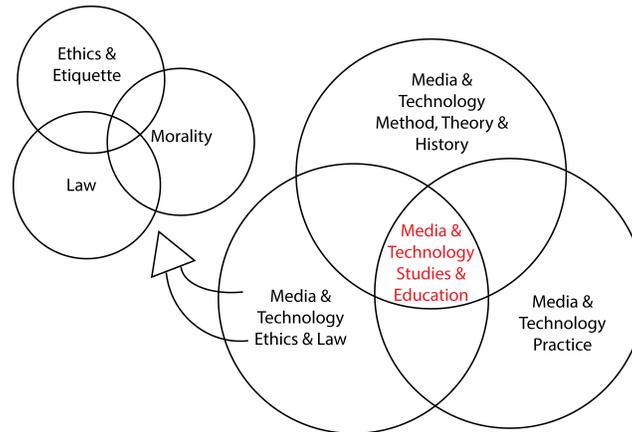




**EDCP 570: Seminar in Teaching ICT**

**Lecture Notes**

S. Petrina (1 October 2018)



**Cyberbullying**

**1. Working Problems**

- a. At this moment, perhaps more relevant than any other problem of media & technology ethics and law for schools and youth is cyberbullying.
- b. Amanda Todd's mother was immediately vigilant in protecting her daughter's story and reaching out to other families and students facing similar ordeals. To educate and honoring her daughter's wishes, she chose to leave the Youtube video online: "I have lost one child, but know she wanted her story to save 1,000 more." Upon hearing of Rehteah Parsons' suicide, she was again heart-broken with empathy and sympathy for the family and publicly appealed for action. Agonizing to preserve his daughter's story, Rehteah Parsons' father summed up her feelings: "My daughter wasn't bullied to death, she was disappointed to death. Disappointed in people she thought she could trust, her school, and the police.... For the love of God do something."
- c. What are educators to do? What ought we media & technology educators and researchers do?
  - i. Interventionism to what degree and end?
  - ii. Place of cyberbullying in the (ICT) curriculum?
- d.

**2. Definitions**

- a. Bullying
  - i. Olweus
    1. (1993, p. 9): *A student is being bullied or victimized when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other students.*
    2. (1993, p. 10): It is useful to distinguish between *direct bullying* — with relatively open attacks on a victim — and *indirect bullying* in the form of social isolation and intentional exclusion from a group. It is important to pay attention also to the second, less visible form of bullying.
    3. Nansel et al. (2001, p. 2094): specific type of aggression in which (1) the behavior is intended to harm or disturb, (2) the behavior occurs

repeatedly over time, and (3) there is an imbalance of power, with a more powerful person or group attacking a less powerful one. This asymmetry of power may be physical or psychological, and the aggressive behavior may be verbal (eg, name-calling, threats), physical (eg, hitting), or psychological (eg, rumors, shunning/exclusion).

4. Boulton (2002, p. 354): Olweus (1991, 1993) has presented a strong case to support his claim that all of the following can qualify as bullying—threatening, taunting, teasing, name-calling, making faces and dirty gestures, intentionally excluding someone from a group, and refusing to comply with another person’s wishes. [Olweus (1993, p. 9)]
- ii. Smith et al. (2008, p. 376): ‘Bullying’ is usually defined as being an aggressive, intentional act or behaviour that is carried out by a group or an individual repeatedly and over time against a victim who can not easily defend him or herself (Olweus, 1993).
- b. Cyber
  - i.
- c. Cyberbullying
  - i. Franek (2006, p. 39): Technology has spawned a host of thorny problems, none more pernicious than the *cyberbully*—defined as anyone who repeatedly misuses technology to harass, intimidate, bully, or terrorize another person. Such behavior usually takes the form of inappropriate and hurtful rumors or threats sent through e-mails, instant messages, text messages, or Web site posts, with the sender often anonymous or disguised as someone else.
  - ii. Smith et al. (2008, p. 376): An aggressive, intentional act carried out by a group or individual, using electronic forms of contact, repeatedly and over time against a victim who cannot easily defend him or herself.
  - iii. Hinduja & Patchin (2008, p. 152): willful and repeated harm inflicted through the medium of electronic text.
  - iv. Accordino (2011, p. 15): bullying is defined as face-to-face coercion, aggression toward peers, and cyberbullying is defined using technology to intimidate, harass, terrorize, or bully others.

### 3. Conceptual History

- a. History of Bullying
- b. History of Cyberbullying
- c. Philosophy of Intervention
  - i. Interventionism
    1. Education
      - a. Parental
      - b. Curriculum
    2. Ethics and Codes
    3. Care
    4. Legal and Policy Regulation
- d.
- e. Micro-aggression/s
  - i. Pierce (1970, p. 10): **offensive mechanisms**, the small continuous bombardment of **micro-aggression** by Whites to Blacks is the essential ingredient in race relations and race interactions. The existence of offensive mechanisms stems from the need of Whites to reaffirm and reassert feelings and ideas of racial superiority" (p. 10). The subtleties involved here can be easily overlooked, either (a) deliberately in an attempt to establish or maintain a superior posture or (b) through simple nonawareness.
  - ii. Pierce, Carew, Pierce-Gonzalez, & Wills (1978, p. 66): These are subtle,

stunning, often automatic, and non-verbal exchanges which are 'put downs' of blacks by offenders.

- iii. Delgado (1991, p. 790): Of course, some will challenge even low-level harassment and slights and demand that the institution address them. But if the micro-aggressions are borderline or small, then minority students may decide to forgo taking action for fear of seeming hypersensitive or of wasting time better devoted to their studies. The decision which offenses to counter and which to let lie saps energy. Students who find themselves in an environment that constantly demands that they make these decisions may finally give up or leave.

#### 4. Cyberbullying Cases

- a. At this moment, perhaps more relevant than any other problem of media & technology ethics and law for schools and youth is cyberbullying. In October 2012 and April 2013 were two highly publicized suicides of young women in the throes of torment through social media. The heart-breaking, tragic story of Amanda Todd, who took her life on 10 October 2012 after posting on YouTube an emotional cry for help and description of the cyberbullying she suffered, generated a wave of compassion and questions: how could this have happened to a 15 year-old high school student at CAFE Secondary School in Port Coquitlam, BC. Who and what are responsible? Why? Canadians relived a nightmare again when Rehteah Parsons, a 17 year-old student in Coal Harbour, NS, took her life on 7 April 2013. This young woman was a tragic victim of rape and subsequent malicious social media practices. Yet the deaths of these young women followed three suicides in 2011-- young women all of which were tormented through social media practices maligning and targeting them: Emily McNamara, Jenna Bowers-Bryanton, and Courtenay Brown took their lives in March and April 2011. There is no getting over these young women or the many others who lost or took their lives for similar reasons.
- b. Amanda Todd's mother was immediately vigilant in protecting her daughter's story and reaching out to other families and students facing similar ordeals. To educate and honoring her daughter's wishes, she chose to leave the Youtube video online: "I have lost one child, but know she wanted her story to save 1,000 more." Upon hearing of Rehteah Parsons' suicide, she was again heart-broken with empathy and sympathy for the family and publicly appealed for action. Agonizing to preserve his daughter's story, Rehteah Parsons' father summed up her feelings: "My daughter wasn't bullied to death, she was disappointed to death. Disappointed in people she thought she could trust, her school, and the police.... For the love of God do something."
  - i. What are educators to do? What ought we media & technology educators and researchers to do?
- c. By 15 October, Amanda Todd's tragic video registered 20 million views.
- d. Given the extreme sadness and gravity for students, BC teachers began to write lessons around the video, honoring the young teen's wishes that she be remembered educationally.
- e. BC Ministry issued a Memo to all school districts (14 October 2012), advising teachers not to show her video: showing the video "does not help to address (bullying or suicide) issues" and that "some students may have purposely avoided watching it because they know it could be a trigger for them." The minister said he expects teachers will exercise their own autonomy, and admits most students have likely already seen it.
- f. The president of the B.C. Teachers' Federation says a government memo urging teachers not to show Amanda Todd's YouTube video in class ignores the reality that many kids have seen the video and need to talk about it. "(Teachers) should have the ability to make that decision themselves," said BCTF president Susan Lambert. "We know that that video has gone, as they call it, viral. We know that kids have looked at that video. It's far too late now to try to ignore this situation.
- g. "Registered clinical counselor Tabasom Eblaghie, who specializes in bullying and

suicide, disagrees with the province's expert advice – she says it's important to keep talking. "Dialogue is always good. We do need to be having conversations about this," Eblaghie said. "At the same time, who's holding these conversations? And are they equipped to be holding these conversations with these children? Are there messages being given to them that actually could be dangerous to them?"

- h. Sensing that the media had covered the story in dramatic ways and with fear that the coverage would generate more suicides, a motion was passed on 27 November 2012 by the VSB urging the BC Press Council and Canadian Association of Broadcasters to ensure "province-wide adherence" to suicide-coverage guidelines recommended by the Canadian Psychiatric Association:
- i. That the Vancouver Board of Education (VBE) write to the BC Press Council, the BC Association of Broadcasters and Canadian Association of Broadcasters asking them to adopt and ensure province-wide adherence to best practices for media coverage of suicide deaths, as outlined in currently available guidelines, such as the Canadian Psychiatric Association, the Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention and the US Centres for Disease Control and that the board issue a news release calling on BC media outlets to comply with the guidelines published by the above agencies.
- j. Increasingly, teachers are wanting to do something but do not necessarily know what to do or how to protect themselves from making a mistake in the selection of resources. For instance, on 29 May 2013, a Winnipeg teacher at École Julie Riel in St. Vital showed a popular anti-bullying movie titled *Love is All You Need?*, using the YouTube version. It's a professionally produced movie with a powerful message. Writer and director Kim Rocco Shields defended the movie, noting that "it was created to open eyes of more adults and maybe teenagers, late teens, that couldn't really grasp the idea of why kids were being bullied and why kids were taking their own lives." Contemplating an edited version for use in schools, she reported that "some of the experts said, right then and there, we must change the ending so it's more uplifting." View with caution, as the original ending is explicitly sad and violent.



- k. It turned out that a student fainted in class and the boy's parents became quite upset. The boy's father was straightforward: "A teacher chose something that was viewed that was not part of the official curriculum." Superintendent Duane Brothers called the video "clearly inappropriate," noting that "it's a reminder to administration that the use of any material needs to be reviewed and policies taken into consideration." (Read More: [Winnipeg Free Press](#))
- i. On 3 June 2013, Heritage Minister James Moore announced \$250,000 in funds to support the Federal government's Youth Take Charge initiative. The new funding supports a youth-led anti-bullying project primarily through the Canadian Red Cross's Stand Up to Bullying and Discrimination in Canadian Communities project, building on its Beyond

the Hurt program. The Red Cross funds will be used to train 2,400 teens ages 13 to 17 to deliver workshops for their peers. The announcement was made at the Ottawa high school where Jamie Hubley was a student when he heart-breakingly took his life in the throes of bullying on 15 October 2011.

- m. In a tragic coincidence, on 9 September 2013 as the Federal Government of Canada was announcing plans to introduce cyberbullying legislation, Todd Loik committed suicide under cyberbullying conditions. His mother said "It was non-stop taunting" from about two years ago, with posts on Facebook. It was "nastiness," she said.
- n. On 20 November 2013, the Federal Government introduced legislation to criminalize certain actions that have been at the base of some of the more tragic cyberbullying cases in Canada. It is not a Cyberbullying Bill per se but can be seen as a preventive measure (see Bill C-13, An Act to Amend the Criminal Code).
- o. Cyberbullying legislation has been proposed in the past by various parties at the Federal level but nothing has been approved. See for example, Bill C-273 (2011) and Bill M-385 (2012).
- p. This latest measure, Bill C-13, drew support of all parties. It is based on the FPT meeting of October 2012 This resulted in the Cyberbullying and Non-Consensual Distribution of Intimate Images report, released in June 2013.
- q. Bill C-13 was passed into law by the House of Commons on 20 October 2014. <http://www.parl.gc.ca/HousePublications/Publication.aspx?DocId=6731159&Mode=1&Language=E>
- r. However, the new legislation is not about bullying or cyberbullying, as advocates initially hoped or planned. "In Bill C-13, the federal government proposes to "modernize" the lawful access provisions of the Criminal Code that allow the state to get access to electronic communications in appropriate circumstances. This has little to do with cyberbullying, the bill's supposed target," Austen, Stewart & Clement reported. "The lawful access provisions are recycled from past failed attempts at lawful access reform, the main parameters of which were set in the post-Sept. 11 world. They provide a tool kit that has long been sought by the state in relation to investigating terror cases although the case for the necessity of this tool kit is weak. Two important questions need more public discussion: what kinds of surveillance do the new powers enable and are these powers constitutional?" [http://www.thestar.com/opinion/commentary/2014/11/22/bill\\_c13\\_has\\_little\\_to\\_do\\_with\\_cyberbullying.html](http://www.thestar.com/opinion/commentary/2014/11/22/bill_c13_has_little_to_do_with_cyberbullying.html)
- s. What do you think? What is needed?
- t. To inform discussion, [download and read the Supreme Court of Canada 2012 decision on A.B. v. Bragg Communications Inc.](#)