

Spectacles of intimacy? Mapping the moral landscape of teenage social media

Article (Submitted Version)

Berriman, Liam and Thomson, Rachel (2014) Spectacles of intimacy? Mapping the moral landscape of teenage social media. *Journal of Youth Studies*, 18 (5). pp. 583-587. ISSN 1367-6261

This version is available from Sussex Research Online: <http://sro.sussex.ac.uk/id/eprint/51111/>

This document is made available in accordance with publisher policies and may differ from the published version or from the version of record. If you wish to cite this item you are advised to consult the publisher's version. Please see the URL above for details on accessing the published version.

Copyright and reuse:

Sussex Research Online is a digital repository of the research output of the University.

Copyright and all moral rights to the version of the paper presented here belong to the individual author(s) and/or other copyright owners. To the extent reasonable and practicable, the material made available in SRO has been checked for eligibility before being made available.

Copies of full text items generally can be reproduced, displayed or performed and given to third parties in any format or medium for personal research or study, educational, or not-for-profit purposes without prior permission or charge, provided that the authors, title and full bibliographic details are credited, a hyperlink and/or URL is given for the original metadata page and the content is not changed in any way.

Spectacles of intimacy? Mapping the moral landscape of teenage social media

Liam Berriman and Rachel Thomson

School of Education and Social Work, University of Sussex, Brighton, United Kingdom

Words: 8000

Abstract

This paper explores young people's expressed concerns about privacy in the context of a highly mediated cultural environment, mapping social media practices against axes of visibility and participation. Drawing on interdisciplinary conceptual resources from both the humanities and social sciences we use 'spectacles of intimacy' (Chase and Levenson 2000) to conceptualise breaches of privacy, mapping an emergent moral landscape for young people that moves beyond concerns with e-safety to engage with the production and circulation of audiences and value. The paper draws on data from a methodological innovation project using multi-media and mixed methods to capture lived temporalities for children and young people. We present a model that captures a moral landscape shaped by emotional concerns about social media, the affordances of those media and affective discourses emerging from young people's use of the media.

Keywords: youth, social media, privacy, visibility, participation

In this paper we map the contemporary landscape of teenage social media use, suggesting that this is a highly moralised terrain, bringing with it the potential for the spoiling of identities and reputations. Our approach is informed by interdisciplinary conceptual tools including the idea of 'spectacles of intimacy' drawn from literary approaches as well as a consideration of practices of self-conscious display and revelation drawn from sociological and anthropological accounts. Drawing on qualitative data from research with British teenagers about the place of digital cultures within their everyday lives we identify two underlying moral logics in young people's accounts of their practices: a concern with the imperatives of participation and a concern with the values, 'risks', and consequences of visibility. Using these two logics as axes we present a heuristic model that captures the nuanced moral landscape of contemporary social media practices for young people, including the dangers and potential rewards. This 'map' can be understood within a tradition of imaginary and moral maps that goes back to the 15th century and associated with the popular communication and satirisation of moral codes¹. Our use of the term 'moral' to describe this terrain refers to the way in which public visibility incites the elaboration of normative codes regarding acceptable and unacceptable conduct – and that this is likely to be developed in an uneven and heterogeneous manner with the development of participant moralities sometimes at odds with those informing the governance of these new

¹ Interesting examples relate to campaigns against slavery in the 19C. as well as satirical comment on gender relations with resonance today, see: 'Beware the dangers to travellers therein!', The Daily Mail, November 15, 2011, <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-2061844/Beware-dangers-travellers-19C-Map-Womans-Heart-charts-treacherous-grounds-ladys-character.html>. The affordances of digital data have given rise to new generation of moral maps associated with the mapping of social inequalities. For a discussion of moral mapping, see: 'Vintage data visualisation', Inspired Mag, April 2, 2013, <http://inspiredm.com/vintage-data-visualization-35-examples-from-before-the-digital-era/>.

spaces. The paper begins with an introduction of our theoretical tools, locating the concept of the 'spectacle of intimacy' in relation to transgressions of privacy. We then consider how 'risking privacy' has emerged as a key concern of young people's use of social media, suggesting that this has paradoxically been associated with a move to privatise responsibility for managing privacy. We then introduce the empirical project that has informed the paper, presenting an analytic model emerging from our work that can be understood as a 'moral map' of teenage social media use, capturing the distinctive 'spectacles of intimacy' associated with sets of practices and 'figures' in the popular imaginary. The paper concludes with our reflections on how this model may be used to inform and enrich current debates within the field suggesting that young people's privacy practices may be seen as a fruitful site for building an account of risk that is politicised rather than privatised.

Privacy, morality and 'spectacles of intimacy'

Notions of a public/private divide are foundational to modernity and to a range of modern political and social theories including feminism, socialism and liberalism. Within this paradigm the private is both an escape from the demands and dangers of the public, and a site of oppression that must be escaped in order for citizenship to be realised. Such accounts were thoroughly destabilised in the latter part of the 20th century by the recognition that not all were included in this social contract (Pateman 1988). Growing evidence also indicated the penetration of the 'private' by processes of marketization (Miller & Rose 2008), governmentality (Rose 1990). In the 21st century information technologies disrupt the conceptual and empirical stability of a public/private divide (Nissenbaum 2010), reconceived for example by Michael Warner as 'practical fictions' associated with the situated, cultural and performative affordances of new media and associated politics (Warner 2005).

Contemporary academic accounts of privacy deploy interactionist, anthropological and historical approaches to view privacy as a diverse, contingent phenomenon. For example, American sociologist Nippert-Eng (2010) invites us to watch how people 'do' the selective concealment and disclosure that constitutes 'boundary work' and how these are often collaborative, involving gifting and withholding, with the task of concealment proving to be a greater challenge than that of disclosure within a wider social context of creeping 'accessibility'. Similarly anthropologist Daniel Miller (2011) considers how practices of online display may be embroiled in the creation and maintenance of a new kind of private self that is off limits. Historical perspective reveals the extent to which changing technologies enable new kinds of practices and associated moralities. The rise of the modern bourgeois public sphere has been linked to the emergence of print (Habermas 1989, Warner 2005), with subsequent media revolutions of radio, television and the internet mediating the relationship between visibility and power that underpins communication. Thompson argues that there has been a reconstitution of 'the public and private as spheres of information and symbolic content that are largely detached from physical locales' (2011, 64). These 'territories of the self' are 'constantly challenged' creating 'a new battleground' that is highly moralised and where 'established relations of power can be disrupted, lives damaged and reputations lost' (Ibid.).

Skirmishes on the borders of privacy are by definition spaces within which popular morality is contested. Writing about the scandals of Victorian Britain associated with the rise of the popular novel, literary historians Chase and Levenson suggest that these controversies can be understood as 'paradoxical spectacles of intimacy' where 'the stress of popular sensation'

provides a mechanism through which 'private life' can be known and shared (Chase and Levenson 2000, 6). For the historian it is evident that these scandals were 'energising... inciting insightful discussion of authority and sentiment'. Contemporary sociologists have pointed to reality television (Skeggs 2009, Tyler & Bennett 2010) and social media (Ringrose et al. 2013) as key spaces in which moral personhood is contested. In this paper we work with the idea of an 'intimate spectacle', exploring what can be learned through the 'heat of sensation' generated by transgressions of the private in the contemporary landscape of teenage sociality.

Risking privacy and privatising risk in an age of social media

In recent decades the notion of 'risk' has emerged as a dominant theme in discussions of childhood and youth (James & James 2008; Thomson 2013), with young people simultaneously constituted as a group 'at risk' *from* others, but also as a risk *to* others. James & James argue that this agenda has led to a closer alignment between notions of risk and protection, with children and young people increasingly framed as "in need of protection *from* risk" (114: emphasis in original). In contemporary public discourse, the internet emerges as a key site for discussions around risk and protection, with early concerns about grooming and paedophiles increasingly replaced with concerns over young people's capacity to sexualise themselves. The New Labour government commissioned 'Byron Review' (2008) captures these doubled edge notions of youth 'at risk' and 'risky' youth, focusing on the promotion of digital literacies as a solution, including raising awareness of the unforeseen consequences of internet display for their future reputations. Young people's management of privacy has also emerged as a topic of concern in public (Valentino-Devries 2010) and academic discussions (Lincoln 2012; Marwick et al. 2010; Robards 2010), including the concern that the public display of personal data may risk both present and future reputations.

A key voice within these debates, particularly in the United States, has been danah boyd (2014), who has published numerous accounts on young people's online privacy practices. In juxtaposition with research focused on safety and risk, boyd's work offers an account of how teenagers and young people make sense of privacy within an increasingly digitally mediated environment. Boyd treats young people as experts of online privacy and as capable of developing sophisticated practices and techniques for managing digital content. Adopting a 'youth centred' approach, boyd has observed how the increasing regulation and surveillance of young people's 'offline' public spaces (see Valentine 1996) has led them to pursue social media as an 'alternative' public space to escape the intrusions of 'concerned' adults.

However, young people's 'networked publics' have emerged with their own sets of challenges for managing privacy. Boyd (2014) describes how the affordances of networked technologies, such as the persistence of online data, has meant that past conversations and content can resurface at a later date with potentially negative consequences. The 'spreadability' of content also makes it difficult to maintain control of what is being shared and with whom. Perhaps of most immediate concern to young people is what boyd describes as 'context collapse' – where networked publics bring together people from different parts of their lives, including family, friends, co-workers etc. Boyd's account raises important questions as to how we conceptualise the meaning of 'privacy' and 'public-ness' for young people at a time of social and cultural transformation where social and digital media are increasingly ubiquitous and media landscapes are uneven and dynamic. For example Marwick and boyd (2014) observe that those interactions adults conceptualise as bullying may be reframed by young people as 'drama'. This

more 'slippery' terminology allows for ambiguity of meaning and the kinds of complexities of agency impossible within the rubric of victim/perpetrator associated with a child protection approach.

Yet risk continues to shape public discourse on young people's use of social media in profound ways. Andrew Hope (2014) argues that our ability to have an informed debate about children online is subverted by four factors: the discursive construction of e-kids (as vulnerable); the muting of young people's voices (not asking about what happens in practice); the responsabilisation of students (making the work of privacy a private business); and finally a diagnostic inflation of risk through realist discourses – leading to a conflation of different kinds of risks – for example those associated with content and contact. The EU Kids Online projects has been doing the painstaking work of mapping the digital lives of 25,000 children across twenty-five European countries and confirms that many users are 'underage' for the platforms and apps that they are using and lack the skills to control privacy settings (Livingstone & Helsper 2013). Yet among 9-16 year olds, self-reported harm is low (12% report being 'bothered' by something online) and although exposure to mild risk is common (e.g. mean comments on Facebook), severe risk (e.g. grooming) is rare (Ibid.). This research reveals a complex picture of risk with "some aspects of the online world draw in certain groups of young people that would normally be less at risk offline. Girls and those who are digitally but not socially confident are likely to migrate to cyberbullying, and those who are either digitally confident or sensation-seekers are more likely to take contact risks" (Ibid.).

Studies such as EU Kids Online suggest a highly dynamic picture, where the affordances of new technologies are enacted by young people as intensive users within an uneven landscape of access and support. Livingstone and colleagues note that high digital literacy does not protect against risk in a simple way. 'Risk' is higher in wealthier countries with greater press freedom, more broadband, more computers and longer schooling, and children who are vulnerable offline are also vulnerable online (Livingstone & Helsper 2013). The EU Kids Online study also found that most young people stick to parental rules (Ibid.) but that the nature of parent-child relationships depended on many things, including the speed at which online access was taken up. Patterns of parental-child interaction are shaped by these synchronicities, enabling researchers to distinguish a typology that characterises families' situations within differing national contexts and socio-economic and technological landscapes.

The aim of this paper is, following Hope (2014), to contribute to a research agenda that goes beyond 'the promotion of personalised responsibility for e-safety for all' to one that 'engages more positively with digital rights'. Our starting point for this research is an account of everyday rather than problematic social media use, which is focused on young people's reports of their own practice. As such, this work sits alongside a growing body of research that suggests teenagers are concerned about privacy and are actively involved in negotiating the affordances of a rapidly evolving social media environment (Livingstone 2008; Marwick et al. 2010). In the rest of the paper we explore the privacy concerns expressed by young people as they move between face-to-face and online communications, including their underlying moral logics. Drawing on a cultural studies model we seek to understand young people within and beyond a rubric of cultural and political production, engaged in making and responding to audiences. Following Carpentier (2011) we are attentive to the operations of access, interaction and participation, using a focus on 'spectacles of intimacy' to provide clues as to what is at stake and how new forms of value are being generated and exploited.

Mapping the moral landscape of teenage social media use

'Face 2 Face: Tracing the real and the mediated in children's cultural worlds' is a methodological innovation project funded by the ESRC National Centre for Research Methods as part of a strategy for extending the frontiers of qualitative longitudinal research (QLR) (Thomson et al. 2014). The 12-month project involves following two small panels of young people: a group of six 7 year olds, who are part of longitudinal family case studies that began before their birth (Thomson et al. 2009), and a newly convened panel of nine teenagers. Participants are followed intensively over the course of one calendar year, using a range of methods, including: individual and family interviews, observations and self-documentation. The young people in the panels are all from the southeast of England, but in other ways are heterogeneous, selected to capture differences of social class, ethnicity, religion, urban/rural location, dis/ability. The aim of the study is both to experiment with the utility of a range of methods over time so as to build a rich understanding of the interplay of mediated and face-to-face sociality as well as the temporal rhythms that synchronise biographical, cultural and technological change. The research team are attentive to the practical and ethical challenges of digital methods, with questions of privacy and ownership emerging as both methodological provocations and substantive areas of enquiry. Analysis is conducted through the development of individual case histories (Thomson 2007) as well as through a series of analysis workshops where multi-modal data for each wave of fieldwork is shared and interrogated by the research team to identify common themes and insights.

In our initial pilot work with teenagers we explored key questions relevant to the study including outlining typical daily routines, including face-to-face and mediated communications, enquiring as to how they would feel about sharing online and offline activity with a researcher and exploring the kinds of self-documentation that they may already engage in. These pilot interviews, proposed as a way of us feeling our way into fieldwork, were highly generative revealing an elaborated ethical code and language for thinking about privacy and mediating boundaries. The model presented in this paper is informed by an initial analysis of data from our panel of teenagers, and seeks to make sense of the diversity of their practices and emotional investments in social media as well as the ways in which they spoke about this practice, revealing distinct moral discourses linked to peer negotiations and parental/institutional governance.

Similar to Ito et al.'s work of identifying 'genres of participation' in young people's media use (2010, 14), we have mapped a landscape of media practices along different axis of participation and value. However, in contrast with Ito et al.'s more descriptive typology of young people's media practices, we have sought to elaborate an analytic model that explores both the different kinds of reported *practices* that young people engage in as well as the *emotional investments* associated with this activity. In this way we were also able to pay attention to some of the underlying issues that gave rise to worry, pleasure, excitement and dread. In attempting to make sense of what we heard from a small, diverse yet far from representative group we have created an analytic model that plots these practices and feelings along two axes, representing on the one hand a continuum of participation and on the other a continuum of in/visibility. Following the work of Chase and Levenson we have characterised the map as 'moral', suggesting that these practices are contested because they are mechanisms through which private life can be known, giving rise to debate about appropriate and inappropriate conduct and revealing broader formations of authority and sentiment.

Here we introduce the model (see figure 1), mapping within it a set of practices and characterising four quadrants, distinguished by the kinds of ‘spectacles of intimacy’ that are realised or imagined in the accounts of different young people interviewed, and which may themselves represent different cultural positions that young people may inhabit or move between over time. The quadrants include (in clockwise order) high participation/ low visibility (personified by the figure of ‘the geek’), high participation/ high visibility (personified by ‘the internet celeb’), low participation/ high visibility (personified by ‘the victim/incompetent’), and low participation/ low visibility (personified by ‘the fan/lurker’). Like young people’s media worlds, the model is highly contingent and ‘works’ for a moment in time and within a particular social and geographical location – yet we hope provides a way into thinking through the spectacles of intimacy involved.

Visibility Axis: The horizontal axis of this diagram relates to a young person’s *degree* of visibility via digital media. In a recent paper on the transformation of online/offline identities, Miller (2013b) describes how we have witnessed a shift from mediated environments where anonymity was the norm (e.g. chat rooms), to one in which we are increasingly expected to share and display information about ourselves (e.g. Facebook). Though by no means a hard and fast rule, *opacity* and ‘presentation of the self’ are emerging as new norms for mediated social interactions. The latest social media trends adopted by young people have also increasingly placed ‘visibility of the self’ as their central logic. From Instagram and the ‘selfie’, to the ephemeral Snapchat and YouTube vlogging – young people’s media practices are increasingly visually-orientated, with ‘the self’ and the body framed firmly at their centre. Consequently, this axis of the diagram explores how young people’s media practices shape the degree of a young person’s visibility (or invisibility). The axis of visibility also ties into debates around privacy, with increased visibility leading to fresh concerns around young people’s online exposure and concerns that they are ‘broadcasting’ themselves. Our discussion focuses on how and in what ways young people reflect on their own visibility and the significance of local and more abstract or imagined audiences, including how they weigh the risks and opportunities of increased visibility, and how visibility and invisibility may not always be voluntary choices.

Participation Axis: The vertical axis of this diagram relates to the *forms* of media participation undertaken by young people. This axis does not separate between ‘more’ or ‘less’ active forms of participation, but rather delineates between different participatory modes of ‘production’ and ‘consumption’, treating both as implicated in the creation and generation of value. At the top of the end of the scale we have those young people who seek to position themselves as producers of content or attempt to harness the value of themselves *as content* (e.g. vloggers). At this end of the scale, value and success are defined through the cultivation of audiences and the measurement of viewing figures. The pinnacle of this scale is characterised by young people as a form of celebrity status, such as YouTube stars. At the reverse end of the scale we have those young people who primarily identify as content consumers and who largely participate in the tagging, curating, sharing, following and liking of content created by others (both media corporations and other young people). Though these young people are not directly involved in the *production of content*, they are still heavily implicated in the *production of value* – circulating and sharing, and ranking and arranging, content generated by others. These are by no means exclusive categories, but rather serve as an indicative scale of how young people’s participation can variously be involved in the creation of value through different modes of production and consumption.

In the rest of this paper we introduce each domain, explaining the practices involved and illustrating with examples drawn from interviews. All these examples are taken from our teenage sample (ages ranging from 11-15), capturing an age-sensitive set of cultural practices. While our sample was highly heterogeneous, the media resources and practices were common across the sample (if expressed in idiosyncratic ways) and firmly distinct from the media practices of our panel of 7-8 year olds.

1. Low participation/ High visibility: 'The incompetent/victim'

This domain embodies the alarming side of social media – the creation and display of intimate material and the loss of control of this material resulting in personal exposure and shame. Examples within this domain make up the very spectacles of intimacy that characterise much public debate in this area such as sexting and cyberbullying – with material shared in moments of intimacy then revealed to wider, unsympathetic audiences. A key issue arising from this domain is the absence of consent, with material extracted and exchanged under false premises, epitomised by 'fraping' where a person's online identity is hijacked without their permission. Less extreme but also frustrating is the experience of being tagged in photographs and the creation of a digital footprint through the activities of others. This domain reveals the impossibility of non-participation – that one does not have to create an online persona, it is something that can be created by others. Activity in this domain also reveals the creation or extraction of value within the overall 'attention economy' of participation/visibility. The self and the body are sources of value, which in turn can be objectified and circulated by others. In research on sexting Ringrose et al. (2013) write about the affordances of 'persistence, manipulation and uncertain audiences' associated with the combination of camera and social media technologies (2013, 312). When circulated in a peer group a sexualised image becomes a cipher for sexual reputation – potentially an intimate gesture consensually shared, but also potentially dangerous exposing her to judgement and ridicule through practices of rating and boasting – giving rise to questions such as 'why are the images valuable, who can they create value for and who can they devalue?' (2013, 309).

The imaginary occupant of this quadrant is an object figure: incompetent – a digital media user without the knowledge to make themselves safe – and a victim of those who persuade or trick them into sharing intimate information. This is the territory imagined by e-safety logics (grooming, bullying and exploitation), with young people encouraged to be wary about sharing information, incited to be vigilant about privacy settings and circumspect about digital footprints. As Marwick and boyd (2014) observe, young people avoid locating themselves within such discourse of victimhood, eliding the significance of painful encounters with cautionary tales of others. In our project Claire voiced some of the concerns in response to a question as to whether she posted any material on the social media platform 'Vine':

No, I just watch, because... I think. I usually do something and I think I'm really cool, and then I'll look back and think 'that's really stupid'. So I try not to post too much online, in case I regret it. We always get shown that cyberbullying stuff can affect you later in life – if you bully or get bullied [...] They showed this job interview where a person went for a job, and they looked them up online and found all these things about them, that they'd done to this person who was really innocent. And they said "you're not getting the job because you're a really horrible person, and you have bad people skills". So I try not to post too much.

Claire distinguishes herself from others who 'tend to put themselves out there'. She explains:

'I don't post much. I'm mainly tagged in things. I think it would be a bit embarrassing, because there are things like, where my friends... well not my friends, but people... they swear or whatever. It's mainly ok, but there's just... some embarrassing photos of me that I've been tagged in. Nothing too bad. If it was just my wall. If it was my news feed there would be a lot of stuff, but that's not to do with me.'

So although Claire is neither an 'incompetent' nor a 'victim' her overall social media profile is informed by the dangers of being visible, encouraging a circumspect relationship with social media.

2. Low visibility and low participation: The fan or lurker

This quadrant is largely characterised by more cautious practices of limiting online visibility and avoiding uninvited and unwanted public attention. This can be an active choice, with some young people expressing a desire to avoid the potential risks of a more public online presence and audience. However young people might seek wider audiences and publics, but find that their online presence draws little attention and remains largely unnoticed. In this latter case invisibility is not a voluntary choice, but the inability to secure and cultivate a public audience. For the most part, media participation in this group consists of activities that deliberately avoid exposure to wider public attention. By commenting, following, liking and re-posting, these young people consume content posted by others, but rarely contribute any substantial content about themselves. This is not to say that they do not participate in the creation and production of value. On the contrary, their attention and promotion of content is highly valued and sought after by both corporate and amateur media producers.

In the course of our discussions with young people we have met many who might be located within this category. For the present example we will focus on just one person. Aliyah, a 14-year-old girl from a Muslim background, is largely a cautious social media user. She tends to avoid using her Facebook account and characterises her social media practices as follows:

Facebook is for school [...] I don't really go on it 'cos it's really boring now [...] usually school fights happen through Facebook and stuff like that

Instead, she opts for more private forms of mediated communication with her close group of school friends – using the phone messenger application 'WhatsApp' as a way to arrange meet-ups and to share news and gossip. Over the past year she has also increasingly used Twitter as one of her main social media platforms, using it to keep up-to-date with news about celebrities and popular music artists. As massive fans of the boy band Union J, Aliyah and her friends keenly follow the band members' various social media accounts. Aliyah watches out for breaking updates from the band so that she can either be the first to share it with her friends via WhatsApp or re-tweet it to her Twitter followers.

Aliyah's media practices largely attempt to avoid making her too publicly visible. By maintaining a cautious distance from Facebook she seeks to avoid becoming embroiled in public conflicts amongst her school peers. The more private channel of WhatsApp provides an intimate and secure space amongst trusted peers between whom there is an implicit trust that conversations are private and are not for wider circulation. On the social network Twitter Aliyah is largely a 'lurker' – primarily re-circulating Tweets shared by others, rather than posting her own. Within her particular group of friends, Twitter also provides an important means of 'stalking' celebrities. As Aliyah describes:

This new British Band came out, and we all kind of stalked them.

Q: What does stalk mean?

Like look at what they Tweet, so my friends are going to [airport] today 'cos they found out the band are coming home, they're coming back from some other country they went to. So they're coming back and they're going to stalk them.

For Aliyah and her friends, being a successful researcher, or 'stalker', of others' digital footprints has become a highly valued skill and practice. Stalking offers a playful means of keeping track of their favourite band and occasionally provides the opportunity to engineer face-to-face encounters in offline public spaces. Aliyah has yet to join her friends on one of these trips but eventually hopes to do so. For now she derives pleasure from the anonymity afforded by Twitter whilst 'stalking' her favourite bands, maintaining a wary distance from the more public visibility courted by those e-celebs that she devotedly follows.

3. Low visibility and high participation: 'The geek'

This quadrant is configured by the coincidence of low visibility and high participation, characterised by a number of practices that involve the creation and sharing of original content that do not rely on or reveal the identity of the creator. Examples reported to us include a range of strategies for narrating or voicing over extant material including 'let's play' short films that capture live gameplay and the narration of the player/s; animations that are played over audio recordings; home-made music and accompanying videos. Although closely associated with a boy subculture of gaming, we found girls were also engaged in these kinds of practices, creating YouTube content, animations and fan fiction. What is distinctive about these active social media users was the entrepreneurial character of their practice, with 'play' re-envisioned as a form of economically rewarding work. By gaining an audience young people are aware that they *could* capture advertising and corporate sponsorship. The dream is to 'go viral' establishing a career as a YouTuber or cultural creator. In the face of a need to build a credible professional identity as well as the necessity of taking risks in the kinds of content created, young people are aware of the need to make careful decisions as to how much they reveal about themselves and seek comfort in forms of display that maintain anonymity. This is performed at many levels but includes the use of ambiguous screen names, a shying away from photographs of the self, and pleasure in the creation and exploration of false identities and disguise. Andrew, a 15-year-old white middle class boy explains that he communicates with friends via Facebook, but by posting content on his own YouTube channel he is able to 'communicate with people I don't personally know [...] Some friends subscribe, others are from forums I use, some are just random people with the same interest in games'. When asked whether he ever records himself he replies:

Not so much myself. Haven't ever recorded myself and posted it on YouTube. I'm a little shy and have confidence issues – I don't think I'd be good talking to a camera [...] Some YouTubers can talk off the top of their head. Mainly I do videos on games, animations, music. I make some music for YouTube. It's just public, unlike Facebook with privacy settings. [...] It depends how much content you put with yourself in it. If you do a lot of videos recording your self and your face, people would recognise you in the street. That's if you have a big enough following. If, like me, you have about 86 subscribers, and without your face in videos, it's unlikely many people would know who you are. So you can take some precautions to keep private on YouTube, even though it's public.

As a serious gamer and a would-be musician and video maker, Andrew feels he must try and be noticed by making his content visible to the corporate players of the internet. For example he tells us that he posts pictures to a company's profile page who might 'respond if it gets enough interest. People can like comments and those with the most go to the top of the page. It's a good way to ask big companies a question.' Making your content open to evaluation is also risky, as negative comments are visible and permanent records of failure. Added to this the difficulty of distinguishing local and abstract audiences creates the potential for a 'spectacle of intimacy' in which schoolboy and professional identities spoil each other:

YouTube is public, but I get embarrassed showing people stuff I'd made. You create content which you're happy for people you don't know seeing. They come up to you and say 'why did you do this' and criticise what you've posted. But it's different with people you know. They can say 'I don't like this, it isn't good'. I try to post quality stuff, but people might not see it that way. With people I don't know I think 'are they being serious?' You can get the type of person who says 'this is terrible' but not say why. [...] More often people are rude, especially if it's serious stuff. If you're not careful you can get negative comments. If it's bad enough [the comment], you can get their YouTube account suspended. Or people can down vote it and mark it as spam. So technically it's public, anyone can see your YouTube.

The logics associated with this quadrant are of the cultural entrepreneur: creating content and carefully building audience and reputation. There is a high level of control attempted, yet the problems of context collapse associated with public platforms such as YouTube create many challenges and ethical complexities. The adoption of alter egos and pseudonyms appears to be a protective strategy allowing the risk-taking that is necessary for creativity while also developing a recognisable brand and audience. We found young people operating within the quadrant could experience high levels of anxiety and fear of ridicule as well as spending enormous amounts of time cultivating their online projects to the extent that local and face-to-face worlds could suffer and parents might step in to limit what was framed as obsessive or addictive behaviour. Indeed, such intensive investments of time and labour might already begin to mirror the precarious conditions faced by those media professionals seeking to make a living in the creative economy (see Campbell 2013; Gill & Pratt 2008; McRobbie 2011). Nevertheless, despite the costs involved, young people seriously engaged as producers of popular content were admired by others suggesting the ascendancy of the producer identity over that of consumer in young people's values.

4. High visibility and high participation: The internet celeb

The fourth quadrant is characterised by activities that demand high levels of visibility and participation. The quintessential member of this category at present is the 'YouTuber', who gains a degree of e-celebrity status through their video blogging activities. In the case of YouTube, high visibility is realised through visual exposure in front of a camera (Miller & Sinanan 2014). In contrast with the media producers described above, the young people in this group seek to gain notoriety through the cultivation of 'self as content'. Whether describing their daily lives and relationships, performing sketches or pranks, or reviewing media and products, vloggers aspire towards the generation and cultivation of a loyal audience. In order to achieve e-fame, a trade-off has to be made in which the security of anonymity is surrendered for the opportunity to be seen and heard by others. For this group, the value of their activities emerges not at the moment of production but rather accumulates through the attention of their audience.

Though none of the young people in our study could be regarded as achieving high levels of attention in their content production, many of them discussed and idolised those YouTubers and Tweeters who had achieved e-celebrity. Fourteen-year-old Abi, an avid YouTuber viewer, has started to run her own channel with a friend and spoke knowledgeably and enthusiastically about the world of YouTubers:

There's this thing on YouTube, like YouTubers, there's loads of them and *that's their job, they just get paid to make videos*, all these skits and things... some do pranks, some do advice, some do things about their life

For Abi, the potential to transform a hobby or interest into a viable 'career' is the ultimate reward of being a successful YouTuber. Here the term 'playbour' (an amalgamation of play and labour) (Kücklich 2005) seems particularly apt as a way of describing the transformation of something that starts out as 'just for fun' into something that can generate economic value. For many, however, this remains a pipe dream and the likelihood of attracting the attention of a wider audience remains slim. As such this group of young media users also represents an aspirational category in which becoming a successful YouTuber is the new dream profession of working/not working. As Abi describes of one particular YouTuber:

he is like a professional so they're really lucky because they don't have to get up and go to work [...] So now everybody wants to be a YouTuber because it's a super easy job, but you get paid really well

Though Abi reveres the success of certain YouTubers, she also remains cautious of the potential risk arising from greater audience exposure. When asked about potential negative comments and 'trolling' from viewers, Abi presented a blunt ethical position that to upload a video is to invite all types of audience exposure:

I think when people are being mean on YouTube it's kind of like, you shouldn't have uploaded the video then

In regards to her own channel, set up with her friend, she describes how:

me and my friend's channel, no one watches it, which I don't mind because then no one's being mean!

Although we find celebration of the possible benefits that might arise from becoming a famed YouTuber, there is little sympathy for the forms of negative exposure that you might open yourself up to. The trade-off of anonymity is one that must be carefully weighed, with the onus for weighing risk placed firmly on the individual.

A cultural economy of spectacle

Touring these four quadrants of our model captures a moment in time of the UK teenage media landscape, a common-culture, where the affordances and logics associated with different applications are realised in different ways, yet fall into recognisable patterns when mapped against axes of visibility and participation. Our choice of these axes was informed by the emotional investments of our young informants – these were the themes that they stressed in their accounts and which made sense of their practices. Yet in mapping practices against these axes we were struck by the relative (un)inhabitability of the different quadrants and the kinds of reputational and physical risks associated with them. Many of these figures form part of a cultural imaginary embedded with distinct modes of value that label them as either figures to be celebrated or derided. Similarities may be drawn here with Tyler and Bennett's (2010)

discussions of the productivity of 'celebrity chavs', moral figures operating as 'a key vehicle through which value is distributed in public culture, and... instrumental in practices of distinction-making between individuals and groups in everyday life' (389).

In our model, quadrant 1 is, in identity terms, uninhabitable: a space of bullying, exploitation and humiliation. It is also an implicitly gendered space, showcasing the extraction of value from the circulation of sexualised images, and a space into which the unsuccessful would-be e-celebrity can fall in the face of failure to establish an audience beyond the local network of those who control sexual reputations. If we reflect on why so much attention is given to this space and the consequences of this we can understand it as a site of moral warnings for new players or for 'fallen' e-celebs. In a 21st century 'moral map' this is the land of the lost that is a warning to all but especially perilous to young women who not only risk professional reputations in the future but also sexual reputations in the here and now. Many of the practices of invisibility adopted in quadrant 2 can be understood as responses to the dangerous spectacles of intimacy represented by quadrant 1 and amplified in the popular media and e-safety discourses. Yet interestingly we also learn how young people are experimenting with and enjoying invisibility – something striking in a commercial context where personalisation and revelation are incited. Practices such as the 'stalking' of e-celebrities involve realising the potential of group identities such as the 'fan' and the 'swarm', while connecting offline adventure (meeting with other fans, travelling to 'witness' celebrity) with the development of online community and the power of collaborative research. Quadrant 3 represents some kind of moral high ground – defined by controlled display and public creative risk-taking, anticipating the future while attempting to enjoy the present. This may be a destination point in a developmental journey or an aspirational figure facilitating induction into a new economy of content creation and circulation. Unlike the e-celebrity of quadrant 4, the geek does not risk a public downfall into the land of the lost, but rather the kinds of risk that Livingstone et al. associate with the 'digitally confident or sensation-seeker'. In terms of their practice most of the young people we spoke to were on the left hand side of the figure, and moved between quadrants 2 and 3. Yet all knew about quadrants 1 and 4 with the dream job of e-celeb and the perils of a spoiled identity powerfully linked in the cultural imaginary.

Our model is a heuristic device that captures the moral landscape of contemporary teenagers in a tradition of moral maps that encapsulate, represent and mediate moral uncertainty in changing times. It may be best understood as outlining a developmental journey, from the dangers of entry into social media through to strategies for making social media work for you (Robards 2012). Within this landscape young people are driven by a dual emotional imperative: seeking to navigate between the potential emotional pleasures derived through praise and recognition, whilst simultaneously attempting to avoid the anxiety and distress of being exposed to criticism and derision. The map has an underlying political economy, sorting and distinguishing the ways in which value is extracted, circulated and harvested. Consistent with Tyler's account of the operation of social abjection to the politics of neoliberalism we see the centrality of states of exclusion to the imaginary (with associated figures of ridicule or pity) and hints of how these forms of abjection may be 'resisted and recuperated in forms of counter-political speech' (2013, 5). Perhaps most clearly, the map shows the analytic salience of the axes of visibility and participation – both deeply ambiguous terms in their own right, giving rise to contested hierarchies and new analytic strategies for moving beyond binaries of active production and passive consumption (Carpentier 2011). That 'spectacles of intimacy' can be

generative gives insight into the tangled relationship between publicity and the generation and destruction of value. Our analysis suggests we are inevitably required to risk our privacy, yet this risk need not be privatised nor must it rely on or trade in abjection. Young people are constantly experimenting and realising the affordances of social media, combining these creatively with face-to-face socialities, and trading off visibility and participation. This is an arena that deserves attention and critical reflection as a site of politics as well as play, and as a starting point for a new kind of public engagement beyond 'e-safety'.

Acknowledgments: This work was supported by the ESRC's National Centre for Research Methods Methodological Innovation Project Scheme:

<http://www.ncrm.ac.uk/research/MIP/face2face.php>

References

boyd, d. 2014. *It's Complicated: The Social Lives of Networked Teens*. Yale: Yale University Press.

Byron, T. 2008. *Safer Children in a Digital World: The Report of the Byron Review*. The UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS). Available at:

<http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/7332/1/Final%20Report%20Bookmarked.pdf>

Campbell, M. 2013. *Out of the Basement: Youth Cultural Production in Practice and in Policy*. Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press

Carpentier, N. (2011) "The concept of participation. If they have access and interact, do they really participate? *CM, Communication Management Quarterly*, 21: 13-36. [Available online at:

<http://www.cost-transforming-audiences.eu/system/files/pub/CM21-SE-Web.pdf>]

Chase, K., and M. Levenson. 2000. *The Spectacle of Intimacy: A Public Life for the Victorian Family*. Princeton, NJ.: Princeton University Press.

Gill, R., and A. Pratt. 2008. "In the Social Factory?: Immaterial Labour, Precariousness and Cultural Work". *Theory, Culture & Society*, 25(7-8), 1-30.

Habermas, J. 1989. *The Structural Transformation of the Private Sphere: An Enquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*. (Trans. Thomas Burger). Cambridge, MA.: MIT Press.

Hope, A. 2014. "Schoolchildren, Governmentality and National E-safety Policy Discourse". *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 36(4), 1-11.

James, A., & A. James. 2008. "Changing Childhood in the UK: Reconstructing Discourses of 'Risk' and 'Protection'". In *European Childhoods: Cultures, Politics and Childhoods in Europe*, edited by A. James and A. James. Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan.

Kücklich, J. 2005. "Precarious Playbour: Modders and the Digital Games Industry". *The Fibreculture Journal*, 5. Available at: <http://five.fibreculturejournal.org/fcj-025-precarius-playbour-modders-and-the-digital-games-industry/>

Lincoln, S. 2012. *Youth Culture and Private Space*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Livingstone, S. 2008. "Taking Risky Opportunities in Youthful Content Creation: Teenagers' Use of Social Networking Sites for Intimacy, Privacy and Self-expression". *New Media & Society*, 15(8), 393-411.

Livingstone, S., and E. Helsper. 2013. "Children, Internet and Risk in Comparative Perspective". *Journal of Children and Media*, 7(1), pp. 1-8.

Marwick, A., D. Murgia-Diaz, and J. G. Palfrey. 2010. *Youth, Privacy and Reputation: Literature Review*. The Berkman Centre for Internet and Society at Harvard University: Harvard University. Available at: http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1588163

Marwick, A., and d. boyd. 2014. "'It's Just a Drama': Teen Perspectives on Conflict and Aggression in a Networked Era", *Journal of Youth Studies*, DOI: 10.1080/13676261.2014.901493

McRobbie, A. 2011. "Re-thinking Creative Economy as Radical Social Enterprise". *Variant*, 41, 32-33.

Miller, D. 2011. *Tales from Facebook*, Cambridge: Polity Press

Miller, D. 2013a. "What will we Learn from the Fall of Facebook?" 24 November. *UCL Social Networking Sites & Social Science Research Project Blog*. Available at: <http://blogs.ucl.ac.uk/social-networking/2013/11/24/what-will-we-learn-from-the-fall-of-facebook/>

Miller, D. 2013b. *Future Identities: Changing Identities in the UK – The Next 10 Years*. Government Office for Science.

Miller, D., and J. Sinanan. 2014. *Webcam*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Miller, P. and N. Rose. (2011). *Governing the Present: Administering Economic, Social and Personal Life*. Cambridge: Polity.

Nippert-Eng, C. E. 2010. *Islands of Privacy*. Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press.

Nissenbaum, H. 2010. *Privacy in Context: Technology, Policy and the Integrity of Social Life*. Stanford, CA.: Stanford University Press.

Pateman, C. (1988) *The Sexual Contract*, Cambridge: Polity Press.

Ringrose, J., L. Harvey, R. Gill, and S. Livingstone. 2013. "Teen Girls, Sexual Double Standards and 'Sexting': Gendered Value in Digital Image Exchange". *Feminist Theory*, 14(3), 305-323.

Robards, B. 2010. "Randoms in my bedroom: Negotiating privacy and unsolicited contact on social network sites", *Prism*, Volume 7: 1-12

Robards, B. 2012. "Leaving MySpace, joining Facebook: 'Growing up' on social network sites", *Continuum*, Vol 26: 385-398

Rose, N. 1999. *Governing the Soul: The Shaping of the Private Self*. London: Routledge.

Skeggs, B. 2009 "The moral economy of person production: the class relations of self-performance on 'reality' television" *Sociological Review* Volume 57, Issue 4: 626-644

- Thompson, J. B. 2011. "The shifting boundaries of public and private life". *Theory, Culture & Society*, 28(4), pp. 49-70.
- Thomson, M. 2013. *Lost freedom: the landscape of the child and the British post-war settlement*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Thomson, R. (2007) "The qualitative longitudinal case history: practical, methodological and ethical reflections" *Social Policy and Society*, 6(4): 571-582
- Thomson, R., M. J. Kehily, L. Hadfield, and S. Sharpe. 2011. *Making Modern Mothers*. Bristol: Policy Press.
- Thomson, R., L. Hadfield, J. Holland, K. Henwood, N. Moore, L. Stanley, and R. Taylor. 2014. *New frontiers in QLR: definition, design and display*. Technical Report. NCRM. <http://eprints.ncrm.ac.uk/3297/>
- Tyler, I. 2013. *Revolted Subjects: Social Abjection and Resistance in Neoliberal Britain*. London: Zed Books.
- Tyler, I., and B. Bennett. 2010. "'Celebrity Chav': Fame, Femininity and Social Class". *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 13(3), pp. 375-393.
- Valentine, G. 1996. "Children should be Seen and Not Heard: The Production and Transgression of Adult's Public Space". *Urban Geographies*, 17(2).
- Valentino-Devries, J. 2010. "Do Young People Care About Privacy Online?". 19 April. *The Wall Street Journal* [online]. Available at: <http://blogs.wsj.com/digits/2010/04/19/do-young-people-care-about-privacy-online/>
- Warner, M. 2005. *Publics and Counterpublics*. New York: Zone Books.