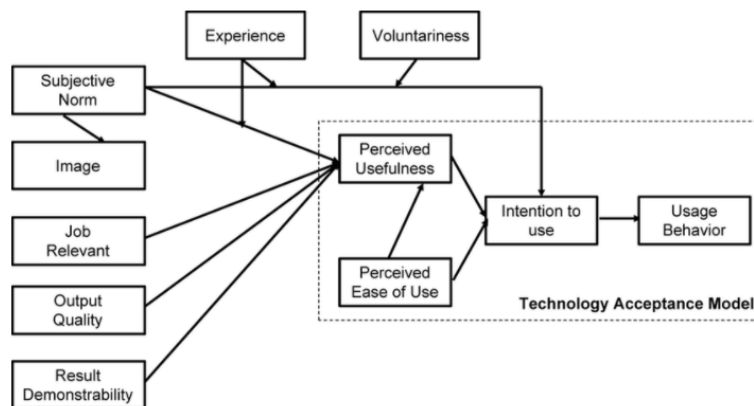
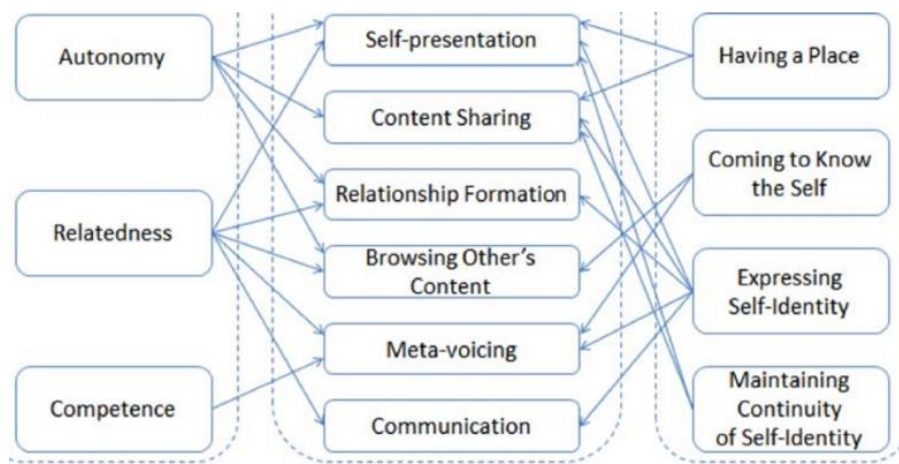
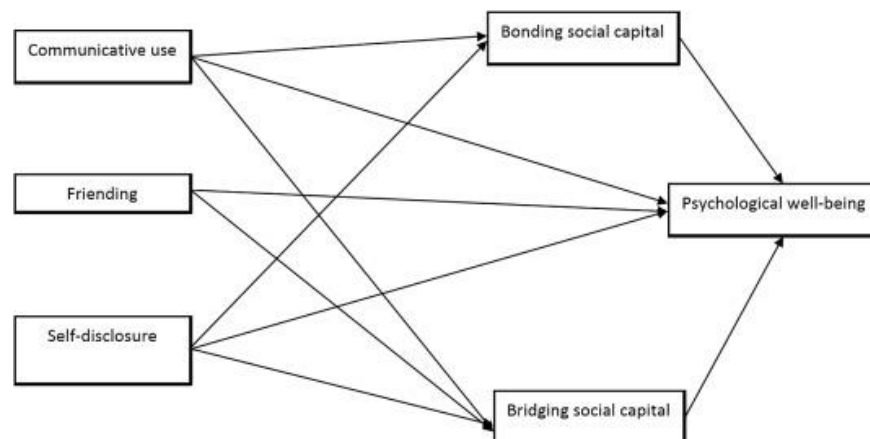


Figure 2: NAF Model



The social network focus describes the social influence theory and the social capital model. Social influence theory asserts that individual cognition and behavior can be affected by three social processes: compliance, internalization, and identification (Sun & Zhang, 2021). Users increase their online reach to fall under societal norms in a bandwagon effect: doing what others are doing. They subsequently harbor subconscious, yet comprehensive, information from these norms, and utilize them to sympathize with communities to which they belong. The social capital model (below, Figure 3) represents a sum of actual and potential resources embedded within, and derived from the network of relationships (Sun & Zhang, 2021). It can be measured with three dimensions: structural, cognitive, and relational.

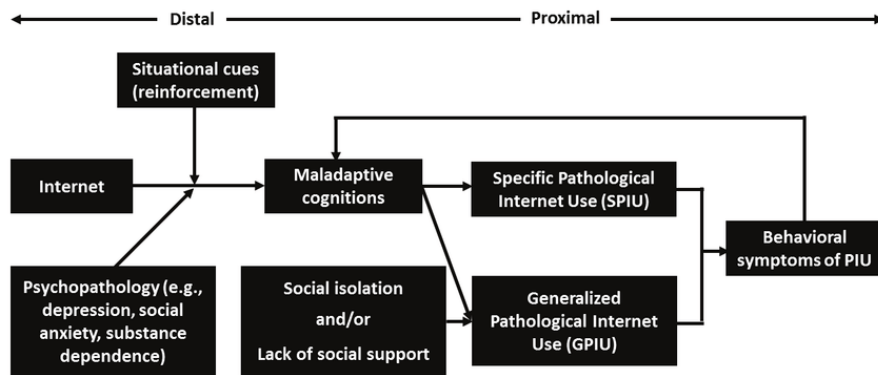
Figure 3: Social Capital Model



Conclusively, there are a variety of internet specific models which guide addictive social media research. Davis' cognitive-behavioral model of Pathological Internet Use (PIU) showcases that symptoms can manifest as results of maladaptive cognitions, or negative patterns of thought. These thoughts are preceded by psychopathology, and amplified by the introduction

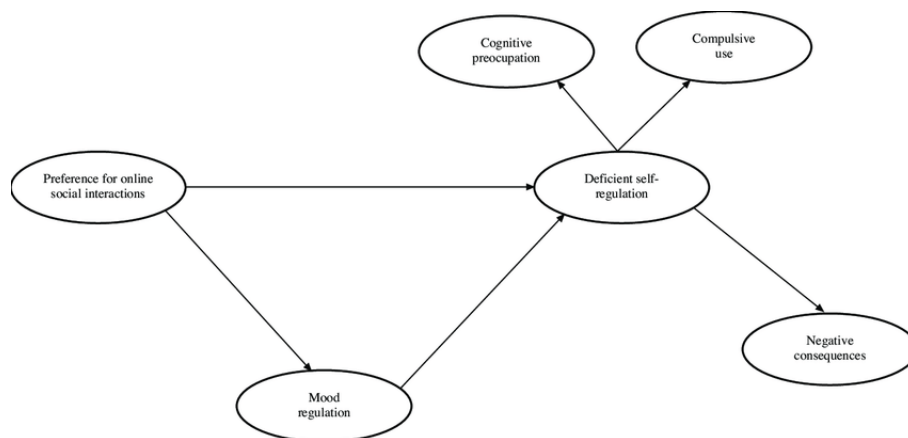
of the internet, and virtual and societal situational cues (Sun & Zhang, 2021). Davis' PIU model (below, figure 4) displays how an individual's social context, including a lack of social support coupled with real world isolation, also contributes to addictive use.

Figure 4: Davis's PIU Model



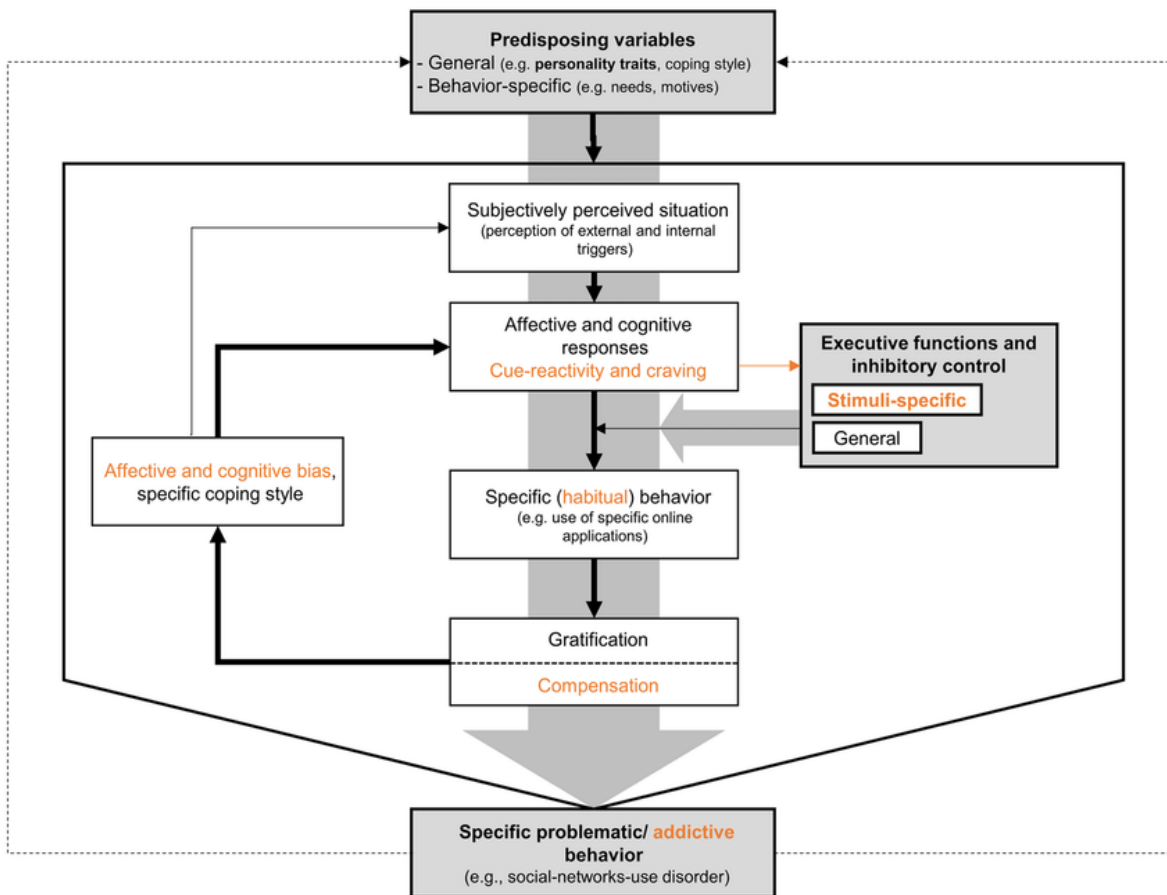
Caplan's social skill model of PIU (below, figure 5), on the other hand, asserts that individuals who suffer from psychosocial problems in life develop preferences for online social interaction (Sun & Zhang, 2021). Those impacted then utilize social media and the internet to regulate their moods, which leads to deficient self-regulation in physical situations and settings.

Figure 5: Caplan's Social Skill Model of PIU



The I-PACE model (below, figure 6) shows a consequence of interactions between predisposing factors (such as neurobiological factors and personalities), moderators (like coping styles and internet-related cognitive biases), and mediators (including responses to situational triggers) (Sun & Zhang, 2021). I-PACE demonstrates how addictive social media users suffer from reduced executive functioning and inhibitory control. These weaknesses are then strengthened by conditioning processes such as continued platform engagement.

Figure 6: The I-PACE Model



Continued Use of Social Media and Usage Effects

Continued Use of Featured Video-Centric Social Media

As mentioned previously, there are six primary motivations for use of, and often, addiction to, the video-centric social media prevalent in this thesis. However, a myriad of other stimuli for use of the social media can be classified under subsections of the six established motivations, which help to explain why motivation turns to continued and escalated use. Modern users are hyper-connected, compelled to receive constant stream of information and updates that social media forums aid in, causing users to become permanently tethered to their devices (Dwivedi et al., 2015). The 'always-on' mentality of continuous videos which often autoplay one after another creates an ideology of openness which furthers this epidemic. Today's social media addicts operate with the assumption that open communication is an unmitigated good (Gibbs et al., 2013). In the process, though, they disregard the negative half of social media tensions. These tensions reference visibility-invisibility, engagement-disengagement, and sharing-control (Gibbs et al., 2013).

Self-presentation allows users to finetune and customize an idealized version of the self, and constant tweaking and alterations keeps them returning to their profiles (Bayer & Ellison, 2020). Controlling how one is perceived by other people provides related psychological gratification, and thus, helps to build social capital, a form of emotional support that bonds others and is associated with strong ties. Populations flock to social media due to its inherent perceived usefulness and enjoyability for themselves and others, which substantiates conviction of worth,

status, or acclaim through use (Dwivedi et al., 2015). Self-presentation selectivity aids the curation of online photo and video uploads. Subsequently, it fuels a fervor known as vibe-capitalism (Chayka, 2021). Collecting specific aesthetic and emotions present in the real world, and utilizing them to compose a mood, helps to communicate one's overall online personality. Self-presentation and this vibe composition propagates an infatuation with oneself. Additionally, despite it decreasing the motivation to perform well on real life cognitive tasks, the exposure gleaned when being exposed to one's own persona almost instantaneously raises one's own state of self-esteem (Toma, 2013). Thus, bolstering this form of discernable confidence and fostering better internal and external relationships through the design of specific platforms like TikTok, Instagram, Snapchat, and Facebook stimulate platform popularity and daily usage.

Self-perception, though, is not only the relational factor which the above platforms harbor that urges continued use. TikTok, Instagram, Snapchat, and Facebook stimulate digital connections which reflect pre-existing, real life relationships. This creates a social graph, or a global network of linkages between all individuals within a system (Ellison & Boyd, 2013). These networking platforms also provide specific message capabilities which can pave a landscape to strengthen these connections. Through chats and direct or instant messaging, users can privately converse with other users and customize a conversational experience. Providing privacy, portability, and asynchrony, these video-centric applications support the capacity to send not only traditional text, but also, photos and videos (Bayer & Ellison, 2020). Users often use messaging to see where they figuratively stand with others, often watching read receipts to see if their message was viewed, and waiting for typing or sending cues, to see if said message will be rapidly responded to. Additionally, some of those who are active social media choose to alter, delete, or make ephemeral their message histories (Bayer & Ellison, 2020). With features

such as time-limited chats on Snapchat or Instagram Direct Messaging's 'vanish mode' causing videos to disappear upon being watched, users' presumed secrecy can spur revelations or conversations that would not occur through traditional social documentation. In an ideal exemplification of the stranger-on-a-train effect, this process is a way in which people tend to open up to strangers (Tufekci, 2017). Relatedly, TikTok especially can be used to build or maintain relationships through sharing videos within or outside of the application, such as via text message. In addition to increasing one-on-one rapport, external sharing also creates a bandwagon effect. This means that the more videos that fall under trends are shared, the more the TikTok community at large can expect to see identical trends or feedback from other users (Vaterlaus & Winter, 2021). Relationally, video-centric social media can create camaraderie over common values of leisure activity, social connection, creative escape, and humor, in addition to information.

An informational perspective also guides users to turn to video-centric social media in the quest for exposure to novel worldviews. When seeking information, users bridge social capital, and solidify their ties with the forums which provide them with sought after data (Bayer & Ellison, 2020). The informational perspective can, in turn, lend to use inspired by community. Community use references a draw to diverse audiences on social media (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). Within the sprawling niches, users are attracted to resonant groups based on shared qualities or identities. Networking platforms can help strangers connect based on shared interests, political views, hobbies and activities, and beyond. As these communities and the number of users drawn online proliferate and expand, social media platforms subject to the same principles of adoption and discontinuance as other interactive communication technologies. This creates network externalities; people are not likely to adopt a specific social media unless a sizable number of

people with commonalities are already using the forum (Hampton, 2012). Once critical mass, or number of users, has been reached, the values of making and continually engaging with an account increase. Conversely, the cost of not participating in the social media platform does too, as those 'left out' may face feelings of the fear of missing out, or FOMO, which breeds anxiety, constant checking in with others, and searching for a window into relation (Zuboff, 2018).

Social media provides multiple avenues for users to find like-minded others and signal their beliefs to one another. Network internalities form to create benefits and collective capabilities attained during process of forming durable connections (Tufekci, 2017). These relationships occur regardless of what the task is or how trivial it may seem, as long as any challenges in relationship-building meet certain criteria. Related obstacles must be overcome collectively through homophily, or the notion of birds of a feather flocking together (Tufekci, 2017).

Networked internalities require decision making, building of trust, and delegation among a semi-durable network of people who interact over time. Network externalities, a void absent of network externalities, and FOMO can combine to create unsettling social isolation and abandonment for those not interacting with video-centric social media platforms.

Users also buy in due to network effects, personal input in design and development, and subsequent intrinsic and image-related utility. Dominance of few platforms online is not a coincidence but is product of two important structural dynamics: network effects, and dominance of advertisements and finance practices, detailed below, for online platforms (Tufekci, 2017). Content provided by others, including virtual gifts displayed on mediums such as TikTok and tagged photos and videos combine with system-provided content to create low barriers to contact initiation. Accordingly, the easier it is to figuratively call out to someone else, the less difficult it also is to engage in connection and reconnection (Ellison & Boyd, 2013). As platforms change,

users are active in providing requests, feedback, and positive and negative reinforcement. In a perpetual beta model, video-centric social media sites launch new features frequently based on watching what people did, what worked and what did not, and likes and dislikes of users (Ellison & Boyd, 2013). Accordingly, this fuels alterations pertinent to usage and feature implementation or de-implementation. Algorithmically, likes allow companies to generate more tailored content to users, stimulating and increasing usage (Zuboff, 2018). Additionally, applications now can record the amount of time that a user spends on a specific post or type of post. This time, coupled with emoji reactions to a post on a forum such as Facebook, alters viewers' streams (Tufekci, 2017). This means that video-centric social media algorithms will ensure not to follow acts such as implementing too many posts that may evoke a sad face or angry face reaction, so as not to offput users.

Pure convenience can rope populations into continued video-centric social media use, as well. Rather than lengthy narratives, videos on TikTok, Instagram, Snapchat, and Facebook show vignettes, or flashes of sensation (Chayka, 2021). In this fashion, video-centric social media satiates not only those above who are seeking information, but also, reaches out to other demographics who are after relaxing entertainment. Shorter videos are also reported to be more convenient and entertaining for all ages, and to promote realism through modality (Vaterlaus & Winter, 2021). This means that users have reported moving visuals to be more trustworthy than text. There is also a myriad of prompts which support convenience, especially those on Instagram and TikTok which aim to attract and skew user's monetary investments (Chayka, 2021). Clicking on specific tags within pictures or videos will immediately cause a linked item, such as a desirable piece of clothing, electronic, or subscription service, to appear. Users will be readily able to buy with ease, as pricing information, external sites, and advertisements, are also

zero touches to one touch away. Furthermore, media elements and related supplements can be utilized for a practice known as social selling; this is an act of engaging prospective and recurring customers through recommendations, comments, and brand publications (Alhabash & Ma, 2017). Often, posts by influencers and brands are meant to create and reinforce patterns of purchase behavior, regardless of the product or service being offered.

Though users may not point out branding and business practices as an initial reason for continued social media use, today, over 90% of companies use social media marketing (SMM) to connect with consumers (Dwivedi et al., 2015). Companies desire to advertise products and services as quickly as possible to greatest number of people possible; this mantra led to social media outlets supplementing traditional ones at the turn of 21st century. Nearly 95% of modern brand managers say they use SMM in their marketing mix, and up to 80% of users say they use social networks to guide purchase decisions, turning communities for the truth on products, services, and new brands (Dwivedi et al., 2015). SMM encourages high attention and participation from consumers via networks. The practice encompasses any form of direct or indirect marketing used to build awareness, recognition, recall, and action for a brand, business, product, person, or other entity, and is carried out using the tools of the social web (Dwivedi et al., 2015). Interactivity increases time spent on social media as customers can generate own messages in form of video reviews, and mentions of products, services, and brands, on their own accounts, increasing word of mouth influence.

General Positive Effects of Video-Centric Social Media Use

In the domain of social media usage research, rarely are positive consequences or advantageous effects of prolonged platform uses presented and explored. Despite this, there are a multitude of beneficial impacts that video-centric networking forums can bestow upon users. For those who utilize personal accounts, video-centric social media is found to increase realism, coolness, agency-enhancement, community building, interactivity, browsing and variety seeking, and play or fun gratifications (Vaterlaus & Winter, 2021). Continued exposure to trends allows users to 'keep up with the Joneses,' mirroring and modifying what seemingly everyone else is up to. Selection of what to consume among thousands of videos disseminated daily increases a sense of personal likes and dislikes, and hones decision making and choice curation. Co-existing in both homogeneous and heterogeneous spaces aids societal strength and navigation. Additionally, users find self-affirmation on social media, which cortisol significantly (Toma, 2013).

In an organizational context, it is easier to become aware of what others are doing and saying on social media. Relatedly, organization-wide postings can provide aggregate material which stimulates awareness in recipient knowledge seekers and reduces ambiguity (Leonardi & Meyer, 2015). Communication through these platforms can thus facilitate an easier transfer of information and increase awareness of the nuances of ambient communication. When searching for a boost in logistics, such as departures to and from conferences and events, carpooling, and relevant community events and protests, these groups can also turn to social media (Tufekci, 2017). This technology utilized impactfully on social media internets or intranets to organize processes and events.

Business-wise, social media also provides a massive venue for conjuring profits and influence. SMM is the only form of marketing that can touch and influence customers at every individual stage of buying process and is a tool for co-creating value with customers (Dwivedi et al., 2015). By giving them coupons, discounts, product information and product information in a nontraditional, yet more strongly resonating, fashion, clientele develops feelings of significance from being part of decision-making process. Through video-centric social media postings and advertisements, companies receive increased impressions, global reach, and better understanding of customers, including needs, behaviors, habits, and buying procedures (Dwivedi et al., 2015). They are also able to support relationship management issues with customer complaints on social media, and representatives can resolve issues if they see them through video or text-based responses. SMM has a lower cost of connecting with customers and broadening their knowledge, and significantly longer carryover effects (Dwivedi et al., 2015). It also allows for customized messages for customer groups, leading to higher customer loyalty.

General Negative Effects of Video-Centric Social Media Use

Unarguably, video-centric social media addiction invites a plethora of ill effects: both personally and relationally. In a phenomenon known as instrumentarianism, continued social media usage leads to an invasion of privacy, with instrumentation and instrumentalization of online behavior being used for the purposes of modification, prediction, monetization, and control (Zuboff, 2018). Through the knowledge that social media networks and their data collecting partners

glean, reliable predictions form to manipulate user behavior and gain power over them, thus shaping human behavior through usage increase. This catalogs prediction of future behavior and its manipulation as a product. Instrumentarianism's intensified behavior modification has an adverse effect on humans' self-determination and autonomy (Zuboff, 2018). Even when users do recognize that they are losing privacy and autonomy, they, due to previously detailed motivations and factors, believe social media is essential to lead an effective life. This conflict causes psychic numbing, or a desensitization to potential infringements on boundaries (Zuboff, 2018). Additionally, social media designers and developers often control users to fit the mold of an ideal consumer through tuning, nudging, and herding. In tuning and nudging, subliminal cues to pique attention are deployed by design features, leading to a push toward a choice component of the forum's architecture (Zuboff, 2018). Herding, just as it sounds, deals with controlling and orchestrating a situation. Key elements in an immediate online context, such as a continuous stream and social media reactions, create an orchestration of the human situation guiding behavior along a path of heightened probability that approximates certainty (Zuboff, 2018). Social media users negatively alter their autonomies, senses of selves, and privacy when submitting to cues subconsciously embedded in displayed video and other media.

From an informational point of view, continued overuse of social media has weakened users' discernment. Under the principle of automation bias, people tend to trust technology innately, and fail to criticize the idea that all technology is trustworthy and wants what is best for each individual user (O'Donovan, 2014). This leads to less discrimination, and thus, less agency, over particularly news-based content. This news-finds-me perception causes users to view information as ambient, since it is ubiquitous and pervasive within video-centric social media platforms (Gil de Zúñiga et al., 2017). Individuals who believe that social media fulfills their

news needs lead more consistently to turn to social media as source of news as a source of news. Automation bias and the news-finds-me-perception combine to create a cyclical relationship, spurring a lack of intentionality in social media use.

Bots, or automatically generated profiles that send out what is programmed, are routinely deployed to create a large amount of unbeneficial, non-purposeful videos, photos, or comments related to topics which their creator desires to promote (Tufekci, 2017). This makes relevant posts, topics, and ideologies more prominent, allowing those who curate spam to take hold of the social media landscape, due to a comment bias which promotes content with more engagement. Confirmation bias in social media usage and algorithms comes into play when users continually affirm that any new evidence is further affirmation of their already-possessed perceptions (Tufekci, 2017). Social media, thus, can serve as an unproductive echo chamber. Furthermore, feedback loops bury some stories and showcase others (Tufekci, 2017). This means that algorithms selecting what users see can shape messages and tactics. Related filtering can result in more polarization and deepen a figurative filter bubble (Tufekci, 2017). In addition to the previously mentioned issues with bias and limited news, this also presents difficulty for creators, who are challenged in knowing whether their message is not resonating, or the algorithm is simply not showing their videos or posts.

Relationally, failed gratifications within social media and online dynamics can be dangerous to mental health and real-world connections. At their core, humans are group animals. Thus, online, they engage daily in social signaling to one another about beliefs, adjusting these according to what we think others around us think (Tufekci, 2017). However, these beliefs frequently break rather than bend, leading to issues with firm morals and values.

This is an example of intense heteronomy, or regulation by others (Zuboff, 2018). Additionally, social signaling breeds immensely detrimental practices in comparison.

Often, video-centric social media provides what many deem to be too much agency, valuing a lack of censorship, which can lead to cyberbullying (Vaterlaus & Winter, 2021). When considering anonymous or targeted mistreatment, which can include video or media-based threats, an inconsistent moderation and censorship of posts exacerbates issues of online harassment. Past studies dealing in Facebook suggest the magnitude of juxtaposing oneself with others, and suggests transferability to the other similar video-centric platforms discussed in this work. Social comparison dominates the Facebook experience, leading to profile inflation, or making oneself look more appealing, on social media (Zuboff, 2018). Accordingly, Facebook usage has been overall associated with viewing others' lives as better than one's own. There is also a direct connection between Facebook usage and negative comparison tendencies (Bayer & Ellison, 2020). A supplemental link between social media and social comparison has been established via the social comparison theory. This theory states that people evaluate their opinions and abilities by comparison respectively with the opinions and abilities of others (Bayer & Ellison, 2020). Streams provide snapshots and responses that naturally lead to this. Specifically, these comparisons are upward comparisons for users who deem themselves less popular in reality, and downward for those who classify themselves as popular in the real world (Stevens, 2017). Upward comparisons rely on the assumption that other people are better than the one making the comparison, while downward comparisons presume that others are overall worse.

Negativity in relationships through social media use is also demonstrated through presumption. For example, users tagged in undesirable videos or photos that others upload featuring them are taking defensive action (Thomas et al., 2017). Users that do not like the way that they look or do not support the content that their online friends and followers have posted are hiding posts from their wall. The users whose posts were hidden, in turn, can take offense, deeming the real-world relationship in question as unvaluable. Users also linking likes from those who they view as having more automatic liking behavior as less valuable (Bayer & Ellison, 2020). Situations such as these exemplify how social media use is closely linked with perceived social support.

Though human emotionality and expression are essential, continued video-centric social media usage can create an overly impulsive environment in users' minds, leading to consequence. For instance, public disagreements on social media are able to be relived (Tufekci, 2017). Even if users delete videos responding or replying to others in a virtual argument, technologies such as screen recording make content always available. Additionally, creativity may be overshadowed by one's desire to become a social media influencer, as new models of virality rewarded and discouraged quickly (Tufekci, 2017). Traditional influencers become famous online by finding a niche with a popular style or trend of videos or media, garnering followers, and reaping monetary and lifestyle benefits. Lastly, a primal emotional response to popup messages can also influence mindless social media use, which will leave users unfulfilled (Tufekci, 2017). Engagement with enticing visual notifications disseminated by social media applications, which are by default supplemented by haptic cues, creates an emotional contagion, prompting immediate navigation to the relevant platform. These uncontrollable habits are predictive of stress and connection overload (Bayer & Ellison, 2020). Specifically, these types

of notifications are pushed routinely to indicate delivery of a message by another user. The potential for new social interaction is thus always there, leading to development of social norms to be on call (Bayer & Ellison, 2020). Notification-based messaging can undermine real conversations and prompting procrastination simultaneously.

Cumulatively, a lack of conscientiousness weaves itself as a common thread through the general negative effects of continued video-centric social media usage. Unsurprisingly, users are habitually unable to accurately report time spent on social media sites (Bayer & Ellison, 2020). A lack of mindful and intentional use is the foundational detrimental consequence of social media as a lackluster personal and relational developer, information hub, and emotional controller.

Video-Centric Social Media and Effects: Adolescents and Young Adults

Psychologically, adolescence stands as a period of extreme orientation toward the peer group. When growing up, humans undergo relational aggression and identity formation as they reach a normative crisis, considering questions of right and wrong, introspection and personal experimentation, and differentiation of the self from others (Zuboff, 2018). Young people, therefore, are undergoing a variety of formative changes, and making a near-infinite amount of daily decisions. Social media propels the young more toward automatic and less toward voluntary behavior, as they are drawn in by a combination of behavioral science and high-stakes design (Zuboff, 2018). Social media is designed to become molded primarily to the psychological structure of adolescence and emerging adults. During these stages, one is

naturally oriented toward the "others," considering group recognition, acceptance, belonging, and inclusion heavily (Zuboff, 2018). The key for designers and developers is understanding what draws young people to social media in first place, and then, ratcheting up the potency of relevant design practices. Video-centric social media design features seek out to transform inclinations into unquenchable need, enmeshing young people into chasing their own zones of flow. Social media researchers have discovered five elements that characterize a state of compulsion in young people: frequency of use, duration of action, potency, route of administration, and user attributes (Zuboff, 2018). Thus, these are the elements in personal and relational interaction that social media engineers fixate upon through aesthetics and functionality.

Regarding children specifically, addictive video-centric social media use provides new unfavorable impacts. Particularly, Snapchat is only one of the included forums in which use is directly related to age; the younger the person, the greater the use (Alhabash & Ma, 2017). Snapchat also leads to a host of issues pertaining to jealousy and insecurity. The application instigates high rates of young adult jealousy when one romantic partner adds a previous one, and also presents discord involving relational challenges, infidelity, deviant behavior, annoyance, friction, jealousy, and widening generational differences (Vaterlaus et al., 2016). Not only are users fueled to engage in riskier behavior due to the ephemeral nature of media exchange, but also, tensions stem from messages being opened and not responded to, and others' place on users' best friends lists, an indicator of contact frequency via the application (Vaterlaus et al., 2016). Snapchat, though, is not the only application that can yield devastating formative effects for adolescents. Instagram has gained criticism for hooking children into use at a younger age rather than protecting them from its primary problems, such as child predatory grooming, bullying, and body shaming (Satariano & Mac, 2021). The ability to send media-based direct messages

particularly opens an avenue for inappropriate relationships and commentary. Teens are also more likely than adults to remove Instagram posts within 12 hours of posting the content (Stevens, 2017). Taking down content with few likes or comments to keep up only what is popular often leads to curation of a more adult or independent image, luring and enticing cyber predators on a grander scale.

Further, for teen girls specifically, Instagram is associated with increased rates of anxiety and depression (Satariano & Mac, 2021). The social media platform has acknowledged this dilemma in cancelling its plans for a proposed Instagram Kids service; the application was to require parental permission, forgo ads, carry more age-appropriate content and features originally. However, analytics showed that Instagram was not appropriate for children under 13 due to the platform's damaging effect on mental health (Satariano & Mac, 2021).

Overall social media use findings with students transitioning to university and those of university age fixated upon three categories which guide overall use, and its relevant impacts. Those approaching or enduring college rely on affirmation, assimilation, and integration to resonate with a sense of purpose (Thomas et al., 2017). Affirmation reflects and celebrates community ties in existence, solidifying one's place in the grand scheme of the internet. Assimilation relies on establishing identities, namely within these communities. Integration is based on maintaining the ties that one has created through identity and video-centric social media bonding.

Targeted Survey Dissemination and Interviews

Demographic and Process Explanation

Throughout the timeline of social media research, heavy focus has lain in conclusions related to young teens. Generalized past focus has also been aimed toward typical adult users. However, data regarding college students, particularly those whose domains of study are centric around social media, is not as available. To collect targeted information on desired demographics, a survey was deployed targeting undergraduates in The Pennsylvania State University's Donald P. Bellisario College of Communications, as well as its College of Information Sciences and Technology. The survey aimed to gather social media behaviors, addiction levels, and personal and relational impacts. In addition to the survey, interviews were conducted with communications and technology students who have begun stints in personal or brand-based social media influencing.

Survey and Results

The above-mentioned survey was disseminated online through research and messaging forum, as well as through email and word of mouth, to the desired population. Overall, there are approximately 4,700 undergraduate students in the target demographic, based on estimates from past university college enrollment. At the survey's conclusion, 221 of these undergraduates had engaged with the survey, totaling about 5% of the university's population. Of these, 201

completed the survey in full. Content included social media behaviors, addiction and time spent, characteristics and importance, and personal and relational impact.

On a daily basis, the respondents spent approximately 4.37 hours, or over one-sixth of the day, on video-centric social media platforms. Instagram was the most popularly utilized application, with only nine respondents who did not possess an account on the platform. TikTok, Snapchat, and Facebook followed in order. Users in general stated that they posted 1-5 times per week, with the majority of these posts being videos featuring themselves. Respondents also stated that they generally posted an approximately equal amount of photo and video content or posted more videos than photos. They also consume drastically more videos than photos, with only 35 respondents indicating otherwise. In terms of use, 19.4% of respondents stated that they were on video-centric social media less than a year ago, 26.4% noted that they engaged more, and 54.2% kept about equal use.

On a scale from one, never, to five, always, users were asked to rate applicability of social media use statements. These statements were indicators of addictive symptoms. On average, users gave themselves a 3.28 for time spent thinking about social media use and a 3.25 for an increasing urge to use social media. An inquiry regarding social media use to forget about personal problems came in at 3.19, while users scored themselves a 2.95 at cutting down on social media without success. Users indicated a 2.36 on average regarding becoming restless when being prohibited from social media use, and a 2.38 in using social media so much, it had a negative impact on their lives. When users were asked to rank purposefulness of their social media use, only 13 users, or 6.5% of complete respondents, indicated a very purposeful pattern, as opposed to the rest of respondents who indicated somewhat, rare, or not at all purposeful use.

Regrettably, data in applications' perceived strength of relationship to others, perception of self, and viewing of others' and their own profiles were widely inconclusive. However, of the applications noted, Snapchat had the most perceived strength upon relationships with others, Facebook was the most non-impactfully perceptible, and TikTok was deemed most weakening in a four-way comparison. As for self-image, Instagram and TikTok were deemed the most comparatively dampening. Regarding design features, users were most drawn to explore and For You pages, which provide recommended content, and autoplay, which continually loops videos one after another. They were least attracted to music and sounds and deemed notifications overall as of little importance.

To users, social media influencers were generally 'someone with a lot of followers,' or a person who 'influences other's thoughts.' They considered influencers as professional content creators, people who get paid to post online, and stimulators of change. Their feelings, though, were much less unified in influencer perception. In a dramatic split, several respondents liked, admired, or envied influencers. They considered influencers integral to culture, hardworking and undervalued, and overall enjoyed content, albeit many were leery of sponsorships and indicated paid partnerships could promote dishonesty. A multitude, though (approximately 70%) had a much different mindset of indifference or even loathing toward social media. In summation, one respondent kept things simple: 'I hate them.' Influencers were categorized as 'attention-seekers' with 'pretty privilege' who 'have something seriously wrong' and 'come off as fake sometimes.'

Interview and Results

With the progression of time has come the onset of social media influencers. Typically acting through public personal accounts, but also, acting as managers of brands, influencers aim to garner public attention and funnel engagement, purchasing, and viewing behavior to themselves as a product. Currently, almost all influencing studies focus on consumer effects. Through a qualitative interview process, approximately half a dozen students served as a case study to gain insight into the producer end of the video-centric social media influencing sphere. Appendix B provides a full list of foundational questions; directly below is a representative amalgamation of responses, several of which provide personal elaboration to the above survey findings. Several influencers, rather than build a brand independently, collaborate with marketing agencies for work, especially if they are students. As one respondent detailed, influencers: 'create content aimed at generating positive affinity and awareness for brands.' These agencies require minimum post requirements weekly or monthly, but they aid in building an original following. In these posts, they aim to capture realistic benefits such as style, comfort, price, or trendiness to amplify product or service desirability.

Though a multitude of benefits were listed, influencers interviewed most commonly cited monetary gain or a source of secondary income. They also referred to free or discounted products and supportive communities... such as the approximately 30% of survey admirers. Influencing was also said to stimulate creativity and human perspectives, and experience education through partner brands. Downsides include an often-rigorous content schedule and personal pages 'converting' into an advertising space for brands. All interviewed influencers stated that their personas on social media are identical to their personas in the real world? The

similarity, they say, is due to working with brands that they actually like. As one stated, partnering with those who 'are accessible to many individuals, regardless of their income, identity, or interests' resonates with her. She recognizes her 'privilege in this role' and 'hopes to use [her] platform for good rather than vanity.

Though success is objective, quality content was stressed over reach. Brand response to content, for example, comments and saves, allow creators to know their content is 'high-quality, ethical, and meaningful.' One influencer specifically recognized that 'everyone and anyone wants to become an influencer in the age of TikTok.' Now, 'everyone is putting out personal information in an attempt to be "relatable" and the next viral star....Obviously everyone wants to be paid to promote free products or services. It is just a matter of if the algorithm, physical appearance, and personality lands in the right audience's lap.'

Areas for Further Research and Development

Areas for Potential Related Further Research and Development

Demographic-specific surveys and interviews could be targeted toward other sectors, such as the elderly or graduate students. Additionally, other social media forums which encompass video rather than use it as a central feature, such as Twitter, could be examined. Assessment of text-based and anonymous forums, including question and answer sites YikYak and ask.fm, would likely also lead researchers to interesting results. Finally, up-and-coming social media platform BeReal is rife with potential for methodological discovery. The application is supposedly healthy for users, stressing authenticity in posting random photos

throughout a typical day. Though not yet video-centric, the platform does lend itself to prospective expansion.

Appendix A: Complete Survey Questions

This appendix is a replication of questions disseminated to undergraduate students with areas of study in technology and communications at The Pennsylvania State University. The survey was created through Qualtrics online system, and deployed via the university's SONA online subject pool. Exact content is below.

This survey is for College of IST and/or Communications students at Penn State. You are able to answer whichever questions you choose, and you can leave the survey at any time. All of your responses will be confidential and anonymous. If you have any inquiries about this survey, feel free to email mrb6256@psu.edu.

Indicate your academic college.

- College of Information Sciences and Technology
- Donald P. Bellisario College of Communications
- I am a member of both of these colleges.
-

Select the social media platforms that you use on a daily basis.

- Instagram

- TikTok
- Snapchat
- Facebook

Do you have screen time or another feature which tracks how long you spend on your mobile device enabled?

- Yes
- No

How much time do you spend (or do you estimate that you spend) on the social media platforms which you selected above per day? (To view screen time on iPhone, navigate to Settings -> Screen Time; for Androids, navigate to Settings -> Digital Wellbeing & Parental Controls.)

How many times per week do you post videos (including reels, stories, and grid posts) per week on social media platforms?

Of the videos that you post and repost on social media platforms, approximately what percentage feature yourself?

- 0
- 10
- 20
- 30
- 40

- 50
- 60
- 70
- 80
- 90
- 100

(0- no videos, 100- all videos)

Of the content that you post and repost on social media platforms, approximately what percentage are videos versus photos?

- 0
- 10
- 20
- 30
- 40
- 50
- 60
- 70
- 80
- 90
- 100

(0- all photos, no videos, 100- all videos, no photos)

Of the content that you consume on social media platforms, approximately what percentage are videos versus photos?

- 00
- 10
- 20
- 30
- 40
- 50
- 60
- 70
- 80
- 90
- 100

(0- all photos, no videos, 100- all videos, no photos)

When compared to a year ago, do you find that you use the above social media platforms...

- Less than you did one year ago
- The same as you did one year ago
- More than you did one year ago

On a scale from 1 (never) to 5 (always), how often during the last year have you...

spent time thinking

about use or planned

use of the above 1 2 3 4 5

social media

felt an urge to use the

above social medias

more and more

1 2 3 4 5

used these social

medias to forget

about personal 1 2 3 4 5

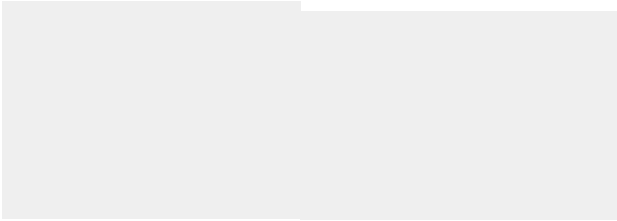
problems

tried to cut down on

social media use

without success

1 2 3 4 5



become
restless/troubled
when prohibited
from using these
social medias

1 2 3 4 5

used these social
medias so much it
has a negative impact
on your life

1 2 3 4 5

How purposeful do you feel that your use of social media platforms are?

Not
purposeful Rarely Somewhat Very
at all purposeful purposeful purposeful

Generally, indicate how you feel that each of these applications that you use impacts your relationships with others.

		This		
		application		
	This	neither	This	
	application	strengthens	application	
Instagram	weakens	nor	strengthens	I do not
	my	weakens	my	use this
	relationship	my	relationship	application.
	with others.	relationship	with others.	
		with others.		

		This		
		application		
	This	neither	This	
	application	strengthens	application	
TikTok	weakens	nor	strengthens	I do not
	my	weakens	my	use this
	relationship	my	relationship	application.
	with others.	relationship	with others.	
		with others.		

		This		
		application		
	This	neither	This	
	application	strengthens	application	
Snapchat	weakens	nor	strengthens	I do not
	my	weakens	my	use this
	relationship	my	relationship	application.
	with others.	relationship	with others.	
		with others.		

		This		
		application		
	This	neither	This	
	application	strengthens	application	
Facebook	weakens	nor	strengthens	I do not
	my	weakens	my	use this
	relationship	my	relationship	application.
	with others.	relationship	with others.	
		with others.		

Generally, indicate how you feel that each of these applications that you use impacts your perception of yourself.

		This		
		application		
	This	makes me	This	
	application	feel	application	I do not
Instagram	makes me	neither	makes me	use this
	feel worse	better nor	feel better	application.
	about	worse	about	
	myself.	about	myself.	
		myself.		

		This		
		application		
	This	makes me	This	
	application	feel	application	I do not
TikTok	makes me	neither	makes me	use this
	feel worse	better nor	feel better	application.
	about	worse	about	
	myself.	about	myself.	
		myself.		

		This		
		application		
	This	makes me	This	
	application	feel	application	
Snapchat	makes me	neither	makes me	I do not
	feel worse	better nor	feel better	use this
	about	worse	about	application.
	myself.	about	myself.	
		myself.		

		This		
		application		
	This	makes me	This	
	application	feel	application	
Facebook	makes me	neither	makes me	I do not
	feel worse	better nor	feel better	use this
	about	worse	about	application.
	myself.	about	myself.	
		myself.		

How often do you use or visit the explore, for you, or recommended pages on social media platforms?

		Some of	Very	Almost
Never	Rarely	the time	often	always

How often do you interact with autoplay (a feature which automatically shows the next photo or video when the first ends or times out) on social media platforms?

		Some of	Very	Almost
Never	Rarely	the time	often	always

How often do you interact with notifications pushed to your devices by social media platforms?

		Some of	Very	Almost
Never	Rarely	the time	often	always

How often do you interact with trends, including hashtags and popular music or sounds, when posting on social media platforms?

		Some of	Very	Almost
Never	Rarely	the time	often	always

How important are the explore, for you, or recommended pages on social media platforms?

Neither

Not important

important Of little nor Somewhat Very

at all importanceunimportant important important

How important is autoplay on social media platforms?

Neither

Not important

important Of little nor Somewhat Very

at all importanceunimportant important important

How important are notifications on social media platforms?

Neither

Not important

important Of little nor Somewhat Very

at all importanceunimportant important important

How important are trends on social media platforms?

Neither
 Not important
 important Of little nor Somewhat Very
 at all importanceunimportant important important

How do you define a social media 'influencer'?

How do you feel about social media influencers?

Rank your overall self-esteem level.

Extremely
 low Low Moderate High high
 Extremely

How often do you find yourself secretly viewing other people's profiles?

Almost
 every
 time
 Almost Some of Most of you are
 never Occasionally the time the time online

How often do you find yourself concerned with or obsessing about your number of likes and followers?

Almost Some of Very Almost
never Rarely the time often always

Appendix B: Complete Interview Questions

This appendix details a cumulative and time-ordered list of questions disseminated to social media influencers and brand account managers who also served as undergraduate students. Elaboration and conversation naturally altered and added information to each interview.

What do you do as an influencer/brand ambassador? Give a description.

How did you get started, including your brands, building a following, etc.?

Name some brands you have worked with or partnerships/sponsorships that you possess.

How many posts per week/month do you put out for brands? How do you curate these posts/how long does it usually take?

What is appealing about being an influencer?

What are some negatives or downsides to being an influencer?

Do you think your persona on social media is identical to your persona in the real world? How so?

How do you know that you are succeeding as an influencer?

Is there anything else you would like to add?

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ACADEMIC VITA

EDUCATION

May 2023 **The Pennsylvania State University Schreyer Honors College**

Presidential Leadership Academy

Bachelor Science: Human-Centered Design and Development, Security and Risk Analysis Focus

Bachelor Arts: Film Production

Minor: Information Sciences and Technology

Thesis: A History and Evolution of Video-Centric Social Media: Identifying and Analyzing Addiction, Design Features, and Personal and Relational Impact

EMPLOYMENT

(May 2022-August 2022) PNC Bank Enterprise Technology and Security Digital Identities Intern

- Collaborated with agile technology team on security, design, development, and logistics
- Produced role-based deliverables in cloud computing, security, and user experience
- Underwent training and education in authentication, access tokens, and Microsoft
- Attended team process and daily scrum meetings, engaged with PNC speakers and events

(2020-present) Penn State Presidential Leadership Academy Intern

- Recruit new class members (approximately 200 yearly applicants for 30 spaces)
- Manage and create graphics for Instagram, Facebook, and LinkedIn pages
- Create weekly newsletters to engage students and alumni while overseeing web inquiries
- Lead prospective applicant process, create essay, application, and interview questions
- Train new program interns in completing job responsibilities

(2020-present) Pittsburgh Bereavement Doula Video, Administrative, and Website Support

- Curate messaging and media content for infant loss nonprofit
- Produce film products regarding doula trainings and organizational events
- Coordinate mailing lists, campaigns, and audience through Google Sheets and Mailchimp
- Complete personal assistant and operational support duties for nonprofit founder

(2018-present) Independent Mathematics and English Tutor

- Provide instructional support to elementary, middle, high school, and college students in grade-level mathematics (kindergarten through trigonometry), reading, and writing
- Aid in research paper composition, structure, and relevant project comprehension

- Led in-home, online instruction for children with learning disabilities during pandemic

(2017-present) Nanny and Child Care Worker

- Plan educational and extracurricular events while managing transport and household
- Provide in-home instruction and coordinate neighborhood events
- Maintain state background check and child abuse clearances

(2016-present) Greater Pittsburgh Girls' Softball League Umpire

- Judge recreational and travel league contests from ages seven to sixteen
- Manage home plate and field calls independently while maintaining community relations
- Instruct training and up-and-coming softball players in sportsmanship and skills

(2017-2019) Fox Chapel Area School District Summer Learning Academy Instructor, Teaching Assistant

- Taught mathematics, English, and English as a Second Language for second-fifth grades
- Chaperoned and supervised exploratory field trips and events
- Spearheaded administrative and clerical work and assessed students
- Curated video content to summarize and advertise supplemental learning program

INVOLVEMENT AND ACADEMIA

(2022-present) Thesis Research and Media Effects Research Lab (Penn State MERL)

- Convene as sole undergraduate member with Master's, Graduate, and Ph.D. students and nationally located professors in weekly lab for social media and technology innovation
- Research design features of social media and their impact on addiction, personal perception, and relationship behavior among designated populations

(2020-present) Empowering Women in Law Founding Member

- Engage career development and legal readiness in founding chapter's biweekly meetings
- Explore career opportunities in law-related fields through immersion events and visitors

(2020-present) Student Film Production and Assistance

- Direct, produce, and assist in student cinema projects throughout the college of communications
 - Recent/current involvements: A Sacred Purpose (Penn State Fraternity documentary- director and editor), Oh, To Just Be (student narrative-producer), three 400 level documentary films with titles pending (producer of two, editing one)

(2019-present) Dean's List, President's Freshman Award, and President Sparks Award

- Recognized semesterly and yearly for GPA

(2019-present) Women in Information Science and Technology Mentor, Panelist, and Member

- Created and supervised mentor-mentee pairings for college and career guidance
- Coordinated and led mentor-mentee events, initiated surveys and check-ins
- Guided underclass mentor in major-related and external organization endeavors

(2019-2022) CHAARG Vice President- Membership, Social Committee, and Group Coordinator

- Coordinated and placed over 520 members in chapter meeting groups and weekly events
- Led recruitment efforts to build largest organizational chapter in national history
- Plan retreat, formal, and all Penn State welcoming, bonding, and expansion events
- Serve as mentor for two underclass students
- Fundraise and advocate for Penn State THON

(2019-2021) Penn State Homecoming

- Prepared events on University Relations Involvement Committee as two-year member
- Acted as Homecoming Float Grounds Coordinator in parade preparation

(2019-2020) Victoria's Secret PINK Campus Team Liaison

- Spearheaded marketing and promotional events in brand ambassadorship
- Curated social media campaigns while engaging with corporate legal regulations