THE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE BEEN

TECHNOLOGICALLY STALKED BY A PAST INTIMATE:

A HERMENEUTIC PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY THROUGH A

COMMUNICATION PRIVACY MANANGEMENT THEORY LENS

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A Dissertation

Presented to

The Faculty of the Graduate School

At the University of Missouri

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In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

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By

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DECEMBER 2013

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THE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE BEEN

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A candidate for the degree of

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And hereby certify that, in their opinion, it is worthy of acceptance.

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Dr. Christine Proulx

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my son, Dustin G. Powers,

and my partner, Christopher M. Hess.

You are the two of the most patient men in the world who never let me give up.

I love you!

This dissertation is also dedicated to the victims in this study who shared their harrowing

narratives and showed remarkable resilience under tremendous circumstances.

"Justice will be done."

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There are many individuals who guided, helped, and counseled me during the process of making this dream a reality.

First, I am grateful to my superb and patient advisors, Dr. Colin Hesse and Dr. Colleen Colaner. Dr. Hesse, thank you for believing in this project from its inception, holding me to my deadlines, and the insistence on checking my grammar and spelling. Dr. Colaner, thank you for agreeing to take me on, helping me to solidify my ideas, and talking me down from the ledge on so many occasions. Your support during my darkest hours gave me the courage to fight for myself and the victims.

Thank you to Dr. Rebecca Meisenbach for making me feel like my brain grew every time I talked to you. I have enjoyed thoroughly every interaction with you and every challenge you have presented to me. Thank you to Dr. Christine Proulx for stepping in during dissertation process and providing valuable advice and insight into my study. I am humbled by your generosity.

A very special thank you to Dr. Loreen Olson. Although not an "official" member of my final dissertation committee, you have always been there for me professionally and personally. Your faith in me has never wavered. I am a better person and scholar for having you in my life. The lessons you have taught me, I will cherish forever.

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ABSTRACT

According to the 2006 Supplemental Victimization Survey, over half of the estimated 1.7 million technological stalking victims in the United States have had a previous intimate relationship with the aggressor (Baum et al., 2009). Despite growing evidence that this crime is growing in scope and severity, researchers know very little about this phenomenon. Therefore, this current hermeneutic phenomenological study examines the lived experiences of individuals who have been technologically stalked by a past intimate. A Communication Privacy Management Theory lens is used to investigate the participants' narratives for privacy boundary modifications following relational dissolution, but prior to technological stalking, incidents of privacy violations during technological stalking, and reports coping mechanisms used following privacy boundary turbulence. The results indicate (a) victims report contextual factors, such as contact with the aggressor and abuses enacted during the intimate relationship, as key reasons for modifying privacy boundaries with their past partners, (b) aggressors use data-transmission devices in order to commit privacy violations (c) victims' attempts to cope with boundary turbulence are often frustrated by the aggressor, as well as by third parties.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALES

Introduction

U.S. Federal statutes identify the use of electronic devices through repetitive

actions that cause emotional distress or reasonable fear by threatening , harassing,

intimidating, or monitoring as the illegal activity known as cyberstalking (18 USCS §

115; 47 U.S.C. §223). Since the institution of this law in 1999, evidence suggests this

crime is growing in size and scope as new technologies emerge (Spitzberg & Hoobler,

2002). New technologies, such as "smart" phones with data transmission capabilities are

able to disseminate videos to a mass audience and to track the location of a target.

According to Baum, Catalano, and Rand (2009), the 2006 Supplemental Victimization

Survey (SVS) reported over 25% of the estimated 3.4 million stalking victims had stated

that the perpetrator used some form of technology capable of data transmission such as

email, mobile phones, instant messages, blogs, websites, computer spyware, and global

positioning systems (GPS). Within this population, 52.7% of all stalking victims had a

previous intimate relationship with the aggressor, such as a current or past intimate, a

friend or acquaintance, a co-worker or a family member (Baum et al., 2009). For

example, after a college student in Texas broke off her engagement, she received

hundreds of email messages that grew so violent that the woman sought help from the

FBI (Schiller, 2011). Unfortunately, this victim is not alone.

The Supplemental Victimization Survey reported each year an estimated 25,000

American adults are stalked by a past intimate with global-positioning systems (GPS) that

allow one individual to track another via mobile phone or stand-alone device (Baum et

al., 2009; Scheck, 2010). For example, in 2010, Andre Leteve used the GPS built into his wife's mobile phone to locate her before he murdered their two children and fatally shot himself. On the other hand, William Woods purchased a stand-alone GPS device at a chain retail store and attached the device to his ex-wife's vehicle. Through the GPS device, Woods was able to track his former spouse's whereabouts and to learn of her new address. Despite a court order to stay away from his ex-wife, Woods continued to stalk and harass his former spouse for months (Mann, 2012).

Mobile and land line phones also are data transmission devices used to torment a former intimate. Specifically, these devices are used to excessively communicate with one's former partner. For example, two days after a man from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania had been arrested for breaking and entering into his ex-girlfriend's home, he sent 62 text messages within an 8-hour period that contained threats of violence against the woman and her father (Gibbons, 2012). Similarly, a Plainfield Township, PA newspaper reported Tyler J. Leighton was arrested for excessively texting his ex-girlfriend. According to the news source, Leighton sent his victim over 500 text messages in a 24-hour period following a breakup (Tobias, 2013). According to Tobias, even after Leighton had threatened suicide and was being transported to the hospital for treatment, he continued to text his former intimate to plead for a second chance.

Statement of the Problem

The examples and statistics above provide evidence of the most recent type of interpersonal violence known as *cyberstalking* enacted by a past intimate. Specifically, the exemplars demonstrate how recent technological advances in data transmission devices have made the infliction of harm on a loved one as simple as pushing a few

buttons. Although in the cases presented above all the individuals had had an intimate relationship with the victims, legally a previous bond with the aggressor is not a prerequisite to be charged with cyberstalking.

At the broadest level, cyberstalking is defined within state and federal statutes as "the use of the Internet, e-mail and other electronic communication devices to stalk another person" (US Attorney General Report, 1999). Within the extant academic literature, the term cyberstalking often is used interchangeably with cyber-harassment, cyber-abuse, technological stalking, and stalking with technology. Yet, this lack of agreement about terminology among scholars has often led to disparate findings and over generalized results. For example, some studies only focus on harassing or stalking internet activities (i.e., Finkelhor, Mitchell, & Wolak, 2000; Jerin & Dolinsky, 2001), whereas others cast a broader net and include all electronic and data transmission devices (McFarlane & Bocij, 2003).

An additional concern for researchers is whether stalking is a subset of harassment or if stalking is a more severe form of harassment. For example, the U. S. Merit Systems Protection Board includes stalking as a form of workplace sexual harassment and workplace violence (1995, 2012). On the other hand, the extant stalking literature argues stalking is separated from other less severe harassing behaviors due to the repetitive and unwanted contact between the aggressor and the victim (i.e., Nicastro, Cousins, & Spitzberg, 2000; Spitzberg & Hoobler, 2002). For example, enacted harassment behaviors may be merely annoying, frustrating, aggravating, a nuisance, or otherwise undesirable, but does not fulfill the legal requirement of fear-inducement as

required by law. Yet, Cupach and Spitzberg (2000) have found even relatively low levels of harassing behaviors are often viewed as at least mildly threatening.

Therefore, for the purposes of consistency and clarity, this current study uses the term *technological stalking* to demonstrate the wide range of stalking activities that utilize data transmission devices in order to stalk and harass an ex-intimate. These activities might include making excessive telephone calls, sending excessive emails or text messages, creating fake on-line profiles, as well as posting, disseminating and accessing private information about the target with the use of data transmission devices. On the other hand, the term *traditional stalking* will be used in this current study to refer to stalking activities that do not utilize data transmission devices, such as leaving letters and gifts for the victim, driving by their home or workplace, and showing up at the location of the victim. Yet, as we will see often traditional stalking may also occur in instances in conjunction with technological stalking.

National statistics of technological stalking reveal this crime is committed by individuals with whom one has had an existing relationship with the victim and occurs with frightening frequency. According to the 2009 National Crime Victimization Study, 82.6% of all stalking targets in the United States are victimized through email, 66.2% received unwanted calls as well as text and voicemail messages (Baum et al., 2009; Scheck, 2010). Although these statistics did not examine the type of relationship between the initiator and the target, research has consistently shown that technological harassment and stalking are perpetrated predominately by individuals known to the victim and former intimate partners (e.g., Alexy, Burgess, Baker, & Smoyak, 2005; Finn, 2004; Jerin & Dolinsky, 2001; Mohandie, Meloy, McGowan, & Williams, 2006;

Sheridan & Grant, 2007). As a result, we know technological stalking impacts a large number of victims, yet our understanding of the use of technology to stalk an ex-intimate is limited. Moreover, we do not know if the technological stalking of a past intimate has unique properties, such as if the dissolution of an intimate relationship played a role in one's experience or if the behaviors enacted may be identified as privacy violations. Thus, in order to gain a thorough understanding of the victims' lived experiences, this current study has two overarching goals. The first aim is to examine the management of privacy boundaries following relational dissolution but prior to technological stalking. The second aim is to demonstrate how victims describe the enactment of technological stalking as privacy boundary violations following relational dissolution and explain how victims attempt to manage or cope with boundary turbulence during the aftermath of technological stalking by a past intimate.

This chapter will begin with a brief explanation of technological stalking as a communicative activity. Second, I will offer the following justifications for the specific investigation of past intimates: (a) the need for a theoretical lens to illuminate key aspects of the technological stalking experience of past intimates, (b) the need to examine victims' lived experiences to enhance our knowledge of technological stalking, and (c) the need to examine technological stalking committed by past intimate partners. Finally, I will offer several theoretical and practical implications for this current study. The overviews in this chapter will guide my discussion of the research and theoretical applications made in the next chapter.

This current study focuses on the lived experiences told by the participants. Therefore, before moving forward, I must note that the use of the term victim in reference

to the target of any destructive behavior is somewhat controversial, with many writers preferring the term survivor (Rosenfeld, 2004). The term survivor often is preferred due its positive connotation to one's ability to cope and recover from a trauma (Dunn, 2005). The choice to use target and victim in this paper is in respect to the sad reality that not all victims survive the stalking experience, with the caveat that no negative connotations are intended. Moreover, the term aggressor is used with no judgment of guilt or innocence. Thus, the identifier of aggressor is used to demonstrate the party who allegedly communicated the behaviors classified as technological stalking and technological harassment as reported by the study participants.

Technological Stalking as Communicative Behavior

A variety of disciplines, including nursing, criminal justice, psychology, family studies, and education, have investigated technological stalking, yet this act is inherently communicative. Researchers assert the message is an important element to consider in the study of technological stalking (Alexy et al., 2005, Finn, 2004; Spitzberg & Hoobler, 2002). Specifically, these authors argue that electronic messages that are sexually harassing, insulting, or threatening are at the heart of technological stalking. Ellison and Akdeniz (1998) placed these electronic messages into two discrete categories: direct (sent expressly and privately to the target) and indirect (disseminated public insults, threats, and rumors about the target). Direct messages in technological stalking have included cyberbullying (e.g., Campbell, 2005; Finkelhor, Mitchell, & Wolak, 2000; Goodno, 2007), sending mass emails targeted specifically to a victim (Basu & Jones, 2007; D'Ovidio & Doyle, 2003), and unwanted sexual solicitation and/or relational pursuit by an overly-aggressive suitor or spurned love interest (e.g., Jerin & Dolinsky, 2001; Lee,

1998; Spitzberg & Hoobler, 2002). Indirect harassment messages have also been investigated, although appear less commonly in the academic literature (e.g., Ellison & Akdeniz, 1998; Goodno, 2007; Lyndon, Bonds-Raacke, & Cratty, 2011; Ogilvie, 2000).

One type of indirect electronic harassment is *flaming*. The act of flaming is taunting and name calling in a public internet forum with the intent to embarrass or discredit the victim without directly addressing the target (Willard, 2007). Indirect harassment also includes venting and posting comments about another on websites, such as Facebook, MySpace, and Twitter. Finally, Ellison and Akdeniz (1998) argue that the impersonation of another person online is also a form of indirect harassment. The researchers cite two cases where technological stalkers had assumed the identity of the victim and posted advertisements for sex partners with the targets' contact information. In each of these cases, the target received numerous online and offline replies to the ads that resulted from global dissemination of the victims' private information. Clearly, technological stalkers use a variety of direct and indirect communicative messages to harass in their victims.

Frequency of Messages and Fear-inducing Communications

As stated previously, legal definitions for technological stalking state that communication must be recurring and produce fear in order for an aggressor to be legally prosecuted. Unfortunately, the frequency that one receives messages in order to be judged as technological stalking remains unclear in both the statutes and the extant academic literature. To date, only two technological stalking studies have attempted to examine how often these episodes occur. Finn (2004) sampled 337 undergraduates to ascertain how many times they had received "repeated messages" from a variety of sources. He found approximately 10% to 15% of students reported this type of online

harassment from strangers, an acquaintance, or a significant other at least once. Moreover, 14.1% reported the receipt of harassing e-mail and 13.1% stated they had received instant messages even after they requested of the sender cease and desist. Spitzberg and Hoobler (2002) also found a large number of college students had received unwanted tokens of affection, exaggerated messages of affection, as well as excessively demanding and disclosive communications via technological means more than once. Thus, the authors conclude the use of excessive communication is a hallmark of technological stalking, yet as scholars we still do not have a clear distinction of what denotes "repeated" or "excessive."

Researchers also have asserted the frequency and duration of technological stalking is associated with greater emotional distress and fear (e.g., Blaauw, Winkel, Arensman, Sheridan, & Freeve, 2002; Kamphuis, Emmelkamp, & Bartak, 2003; Mullen, Pathé, & Purcell, 2000). Indeed, in an Australian community sample, Purcell, Pathé, and Mullen (2004) found individuals who fit the legal criteria of stalking (fear and repetition) showed signs of elevated measures of psychological morbidity in as short as two weeks. Although an examination of the various health effects associated with technological stalking is outside of the scope of this current study, we will see how excessive communication may have an impact on the victims and their ability to cope with these instances. Moreover, a deeper understanding of the events that came before the technological stalking occurred, the variety of tactics used by the aggressor, and the attempts made by the victims to end their ordeals will provide researchers, professionals, and other victims are more comprehensive view of the technological stalking by a past intimate.

Rationales for the Current Study

The understanding of technological stalking has been impacted by several factors. First, the work conducted to date has been largely atheoretical. Second, at this point in time, research reveals past intimates are at greater risk for technological stalking but very little is known about the victims' lived experiences. Finally, research has not fully investigated if there are unique properties of the technological stalking by a past intimate. Thus, in the next section, I will explain how this current study will add to our existing knowledge of technological stalking by addressing these issues.

Problem 1: Lack of Theoretically Driven Technological Stalking Research

According to Littlejohn (2002), theory is defined "as any organized set of concepts and explanations about a phenomenon" (p. 19). The use of theory serves three very important functions in the social scientific research process. First, theory aids researchers in the identification of a phenomenon as a whole, as well as any elements that may influence the phenomenon. Second, the incorporation of theory also allows researchers to prospectively predict human behavior or phenomenon. Third, theory permits the researcher to retrospectively explain why the action occurred. Thus, researchers who utilize theory attempt to observe and capture a wide array of human behaviors. This type of inquiry allows researchers to make systematic claims that can be tested through a series of systematic processes. In sum, the research process advances our knowledge of the phenomenon and has the capacity to solve practical problems. Without theory, technological stalking investigations will continue to be disjointed and may limit our understanding of technological stalking.

Scholars have noted the dearth of theoretically driven technological stalking research (Nobles & Fox, 2013; Reyns, Henson, & Fisher, 2011); however one investigation has attempted to demonstrate how researchers might infuse theory into their work. Spitzberg and Cupach (2007a) argued the use of theory may inform our understanding of the associations between online (mis)matchmaking and possible negative consequences such as stalking, obsessional intrusion, and technological stalking within the internet dating environment. The authors offer three theories (relational goal pursuit theory, impression management theory, and socio-evolutionary theory) that may be used to investigate how internet dating may lead to the aforementioned deviant relational behaviors. Specifically, the three theories may explain why deception is used in the online environment to inflict harm. Because the online context affords anonymity, the ability to misrepresent one's self is easier than in a face-to-face context. According to Spitzberg and Cupach, this use of deception also could be used to "facilitate maneuvers to attract a person back to the relationship after an attempted detachment" (p. 140). Because technological stalkers may be able to hide their true identities in order to insinuate themselves into a victim's online and offline social networks, the aggressor may use this tactic in order to access the victim's personal information. Thus, following stifled attempts at the re-initiation of an intimate relationship, the aggressor may use deceptive impression management tactics to lure a target back into the relationship or electronically stalk their victim. To date, Spitzberg and Cupach have not tested their suppositions and thus did not offer any empirical support for their claims. Yet, as stated previously, the inclusion of data is also an essential part of the research process.

Therefore, a study that applies its findings to an existing theoretical framework will greatly enhance our understanding of technological stalking.

Problem 2: Lack of Research about the Victims' Lived Experiences

Presently, there have been no qualitative studies that have explored technological stalking. The use of qualitative methods allows researchers to locate the nuanced detail needed to describe the lived experiences of individuals' first-hand accounts of a phenomenon. Denzin and Lincoln (2005) argue qualitative methods are appropriate to use when a researcher desires to explore "things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them" (p. 3). Although I will be unable to actually observe incidents of technological stalking by past intimates, the narratives provided by the participants in this current study may shed light on this phenomenon and give us keen insight into the victims' experiences. Specifically, we may start to better understand how recent technological advances have made the dissemination of private or co-owned information in order to inflict harm upon one one's past intimate as simple as the click of a mouse or send button and how attempt to manage or cope with these incidents.

The extant research has started to inform our understanding of technological stalking; however the use of in-depth interviews in this current study may enhance our knowledge in two areas. First, we may begin to locate and describe unique properties of technological stalking. For example, Goodno's (2007) investigation of the effectiveness of current state and federal technological stalking laws identified five distinctive characteristics of technological stalking: global dissemination of information and threats, the lack of physical presence needed to carry out threats, the technological stalker's

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ability to remain anonymous, the technological stalker's ability to impersonate the victim, and third-party complicity. Because these qualities have yet to be fully fleshed out within technological stalking studies, an empirical investigation of individuals' lived experiences may demonstrate how victims discursively construct the enactment of technological stalking.

Second, according to Finn (2004, p. 480) the use of phenomenological methods "are needed to better understand the personal experiences of victims, including the psychosocial impact of online harassment or technological stalking, the coping mechanisms used by victims, the decision-making processes related to reporting the events, and the long-term effects of the experience." Currently, research has shown the tremendous physical, psychological, and emotional harms technological stalking has on victims, yet very little is known about the experiences of technological stalking targets. Thus, qualitative inquiry will provide a depth to research that explores how technological stalking impacts victims. Specifically, within this current study, I will explore how individuals attempt to manage their privacy boundaries with their technological stalker following relational dissolution.

Problem 3: Lack of In-depth Examination of Relational Context

The prior relationship between an aggressor and the victim is an important, but often understudied, aspect of the technological stalking experience. Often, the status of one's relationship to their stalker is treated as a testable variable, but has not been examined in-depth. For example, survey research often reports the percentages of victims who have been intimate with their technological stalker (Baum et al., 2009). However, researchers have not explored how these incidents differ from those that were

technologically stalked by an acquaintance or a stranger. Similarly, other reports, such as

Mohandie and colleague's (2006) study of convicted technological and offline stalkers,

show that as many as 50% of all perpetrators have been in an intimate relationship with

the victim but do not discuss any potential differences between populations. Sadly,

national trends show that stalking is most common and dangerous after the termination of

a relationship (e.g., Tjaden & Thoennes, 1998, 2000). It is important to note, however,

within Tjaden and Thoennes national studies, the researchers often do not provide clear

figures of those who have been stalked with and without technology. Although the use of

large sample sizes allows us to understand the size and scope of technological stalking,

these studies do not offer the descriptive detail needed to understand how a past intimate

relationship with an aggressor may influence the enactment of technological stalking.

Thus, the study of technological stalking in the context of past intimates is a gap in the

literature that needs our attention.

The use of devices capable of data transmission has created new opportunities for

individuals who seek to stalk and harass their victims, particularly those who have shared

relational history in which intimate information and details have been disclosed between

partners. As stated previously, past intimates comprise the majority of individuals who

enact technological stalking (e.g., Alexy, Burgess, Baker, & Smoyak, 2005; Baum et al.,

2009; Finn, 2004; Jerin & Dolinsky, 2001; Mohandie, Meloy, McGowan, & Williams,

2006; Sheridan & Grant, 2007). Moreover, evidence from news sources suggests

individuals who technologically stalk their past intimate may use private information as

weapons to wreak havoc (e.g., James, 2008; Patrick, 2012). These cases often involve

private details that were once shared between intimates, but are used at a later date in an

effort to cause humiliation or psychological distress to their former partner. For example, Alex Phillips posted naked pictures of his ex-girlfriend on his MySpace page that he made available to their friends and family (James, 2008). The photos were taken by the victim, but had been shared with Phillips during their relationship. In an eerily similar case, a St. Louis man posted secretly recorded images of him and his ex-wife having sex on the internet. In an act of vengeance and extortion, the aggressor then mailed 150 postcards with the web address of location where the images were able to be viewed as well as personal details about the victim and her children to her colleagues, friends, family and a local drugstore (Patrick, 2012). Although these cases may seem like anecdotal evidence, they also demonstrate how the disseminations of once co-owned private information between couples are no longer isolated incidents.

Empirical evidence suggests former intimates use websites, blogs, and social network sites to vent their frustrations about the victim (Goodno, 2007; Lyndon, Bonds-Raacke, & Cratty, 2011; Ogilvie, 2000; Paullet, Rota, & Swan, 2009). Indeed, the high level of personalization in the attacks may be an important feature in the narratives of individuals who have been technologically stalked by a past partner. For example, Lyndon et al. (2011) found over 20% of their 411 participants had taunted their former partner on a social network site and 7.5% reported they had made a nasty or spiteful remark about an ex-partner's photo. In total, 18% stated they had used social networks sites to publicly harass their ex-intimate. Yet, one of the most disturbing results is that individuals who engage in cyber-obsessional pursuit are six times more likely to engage in offline relational intrusion behaviors. In spite of these figures, there is a dearth of

empirical evidence that demonstrates how ex-intimates specifically use technology to instill fear and cause harm to their former partner.

Thus far, I provided several exemplars that demonstrate ex-intimates often have access to private information, such as email addresses, social network pages, and photos, that were shared during the course of one's relationship. These items then may be used as tools to torment a victim after the dissolution of the pair bond. Yet, we still know very little about the impacts of these blatant attacks on one's privacy or how individuals attempt to resolve the destruction of global dissemination of private information. Therefore, a need exists to explore how past partners not only use technology, but also how victims experience, manage, and cope with technological stalking by a former intimate.

Theoretical Application and Extension

As stated previously, there is a dearth of technological stalking research that is theoretically driven. To address this lack of a theoretical grounding, this current study will use Petronio's (2000, 2002) Communication Privacy Management theory to begin illumination of the processes and outcomes involved in technological stalking. This approach will be an initial step towards the synthesis of the literature and provide the findings with stronger theoretical and practical applications. Specifically, I will use of CPM's well-established theoretical lens to illuminate three key areas: (a) the actions or events identified by the victims that led to the renegotiation of privacy boundaries following the dissolution of an intimate relationship (b) the victims' lived experiences of privacy rule violations and (c) the coping mechanisms used by victims during and after incidents of boundary turbulence. The use of Petronio's framework will allow us to

explore how ex-intimate technological stalking occurs through the actual experiences of victims. In addition, because we will focus on the individuals who share relational history and knowledge, we may begin to see how the technological stalking of a past partner differs from stranger technological stalking.

The use of CPM in this current study offers a unique application to the theory in two ways. First, past studies have explored associations between individuals and groups (such as families, intimates, and co-workers) with a vested interest in the maintenance of coordination of privacy boundaries (i.e., Afifi, 2003; Caughlin, Golish, Olson, Sargent, Cook, & Petronio, 2000; Joseph & Afifi, 2010; McBride & Bergen, 2008; McBride & Wahl, 2005). However, currently, studies have not examined how one may attempt to coordinate their privacy boundaries with an individual with whom they do not wish to maintain a relationship. Therefore, this current study may extend CPM to involuntary relationships.

Second, the act of technological stalking is traumatic and may involve violations of privacy rules. For example, when one individual releases or exploits the private information of another person these violations break the privacy rules of disclosure set forth by the pair and require a modification of privacy boundaries. According to Petronio (2002), when privacy rules have been abused, the phenomenon of boundary turbulence ensues. Because boundary turbulence involves the active involvement of individuals to recalibrate their privacy boundaries following a breach, a deeper understanding of how individuals attempt these renegotiations is important. Regrettably, there is a lack of research of this phenomenon. Thus, this current study will attempt to answer Petronio's (2007) call for more investigation of boundary turbulence.

Practical Implications for Researching Technological Stalking

Scholars agree that the goal of technological stalking is to terrorize and to gain control over the victim that may result in a variety of psychological and physical harms (e.g., Ogilive, 2000; Sheridan & Grant, 2007; Spitzberg & Hoobler, 2002). Studies of cyber-harassment have consistently shown repetitive and unsolicited messages can cause undue stress on the target (e.g., D'Ovidio and Doyle, 2003; Finn, 2004; Fisher, Cullen, & Turner, 2000; Meloy et al., 2000; Ogilive, 2000; Sinclair & Frieze, 2000). Unfortunately, despite national and state laws, research has shown there is a common misperception that stalking aided by technology is less dangerous than offline stalking because it may not involve physical contact (Alexy et al., 2005; Lee, 1998; Spitzberg & Hoobler, 2002). Yet, the psychological torment experienced by technological stalking victims is well documented.

The extant literature has found technological stalking can lead to anxiety, and mental anguish (e.g., Bocij, Griffiths, & McFarlane, 2002; Bocij & McFarlane, 2003, Kennedy, 2000; Lamberg, 2002; Mechanic, Uhlmansiek, Weaver, & Resick, 2000; Sheridan & Grant, 2007; Ybarra & Mitchell, 2004). In a 2009 national sample, victims reported their most common fears were: not knowing what would happen next, bodily harm, and the perception that the behavior would never end (Baum et al., 2009). Moreover, the anxiety experienced has been shown to have destructive physical manifestations and emotional impacts.

Somatization is an often reported in individuals who have suffered abusive experiences, including stalking. Somatization has been operationalized as a pattern of physical symptoms for which medical assistance is sought but for which no medical

cause can be identified (Amar, 2006). A 2007 report issued by the National Center for Crime Victims found individuals who had been stalked electronically listed "changes in eating and sleeping patterns, nightmares, hyper-vigilance, anxiety, helplessness, fear, shock, and disbelief" as common occurrences (as cited in Moriarty, 2008, p. 108). Moreover, in the 2009 National Crime Victimization Survey, as opposed to harassment victims, individuals who had been stalked experienced overwhelmingly more feelings of apprehension, fright, vulnerability, and depression. Astonishingly, stalking victims were seven times more likely than harassment victims to report feeling sick (Baum et al., 2009). It is important to note that the national studies above reported aggregate data and did not distinguish between individuals who had been stalked or harassed with or without technology; however; the researchers included measures of technological stalking.

At the time of this writing, only one study has compared the experiences of technological stalking, cross-over stalking, and offline stalking victims. Cross-over stalking occurs when the stalking begins offline and moves to an online context or vice versa. Sheridan and Grant (2007) found no significant differences between the groups in the levels of medical, psychological, financial, and social effects experienced. Their results indicate that these impairments do not occur in isolation. Targets often exhibit multiple symptoms with a variety of negative outcomes.

Taken as a whole, the studies in this section demonstrate technological terrorism can be extremely harmful to one's wellbeing. The effects listed in this section can be long-term or short-term and highlight many of the devastating consequences of technological stalking. Although these studies have been instrumental in our understanding of technological stalking, they reveal little about the influence past

relational knowledge may have on the victim's experience. In light of the psychological and physical destructions inflicted upon victims, researchers must begin to tease out the differences with greater urgency.

This current study represents one initial step towards the identification of the unique aspects of technological stalking by past intimates. In addition to greater understanding of the emotional and physical toll technological stalking takes on victims, this current project may begin to identify methods individuals can utilize during the dissolution of their intimate relationships that may minimize or prevent their likelihood of becoming a technological stalking victim, as well as provide insight of successful and unsuccessful coping strategies. Moreover, this study may offer law enforcement and medical personnel insight into the harms caused by global dissemination of once co-owned private information. Finally, this current study may aid victims by demonstrating the perpetrator's actions are criminal. Past research has shown that often individuals, particularly college students, do not see technological stalking as a serious offense (e.g., Alexy et al, 2005, Lee, 1998). Thus, victims may read the lived experiences within this study and realize they are not alone and understand there is help available.

Conclusion and Preview

The purpose of the current study is to add to our scholarly understanding of technological stalking of past-intimates as articulated by the victims. The overall study of technological stalking remains in its infancy; therefore this chapter has provided several justifications for the importance of this project's intentionally narrow focus. First, I demonstrated the need for theoretically driven research that provides empirical evidence. Specifically, I argued the lack of theoretical grounding in past research has

yielded a fair size of research, but has yet to fully address the communicative processes involved in the technological stalking of an ex-intimate, as well as the responses and coping mechanisms employed by the victims. Second, I looked at how an investigation of victims' lived experiences may enhance our understanding of technological stalking. Third, because these acts are committed most frequently by former intimate partners, I explained why we need to take a closer look at the influence of past relational history. Finally, I offered several theoretical and practical implications for this current study.

In order to achieve this current study's goals, Chapter Two will begin with an overview of Communication Privacy Management theory that will serve as the theoretical grounding of this study. Second, I provide an overview of the literature that demonstrates how relational dissolution may be associated with an increased risk for having negative communicative behavior enacted upon a victim. Third, I examine how the renegotiation of privacy boundaries following the dissolution of an intimate relationship may be necessary. Fourth, I review the extant technological stalking literature. The final section of Chapter Two will explore the research of coping mechanisms used by technological stalking victims. In Chapter Three, I provide a rationale for the use of the interpretative methodology in this present study. In addition, a discussion of the sampling and recruiting procedures followed and description of population studied is provided. The last section in this chapter describes the data analysis process. Chapter 4 includes the results for the current study. Last, Chapter 5 offers a summary of the findings, the theoretical, technological stalking, and practical implications of this current study, as well as the limitations and directions for future research.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Research has consistently shown targets of technological and traditional stalking are individuals who are or have been involved in an intimate relationship, such as prior relational partners, friends, acquaintances, co-workers, and family members (e.g., Amar & Alexy, 2007; Bjerregaard, 2000; Fremouw, Westrup, & Pennypacker, 1997; Hall, 1998; McGuire & Wraith, 2000; Tjaden & Thoennes, 1998, 2000; Sheridan, Gillet, Davies, Blaauw, & Patel, 2003; Spitzberg, 2002). According to Spitzberg and Cupach, the social scientific community views stalking with or without technology "as a dysfunction of the interactional and relational processes of courtship and relationship evolution" (2003, p. 348). Thus, the frustration of a relational goal may lead to traditional stalking, obsessional relational intrusion, and technological stalking (e.g., Alexy, Burgess, Baker, & Smoyak, 2005; Cupach & Spitzberg, 2004; Davis, Ace, & Andra, 2000; De Smet, Buysse, & Brondeel, 2011; Haugaard & Seri, 2004; Langhinrichsen-Rohling, Palarea, Cohen, & Rohling, 2000; Roberts, 2005a). These deviant behaviors can be particularly salient in the stages of relational dissolution. As we have seen in chapter one, the termination of an intimate relationship is often associated with these behaviors and has several negative health impacts on victims.

The dissolution of an intimate relationship is never easy. In addition to the need to divide shared belongings and common friendship networks, individuals must decide how much contact they want to have with their former partners. Research has shown the breakup of a significant pair bond is often one-sided (e.g., Hill, Rubin, & Peplau, 1976; Sprecher, Felmlee, Metts, Fehr, & Vanni, 1998). In other words, one person wants to let

go while the other wants to stay connected with their former partner. Unfortunately, these attempts at reconciliation are often excessive and relentless. Indeed, research has shown victims often perceive the aggressor's need to maintain or desire to resume the relationship as a primary motivation in offline stalking (e.g., Budd & Mattinson, 2000; Buhi, Clayton, & Surrency, 2009; Dressing, Kuehner, & Gass, 2005; Tjaden & Thoennes, 1998). Yet, to date, we know very little about how individuals use data transmission devices to stalk and harass their former partners during and after relational termination. Therefore, an investigation of how ex-intimates use technology to stalk, harass, and inflict harm on their past partners may reveal the role past relational history plays in the technological stalking process. Moreover, a study of the technological stalking by former intimates may deepen our overall understanding of the unique properties of all types of technological stalking.

This current study has two overarching goals. The first aim is to examine the management of privacy boundaries following relational dissolution, yet prior to technological stalking. Because relational dissolution often requires intimates to establish different communication patterns, an examination of this process may illuminate if there are any precursors to technological stalking. Specifically, how victims discursively describe the context of relational dissolution prior to incidents of technological stalking? (RQ1). The second goal is to demonstrate how victims describe dissolution (RQ2) and explain how victims attempt to manage or cope with boundary turbulence during the aftermath of technological stalking by a past intimate (RQ3). Framing incidents of technological stalking as privacy rule violations following boundary renegotiations may demonstrate how relational history is used by aggressors as a

communicative weapon against victims and result in boundary turbulence. Once boundary turbulence has occurred, this current study aims to examine how victims attempt to end the technological stalking through the assistance of outside others.

To meet this current study's first goal, I will begin with an overview of Communication Privacy Management theory, which will serve as the theoretical grounding of this study. Second, I will examine the considerations a victim may need to take into account in their decision to make their privacy boundaries more or less permeable following the dissolution of an intimate relationship.

In order to attain the second goal, I will review the extant technological stalking literature to explain the enactment of technological stalking and may be incidents of privacy boundary violations that lead to boundary turbulence. Next, I will provide an overview of past conceptual investigations of the harms associated with technological stalking during the relational dissolution stages. Third, I will explore the research of coping mechanisms used by technological stalking victims in an effort to demonstrate how individuals may be able to manage the boundary turbulence associated with technological stalking by a past intimate.

Communication Privacy Management Theory

Communication Privacy Management (CPM) will serve as the theoretical base for this study. Because excessive communication is a hallmark of the technological stalking experience, the use of CPM also will illuminate how targets attempt to manage repeated privacy intrusions. Moreover, an examination of how victims describe their lived experiences with incidents of technological stalking enacted by former intimates may extend our understanding of boundary turbulence. To begin, in this section, I will review

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the basic tenets of CPM, the establishment of privacy rules, and the concept of boundary turbulence. This will be followed by an examination of how CPM has been used in research, and discuss how CPM will be used in this study.

Overview of CPM

In order to understand how the experience of technological stalking may be described as incidents of privacy violations, we must review the main tenets of CPM. Stated broadly, CPM theory provides a conceptual framework to illuminate how individuals and groups coordinate the management of private and sensitive information through established boundaries (Petronio, 2002, 2007). CPM is a dialectical theory that demonstrates the tensions communicators experience in their decisions to reveal or conceal private information. Often, individuals face challenges when making decisions about private information, such as the desire for openness over the need for closedness. CPM theory recognizes that all disclosures have both benefits and risks. The benefits of disclosure include enhanced relational development and increased intimacy (Altman & Taylor, 1973). However, not all disclosures are beneficial. There are risks to disclosure that may leave one vulnerable to ridicule, as well as cause a loss of face, status, or control (Petronio, 2000; 2002). As a result, researchers have argued withholding information may be a preferred course of action in certain situations (e.g., Derlega & Chaikin, 1977; Derlega, Metts, Petronio, & Margulis 1993; Greene, Derlega, Yep, & Petronio, 2003). Therefore, CPM provides several key principles to explain the processes involved when individuals balance their competing needs for privacy and for disclosure through the creation of privacy boundaries. These boundaries allow individuals, dyads, and groups to

control access to the information and provide expectations for co-ownership of information that has been disclosed (Petronio, 2002).

Principles of CPM. The first supposition posited by CPM is that private information is information not known by the public. According to Petronio (2002), the content of information, whether public or private, is an important distinction made in CPM. Petronio (2002) argues that intimacy and self-disclosure are not synonymous concepts, instead "intimacy is the feeling or state of knowing someone deeply in physical, psychological, emotional, and behavioral ways because that person is significant in one's life" (p. 6), whereas self-disclosure involve a process of revealing personal content. Thus, self-disclosure may create greater intimacy at times, but Petronio (2002) stresses individuals share private information for a variety of other reasons, including: to control another, to express inner feelings, or to overcome guilt. For example, a technological stalker may threaten to disclose to others that their former intimate had taken sexually explicit photos during their relationship in an effort to coerce their past intimate to return to the relationship.

The second and third tenets of CPM introduce a boundary metaphor as an illustration of the line between information that remains private and information that becomes public (Petronio, 2002; Petronio, Ellemers, Giles, & Galllois, 1998). According to Petronio (2002), privacy is ''the feeling that one has the right to own private information, either personally or collectively'' (p. 6). Thus, individuals desire to have control over their disclosures. Privacy boundaries may be thin and porous, allowing for much information to cross, or they may be thick and impermeable, limiting the flow of information. Within intimate relationships, the boundaries are set, maintained, and

negotiated by the intimate pair in order to navigate the tension between the openness and closedness of their boundaries. Yet, boundaries do not remain stagnant in these relationships. A change in relationship status or the commission of a relational transgression may lead to renegotiation of boundaries. For example, following an extra-marital affair, a couple may opt to close their mutual privacy boundary in order to keep this private information within the couple. However, if they choose to break up over the incident, one party may feel the information is no longer co-owned and tells others about the indiscretion. This exemplar guides us to the next supposition of CPM, the management of private information.

In instances when one chooses to confide their private information to another, there is a level of responsibility assigned to the management of that information (Petronio, 2000). Petronio (2002) identified several processes involved in the coordination of boundaries to ensure the information is managed properly. First, in order to prevent the mismanagement of information, couples and groups must develop rules about what co-owned, private disclosures may be told to others. Second, if rules are adhered to, then successful boundary coordination will be achieved. Thus, boundary coordination is realized when both parties follow the rules set forth and properly manage the private information. However, when individuals are unable to coordinate privacy borders boundary turbulence occurs. Boundary turbulence results from the violations of the rules, whether intentional or unintentional. In the example provided previously, the individual who revealed their partner's infidelity to others broke the rule of silence about the affair.

Privacy rules. The management of information is regulated by the rules established between individuals and groups, as well as by one individual without input from others (Petronio, 2002). The construction of clear privacy rules are based on criteria deemed important within a specific context (Petronio, 2002). Petronio identified five criteria that guide decisions to reveal/conceal private information. The criteria are culture, gender, context, and motivation for revealing or concealing, and the risk-benefit ratio of the disclosure. Although in the development of privacy rules the culture, gender, and context criteria are important, these components are beyond the scope of this current project. Therefore, in this current study, two criteria – context and the cost-benefit ratio – are particularly relevant because these factors help guide individuals' decisions of what information to share or hide from their former partners.

The *context criterion* is defined as a situation that requires individuals to reassess their privacy boundaries regarding specific private information. In other words, when an individual faces an awkward or uncomfortable situation within their environment, they rely contextual cues in order evaluate whether or not changes in privacy boundaries are warranted. The context criterion often is used when an individual has decided based on an event, that he or she must readjust the access others have to their private information. The *risk-benefit criteria* also are used to create privacy rules. The creation of rules based this principle are formulated after one has weighed the dangers and rewards of the disclosure of private information. Because all disclosures have the potential to put one in a vulnerable state, the individual must be cognizant of both the rewards and costs of disclosure.

Privacy violations and boundary turbulence. Thus far, we have seen how the permeability of privacy boundaries depends on the ability to coordinate privacy boundaries and establishment of the rules between individuals and groups. Unfortunately, rules are often broken either intentionally or unintentionally. Petronio (2000, 2002) identified several types of rule violations dyads or groups may encounter. First, *intentional violations* are the purposeful release of private information to others is a violation of privacy rules. Second, *boundary rule mistakes* describe instances when individuals may be unsure or unaware of the rules guiding the disclosure. Third, *fuzzy boundaries* occur when individuals may breach rules due to unclear distinctions between private and co-owned information. Fourth, *privacy dilemmas* may emerge over the release of private information that may benefit the greater good. Each of these rule violations demonstrates a unique type of disclosure that results from an individual's or group's failure to coordinate privacy boundaries based on the rules that govern the disclosure of information (Petronio, 2002). As a result, when a breach of privacy rules occurs, boundary turbulence ensues.

Petronio (2002) describes boundary turbulence as the inability to "collectively develop, execute, or enact rules guiding permeability, ownership, and linkages" of private information (p. 177). In other words, breaches or ruptures to one's privacy boundaries caused by another's unwillingness to follow the established privacy rules may create turmoil within the relationship. Moreover, boundary turbulence also may occur when the privacy rules are implicit or not clearly articulated between co-owners of the information. As a result, the mismanagement of private information, whether intentional or

unintentional, leads to the inability to successfully coordinate privacy boundaries, which is at the heart of boundary turbulence.

The management of boundary turbulence requires individuals, dyads, or groups to reassess and recalibrate their privacy rules regarding the disclosure of private information (Petronio, 2002). In addition, following a violation, individuals may feel the need to readjust the permeability of their personal and collective privacy boundaries to control the amount or type of information disclosed to outside others, as well as to the individual or parties that committed the boundary violation. For example, in Afifi's (2003) study of boundary turbulence in step-families, the author found strategies such as avoidance of the topic and boundary separation were used to manage the family's issues following incidents of boundary turbulence. Thus, individuals in intimate relationships may need to create new boundaries with not only the individual who committed the violation, but with outside others as well. Although Afifi's study has enlightened our understanding of boundary turbulence, there is a current dearth of scholarship focused on the management of boundaries following turbulence despite the wealth of scholarly application of CPM.

The Application of CPM

In the last decade, CPM scholarship has flourished. Studies grounded in the main CPM tenets described above have allowed researchers to explore a variety of topics, such as health disclosures (e.g., Greene, Derlega, Yep, & Petronio, 2003; Greene & Faulkner, 2002; Petronio, Sargent, Andea, Reganis, & Cichocki, 2004; Weiner, Silk, & Parrott, 2005) and family secrets (e.g., Afifi, 2003; Caughlin et al., 2000). CPM researchers also have examined topic avoidance (Caughlin & Afifi, 2004; Golish & Caughlin, 2002; Joseph & Afifi, 2010). Within these studies, there is strong support for the suppositions

that guide CPM and the inherent dialectics of managing private information. For example, Child, Pearson, and Petronio (2009) found bloggers retain a sense of ownership regarding their personal information even when their posts are publicized. These authors argue the original owner of the information has the ability to control the permeability of their boundaries by placing restrictions on access to his or her blog site. When an outside individual is granted access to the site, he or she becomes a co-owner of the information. As a result, synchronization of boundaries becomes important in order to establish if the co-owner has the right to distribute the information and if so, how much they can tell others. However, the researchers note when the boundary rules are violated, the ensuing boundary turbulence is easily recognizable. Thus, Child, Pearson, and Petronio's study highlights the openness-closedness dialectic of privacy boundaries. Similarly, Durham's (2008) examination of voluntarily child-free couples demonstrated the revelation-concealment dialectic in instances when individuals make disclosures to social network members about their family planning decisions. These studies demonstrate the management of information is dialectic in nature with tensions that must be negotiated for successful boundary coordination to occur.

Studies also have demonstrated how individuals attempt to manage their privacy boundaries within a variety of relationships, such as families, friendships, professional relationships (e.g., Afifi, 2003; Caughlin, Golish, Olson, Sargent, Cook, & Petronio, 2000; Joseph & Afifi, 2010; McBride & Bergen, 2008; McBride & Wahl, 2005). This collection of studies has found privacy rules are created, enacted, and enforced within specific situations that are often influenced by significant events. This body of research also addresses under what conditions individuals will exercise control of the information

they reveal to outside others. For example, Joseph and Afifi (2010) found the husbands and wives of deployed of military personnel set clear privacy boundaries during their spouses' deployment. Through the use of the risk-benefit ratio, the non-deployed family members opted for less permeable privacy boundaries about information that might be distracting to their spouse. Many participants reported their fears that this type of information would cause their spouse to lose focus during their mission. In addition, family scholars have also demonstrated relationships without these clear privacy rules are often plagued by rule violations (e.g., Afifi, 2003; Afifi & Schrodt, 2003; Caughlin et al., 2000). For example, Miller's (2009) study of divorced co-parents' decisions to reveal and/or conceal information about their new romantic attachments from their former partner showed that a lack of explicit rules and successful boundary management led to boundary turbulence. Despite the evidence yielded from these studies and the relational consequences, the phenomenon of boundary turbulence itself remains understudied.

In response, several authors have explored recently boundary turbulence in variety of contexts, such as couples experiencing infertility (Steuber & Solomon, 2012); step-family communication (Afifi, 2003), workplace surveillance (Allen, Coopman, Hart, & Walker, 2007) and in online communities (e.g., Child, Petronio, Agyeman-Budu, & Westermann, 2011). These studies have informed our understanding of the how mismanaged privacy information and a lack of boundary coordination contribute to one's experienced boundary turbulence. For example, the literature of boundary turbulence in step-families has found a lack of shared family history combined with the presence of role ambiguity creates conditions of rigid privacy boundaries in the initial stages of these familial relationships (e.g., Afifi, 2003; Caughlin et al., 2000; Caughlin & Petronio,

2004). Caughlin and Petronio (2004) argue rigid privacy boundary rules may separate original family members from new family members. As a result, the authors argued stepfamilies may experience difficulties as they attempt to re-coordinate personal and family privacy boundaries in an effort to establish a new family identity. Thus, the lack of explicit rules and less permeable privacy boundaries may lead to boundary turbulence.

Petronio and Caughlin (2006) argue boundary turbulence is not inherently negative, yet the authors state the experience can be a source of discomfort. In their discussion of family privacy dilemmas, Petronio, Jones, and Morr (2003) assert the tensions that arise from the mismanagement of private information can cause conflict within the family unit. Research has shown the revealing of sensitive information to outside others can be particularly problematic in families (e.g., Afifi, 2003; Caughlin & Petronio, 2006; Morr, Dickson, Morrison, & Poole, 2007). For example, in a study of 250 infertile couples, Steuber and Solomon (2012) found nearly 1/3 of their sample reported perceiving their partner did not approve of their disclosures to outside parties. It is important to note that in this study, the results revealed that both husbands and wives indicate minimal distress during incidents of boundary turbulence. The authors concluded it was possible that the participants may have learned to manage the turbulence through socially appropriate ways; however this was not specifically tested within the study. Thus, more research into the effects of boundary turbulence is needed.

In addition, to date, studies of boundary turbulence have privileged those in mutual, intimate relationships. Therefore, we do not know how individuals involved in non-consensual relationships, such as a victim and a technological stalker or co-workers, experience or manage boundary turbulence. When individuals are involved in a

consensual relationship, they have a vested interest in maintaining harmony, and thus the coordination of privacy boundaries is desirable. However, the enactment of privacy rules and the experience of boundary turbulence may be different in relationships where one does not want to maintain an intimate relationship with the other person. For example, an individual may not wish to communicate with their technological stalker, but past stalking research has found victims often attempt to end the harassment by communicating and reasoning with the aggressor (e.g., Alexy et al., 2005; Spitzberg & Hoobler, 2002). Unfortunately, the scholarly community has not explored how individuals in non-consensual relationships establish or renegotiate privacy rules. This study aims to fill this gap within CPM research by extending our understanding of privacy rules and boundary turbulence in non-consensual relationships between ex-intimates.

The Use of CPM in this Study

The current study will use CPM as a lens to understand privacy rules and boundary turbulence in the context of technological stalking following relational dissolution. To review, technological stalking is characterized as the use of data transmission devices to cause emotional distress or reasonable fear through repetitive actions that threaten, harass, intimidate, or monitor another (18 USCS § 115; 47 U.S.C. §223). This study also includes all data transmission devices in order to account for recent technological advancements. Because the extant research has shown consistently that past intimates are at the greatest risk for becoming victims of all types of stalking (e.g., Mohandie, Meloy, McGowan, & Williams, 2006; Roberts, 2005b; Spitzberg & Cupach, 2007b), several of the main elements of CPM will guide this study to illuminate how a target attempts to deal with their former intimate's destructive communicative

behaviors. First, I will examine several areas of research that highlight instances when individuals may need to re-establish or create new privacy boundaries following the demise of the relationship. Second, the study will take a deeper look at the enactment of technological stalking by an aggressor and his or her past intimates. Specifically, I will examine how the use of technology to stalk a former intimate may result in privacy violations. Finally, this study will attempt to identify management strategies used by victims after boundary turbulence has occurred. Thus, this current study will fill the gap in the CPM literature through an examination the communicative practices employed by individuals who are drawn into a non-consensual relationship with their former intimates in order to deal with the aggressors' technological stalking behaviors.

<center>**Relational Dissolution and the Management of Privacy Boundaries**</center>

To recall, the first goal of this current study is to examine the management of privacy boundaries following relational dissolution. I begin with an examination of literature on the role relational dissolution may play in the technological stalking by an ex-intimate.

According to Baxter (1985), a great deal of communication about the relationship happens between intimates following relational disengagement. One such type of communication involves attempts at reconciliation. Unfortunately, when reconciliation requests are denied, the individual who initiated the break up is at greater risk for having obsessional, relationally-intrusive behaviors and technological stalking activities enacted upon him or her. Research has consistently shown the frustration of the relational goal of reconciliation leads to these behaviors (e.g., Alexy et al., 2005; Cupach & Spitzberg, 2004; Davis et al., 2000; De Smet et al., 2011; Haugaard & Seri, 2003; Langhinrichsen-

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Rohling et al., 2000; Roberts, 2005a). Research has shown these behaviors are often used

in conjunction with technological stalking and harassment of past intimates (Burgess &

Baker, 2002; Sheridan & Grant, 2007; Meloy, 1998; Ogilive, 2000). Therefore, I will

begin with an examination of the relational dissolution literature.

The end of an intimate relationship is often a difficult time for both the rejected

partner and the initiator. During this time, there may be lingering doubts, recriminations,

and hurt feelings. The process of relational disengagement is often a difficult period

heightened by ambiguous and hostile communication, particularly when one partner does

not want the relationship to end (e.g., Davis, Ace, & Andra, 2000; Dye & Davis, 2003).

Former intimates may also need to renegotiate their privacy boundaries after dissolution

because they have a great deal of co-owned information. In this section, I will examine

four keys areas of research demonstrating end-of- relationship opportunities when

intimates may renegotiate privacy rules and boundaries. Specifically, I will discuss: (a)

threats to face during relational termination, (b) communication after the initial

dissolution, (c) attempts at reconciliation, and (d) unwanted pursuit behaviors.

Face Threats during Relational Dissolution

According to Cupach and Metts, "ending a relationship is perhaps one of the most

face-threatening situations we encounter" (1994, p. 81). Individuals are often questioned

by family and friends about the details of the demise in what Duck (1982) labeled the

"social phase." During this time, individuals tell their version of events due to a need for

others to approve of their choice to end the relationship (positive face) and avoid

limitations to their own autonomy (negative face). The stories told must be believable

and largely paint the individual in a positive light. The next stage Duck (1982) refers to

as the "grave dressing" phase, which is when both parties attempt to make sense of the relationship and what went wrong. In both phases, narratives allow the participants to maintain dignity and to demonstrate they are still viable relational mates. As Duck and Rollie (2003) assert, if individuals desire future intimate relationships, they need to create the perception that they are not "damaged goods, or relationally naïve" (p. 1299). This self-serving bias has found support in the relational dissolution literature. For example, in their analysis of the break-up accounts, Cupach and Metts (1986) argued termination narratives serve the identity needs of the storyteller. The authors found both divorced and never married couples provide similar, culturally appropriate reasons for ending an intimate relationship. Moreover, the assignment of blame often falls on the ex-partner, not one's self. While these results may not be surprising, they underscore the need to provide socially sanctioned justifications for relational termination. They also highlight how individuals often divulge private information about their intimate relationships in these narratives to enhance positive face while they try to avoid negative face. As a result, individuals often share private information that was once co-owned by the couple.

This reveal of formerly private information has implications for both parties. Studies of relational dissolution found providing accounts to one's social network may be instrumental in helping one cope with a lost relationship (e.g., Baxter & Widenmann, 1993; Duck, 1982; Emmers & Hart, 1996; Sorenson, Russell, Harkness, & Harvey, 1993). Unfortunately, the ability to publicly articulate to others the issues that preceded the break-up may cause harm to the former partner's positive face. A broad spectrum of studies has found when relational transgressions become public; the act is perceived greater in severity than if the information remained private (e.g., Afifi, Falato, & Weiner,

2001; Levine, McCornack, & Avery, 1992; Metts, 1994). Thus, when one confides

private information to outside others, this may exacerbate feelings of negativity towards

the former partner and the relationship.

During relationship termination, interference by family members and friends also

may act to constrain one's autonomy. Their influence often has a negative impact on the

couple in several ways. First, family and friends may enforce rigid standards for what

may deemed as appropriate reasons to terminate (e.g. Banks, Altendorf, Greene, &

Baxter, 1985; Lannutti & Cameron, 2002). Banks et al. (1985) found when a terminating

couple has considerable network overlap, the initiating partner reported the need to

provide more justifications post break-up. This finding is consistent with research that

has shown one's network of family and friends put pressure on individuals who seek

termination (e.g. Cupach & Metts, 1994; Johnson, 1982; La Gaipa, 1982). Couples may

also be hampered in their termination efforts by fear of losing valued friendships (e.g.

Agnew, Loving, & Drigotas, 2001; Parks, 2007). One may fear that if previously co-

owned private information is publicized, he or she may lose positive face in their other

relationships. As a result, he or she may opt to stay in the intimate relationship so certain

information about one's self or the relationship stays private.

To summarize, the disclosure of co-owned information to third parties during

relational dissolution has numerous face effects on both parties. Because the desired state

in a relationship is boundary coordination, a couple may need to create or modify privacy

boundaries during and after termination. Although the rejected partner may turn to others

to seek solace and comfort or to justify the end of the relationship, he or she may be

inadvertently or purposely violating pre-established privacy rules. Therefore, throughout

the dissolution, individuals must make decisions about what to reveal and what to conceal.

Relational Dissolution Messages

Researchers have found conversations between former partners are difficult when the subject is the redefinition of the relationship (Foley & Fraser, 1998; Kurdek, 1991). Several studies have offered typologies of the communicative strategies used during relational termination (e.g., Banks, Altendorf, Green, & Cody, 1987; Baxter, 1982; Cody, 1982; Patterson & O'Hair, 1992). These projects demonstrated that framing the dissolution message may be crucial to an amicable end of the relationship. Unfortunately, some communicative tactics may also lead to further unwanted contact.

The relational dissolution literature has identified several strategies for "successful" breakups; however, close inspections of these studies reveal certain tactics may send mixed messages to the rejected. Early work suggested breakup initiators who use positive tone, de-escalation, and external justification during termination will end their relationships amicably (e.g., Banks et al., 1985; Cody, 1982; Cody, 1982; Metts, Cupach, & Bejlovec, 1989). Examples of positive tone include messages that express the better attributes of the relationship and do not assign blame. For example, "We had a lot of good times. I will miss our Friday movie dates but we need to move on." De-escalation messages aim to lessen the intimacy in a relationship, such as, "I'm going through a lot right now, but perhaps we can still be friends." Indeed, studies of on-again/off again relationships have found as couples transition between dissolution and reconciliation these tactics are used regularly (Bevan, Cameron, & Dillow, 2003; Dailey, Pfiester, Jin, Beck & Clark, 2009, Dailey, Rossetto, McCracken, Jin, & Green, 2012;

Dailey, Rossetto, Pfiester, & Surra, 2009). However, these types of messages may signal

the desire for continued communication and lead to a false impression of a continued,

albeit redefined, relationship.

The literature of unrequited love offers evidence of individuals who have been

unable or unwilling to accept the end of an intimate relationship. Baumeister, Wotman,

and Stillwell define unrequited love as "a relationship that fails to form or thrive ... [when

an individual] finds himself or herself the reluctant object of another's unwelcome

affections" (1993, p. 377). In their study, the would-be-lovers overwhelmingly reported

that the rejector had led them on in some fashion and that feelings had been reciprocated

at one point. These results are also found in studies of former partners who seek

reconciliation (e.g., Baxter, 1985; Sheridan, Gillett, Davies, Blaauw, & Patel, 2003). Yet,

in Baumeister, Wotman and Stillwell's study, the individuals within the rejector and the

rejected groups varied greatly in their reports of whether explicit messages of rejection

had been provided to the would-be-lovers. The rejected party stated that they had not

received clear communication of disinterest. Thus, this study, as well as other

investigations of reconciliation attempts, shows that how one communicates a desire to

end the relationship may be helpful in our understanding of unwanted pursuit.

Research has found messages of dissolution can be placed on a continuum of

directness-indirectness, referring to whether or not the initiator of a breakup informs

his/her partner of his/her desire to end the relationship in an obvious manner (e.g., Baxter,

1985; Wilmot, Carbaugh, & Baxter, 1985). Message directness is conceptualized within

the compliance-gaining literature as "the extent to which a message makes clear the

change that the source is seeking in the target" (Dillard, Segrin, & Harden, 1989, p. 30).

Similarly, Petronio (1991, 2002) characterized *direct messages* as communications that indicate expressly how the message target is to react and respond to the directive. The use of direct messages has been found in other studies to be an effective means to terminate an intimate bond, yet may also be inherently face threatening for both parties (e.g., Cupach & Metts, 1994; Kunkel, Wilson, Olufowote, & Robson, 2003; Patterson & O'Hair, 1992). Because direct messages are blunt, the initiator may lose positive face if the receiver and others see their communication as heartless or cruel. For the receiver, these messages may be felt as character attacks. Therefore, some initiators may prefer to use indirect messages to ease the harm to either one's own or the receiver's positive face.

Baxter (1985) conceptualized *indirect messages* as communications that do not plainly articulate the expected outcome. According to Petronio (1991, 2002), vague communications that are left open to interpretation may allow some form of rhetorical protection for the sender because one may claim the receiver misunderstood the intent of the message. For the receiver, the lack of explicitness may buffer any perceived harshness within the content of the message. However, indirect messages also may lead to increased and unwanted communication because uncertainty is high. Thus, the goal of reduced contact with one's former partner may not be mitigated through the use of less-direct messages.

Ultimately, the decision to use any of these types of message may influence the outcome either positively or negatively. In sum, the research in this section verifies Baxter's (1982) initial findings of message types and relational termination. Baxter found that partners were more direct in their dissolution messages when they wished to remain close with the partner. However, Baxter (1982) reported a degree of indirectness

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allowed participants to "ease out of the relationship without losing face" (p. 98). Yet,

when indirect strategies are utilized, there is also a greater chance for reconciliation

attempts (Baxter, 1985), which may indicate that indirect messages are less effective in

completely dissolving the relationship. An indirect message may communicate a lack of

finality or confidence in the decision, encouraging the receiver of the indirect dissolution

message to believe the relationship is not over or that the initiator is open to attempts by

the rejected to repair the relationship. As result, indirect messages may lead to an

inability to coordinate privacy boundaries because one party may wish to minimize or

eliminate the communication with the other, whereas the other may want to maintain the

level the couple had prior to the breakup. Therefore, if the privacy boundaries are not

clearly articulated, one such outcome may be the rejected party making repeated and

unwanted attempts at reconciliation. These requests may be aided by technology, such as

repetitive phone calls, texts messages, and numerous social network posts. Thus, we

need to examine how persistent reconciliation requests may become incidents of

technological stalking.

Reconciliation Requests

Reconciliation requests are a common occurrence following relational dissolution.

Previous studies have found that these requests can be successful (e.g., Bevan &

Cameron, & Dillow, 2003; Kalish, 1997; Dailey, Pfiester, Jin, Beck, & Clark, 2009;

Dailey, Jin, Pfiester, & Beck, 2011; Davis et al., 2000), though for many relationships,

dissolution is final (e.g., Hill, Rubin, & Peplau, 1976; Metts, Cupach, & Bejlovec, 1989**;**

Sprecher, Felmlee, Metts, Fehr, & Vanni, 1998). This body of work highlights that

relationships may go through several iterations of dissolution and resolution before the

final termination. In order to uncover "successful" reunification strategies, researchers have asked individuals to describe how likely they would be to return to a relationship based on a variety of tactics used (e.g., Bevan, Cameron, & Dillow, 2003; Cody, Canary, & Smith, 1994; Patterson & O'Hair, 1992). These studies have found a wide range of strategies are used to win one back to a dissolved relationship.

Patterson and O'Hair's (1992) study of tactics used by rejected partners found two reconciliation strategies salient to our discussion of privacy violations that may lead to off-line and technological stalking. First, many participants reported the use of third parties to "coerce" a dialogue between the rejector and the rejected. The rejected would often have friends or family create opportunities for the ex-partners to meet in order to discuss their relationship. Second, third parties were also used to serve as mediators to exchange information between ex-partners. The go-between would make the reconciliation request to the rejecter and report their findings to the rejected. In both situations, individual privacy boundaries may be breached. Specifically, one's network of family and friends is asked to provide private information in their quest to reunite with their former partner. Although the third party may feel they are doing the couple a service in their attempt to bring the couple, the disclosure may create privacy dilemmas. Therefore, it may be necessary for the rejecter to establish clear privacy boundaries with the networks they share with their past intimates. Thus, just as an individual needs to create direct messages with their former partner about the future of their relationship, individuals must also be clear with their mutual social networks to inhibit the dissemination of private information to the pursuer. Moreover, the establishment and

maintenance of clear privacy rules may discourage the persistence of repeated

reconciliation requests that can potentially lead to stalking behaviors.

Persistence in reconciliation has been conceptualized in terms of the degree of

intensity and frequency of contact between intimates (Cupach, Spitzberg, Bolingbroke, &

Tellitocci, 2011). Davis, Swan, and Gambone (2012) argued persistent pursuit following

the termination of an intimate relationship occurs for two specific reasons: rejection and

unreciprocated desire. Many participants in Patterson and O'Hair's (1992) study found

persistence a positive tactic to win back their former partner; however, subsequent

research has found the actions associated with persistent reconciliation attempts can

range from benign to harmful (e.g., Cupach & Spitzberg, 1998, 2000; Haugaard & Seri,

2003; Spitzberg & Hoobler, 2002). These behaviors often have devastating effects for

both individuals in the relationship. Baumeister, Wotton, and Stillwell (1993) argued that

one-sided reconciliation attempts may extend the hurt for the pursuer and increase the

expressed anger in the target.

Persistent efforts at reconciliation can quickly spiral into an array of negative

behaviors that put the target at risk. The behaviors associated with this line of inquiry

have a variety of labels including: unwanted pursuit behavior (e.g., Dutton & Winstead,

2006; Langhinrichsen-Rohling et al., 2000) obsessional relational intrusion (e.g., Asada,

Lee, Levine, & Ferrara, 2004; Cupach & Spitzberg, 1998, 2000; Spitzberg, Nicastro, &

Cousins, 1998), intrusive contact (e.g., Haugaard & Seri, 2003) and stalking (e.g., Logan,

Shannon, & Cole, 2007; Morewitz, 2002; Mullen, Pathé, & Purcell, 2000). These studies

often attribute the desire for greater intimacy as a primary motivation for stalking

behavior. Empirically, research has found the majority of both technological and

traditional stalkers are individuals who seek to persuade a former intimate partner to return to the relationship or to punish the victim for not responding to the stalkers' overtures (Cupach & Spitzberg 2004; Meloy, 1998; Mohandie et al., 2006; Mullen, Pathé, & Purcell, 2000; Pathé & Mullen, 1997; Tjaden & Thoennes 2000; Zona, Sharma, & Lane, 1993). For example, in a study of North American stalkers, Mohandie et al. (2006) reported when persistent reconciliation attempts failed, the stalker's emotions often fluctuated between love and hostility.

The seemingly unpredictable nature of the stalker's actions often makes their behaviors particularly unnerving for the target. Yet, in an effort to explain the actions of stalkers, researchers have argued from a relational goals theory pursuit perspective, aggressors view the relationship with the victim as a means to achieve higher order goals (e.g., happiness and self-worth) so when they are rebuffed or their overtures are stifled, he or she may ruminate and experience negative affect (Spitzberg & Cupach, 2007a; Cupach et al., 2011). According to Spitzberg and Cupach (2004), stalkers seek to maintain communicative contact with their victim, yet the victim's primary goal is to limit interaction.

Research consistently has shown stalkers express a need to communicate with their victims for validation that a relationship exists with their target. In their study of stalkers' behaviors and perceived motivations, Davis et al. (2000) found a high correlation between expressions of love and stalking. Similarly, Buhi et al. (2009) found the most frequent motives of the stalkers, as assessed by the victims, were a desire for a loving relationship, resumption of a former relationship, jealousy, envy or distrust, revenge, and feeling hurt by rejection. The authors assert stalkers view their actions as

continued expressions of their feelings of love aimed at the end goal of connection or reconciliation, not as destructive communications. As Cupach and Spitzberg argued in cases of stalking, "mutual respect and sustenance of dialogue are often precisely the objectives the unwanted pursuer seeks to impose on the victim, and precisely what the victim seeks to deny the stalker" (2004, p. 157). Thus, when dealing with a stalker, a target may need to re-evaluate their privacy boundaries with the rejected party.

The Management of Privacy Boundaries

As we have seen, there are many factors one must take into consideration in the dissolution of an intimate relationship. In addition to how one chooses to communicate the termination of the relationship with their significant other, one must consider what types and how much private information the rejecter wants to continue to share with the rejected, as well as with members of their shared networks. According to Petronio (1991, 2002), the decision to make one's privacy boundaries more or less permeable depends on several variables including (a) the importance of the information, (b) the degree to which one can predict the outcome of the reveal, (c) the risk involved, (d) the degree one considers the privacy of the information, and (e) the degree one has emotional control. Thus, the decision to share or hide private information with a former partner also may be influenced by these aspects.

The dialectical tensions between openness and closedness during relational dissolution may require former partners revisit their original rules for sharing private information. For example, according to Baxter (1982), open self-disclosure following the dissolution is necessary if one wants to maintain relationship intimacy and understanding. On the other hand, privacy may also desirable as individuals may not want to fully

discuss matters for fear of vulnerability or hurt resulting from excessive honesty. Thus, when reconciliation overtures are unwanted, the rejecter must attempt to reconcile their need to communicate with the rejected (e.g. end the harassment or create understanding that the relationship is over) with their desire to tightly control his or her privacy boundaries to avoid providing the rejected with private information.

While no studies at the time of this writing have specifically examined the management of privacy boundaries in the context of off-line or technological stalking, the extant literature is clear that there is an on-going process of privacy negotiations between the victim and the aggressor (Burgess et al., 1997; Canter & Ioannou, 2004; Emerson, Ferris, & Gardner, 1998; Meloy, 1996; Mumm & Cupach, 2010). For example, Mumm and Cupach (2010) found individuals who had been pursued felt forced to address their stalker when confronted with non-reciprocal affectionate expressions and inappropriate physical intimacy. In these situations, the target did not want to engage in an intimate relationship, but felt compelled to communicate their desire to end the harassment.

The decision to make one's privacy boundaries less permeable following relational dissolution can have several implications for the rejecter and the rejected, including hurt feelings and stalking. Thus far, I argued that the influence of possible face threats, the use of direct or indirect messages, the request for reconciliation, and the persistence of communication may be possible reasons why one may need to recalibrate their privacy boundaries with a past intimate. Despite a victim's desire to create less permeable privacy boundaries with their former partner, communication is required to rebuff persistent requests for the reestablishment of intimacy. Although past literature would suggest less communication and interpersonal contact between ex-partners may be

beneficial in the process of relational dissolution, we do not know if these attempts are successful or have led to an escalation of deviant technological stalking behavior.

In this section, I have argued that relational dissolution may contribute to one's technological stalking experience. Specifically, the communicative choices individuals make may put one at increased risk for technological stalking. Therefore, the following research question is posited:

RQ1: How do victims discursively describe the context of relational dissolution prior to incidents of technological stalking?

In this section, I have argued there may be several factors one must take into account in the choice to have more or less permeable privacy boundaries following relational termination. Despite the lack of literature that directly examines how mismanaged privacy boundaries or a lack of boundary coordination may result in both offline and technological stalking, there is an abundance of unwanted pursuit and stalking studies that illuminate how individuals inflict interpersonal terrorism on their past intimates. Therefore, the subsequent section will begin with a general discussion of past conceptualizations of unwanted relational pursuit with special attention paid to obsessional relational intrusion and cyber-obsessional pursuit.

Past Conceptual Explanations of Unwanted Relational Pursuit

The second goal of this study is to examine how the experience of technological stalking may be actual incidents of privacy violations and the boundary turbulence that may be the result of privacy rule violations. Although the extant research has shown a variety of tactics used by technological stalkers as a group, the behavioral manifestations specific to the technological stalking of past intimates have to be fully explored at the

time of this current study. Moreover, empirical research of how individuals respond to incidents of boundary turbulence is limited. To address these limitations and extend our understanding, I will begin with an overview of several conceptual explanations researchers have employed to describe past intimate aggressors' offline and technologically-driven behaviors.

During the 1990s, investigations of traditional stalking by past intimates yielded a substantial amount of literature. However, many scholars noted that not all behaviors associated with the unwanted pursuit of greater intimacy fit within the legal criteria of persistence and fear that defines stalking. As a result, researchers assigned numerous labels to these activities such as: unwanted pursuit behavior (e.g., Dutton & Winstead, 2006; Langhinrichsen-Rohling et al., 2000) obsessional relational intrusion (e.g., Asada, Lee, Levine, & Ferrara, 2004; Cupach & Spitzberg, 1998, 2000; Spitzberg, Nicastro, & Cousins, 1998), and intrusive contact (e.g., Haugaard & Seri, 2003). Most recently, the concept of cyber-obsessional pursuit has been added to describe intrusive behaviors connected to the unwanted pursuit with technological devices capable of data transmission. Thus, I begin this investigation with a closer look at two past conceptual frameworks, obsessional relational intrusion and cyber-obsessional pursuit. These frameworks are salient to the history of technological stalking because they specifically explore the traditionally and technologically invasive actions of individuals who desire to have or have had an intimate relationship with their victim. It is important to note that although each category will be discussed separately, recent research has found these clusters of behaviors are often reported in incidents of technological stalking (e.g., Burgess & Baker, 2002; Ogilive, 2000; Sheridan & Grant, 2007). Therefore, a deeper

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understanding of each category may reveal possible infringements of one's personal privacy boundaries and may contribute to the experience of boundary turbulence.

Obsessional Relational Intrusion

Cupach and Spitzberg (1998) define obsessional relational intrusion (ORI) as "repeated and unwanted pursuit and invasion of one's sense of physical or symbolic privacy by another person, either stranger or acquaintance, who desires and/or presumes an intimate relationship" (pp. 234-235). This definition highlights an on-going interpersonal phenomenon in which an individual seeks to establish or re-establish a personal connection with their target through a variety of communicative tactics but is rebuffed. Thus, similar to stalking, ORI often grows out of the stifling of a potential romantic relationship or the termination of intimate bond. Cupach and Spitzberg (1998, 2000) argued behaviors attributed to ORI may not be inherently threatening and can be placed on a continuum from mere annoyance to fear-inducing threats of violence. Conversely, research has shown when the aggressor's actions are repetitive and invasive; these behaviors would fall under the rubric of stalking (Cupach & Spitzberg, 1998, 2000; Cupach, Spitzberg, & Carson, 2000; Spitzberg, Marshall, & Cupach, 2001; Spitzberg et al., 1998, 2001; Spitzberg & Rhea, 1999). Therefore, many, but not all, of the actions associated with ORI are also classified as stalking.

Generally associated with the initiation or escalation of an intimate relationship, the unwanted pursuit behaviors of ORI have also been reported after the termination of an intimate relationship (e.g., Dutton & Winstead, 2006; Langhinrichsen-Rohling et al., 2000; Roberts, 2005a). ORI consists of five clusters of behaviors labeled as violence, hyperintimacy, pursuit, invasion, and intimidation, (Cupach & Spitzberg, 1998, 2000;

Spitzberg & Cupach, 2003). Each category encompasses a large variety of actions. First, *violence* as an ORI tactic involves the actual or attempted physical assault, as well as the physical restraint of a victim. In addition, the murder of the target or their pet is included within this category. Second, *hyperintimacy* involves sending excessive and exaggerated messages under the guise of romance. In addition, the aggressor involves others by claiming to be in a relationship with the target, spreading rumors, and sharing intimate details about past relational history. Third, *pursuit* activities, such as approaching the person at their job, following the target, and placing the victim under surveillance, are used by the aggressor to increase the contact and the immediacy with their target. Pursuit behaviors also may include the use of third party intermediaries to dispatch messages. Fourth, *invasion* is the intrusion into the target's private or personal space. Often these behaviors include showing up at one's residence, leaving messages for the victim at their residence or place of work, and hacking into one's personal or professional computer. Finally, *intimidation* is the use of threats, harassment, and coercion in an attempt to force the target into a response. This tactic can also include sending sinister messages and making threats aimed at the victim's family and friends. In light of recent technological advances, the study of ORI has been expanded to examine cyber-obsessional pursuit to explore if ORI behaviors also are enacted with the use of data transmission devices.

Cyber-Obsessional Pursuit

One of the earliest conceptual frameworks used to explore technological stalking was cyber-obsessional pursuit (COP). Spitzberg and Hoobler (2002) define COP as the use of data transmission or electronic devices to harass, intimidate, or demand intimacy from another person. Drawing heavily from the concept of ORI, Spitzberg and Hoobler

identified three core characteristics: hyperintimacy, intrusion, and aggression. Like traditional ORI, *hyperintimacy* is characterized by amplified and unwanted expressions of affection. These electronic messages, such as telephone messages, emails, texts and instant messages are characterized as excessively needy, disclosive, and demanding. In the first test of the COP measures, the researchers found 25-31% of their participants reported hyperintimacy behaviors. *Intrusion behaviors* involved threats of public dissemination of personal and private details about the target, as well as warnings of sabotage to the victim's reputation. *Aggression activities* included the use of threats, attempts at computer hacking, and the willful alteration to the target's online identity. These categories represent the variety of ways an aggressor may utilize the internet to harm a past intimate, acquaintance, or stranger through electronic means.

Technological Stalking

Technological stalking, the use of technology to control, harass, and stalk another through the use of technology, is a rather new phenomenon. Although technological stalking often is viewed as an extension of traditional stalking because there is considerable overlap in the enacted behaviors, there are distinct properties that separate the two. Two key differences between traditional stalking and the technological stalking experience are the use of excessive communication via technological channels and the use of the advanced tools to engage in surveillance (e.g., Southworth, Finn, Dawson, Fraser, & Tucker, 2005, Spitzberg & Hoobler, 2002). In this section, I will provide a brief historical overview of technological stalking research. This will be followed with an examination of the types of data transmission devices used by technological stalkers to

demonstrate the variety of tools used during enactment. Finally, I will discuss how specific types of technological stalking may be classified as boundary turbulence.

The History of Technological Stalking Research

The use of data transmission devices to harm others first appeared in studies of traditional stalking (e.g., Bjerregaard, 2000; Mullen, Pathé, Purcell, & Stuart, 1999; Sheridan, Davies, & Boon, 2001; Spitzberg, 2002; Spitzberg et al., 1998; Tjaden & Thoennes, 1998, 2000). The main focus of these studies was interpersonal violence but also included measures to explore aspects of the technological stalking experience (e.g., numbers of phone calls received, types of surveillance tactics used). As a result, researchers began to see how stalkers used data transmission devices to instill fear and terror in their victims.

Recent technological advancements in these data transmission devices provided new opportunities for individuals to stalk, observe, and intimidate their targets. Lawmakers began to take notice of this problem and in 1999 the federal government signed the Cyberstalking Law, which not only includes stalking via the internet, but all data transmission devices. Following this crucial legislation, researchers identified several new devices used by harassers such as telephones, cameras, GPS, computers, the Internet, instant messages, and websites (for a review see Southworth, Dawson, Fraser, & Tucker, 2005). More recently, several state laws have attempted to expand their definitions to include the use of social media. However, it is important to note researchers have included the use of social network sites as a means to conduct surveillance on one's past partners prior to legislative efforts (e.g., Chaulk & Jones, 2011; Henson, Reyns, & Fisher, 2011; Lyndon et al., 2011).

Oglive (2000) and Spence-Diehl (2003) created the two of the most often cited typologies of technological stalking, however these categories were listed as "cyberstalking" and "online" activities by the author. These labels reflect the researchers' choices to study technological stalking as purely computer-assisted stalking or harassment. Therefore, to preserve the integrity of the author's work, their original labels are retained. Ogilive (2000) provided three discrete categories: email cyberstalking, internet cyberstalking, and computer cyberstalking. Email cyberstalking included unsolicited email and spam. Internet cyberstalking consisted of the dissemination of personal information, pictures, and slanderous material on the internet. Computer cyberstalking was defined as the use of viruses, spyware, and Trojans in order to gain access to one's electronic files or track one's online movements.

On the other hand, Spence-Diehl's (2003) typology sought to explore if technological stalkers crossed over between online and offline environments. Specifically, the author argued there were three separate domains that describe the domains of the stalker's activities. First, the purely online context describes actions that permit the aggressor to remotely stalk his victim without any direct, physical contact, such as email threats or excessive social media posts. The second domain is harassment that begins online but shifts offline. For example, an aggressor may begin to harass their victim through an online dating service but shifts to offline activities, such as driving by their target's house or showing up at their workplace. The final domain has both an online and offline component. For example the aggressor may use posts on social media to provide information about the victim's whereabouts in order to force a confrontation. Although each typology offers a unique perspective of how and where stalkers operate,

unfortunately, to date, no study has used both classification systems to better understand technological stalking.

Types of Technological Stalking

The extant research has identified several types of technology used in stalking. According to Spitzberg and Hoobler (2002) each new development in technology has the potential to be used to inflict harm on others. The uses of these devices may be quite disturbing, but others have been deemed "mild" by previous researchers (e.g., Cupach & Spitzberg, 1998, 2003; Emerson, Ferris, & Gardner, 1998; Spitzberg & Hoobler, 2002). In this section, I will discuss the myriad ways a technological stalker uses data transmission devices to harass, stalk, and control their target, followed by a discussion of how incidents of technological stalking may be viewed as incidents of boundary turbulence.

Data transmission devices. The use of data transmission devices characterizes the technological stalking experience. Different than computer technology that requires an internet connection, data transmission devices are capable of sending and receiving information through a stand-alone technology. Specifically, technological stalkers are able to utilize these devices in several ways to terrorize their targets, specifically through repeated telephone calls and text messages, global positioning systems (GPS) as well as social media.

The extant literature finds repeated contact via telephone the most frequent behavior experienced by victims of intrusive contact following the demise of an intimate relationship (e.g., De Smet, Buysse, & Brondeel, 2011; Haugaard & Seri, 2003; Mechanic, Weaver, & Resick, 2000). For example, in a national sample of U.S. citizens,

Baum, Catalano, and Rand (2009) found 66.2% of participants reported they had been stalked and 57.2% had been harassed via the telephone. Moreover, Spitzberg's (2002) meta-analysis of stalking studies found telephone calls accounted for 57% of all incidents reported by participants. Studies that have examined post-dissolution stalking also report high rates of persistent and unwelcome telephone calls. For example, Dutton and Winstead (2006) reported repeated phone calls as the most frequent tactic used by the rejected party following relational termination. Likewise, Langhinrichsen-Rohling and colleagues' (2000) study of individuals' harassing behaviors following the demise of an intimate relationship found both the rejector and the rejected reported unwanted telephone calls and unwanted telephone messages as the most common experienced pursuit behaviors. Perhaps the most unnerving study was conducted by McFarlane, Campbell, and Watson (2002), which surveyed female stalking victims. The authors found that of the 348 victims in their study, 48% had reported unwanted and persistent phone calls prior to incidents of actual or attempted femicide committed by their past intimate.

A second popular method to stalk a target is with mobile phones through text messages. In an exploratory study of undergraduate students' use of mobile phones, Short and McMurray (2009) found over 35% of their sample had received unwanted text messages. Within this group, 75% felt irritated, 44% were worried, and 21% experienced fear. In addition to mobile phone usage to harass another, Burke, Wallen, Vail-Smith, and Knox (2011) found evidence that individuals use mobile phones to control their significant others. An overwhelming majority of their 804 participants indicated they had used text messages to excessively communicate with their partners while in the

relationships. This study is interesting because it demonstrates that technological stalking can occur between current intimates, not only after the relationship has ended.

Recent advances in technology have allowed stalkers to use mobile phone applications to follow victims' daily movements and their real-time location. Baum, Catalano, and Rand (2009) found 10% of their national sample stated they had been stalked through GPS technologies. If we recall the exemplars provided in the first chapter, stalking via GPS has serious consequences despite the limited empirical evidence.

The collection of devices in this section show the wide variety of technologies an aggressor may use to inflict harm on a victim. Moreover, this section demonstrates that although the telephone is a long-standing technology, stalkers are always finding new tools to torment their victims. We now shift our attention to the cyber-world where the use of computer technology is also used to stalk, harass, and intimidate individuals.

Computer technology. The rapid growth of computer technology and the internet in the last three decades provides aggressors many new tools to stalk their targets. The plethora of methods available to the aggressor makes one's ability to terrorize a victim than ever before. Moreover, the capability to remain anonymous and harass a target from a distance limits the aggressor's chances of facing prosecution. In this section, I will review the extant literature of the uses of email and social network websites as two technologies commonly cited within the technological stalking experience.

Unwanted and persistent email is discussed most frequently within the technological stalking literature (e.g., D'Ovidio & Doyle, 2003; Sheridan & Grant, 2007).

Several national surveys of college students report 14-25% have received excessive email (Finn, 2004; Fisher, Cullen & Turner, 2000). Email as a common frequent form of technological stalking has also been found in community samples. D'Ovidio and Doyle's (2003) investigation of the New York Police Department Computer Investigation & Technology Unit (CITU) cybercrimes records uncovered that email was used in 79% of all cases. One limitation of these studies is the lack of identification of the aggressor or their relationship with the victim. However, research reveals individuals receive fear-inducing emails from former intimates.

Research of ex-intimate use of email to terrorize their victims is well documented. For example, Baum and colleagues' (2009) use of national data revealed that 83% of their population who had been stalked also reported they had been intimidated via email. Botuck, Berretty, Cho, Tax, Archer, and Cattaneo (2009) also found threats reported in their study, yet to a lesser degree. Only 15% of the 88 participants had received actual physical threats. Last, email threats from potential intimates have also been demonstrated. Jerin and Dolinsky (2001) pool of 134 female internet dating website customers and found 26.9% had received obscene emails and 8.2% threatening emails from other subscribers.

Taken as a whole, these studies highlight the sheer volume of victims who have been threatened and harassed through email. Yet, as new technologies emerge, technological stalkers demonstrate they can adapt easily. As stated by Spitzberg and Hoobler (2002), "stalkers and obsessive pursuers clearly incorporate any means that facilitate their pursuit" (p. 75). Most recently, technological-aggressors have included social network websites as a means to wreak havoc in their victims' lives.

The popularity of social network sites in recent years has had a profound effect on relational communication. Although these sites can enhance the quality of an intimate relationship, conversely, research demonstrates social network sites can aid individuals in their ability to harass and stalk their others, including former intimates (Chaulk & Jones, 2011; Henson, Reyns, & Fisher, 2011; Lyndon et al., 2011). For example, Lyndon et al. (2011) ascertained their participants engaged in three primary activities on the past relational partner's social network page. First, over half of the participants partook in covert surveillance and provocation by searching the ex-intimate's photos, posting status updates to make the other jealous, and writing messages aimed at either taunting the other or attempting reunification. Second, venting was identified as comments designed to denigrate or ridicule the friends or the new partners of one's former intimate. Finally, public harassment included posting embarrassing photos or information, as well as using a "fake" profile to gain access to the ex-intimate's page to cause trouble.

Chaulk and Jones (2011) surveyed 230 undergraduates to find evidence of relational intrusions from both offenders and targets on Facebook. The researchers found five different categories of intrusions, including: primary contact attempts, secondary contact attempts (i.e., contacting others connected to the target), monitoring or surveillance, expressions, and invitations. Primary contacts consisted of items such as inviting the victim's friends and family to join a Facebook group or page created by the aggressor posing as the target in order to gain information and appearing at locations the victim had mentioned in their posts. This category demonstrated how the information shared on social media may lead to offline stalking. Next, the secondary contact category showed how the aggressor makes contact with the family and friends of the target in

order to disseminate previously co-owned information or malicious gossip. Third, the

technological stalker and target report monitoring is a common use of Facebook. The

actions associated with this category are akin to the covert provocation tactics in Lyndon

et al.'s (2011) study. These behaviors include using the victim's Facebook posts to "keep

tabs" on their former intimate, excessively checking the target's status updates, and

reading the victim's online conversations with others. The fourth and fifth categories,

expressions and invitations, demonstrate the use of excessive communication and

exaggerated expressions of affection found in past research of technological stalking.

Therefore, this study is consistent with previous findings that demonstrate technological

stalkers use both excessive communication and surveillance to harass and stalk their past

intimates.

Thus far, I have discussed the multitude of tools used by technological stalkers to

symbolically and actually infringe upon their past intimates' privacy. Thus, we know

that ex-partners utilize technological stalking tactics, such as the use data transmission

technologies to ascertain information about one's former intimate. Yet, we do not have a

clear understanding about how the use of these devices may be used in order to violate a

target's privacy boundaries. Therefore, I will offer several possible types of privacy

violations that may result from global dissemination of information.

Global dissemination of information. As stated previously, a blatant disregard

for established privacy rules is the public dissemination of private information (Petronio,

2002). One method aggressors use to make public the private or co-owned information

accumulated during an intimate relationship is through posts on the internet. In these

instances, individuals use a variety of online sites and social media outlets to vent or seek

information about their past relational partner (Lyndon et al., 2011). For example, social networking websites are one efficient avenue by which technological stalkers can disclose private information and spread vicious rumors about their victim without confrontation. In their exploratory study of students' experience with technological stalking, Paullet, Rota, and Swan (2009) found a positive relationship between on-line harassment and usage of social networking websites. The most frequent incidents reported in the study were the posting of personal information, threatening comments, and offensive or altered images.

A second type of global dissemination is outing/trickery. Willard's (2007) study of cyberbullies found individuals use outing/trickery in order to trick the target into revealing personal or sensitive information which is then forwarded or distributed to outside others. These messages are then revealed to others in order to embarrass the target in a public forum. In a nationally publicized case, a young woman was tricked into revealing her most private thoughts to a boy she believed was a potential suitor, but, in fact, was the mother of a classmate (Johnston, 2009). The information gained by the woman was then posted on multiple internet platforms, including social media and a website created specifically about the victim. Because the website allowed others to post hateful and harmful remarks about the victim, this example exemplifies both dimensions of Willard's conceptualization of outing/trickery: unwitting revelation of private information and making these details public in order to ridicule the target as well as damage his or her reputation and friendships. Moreover, the outing/trickery method employs the use of gossiping and spreading rumors.

According to Petronio (2002), gossip is a sub-type of boundary violation. She defines gossip as a message "about someone else's private information that may only be partly true, or that may not be true at all" (p. 193). Several studies have found technological stalkers use websites, social network sites, and personal blogs, to spread malicious rumors and misinformation about their former partner (Burgess & Baker, 2002; Finn & Banach, 2000; Lyndon et al., 2011; Melander, 2010). Similar to outing, past intimate technological stalkers commit privacy violations when they gossip about private information or spread rumors as a means to enact revenge on their past partner.

In this section, I have reviewed the historical roots of technological stalking research. I have offered an explanation of the variety of devices used by technological stalkers in their quest to inflict harm upon their victims. Although these past studies have provided a strong backdrop for this current project, we still have limited information about how one's past relational history with their aggressor may play a role in victims' technological stalking experiences. Therefore, the following research question is posited: RQ2: How do technological stalking victims describe their experiences of privacy violations committed by their past intimate?

To summarize, technological stalkers use a plethora of devices to violate their ex-intimates' privacy. Once this action has occurred, the victim may experience a range of emotions such as fear, anger, and embarrassment. In an effort to understand how individuals attempt to manage or cope with the technology stalking by their former partner, the next section will examine boundary turbulence and the tactics used by victims in their attempt to end the harassment.

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The Management of Privacy Boundaries after Boundary Turbulence

As stated previously, the inability to coordinate privacy boundaries with another or group is known as boundary turbulence. Boundary coordination is achieved when individuals are able to negotiate ownership of information and follow the rules for revealing and concealing with others (Petronio, 2000). However, during relational dissolution, individuals are often faced with difficulty regarding private co-owned information that if not managed properly may result in boundary turbulence. Therefore, intimates should strive to create and enact privacy rules that guide the decisions about how they will handle their co-owned and private information in future situations. There are several questions that intimates should address. For example, when is it appropriate for one to contact their ex-intimate? Should parties share information about their lives after the relationship has ended? How much information about the termination should each person share with others? These decisions directly impact the permeability of the intimates' shared privacy boundaries. As a result, the probability for violations that result in boundary turbulence is high if former intimates are unable to coordinate their boundaries during and following relational termination. Unfortunately, to date, research has largely overlooked what types of turbulence individuals experience as well as how boundary turbulence is experienced in the relational dissolution phase.

Following episodes of boundary turbulence, individuals must renegotiate their boundaries with not only the aggressor, but possibly with others affected by the revelation of private information. How one responds to the turbulence may depend on the type of violation committed, the content of the disclosure, and the reach of the disclosure of private information. However, due to the lack of empirical evidence in this

area, we must examine other bodies of literature to offer other possible responses to privacy violations.

Although little is known about the effects of boundary turbulence, the extant research has shown technological stalking has many physical and psychological impacts, such as somatic episodes caused by anxiety and mental anguish, as well as changes in eating and sleeping patterns, nightmares (e.g., Bocij, Griffiths, & McFarlane, 2002; Bocij & McFarlane, 2003, Kennedy, 2000; Lamberg, 2002; Mechanic, Uhlmansiek, Weaver, & Resick, 2000; Sheridan & Grant, 2007). Thus, understanding how one copes after breaches in privacy boundaries have occurred should be important to both researchers and practitioners. I will begin with an overview of past research that explores how individuals cope with technological stalking. Next, I will provide a summary of the boundary turbulence literature. Finally, I will conclude with a discussion of how individuals cope with privacy violations that occur in when an aggressor uses technology to stalk or harass their victims.

Technological Stalking Coping

Currently, there are few empirical investigations that explore victims' coping responses to technological stalking. Each offer several methods that victims employ during their attempts to end the harassment. First, Alexy and colleagues (2005) examined college students' perceptions of technological stalking. The participants read vignettes of real technological talking cases followed by the presentation of a list of tactics associated with traditional stalking. The authors found communicative acts, such as yelling at the person, screening phone calls, as well as reasoning, threatening, and pleading with the stalker were common responses. From the results, we can infer that the

victim might continue to communicate with the aggressor in order to attempt to re-calibrate their privacy boundaries. Although this may appear to be the simplest approach to end technological stalking, this method may not be the most effective.

Spitzberg and Hoobler's (2002) examination of cyber-obsessional intrusion by past intimates found interaction with the stalker the most common coping response following declarations for increased intimacy. Remarkably, in cases where the aggressor continued their pursuit into the offline realm, interaction was no longer used to the end the harassment. The authors argued this response may be because savvy technological stalkers may step up their pursuit in order to paralyze their victim with fear. However, Spitzberg and Hoobler are quick to caution more research is needed to fully investigate this phenomenon.

A second area that has investigated the coping responses of technological stalking victims has focused on whether a prior relationship with aggressor changes how victims deal with the aggressor. Sheridan and Grant's (2007) exploration found victims utilizing the communicative methods listed above with no significant differences between individuals stalked with technology and those traditionally stalked by a past intimate. Interestingly, participants who reported the incidents to police believed the police took them more seriously when the aggressor was not an intimate. As a result, these victims may have had the police intervene on their behalf, therefore may have not needed to communicate directly with their aggressor.

Finally, Finn's (2004) investigation of students' reports of technological stalking encounters found few individuals utilize outside resources to end online abuses. This study found that only 6.4% of the 339 students surveyed reported harassment through

technological means to an authority. Shockingly, 70.7% did not report the technological

harassment. Of the students who indicated they had experienced technological

harassment, these participants were more likely to experience e-mail harassment, instant

messaging harassment, and to receive unwanted pornography. Students reported the

harassment mainly to their internet service providers (30.4%), but also to residence hall

advisors, the Computer Information Services help desk, the campus police, and other

campus offices. Sadly, within the population who had been harassed, less than 50%

indicated they were satisfied by the assistance they received. Those who did not report

the incidents cited reasons such as not feeling the issue was serious, ignoring the

messages, handling the episodes personally, yet nearly 13% did not know where to turn

to for help.

The studies in this section show how individuals use communicative techniques to

engage their aggressor in order to address the technological stalking. However, it is

important to note that the majority of these studies have relied on survey responses that

may not be sensitive enough to capture the nuanced detail of one's technological stalking

experience. Moreover, in several of these studies, the data of both stranger and former

partner situations were aggregated. Therefore, a deeper examination of the lived

experiences of individuals who had been technologically stalked by a past intimate may

reveal alternative tactics.

Boundary Turbulence Coping

Following privacy violations, the inability to coordinate privacy boundaries leads

to boundary turbulence. Despite the dearth of research that has explored how individuals

attempt to manage or cope with the after effects of privacy violations, Afifi's (2003)

study of step-families' may provide insight for how individuals respond following incidents of boundary turbulence. First, in Afifi's study, families who use open and direct confrontation about the violation have increased effectiveness when creating new boundaries. Second, when parents present a united front towards their children the family was able to better enforce privacy rules and prevent alliances from forming. Third, the development of privacy rules about what constitutes appropriate communication allowed for the clear boundaries. Finally, in cases where one party was unwilling to abide by the newly established privacy rules, communication was minimized through lack of direct messages and increased usage of indirect channels. This study underscores the boundary turbulence inherent in difficult relationships but also how turbulence can be managed successfully. Moreover, Afifi demonstrated how children are often compelled by their parents to enter into new relationships within their stepfamilies despite any of the children's possible objections or reservations. Therefore, this study may provide clues into how one manages boundary turbulence in non-consensual relationships.

Afifi's (2003) study reveals several communicative strategies that may be useful in stopping technological stalking. First, victims may directly request the aggressor cease all harmful activity. However, as discussed above, this tactic may be met with mixed results. Second, the victim may have outside others, such as friends, family, and law enforcement contact the aggressor. This united front may demonstrate to the aggressor that the victim is not an isolated, vulnerable target. The assistance provided by law enforcement and other legal professional also may facilitate the transmission of indirect messages, such as arresting the perpetrator as well as preparing legal documents and

serving restraining orders. These would be classified as indirect messages because the victim does not have direct contact with the aggressor.

Internet Privacy Violations Coping

Researchers consistently find individuals are aware of the risks associated with privacy settings yet do not enforce rigid control over private information (e.g., Andrejevic, 2002; Livingstone, 2008; Tufekci, 2008). These studies show that although all social network and dating websites have privacy policies, individuals continue to post private information. Individuals often report the benefits of internet communication outweigh the possible risks (e.g., Joinson & Paine, 2007; Youn, 2006). For example, one may post their plans for the evening on a social network page so that their friends can come join the fun. However, if this person has not deleted their ex-intimate from their list of contacts, the spurned lover will also know the target's location and make nasty comments to the post. As stated earlier, Lyndon et al.'s (2011) study of the uses of Facebook reported former intimates engage in a tremendous amount of traditional relational intrusion and cyber-obsessional pursuit based on information garnered from online posts. Although some individuals do pay heed to the warnings of the possible dangers of internet disclosures on social media, a more common scenario is for one to delete their ex-intimate from their "friend" or "follower" list after a breach of privacy boundaries (e.g., Debatin, Lovejoy, Horn, & Horn, 2009; Hitchcock, 2006; Pittaro, 2007). The use of increased privacy settings and the elimination of the former partner's ability to post on the victim's social media accounts seem like a common sense approach, individuals often are unable to block their former partners from having access to their information. For example, on a social network site, one's former partner also may be a

friend of a trusted confidante. Thus, if we return to the example above, the aggressor still has the ability to locate their ex-intimate via the confidante's social network page. Therefore, the target may need to negotiate or renegotiate several unique privacy boundaries with others to avoid offline and online stalking. Thus, individuals may be able to manage their private information through the coordination of privacy boundaries with others.

In the age of social networking, blogging, and the posting of personal data on the internet, technological stalkers have easy access to our private information through outside others. As a result, the establishment of privacy rules with others about what information is not allowed to be disclosed may aid in limiting unwanted communication from the aggressor. For example, a technological stalking victim may need to assert tighter boundaries with family and friends about information posted on social networks sites about plans with the victim or an individual may need to submit a request to their employer not to release personal details on the company's website. However, this claim is purely speculative and needs to be explored empirically.

In this section, I have argued that following incidents of boundary turbulence, victims may have a variety of coping mechanisms, yet may need to create new privacy boundaries, not only with the aggressor, but with outside others, as well. However, the limited amount of research in this area demonstrates a clear need for this study. In an effort to begin to illuminate unique coping strategies used in a non-consensual relationship that can extend CPM, the following research question is offered:

RQ 3: How do victims of intimate technological stalking attempt to manage privacy boundaries following incidents of boundary turbulence?

The termination of an intimate relationship is often a difficult process. Because the pair shares a relational history, they have accumulated co-owned information. The ability to effectively coordinate the privacy rules about the concealment and disclose of the information is crucial to maintaining the privacy of both parties. However, as I have argued in this chapter, the inability to abide by the established rules may result in privacy violations that may be manifested in technological stalking behaviors. Therefore, the boundary turbulence that occurs after the violation must be managed. In an effort to investigate these claims, the next chapter will provide a thorough explanation of how I will conduct this current study to include: an explanation of the interpretive paradigm, a rationale for phenomenology as my chosen method, a description of the procedures used to recruit participants, a description of the study participants and the data collection procedures, as well as an overview of how I analyzed the data for this current study.

CHAPTER 3: METHODS

This current study is an exploration of the lived experiences of individuals who have been technologically stalked by a past intimate after relational dissolution. In order to capture the rich detail of these experiences, I utilize van Manen's (1990) hermeneutic phenomenological method. Specifically, this approach will fulfill the current study's two overarching goals. The first aim of this study is to explore how victims describe the management of privacy boundaries with their aggressor after relational dissolution but prior to the onset of technological stalking. To date, researchers have not investigated how the mismanagement of privacy boundaries may contribute to the technological stalking of past intimates. The second goal is to examine victims' reports of technological stalking and how the victims cope with these experiences.

I begin my inquiry with an examination of how victims describe the context of relational dissolution prior to incidents of technological stalking. This focus illuminates the complexity of the (mis)management of privacy boundaries between past intimates through the lens of Communication Privacy Management (CPM) theory. This theory allows us to examine how and why the permeability of individuals' privacy boundaries with their former partners may change following the end of an intimate relationship. Moreover, an examination of the privacy rules established or the lack of privacy rules put in place during the relational termination phase may aid in the identification of key aspects in the technological stalking experience.

The second goal was to examine individuals' lived experiences with technological stalking during and after privacy boundary violations and boundary turbulence. Specifically, I examined the victims' narratives for incidents of reported

privacy violations that resulted in boundary turbulence. In addition, I attempted to locate instances where individuals described their attempts to manage or to cope with the boundary turbulence and the after effects of technological stalking. Thus, this present project used interpretive methods to describe these phenomena from the narratives supplied by the participants.

In the following chapter, I will detail the methods used to meet the project goals. I will first provide a rationale for the use of the interpretative paradigm in the present study. Next, I will explain how the use of a hermeneutic phenomenological methodology guided this current project. Third, I will discuss the procedures proposed to meet the aims of this present study. Fourth, I provide a detailed plan for how the data analysis was conducted. Last, I will discuss how I verified the results of this present study.

Rationale for Interpretive Paradigm

This section will begin with a broad discussion of the interpretive paradigm assumptions in order to explain the usefulness of an interpretive lens to aid in our understanding the participants' lived experiences. Also, I will demonstrate how the application of a hermeneutic phenomenological method in this current study allowed me to uncover the nuanced details within these incidents.

Assumptions of the Interpretive Paradigm

The goal of interpretive research is to "attempt to make sense out of, or to interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 3). As an overarching paradigm, the interpretive perspective is guided by several philosophical assumptions. In this section, I will discuss the ontological, methodological, and epistemological assumptions used by interpretive researchers in their efforts to develop an understanding of a phenomenon.

Ontology. First, the ontological assumption of an interpretive researcher is that reality is subjective. There is no singular Truth or truth. Instead, "the social world consists of multiple realities according to the subjective position of the person or group" (Baxter & Braithwaite, 2008, p. 8). Interpretivists attempt to see social action from each individual's point of view in order gain insight into what is occurring. Thus, interpretive researchers seek to understand the perspective of the actors themselves to identify both the "native's point of view" and the commonalities in meaning among individuals (Baxter & Babbie, 2004; Creswell, 2007). The evidence of multiple realities is demonstrated in the actual words and phrases from individuals under investigation. Because each individual offers a different perspective of an experience, interpretive researchers are mindful of unique contributions of their participants, yet also seek to uncover how discourses are produced and maintained in a larger societal context. Therefore, the methodological choices made by the researcher permit the experiences of the participants to aid in our understanding of a complex phenomenon.

Methodology. Methodologically, interpretive research is an emergent process (Babbie & Baxter, 2004; Creswell, 2007). The researcher sets aside preconceived notions and works with individuals to investigate the details of their experiences before the establishment of generalizations. However, when an established theory is used, the researcher is informed by the main tenets of the theory during the initial stages of the investigation and analysis to build a solid foundation. The theory serves as a sensitizing device in the study of a phenomenon. Yet, as the project progresses, the researcher may modify their data collection and data analysis as new details and themes emerge. In this sense, interpretive methodological assumptions drive the research project not the method

employed and avoids the common problem of the synonymous use of the words

"methodology" and "methods" (Caeli, Ray, & Mill, 2003).

Epistemology. The use of qualitative methods is rooted in the epistemological

assumptions of interpretive research. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2005), research

in the qualitative paradigm is a positioned activity that places the observer in the context

of what is being explored. In other words, qualitative scholars work jointly with the

participants to describe a specific phenomenon. This joint activity allows the interaction

between the researcher and the participants to socially construct knowledge and meaning.

As a result, multiple realities are created and valued because the researcher and

participant bring in their own unique experiences and insights to the discussion.

Hermeneutic Phenomenology within the Present Study

The dearth of research regarding individuals who have been technologically

stalked by a past intimate presents researchers with tremendous opportunities. As

indicated by Creswell (2007), qualitative methods are preferred in the study of issues

where a complex, detailed understanding of a phenomenon is needed. The qualitative

methodology of hermeneutic phenomenology was selected for this present project in

order to develop a deeper understanding of relational technological stalking through

individuals' lived experiences. In this section, I will begin with a general definition of

hermeneutic phenomenology; next I will compare and contrast this method with

phenomenology; last, I will explain how the use of hermeneutic phenomenology was

used to examine relational technological stalking within this present study.

Hermeneutic Phenomenology. Hermeneutic phenomenology as a methodology

attempts to reconcile the works of Husserl, Heidegger, and Gadamer in order to examine

the lived experiences of individuals. According to van Manen (1990), hermeneutic phenomenology "is a descriptive (phenomenological) methodology because it wants to let things speak for themselves, it is an interpretative (hermeneutic) methodology because it claims there are no such things as uninterpreted phenomena ... even the 'facts' of lived experiences need to be capture in language (the human science text) and this is an inevitable interpretive process" (p. 180). However, other researchers argue descriptive phenomenology and hermeneutic phenomenology are distinct methodologies (e.g., Hein & Austin, 2001; Laverty, 2003; Polkinghorne, 1983).

Descriptive phenomenology and hermeneutic phenomenology share several key similarities, but also have differences in how a researcher explores their subject. One key similarity between descriptive and hermeneutic phenomenology is the search for a holistic understanding of a phenomenon. According to van Manen (1990), the overarching purpose of the descriptive phenomenological approach is to "grasp the very nature of the thing" (p. 177). To achieve this goal, interpretive researchers attempt to describe the commonalities of the participants' experiences with a specific phenomenon. Like descriptive phenomenology, hermeneutic phenomenology also is concerned with the human experience as it is lived. The focus for both is toward uncovering details and seemingly trivial aspects within one's experiences that may be taken for granted in order to create meaning and achieve (Wilson & Hutchinson, 1991). Although the goal of descriptive phenomenology and hermeneutic phenomenology is not to generalize the results, these methods permit the researcher, the participants, and the audience to develop holistic nature of an event or series of occurrences. Thus, both descriptive phenomenological and hermeneutic phenomenological researchers intentionally seek out

individuals who can provide rich, detailed, and nuanced accounts of the particular phenomenon under investigation. Moreover, both require the researcher to be rigorously thoughtful, rhetorically sensitive, and constantly open to experience (van Manen, 1997). However, how a researcher arrives at his or her conclusions about the phenomenon is a crucial difference between descriptive phenomenology and hermeneutic phenomenology. This differentiation is often evident in choice of methodology employed by the researcher.

Methodology. The involvement of the researcher and subsequent interpretations made are the key to understanding the separation between descriptive phenomenology and hermeneutic phenomenology. According to Laverty, "phenomenological research is descriptive and focuses on the structure of experience, the organizing principles that give form and meaning to the life world" (2003, p. 27). In other words, a descriptive phenomenological study seeks to illustrate a phenomenon in its purest essence devoid of any outside influence or interpretation from the researcher. During a descriptive phenomenological research project, the researcher takes precautions to "bracket" any pre-existing biases, assumptions, and knowledge in order to be " as open and receptive as possible to participants' descriptions of their experience of the phenomenon" (Hein & Austin, p. 6, 2000). This stance allows the researchers to fully attend to the participants' accounts in order to interrogate the phenomenon on its own terms.

On the other hand, the goal of hermeneutic inquiry is to create for the co-construction of meanings between the participants' and the researcher, therefore the use of any previous knowledge or theory is an important element. Hermeneutic phenomenologists maintain that a researcher's past experiences and potential

preconceptions and biases cannot be bracketed out. Instead, the use of this information allows the hermeneutic researcher to interpret and to expound on the meanings and assumptions stated by the participants particularly when they may have difficulty in articulating their experiences (Crotty, 1998; van Manen, 1997). Thus, the use of theory to guide the researcher's inquiry is permissible within hermeneutic phenomenological studies. This distinction also has implications for the methodological choices made by researchers.

The current project. To understand, describe, and interpret the experience of technological stalking by a past intimate, this current project utilized van Manen's (1990) framework for conducting hermeneutic phenomenological research. Each "step" was consistent with the interpretive paradigm and was associated with an activity performed by the researcher to guide the inquiry. Although van Manen is quick to caution researchers not to lose sight of the flexibility inherent in the hermeneutic phenomenological approach, he outlines six methodical procedures. The stages are not meant to be conducted in strict, linear fashion, but instead may move back and forth during data collection and data analysis.

In the first step, the researcher locates a phenomenon of interest. Specifically, van Manen (1990) identifies the first stage as "turning to a phenomenon of interest" (p. 31, 1990). For this current project, the first step was to conduct a thorough review of the literatures of technological stalking, Communication Privacy Management theory, and relational dissolution in order to develop suitable research questions. The decision to investigate the (mis)management of privacy boundaries by past intimates and the subsequent privacy violations as the selected phenomena was informed and influenced by

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the reviews of all three areas of research. Moreover, these literatures were consulted during each subsequent step of data collection and data analysis.

The second step involved the selection of participants and the actual interview process. The goal was to locate individuals who are able to contribute first-hand accounts of their experiences. This step involved the careful and purposeful selection of inclusion and exclusion criteria with the aim of identifying participants who have lived experience with both relational dissolution and technological stalking. van Manen (1990, p. 31) labeled this stage" investigating experience as we live it." Once participants were located, the next step was for the researcher and participant to engage in dialogue in order to develop the co-creation of meaning. In this current project, the use of semi-structured interviews provided the investigator and participants opportunities to engage in dialogue in order develop an understanding of what is meant to be technologically stalked by a past intimate.

The third and fourth stages involved the researcher's active involvement with the data through "reflecting on essential themes which characterize the phenomenon" and "describing the phenomenon' (van Manen, 1990, p. 33). The aim during these stages is to locate words and phrases that give meaning to the phenomenon. The goal is illuminate key aspects within the participants' narratives in order to develop a written description of the phenomenon. In this current project, I created and maintained a journal of field notes taken during each interview. The journal was used to record my insights and preliminary impressions observed before, during, and after the interviews.

Finally, during the fifth and sixth steps, the researcher further refines their interpretation of the phenomenon by moving beyond the surface descriptions provided by

the participants. van Manen (1990) refers to these steps as "maintaining a strong and oriented relation to the phenomenon" and "balancing the research context by considering the parts and the whole." For the current project, I attempted to maintain *hermeneutic alertness*. van Manen (1997) suggests researchers step back to reflect on the meanings of situations rather than accepting their pre-conceptions and interpretations at face value. Thus, each interview received multiple reads throughout the data collection and data analysis processes.

Procedures

After the review of the pertinent literature, one of the first activities a researcher partakes in after the identification of a phenomenon of interest is to locate individuals who have lived experience about the subject matter under investigation. Because the goal of this present project was to explore the experiences of individuals who have been technologically stalked by their past relational partners, great efforts were made to identify potential participants. In this section, I outline the criteria I used to assess inclusion and exclusion from the study, as well as identify sites of recruitment, and discuss how the number of participants was selected.

Participant Criteria

The participants for this study were individuals who fit specific criteria. The first criterion was to locate participants who perceived they had been or are currently a target of technological stalking. In this current study, I employed a modified version of Bocij and McFarlane's (2002) definition to seek individuals who had been harassed or stalked through the electronic transmission of threats, false accusations, or computer surveillance that caused the target to suffer emotional distress. This criterion was used in order to

locate participants where the victim perceived that the aggressor has utilized technology to disrupt the life of the target. These technologies include all devices capable of data transmission, such as landlines and mobile phones, GPS, as well as the internet through email, blog posts, and social media. Although the legal definition requires a victim to have experienced recurrent electronic contact with the technological stalker that resulted in fear, I will include individuals who experienced mild annoyance and irritation, as well as those who had experienced psychological and somatic distress. This criterion allowed me to explore a diverse range of experiences in order to obtain a holistic sense of what it means to be technologically stalked by a past intimate.

Second, individuals must have been involved in an intimate relationship with their aggressor prior to the episodes of technological stalking. Because the nature of this study examines the management of privacy boundaries and the disclosure of private information, the term "intimate relationship" is defined as a pair bond that has experienced the "relational process in which individuals have come to know the innermost, subjective aspects of another and are known in a like manner" (Chelune, Robison, & Kommor, 1984, p. 14). In this view, intimacy unfolds during a dynamic process whereby an individual discloses personal information, thoughts, and feelings to a partner; receives a response from the partner; and interprets that response as understanding, validating, and caring (Reis & Patrick, 1996; Reis & Shaver, 1988). Therefore, the definition does not presuppose individuals have been involved romantically or sexually. Instead, this all-encompassing definition may include former lovers, close friends, co-workers, and family members. This criterion was included in order to exclude individuals who have been technologically stalked by acquaintances and

unknown others. The call for participants and recruitment scripts used the layman's terms spouse, boyfriend girlfriend, close friend, or family member to avoid confusion (see Appendices A, B, and C). It should be noted, however, that all participants within this current study, had been involved in a romantic relationship with their aggressor.

Third, in order to provide accurate descriptions of the participants' experiences, I limited the scope of this current project to include individuals who are currently being or those who had been technologically stalked within the last two years. Although Polkinghorne (1989) argued researchers should strive to select an array of participants who can offer a full range of perspectives, the time restriction will be included in order to locate participants who have recent recollections of the technological stalking incidents. Moreover, the inclusion of both current and recent victims provided the diversity of results important in a hermeneutic phenomenological study.

Finally, only individuals who opted to take part in a face-to-face or Skype interview after being briefed on the present study's goals and given their informed consent were included. Because this present study involved a highly sensitive topic that may have resulted in further distress, individuals were thoroughly briefed before and after the interview. I provided all participants with contact information and materials for agencies who may aid in the recovery process for victims of technological stalking.

Recruitment

I began recruitment for this current study with purposive sampling to aid in the identification of the primary participants. I selected the sample based on individuals who fit the criteria listed above; specifically those have been stalked technologically by a past intimate. There were several sites where I advertised for volunteers.

First, I posted a call for participants on the Working to Halt Online Abuse (WHOA) website as well as the WHOA Facebook group (see Appendix A). These two web-based forums provide crucial resources, such as information and services, to individuals who have experienced internet harassment and other forms of electronic abuse. At the onset of this current project, I contacted Jayne Hitchcock, the President of WHOA and a former technological victim. The organization supplied written approval to the researcher.

Second, I gathered a snowball sample from individuals who may know someone who has experienced relational technological stalking. This technique is a method of expanding the sample by asking one informant or participant to recommend others for interviewing (Babbie, 1995). This sample was generated from personal contacts, as well as leads from previous interviewees (see Appendix B).

Finally, I advertised the study and its goals in communication courses at both my home university as well as others where I have personal connections (see Appendix C). This may have resulted in the abundance of a college student population within this current study. However, research has indicated this age range is most susceptible to technological stalking in general (e.g., Alexy et al., Finn, 2004). Thus, I was mindful of this potential bias as I collected data and analyzed the data in order not over-represent this population to the exclusion of others.

Number of Participants

Researchers who conduct hermeneutic phenomenology studies should not enter into a project with a set number of participants in mind. According to Whitehead and Annels (2007), the reliance on informed participants is a primary concern in a

hermeneutic phenomenology project. As a result, the authors argue the richness of data is considered most important and sample size needs neither to be large nor representative. Byrne (2001) also argued because the rich descriptions offered by the participants and researchers serve as an abundant source for locating and interpreting relevant information; quality of themes should indicate adequacy of sample size.

Similarly, descriptive phenomenological research projects do not mandate a specific number of participants because the goal is to develop a thorough understanding of a specific, and often complex, phenomenon. Yet, within the scholarly community, there appears to be disagreement about the satisfactory sample size within phenomenological research studies, as a whole. For example, Wertz (2005) explains if in-depth knowledge of one individual's experience will satisfy the goal(s) of the research, one participant may be sufficient. Boyd (2001) suggests two to ten participants or research subjects and Creswell (1998, p. 113) recommends "long interviews with up to 10 people" for a phenomenological study. On the other hand, Polkinghorne (1989) suggests 5-25 individuals may provide enough data to achieve phenomenological saturation. Phenomenological saturation occurs when the researcher has obtained enough data to have a complete description of the phenomenon and further inquiry would not add any new or substantive explanations (Cohen, Kahn, & Steeves, 2000; Polkinghorne, 1989; Sandelowski, 1996).

Within this current study, I located sufficient participants to provide rich description until phenomenological saturation occurred. Within a hermeneutic phenomenological project, the researcher often conducts data collection and data analysis simultaneously. As a result, I revisited the data previously collected in order to

continuously develop and flesh out aspects of the phenomenon until saturation was obtained (Sandelowski, 1996). This was achieved by taking extensive field notes and keeping a well maintained audit trail, as suggested by van Manen (1990).

Participants

A total of 27 participants were identified and interviewed. Twenty-five of the participants lived in the United States, the other 2 were military personnel stationed overseas. Participants ranged in age from 20 to 48 (mean age: 27). Of the 27 participants, 10 were male and 17 were female. Despite the author's intent, a majority of the participants were Caucasian (22 white, 3 black, 1 Hispanics, 1 Asian). Members of the sample ($n = 23$) were predominately involved in heterosexual relationships. The average length of the relationship was 5.9 years and the average length of time since the separation from the aggressor was 1.2 years.

Data Collection Procedures

The data collected for this present study involved three stages. In the first phase, I asked for the participant's verbal informed consent. This included a thorough briefing of the study's aims as well as the benefits and risks involved in their participation. This was done to ensure all participants were comfortable with the subject matter prior to the administration of the demographic survey and the interview process. Second, individuals were asked to fill out a short demographic survey (see Appendix D) that consists of items regarding the age, their race, their past and current relationship with aggressor, the length of the relationship prior to the onset of technological stalking, the frequency of contact by the aggressor during the technological stalking, and the types of privacy violations committed by the aggressor. In addition, a portion of Spitzberg and Cupach's (2011)

Obsessional Relational Intrusion Victimization Report (ORIVR) was included to prime

the participants for the interview. Specifically, the measures that explore mediated

context and proxy pursuit were used in order to explore specific technological stalking

behaviors. The demographic survey and ORIVR were given to participants prior to the

interview. For participants who opted for the Skype interview, these measures were

administered orally. During the third step in the data collection phase, I engaged the

participants in semi-structured interviews via face-to-face conversations or Skype in an

effort to uncover the individuals' experiences with relational technological stalking.

Semi-structured Interviews

The use of interviews is a valuable method for interpretive scholars to collect

information from individuals with lived experiences because they are able to articulate

their first-hand knowledge about a particular phenomenon (Baxter & Babbie, 2004;

Creswell, 1998). Moreover, this method allows researchers to uncover the nuanced detail

of a specific context in order to develop a more complete understanding of the

phenomenon. As a result, I employed semi-structured interviews to guide the participants

to areas specific to this present study, but also allowed participants to elaborate on their

specific experiences.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted because of their balance of flexibility

with structure. The flexibility of such interviews allowed the researcher to probe

interviewees' responses to develop a deeper understanding of a phenomenon. This type

of interview also provided structure that allowed the researcher the ability to compare and

contrast the experiences of all participants.

In keeping with the hermeneutic phenomenology methodology, semi-structured interviews served very specific purposes for this current study. First, interviews were the means for exploring and gathering of first-hand accounts of lived experiences. Second, interviews also allowed participants to share their stories in their own words. Third, interviews allowed for a conversational relationship to unfold between the participant and the researcher in order to create a mutually developed description of the meaning of each participant's experience. This was achieved through engaged dialogue and reflection with the participant on the topic at hand (van Manen, 1997).

In this current study, I collected the thick, rich detail necessitated for a hermeneutic phenomenological study. For all interviews, I started with the same question: "Can you describe what your relationship was like before the split? This question was asked in order to obtain participants' descriptions of their relationship with their past intimate prior to the modifications made to their privacy boundaries. Next, because all participants were involved in a romantic relationship, I inquired about the break up process with their former intimate. I also asked the participants about the types of contact each party has had following the dissolution of the partnership. This portion of the interview provided insight into the process of boundary renegotiation. These questions were followed with more specific probes regarding instances of privacy violations. These inquiries were used to illuminate instances where individuals were confronted with technological stalking. In each category of the interview, the same broad questions were asked of all those involved to ensure sufficient coverage. Yet due to individual differences of experiences, supplementary questions were needed in instances

where the researcher felt clarification was needed or an interviewee wanted to disclose new or different information (see Appendix E).

A combination of face-to-face (n = 18) and Skype (n = 11) interviews were conducted due to the geographic diversity of the participants. The interviews were conducted at a time and location convenient to the participant and in a private room to protect their confidentiality. The interviews lasted 52 minutes on average, ranging from 36 to 72 minutes. This time represents the total time for the interview; the time for the administration of the demographic survey questions prior to the interview is not included in this figure. To protect their identities, the participants' selected a pseudonym after verbal informed consent was obtained. The names included in the results section are the pseudonyms selected by the participants.

In this section, I presented the process of participant selection, included information about the study participants, and argued that the use of semi-structured interviews was an appropriate method of data collection for this current project. Although the goal of this qualitative study was not to generalize their data per se, the use of consistent probes allowed me to take notice of specific themes presented in individuals' experiences. This enhanced my ability to develop an overall understanding of how past relational partners used technology to interrupt, distort, and violate the privacy boundaries erected by their targets.

Data Analysis

The interviews were audio-taped and transcribed verbatim by the primary researcher and a paid professional, yielding a total of 191 single-spaced pages of data. In order to analyze the data, I used van Manen's (1990) hermeneutic phenomenological

method to analyze the data and Owen's (1984, 1985) conceptualization of thematic interpretation in order to unitize the data. The two methods of data analysis allowed this researcher to create a piece of writing that illuminates the meaning of a specific phenomenon, within this current study.

In order to meet the desired outcome of a study using the hermeneutic phenomenological approach, data collection and analysis occurred simultaneously through an iterative process. Specifically, as each interview was completed, I examined each individual text to note of any commonalities between the newest information gathered against information that had been previously collected. In addition, this method often revealed news areas that needed further examination in order to further develop and clarify the phenomena under investigation. This process allowed me to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon by contrasting each part against the whole. Moreover, this process allowed me to form impressions of individuals' experiences with technological stalking through early stage thematic analysis. Thus, I attempted to remain consistent with Cohen, Kahn, and Steeves (2000) argument that data analysis should occur during data collection because I attended to what was being said and not said by the participants. Additionally, careful maintenance of an audit trail and extensive journaling, allowed me to record and label possible themes for further analysis upon completion of data collection.

Next, I will outline the process I followed during the in-depth data analysis. Specifically, I will demonstrate how during the data analysis stage, I utilized three research activities: reflecting on essential themes which characterize the phenomenon,

describing the phenomenon, and balancing the research context by considering the parts

and the whole (van Manen, 1990).

Reflecting on Essential Themes which Characterize the Phenomenon

The first step taken in data analysis was to conduct multiple readings of the

transcripts. van Manen (1994) describes this activity as immersion in the data with the

aims of developing a full understanding of the phenomenon and formulating initial

impressions that will guide the coding in later steps. In this stage, the researcher begins

with an examination of the collected texts, as a whole, because the meaning of the whole

will influence understanding of all other parts of the texts. In addition to the transcribed

interviews created with the participants, I also examined the technological stalking, CPM,

and relational dissolution literatures to assist in my efforts. However, I was sure to take

note of these potential biases. Thus, all the sources of data enlightened my overall

interpretation of the meaning of what it means to be technologically stalked by a past

intimate.

Describing the Phenomenon and the Unitization of the Data

This current study used van Manen's (1990) approach to the development of

thematic statements and Owen's (1984, 1985) conceptualization of thematic

interpretation to unitize the data. Because the goal of hermeneutic phenomenology is to

locate themes that represent the diverse interpretations embedded within the data, as well

as categorize and classify the experiences provided by the participants, the two

approaches aided in these processes. Thus, in this section, I will provide a detailed

account of how each approach was used in this step of the current project.

According to van Manen (1990), the goal of this phase is to identify and create themes that may provide a rich and detailed understanding of the phenomena, as well as guide the data analysis section of an investigation. To develop thematic statements, van Manen suggests researchers have several options including: "the wholistic or sententious approach; the selective or highlighting approach; and the detailed or line-by-line approach" (p. 93). Each process guides a different view of the text in order to develop a comprehensive understanding of the transcribed interview texts. The first approach is to identify a global understanding of the collected texts. The goal is to develop a phrase that represents the collection of texts as a whole. The second approach focuses on phrases or sentences that stand out in the texts. The aim for the selective approach is to examine the collection of texts for statements that appear with great frequency or reveal important information about the phenomena under investigation. The third approach is a close examination of the text sentence by sentence. According to van Manen, the researcher seeks to answer the question of "what does this sentence or cluster of sentences reveal about the phenomenon or experience being described?" (p. 93). Within this current study all three strategies were used in order to develop a comprehensive understanding of the participants' technological stalking experiences.

In order to augment van Manen's (1990) detailed approach, I also utilized Owen's (1984, 1985) framework in the identification of themes. Owen's model allowed the researcher to locate themes based on recurrence, repetition, and forcefulness. First, recurrence was noted in significant passages that appeared more than once and "have the same thread of meaning" even though different wording may have been used. In other words, if the same idea was presented within the stories told by the individuals but was

stated in a different manner, the passage was recurrent. Related to recurrence is repetition. Repetition is the explicit use of exact words and phrases to stress the importance of an incident or idea. Repetition was located by thoroughly reading the interview transcripts and interview notes. Finally, forcefulness was identified by the use of verbal and nonverbal means to emphasize key ideas within one's retelling of their experiences. In order to locate instances of forcefulness I referred to the interview journal to locate instances that had been underlined and highlighted in the notes taken during the interview. The use of these three criteria allowed me to narrow the data to meaningful units of data and to proceed to further thematic analysis.

Considering the Parts with the Whole through Thematic Analysis

The next step involved the systematic analysis of data in an organized effort to make sense of the data. This process required the researcher to continuously move back and forth from parts of the text to the whole to identify which statements were representative of the particular themes identified in the previous step (van Manen, 1990). In order to achieve this desired outcome, the first area explored were the contextual factors that led the participants to renegotiate privacy boundaries with their ex-intimate. This focus illuminated when privacy boundaries between former partners had changed and under what conditions. Specifically, during the data collection stage and the first phase of data analysis, the identification of these instances was crucial to developing categories of .privacy boundary (mis)management and privacy rule violations.

After an initial identification of significant passages, I was able to move toward more general categories. This process involved the transformation of the themes to higher level abstractions to "allow theoretical connections within and across cases but

also remain grounded in the particularity of the specific things said" by the participants (p. 68). During this step, I began to make connections between themes that emerged and the assumptions of CPM in order to develop a more complete picture of how the factors that influence one's decisions to make their privacy boundaries less permeable are related to privacy rule violations. For example, in the initial stages of data collection, I began to notice several participants refer to abusive incidents that had occurred during the course of their relationship. Thus, an initial theme was recorded as "abuse." As the interviews progressed, I added a question about any form of verbal, emotional, or physical abuse to the interview protocol. These inquiries allowed me to further create cluster themes based on the type of abuse in order to demonstrate how the participants used the risk-benefit criterion in their decision to make privacy boundary modifications following dissolution. This process also was followed for all research questions in order to create super ordinate themes that explain each phenomenon. Moreover, this activity was completed through a continuous check of the transcripts to ensure each theme was consistent with the actual articulated experiences of the participants.

The final stage was to create a table of the themes identified within the participants' narratives complete with descriptive information about each theme in order to easily locate the words and phrases in the manuscripts that corresponded to each theme. This organizational method allowed me to demonstrate the superordinate themes and all sub-themes contained within each category. This was an important step because categories that did not have sufficient support were dropped and themes with excessive support were further divided.

In this section, I discussed how I conducted the data analysis for this current study. Specifically, I explained the processes of multiple, close readings of each transcript, the unitization of the data, and the coding of the data. Next, I will discuss briefly how I utilized this approach to answer each specific research question.

Specific Research Question Data Analysis

The first research question asked "how do victims discursively describe the context of relational dissolution prior to incidents of technological stalking? In order to examine the relational dissolution context, I located instances when individuals discussed their decisions to make their privacy boundaries more or less permeable, I was attuned to the moments individuals identified specific events that led the participants to grant or deny access to their private information during relational termination. This led to the identification of the specific criteria individuals used to develop or renegotiate privacy rules with their former relational partner. To recall, privacy rules are used to regulate the flow of private information between individuals or an individual and a group. The theory of Communication Privacy Management suggests five criteria that may be used when individuals formulate privacy rules (Petronio, 2002). Specifically, the theory has identified culture, gender, context, motivation for revealing or concealing, and the risk-benefit ratio of the disclosure as the key criteria for privacy rule development. As a result, these categories were used as a sensitizing device to enhance my theoretical sensitivity during data analysis; however I remained open to other possible criteria.

Research question two asked "how do technological stalking victims describe their experiences of privacy violations committed by their past intimate?" In order to analyze the data provided within the interviews, I employed several strategies. First, I was attuned to what types of boundary violations were represented in the respondents'

descriptions of boundary turbulence. Next, I explored the instances when the respondents

report the mismanagement of co-owned information. This allowed me to identify

Petronio's (2002) types of intentional and unintentional boundary violations within the

data. To review, Petronio labeled these privacy breaches as: (a) intentional rule

violations (b) boundary rule mistakes (c) fuzzy boundaries and (d) boundary definition

predicaments (e) privacy dilemmas. These privacy boundary violations were used as a

sensitizing device. Second, because, to date, no other studies have examined the

enactment of relational technological stalking as privacy violations, I remained open to

additional ways individuals commit boundary violations. Therefore, I was mindful to

explore the data for these unique instances. For example, as stated previously, global

dissemination of private information, excessive communication, surveillance, and

Facebook "stalking" have been identified in past research as activities undertaken by

technological stalkers and were found in this current study. The awareness of these

behaviors aided in the identification of new privacy violation categories.

Finally, in light of the dearth of research of how individuals manage or cope with

boundary violations, the third research question examined how targets attempt to manage

incidents of boundary turbulence following technological stalking. Because of the

multitude of types of boundary violations, how one responds may be contingent upon the

type of boundary violation enacted. The theory of Communication Privacy Management

was used as a sensitizing device, however I was able to uncover other communicative

tactics used by the victim to manage the damage done during and after incidents

boundary of boundary turbulence.

In this section, I have reviewed the three research questions put forth in this study. Relational dissolution presents many challenges for individuals as they negotiate once assumed privacy boundaries. The process of separating from an intimate may be fraught with ambiguity and hostility that may result in unintentional or intentional boundary violations. Through the participants' descriptions of their lived experiences, we can begin to understand how they attempt to manage incidents boundary violations. Through this information, we may gain us with a deeper understanding of the management of boundary turbulence that is notably underdeveloped in the articulation of CPM theory. However, the themes represented in this study are only useful if they have been subjected to rigorous verification. Therefore, in the next section, I outline the two methods used to validate the findings of this current study.

Verification of Findings

The goal of verification for interpretive researchers is ensure the voices represented in their work are an accurate depiction of the participants' experiences and the context in which incidents have occurred. Numerous authors have argued for rigorous criteria to establish "trustworthiness" and "validity" in qualitative studies (e.g., Guba, 1981; Guba & Lincoln, 1981, 1982; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Leininger, 1994; Rubin & Rubin, 1995). Although Cresswell has argued that the standards for the assessment of validity in phenomenological studies are less standardized, researchers are able to demonstrate rigor in their work through several methods. Therefore, in this section, I will begin with the criteria Polkinghorne (1989) has identified to aid the phenomenological researcher to enhance the validity of their results. Second, I outline how I used member checks and thick description to further validate my results.

Validation in Phenomenological Research

Because the aim of a phenomenology is to describe the lived experiences of individuals, the demonstration of validity may seem at odds with this goal. However, Polkinghorne (1989) asserted validity is assessed through the strength of supporting evidence. According to Polkinghorne (1989), researchers can increase the validity of findings in several ways. First, the researcher must be mindful not to impose his or her judgments on the participants. This will prevent any influence of the researcher's standpoint that may impact how individuals share their experience. Second, during the transcription process, a researcher needs to remain truthful to the spirit of each participant's meaning making and articulation of the experience under investigation. Third, the researcher must also examine and identify alternative explanations of conclusions drawn during the data analysis process. Finally, the structural description must specifically address the specific phenomenon under investigation. If the descriptions of the phenomenon are overly general, the researcher may need to re-examine the transcripts or the goals of the study. For this present project, I maintained these standards during all stages of data collection and analysis. In addition, I relied on Cresswell's (2007) recommendation to use two or more other methods for ensuring rigor.

Member Checks

Bronfenbrenner (1976) argues in-depth member checks are an invaluable method for assessing the accuracy of one's results. This approach calls for the researcher to share the results with the study participants to solicit feedback. Specifically, the researcher asks the individuals interviewed for the study to make sure the results reflect truthfully their experiences and perceptions. However, Creswell and Miller (2000) state member

checks may be inappropriate for phenomenological research because participants are only able to comment on the reduced portions of a phenomenon represented as themes. Thus, the themes may not capture fully the experience of the participant. In an effort to overcome this potential issue, I offered all study participants the opportunity to read through the study's abstract and results section to allow each individual to correct any errors or provide clarification for misrepresentations in their own narratives. Of my 27 participants, 3 read through the abstract, their original transcript and their verbatim excerpts used in results section with no modifications necessary.

Thick Description

The purpose of thick description is to use interviewee's own words to illustrate, enrich, and contextualize the research findings. Tracy (2010) defines thick description as in-depth illustration that illuminates culturally situated meanings and copious concrete detail (p. 843). In order to accomplish thick description, researchers need to provide the reader with ample insight to both the individuals' experiences and the context in which the instances occur. Several scholars have argued the thick, rich detail gathered during interviews increases the authenticity of the results (Baxter & Babbie, 2004; Lindlof & Taylor, 2002; van Manen, 1990).

To achieve this aim, in the results section, I included in-depth quotations stated by the participants that underscore their reactions, perceptions, and behaviors regarding their lived experiences. This strategy allows readers to have generous context in their formulations of the incidents, as advised by Tracy (2010). Moreover, this method serves the interpretive paradigm through the representation of the multiple perspectives of reality of the participants and the description of the contexts in the words of those who

have lived through the experiences (Merriam, 1998). According to Maxwell (1996), a qualitative study is best judged by its ability to accurately describe and interpret the phenomenon under study.

Conclusion

In sum, this section has discussed the principles of interpretive research, explained the phenomenological method, outlined the recruitment of participants and the process for data analysis, and demonstrated how verified my results. The identification of how individuals (mis)manage privacy boundaries at the end of an intimate relationship is a critical step in our understanding of relational technological stalking. Through the lived experiences of individuals who have been technologically stalked by a past intimate, we may begin to understand the effects of boundary turbulence and how to cope with these incidents.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

The purpose of this current study was to develop a deeper understanding of individuals' lived experiences with technological stalking by a former intimate. In order to reach this objective, this current study has two overarching goals. The first aim of this study is to examine how victims describe the management of privacy boundaries with their aggressor after relational dissolution but prior to the onset of technological stalking through the lens of Communication Privacy Management (CPM) theory. The second aim is to examine the participants lived experiences with technological stalking during and after privacy boundary violations and boundary turbulence.

Twenty-seven individuals were interviewed and asked to describe their experiences with their former intimate. Each interview was conducted and transcribed by the researcher. Transcripts were analyzed by the researcher using the van Manen's (1990) phenomenological methodology. Although each participant's experience was unique, several communalities emerged within the group through the analysis process for each research question.

In this chapter, I discuss the dominant and sub-themes that emerged throughout the interviews with the current study participants, based on the research questions. I begin with the identification of two specific criteria discussed by the participants that individuals take into account when they decide to maintain or re-negotiate privacy boundaries with their past intimate: (a) context and (b) risk-benefit ratio. Within these criteria, participants report their perceptions of how their own actions may have exacerbated the technological stalking experience. Second, I discuss how technological

stalking victims describe their experiences of privacy violations committed by their former intimate. In addition to the intentional rule violations, fuzzy boundaries, and privacy boundary dilemmas identified by Petronio (2002) as privacy boundary violations, I located two new violations that involved the use of technology. Specifically, several victims' reported aggressors' had engaged in excessive communication and placed the victim under surveillance. Finally, I discuss how targets attempt to manage incidents of boundary turbulence through blocking, and seeking assistance from professionals. The results will show the assistance of others, in some cases, may not be a positive experience. A descriptive list of summarizing the research questions, themes, and sub-themes are provided in Table 1 to facilitate the presentation of results.

Table 1

Key Themes and Sub-themes Located in the Participants' Narratives

Table 1	
Research Questions	
Key Themes/Sub-themes	***Description***
Research Question 1	
RQ1: How do victims discursively describe the context of relational dissolution prior to incidents of technological stalking?	
Theme 1: Context - A situation that requires individuals to reassess how much interaction they want to have with their past intimate	
Relational Environment	Communication about the dissolution between the victim and the aggressor.
Physical Environment - Public	Public encounters with one's former intimate that causes distress.
Physical Environment - Private	Private encounters with one's former intimate that causes distress.
Social Environment - Threats to the victims' positive face	Aggressors' messages to others in order to denigrate the victim.
Social Environment - The use of other relationships to solicit information	Aggressors' messages to others in order to obtain information or re-establish the relationship after termination.

Theme 2: Risk-Benefit Ratio - Past abuses enacted during the relationship that factored into the participants' decisions to renegotiate their privacy boundaries with their ex-intimate.	
Emotional abuse	Characterized as expressed jealousy during/after the relationship termination
Physical abuse	Characterized as an act or series of acts carried out in order to cause another person to experience physical pain or injury during the relationship.
Psychological abuse	Characterized as the enactment of controlling and coercive behaviors during the relationship.
Research Question 2	
RQ2: How do victims of technological stalking describe their experiences of privacy violations committed by their past intimate?	
Intentional Rule Violations	The dissemination of private information
Fuzzy Boundaries	The dissemination of previously co-owned information
Privacy Boundary Dilemmas	The choice of whether or not to release private information
Excessive Communication	Numerous, unwanted communications from the aggressor
Surveillance	The aggressors use of technology to locate and stalk their victims offline and monitor their online activities
Research Question 3	
RQ3: How do victims manage incidents of boundary turbulence?	
Directly Contacting the Aggressor	Asking the aggressor to cease all communication
Blocking	Restricting the aggressor's' incoming electronic communications one one's technological devices.
Assistance from Law Enforcement	Seeking aid from police officers and the courts.
Assistance from Friends	Seeking aid from friends.
Assistance from Medical/Psychological Professionals	Seeking aid from physicians, psychiatrists, and therapists.

Research Question One: The Renegotiation of Privacy Boundaries

The first research question examined how victims discursively describe the

context of relational dissolution prior to incidents of technological stalking. The purpose

of this question was to ascertain what conditions were present prior to the onset of

technological stalking. Nearly all participants were able to articulate a traumatic episode

or series of incidents with their former partner that led to a decision to alter their privacy

boundaries with their past intimate. These decisions were influenced often by the

victims' perceptions that the aggressor had violated certain privacy rules the couple had

agreed upon prior to dissolution. Moreover, in other cases, victims reported

modifications to their privacy boundaries were necessitated because the actions of the

aggressor had become frightening and unpredictable. Therefore, in both situations,

significant events led victims to realize communication with their former partner must

change. Specifically, I found individuals utilized the context and the risk-benefit ratio

privacy rules criteria in their decision to modify existing privacy boundaries with their

past intimate.

Context

The context is defined as a situation that requires individuals to reassess if she or

he needs to maintain or modify existing privacy boundaries with another person or group

(Petronio, 2002). In other words, when individuals face an awkward or uncomfortable

circumstances within their environment, they rely contextual cues in order evaluate

whether or not changes to existing privacy boundaries are warranted. In this current

study, several individuals discussed the need to re-adjust their privacy boundaries with

past intimates after the relationship had ended, yet prior to the onset of technological

stalking. Here victims describe specific incidents that led to their decisions to alter their existing privacy boundaries with their past intimates. Specifically, three main themes emerged: the relational environment, the physical environment, and the social environment.

Relational environment. For this theme, I examined how unclear communication about the dissolution between the victim and the aggressor may have contributed to the onset of technological stalking. Several participants characterized their relationship with the aggressor as on-again/off-again. These individuals perceived their own inability to communicate the demise of the relationship to the aggressor, their family, and their friends may have contributed to the aggressor's inappropriate expressions.

Marilyn and Charlotte, for example, reported when their former partners learned that they had started dating others, each of their ex-intimates expressed anger. In each case, the victim perceived her lack of clear communication about the dissolution may have added to her own culpability, yet both women stated the confrontation spurred the desire to modify their privacy boundaries with their past partner. Marilyn recalled:

> Joseph found out that I had gone out ... on a date with another guy, and he, uh, he was very upset. So, yeah, he ... called and said I was ... a cheating, uh, can I say it, um, a, well not so nice word. I mean, we had always split up and got back together, so I guess, I could, uh, kinda see his point, but when he, uh, started screaming at me, and uh, calling me names, I felt that maybe, I ... needed to end it once and for all.

Charlotte also perceived her on-again/off-again relationship may have incited a negative reaction from her ex-intimate Alan. Initially, Charlotte's guilty feelings about finding a new relationship led her to maintain open communication with Alan. However after a telephone conversation with her ex-intimate left her shaken, she re-evaluated her privacy boundaries with him. In this excerpt, Charlotte explained the progression of her decision:

> We would usually have a fight and not talk for a few days, but eventually, one of us, we'd uh, uh, ya know, like cave in. So, like when I didn't hear from him for like a month, I just figured that we were through, ya know? So, I went out with some friends and met Joshua. When he (Alan) found out, he called me crying sayin', uh, asking, uh, things, like how could I do this to him? I felt so bad, I mean like really awful, but then he started calling all the time trying to make plans, like we had never had a fight, or broken up, which just smacked of desperation to me, and like really turned me off of him. So, yeah, at one point, I just said, we broke up like months ago, can't you just let it go already? When he said no, I mean it was like how he said it really kinda freaked me out. So, I knew things had to change between us.

The two examples above demonstrate how unclear communication about the termination of an intimate relationship may influence how the ex-intimates perceive the act of moving forward with a new relationship. In Marilyn's and Charlotte's cases, both expressed a sense of responsibility for their ex-partners' reactions. Nonetheless, in each situation, the victims felt their former partners responses were a valid reason for the modification of their privacy boundaries.

Physical environment. For this theme, I examined how the context of contact, whether a public or private setting, between past intimates was perceived by participants as a reason to renegotiate their privacy boundaries with their ex-partner.

Public setting. Some individuals experienced distress after public encounters with their former intimate. Rebecca explained her ex-partner would show up at the places where she was with her friends. In this excerpt, she described her perception of the events.

> Like whenever we went somewhere, like, there, he, uh, was. At first, I thought it
> was ... like, uh, uh coincidence or something, ya know, ... like, after the first few
> times, I like asked my friends, if they like told him, ya know, like, where we'd be.
> So, like, they sweared that they didn't. He'd always be with some girl, or
> something, but he would still be texting me from across the room, saying I was
> lookin' uh, hot, ya know (pause) I wasn't scared, until, like the bar closed, cuz I
> was like worried, he'd come up to me again ... Yeah, like one time, I was, uh,
> hanging out with my friends, and he, uh, he ...was, uh walking down the street, as
> ... we was, uh leaving (the bar), ya know, to like, uh, like go to our car, and he,
> like, uh, like, bumped into me, uh, like real hard, and just started laughing, asking,
> where my, uh, yeah, like, where's you new, uh, boyfriend at? But, he didn't say it
> that nicely (looks down and pauses).

Rebecca's narrative demonstrated how she had maintained open her privacy boundaries with her ex-partner after the termination of their romantic relationship. Yet, following the public incident where he revealed the private information that he knew where she was that evening and that she was involved in a new relationship, she was left shaken.

Similarly, Alicia became afraid when her husband publicly confronted her despite the fact that she had not informed him of her activities.

Alicia had wanted to maintain an amicable relationship with her husband "for the sake of her children." However, she became concerned by his actions after she had visited an attorney to obtain a legal separation. She recalled:

> Well, a few days later, when I left the lawyer's office, he was standing next to my sister's car waiting for me. I asked him what he was doing there and he said that he always knew where I was and that I was a sinner for contemplating divorce. A few people rushed over to see if I needed help, he was, uh, so uh, so very loud. I think I was uh, uh, (looks down) more embarrassed at the time and uh, uh, (sobs and long pause) but that was just uh, uh, the start of things to come. I mean I knew I had to do something, I, I, uh, I saw the look on his face, it was the same look he had the night he, uh, he, (pause), he struck Mary [their daughter].

Rebecca's and Alicia showed genuine surprise that their ex-intimates had selected a public setting to reveal they had the ability use private information in order to gain access their victims. Both women stated that the unexpected arrival of their past partner had served to heighten their fears. Moreover, both recalled how fear quickly turned to panic, which served as a basis to re-adjust their communication with their partners.

Private setting. The use of private messages from their former intimate also led victims to re-evaluate their privacy boundaries. Specifically, the receipt of threatening, private, electronic messages from their past intimate served as the impetus for a few participants to attempt to cease communication. Hailey recalled an incident that left her very frightened.

The first time I realized that I may, uh, be in trouble was when Marco emailed me a photo of me and my daughter playing in the park by her school. He basically said that he was always watching me and that he just wanted to talk, but, I, I, uh, knew better, 'cause he had been so, so abusive when we were, we were, uh, ya know, a couple. I felt so trapped, ya know, like he could get to us anytime, anywhere.

William also reported fear after his former partner, Jennifer, had sent a series of disturbing, private text messages. In this excerpt, he explained the text message contained a reference to a popular movie they had watched together followed by an explicit threat.

She, basically said that she was gonna make my life hell, just like that lady had done if I didn't call her, like now and when I didn't, she texted me, oh, I don't know, probably, like 50 more times, each time saying stuff like I know I can make you love me and boo hoo hoo, why don't you love me. I guess it makes me sound like a puss, but, when she said I won't let you live with anyone else, I was, uh, ya know, like really freaked out.

Although both, Hailey and William, stated their desire to close their privacy boundaries to their former partners, each informed their aggressor that third parties had been contacted about the private communications. Hailey contacted the police and William informed his father. The involvement of outside parties, however had seemed to further infuriate their past intimates and both victims perceived the incidents led to their experiences of technological stalking.

Hailey explained "so, yeah, I went straight to the cops and ... I let him know that I had showed the cops the email, but that just made him more mad." William also perceived his action to make his ex-partner angry. "So, I called my dad and he said I should text her and tell her to just stop ... so I did that, and that's when she went absolutely, over-the-edge, completely insane."

Although, at the time, Hailey and William believed the involvement of outside others would have helped their situations, each expressed regret because their aggressors increased threatening and harassing communications.

Social environment. In addition to the relational and physical environments, participants also reported the social environment played a role in their decision to renegotiate their privacy rules with their past intimate. The social environment describes the realm outside of the relational environment. Specifically, the exemplars in this section focus on how the release of once private information about the victim impacts their relationships with others outside of the relationship. These acts include: (a) how the aggressor's release of information threatened the victims' face and constrained the victim's autonomy and (b) how the aggressor's inquires for information about the victim effected the connection between the victims and others. Because these instances may also be labeled as intentional rule violations, the events led victims to modify their privacy boundaries with their ex-intimate. Yet, it is important to note that the experiences provided in this section occurred prior to the onset of technological stalking. In all cases reported by the participants, these incidents led to the installation of tighter privacy boundaries with their aggressor whose negative response was to initiate technological stalking behaviors.

Threats to the victim's face. Following relational dissolution, several individuals perceived they had parted on friendly terms; however when the aggressors began to take their grievances public, the victims reported they reassessed their relationship with their past intimate. Moreover, the participants explained they had to open their boundaries to outside others in order to address the allegations made by their aggressor. For example, immediately following her break-up with Max, Monica began to notice Facebook posts by her former partner blaming her for the split, despite her perception that the split had been amicable.

> Max was writing all these crazy messages, like I was a cheater, that I wasn't to be trusted, like if I could turn on him, others, better, uh, they better, uh watch their backs...Yeah,that was fun, uh, trying to explain to our, uh, mutual friends, that he was the twisted one. I mean, he, uh, didn't ... say anything, ... specific about other people, but to me, the message was loud and clear, like at any time, he could, uh, tell people, all the things I had said, like during our whole ... relationship ... when he found out that I ... had told others about how he always ... over-reacted to stuff, he went really nuts.

Monica's narrative highlighted how victims must attempt to manage multiple privacy boundaries following relational termination. Monica's reaction to Max's thinly veiled threat to release once co-owned private information gave her courage to attempt to close her boundary with him. However, she also had to open her boundaries with family and friends to refute Max's allegations. Matthew, a bank employee, also faced a similar dilemma.

Matthew's ex-intimate, Ashley, also turned to Facebook after he initiated their break up. Because he had maintained open communication with Ashley following the termination, Max had continued to be her Facebook friend. However, one morning as he read her status updates, he realized that she was using social media to smear his private and professional reputation. Although Max perceived the first posts as rather benign, he stated that Ashley stepped over the line when she implied he was stealing from his employer, a bank in a small town. According to Matthew, his friends, including those he worked with, had also witnessed the posts. As a result, Max had to contact his employer and his co-workers to explain the situation. In this example, Max described the situation:

> Ashley wanted everyone to think that it was my fault that we broke up and I guess I was, was, uh, okay with it, I guess ... but then she says that I had told her that I was stealing from work, ... and then I remembered that one time I had taken my bosses pen and I mean come on, we even joked about how I'd go to jail for it, anyway I called her to tell her to knock it off and she didn't pick up, so I left her a message and it couldn't have been two minutes later she posts "the felon just called and wants to work things out." So, all I could do was sit there and watch all her friends say that SHE [emphasized by the participant] should go to the cops and how SHE was better off without me, really? So, I had had a lot of explaining to do ... did she stop after that? No, it got a whole lot worse after she finally called me.

This exemplar illustrated that his ex-intimate used previously co-owned private information to cause problems for Max with his colleagues and friends. Like Monica, Max had to discuss his former relationship with his ex-partner in order to explain the

remarks. Moreover, he found himself in the position to keep open boundaries with Ashley as he tried to stop her posts. During his conversations with his aggressor, Ashley, Max recalled that she stated the posts would stop if they were to get back together.

The exemplars in this theme demonstrate how the victim must address the comments made by their ex-intimate in order to save face and attempt to repair any damage to their relationships with others. Thus, the aggressors' use of private information compels the victim to open their privacy boundaries with others despite the desire to keep aspects of their relationship with the aggressor private.

Information compilation. The second sub-theme within the social environment category was the aggressors' attempts to solicit information from outside others. This category centered on the aggressors' messages to others perceived by the victim as attempts to obtain information or re-establish the relationship after termination. In these situations, though, the victim must achieve two simultaneous goals. First, the victim must open their privacy boundaries with others in order to explain why they did not want any private information shared. Second, the private information shared by the victim must be carefully constructed so as not to harm their relationship with the outside others.

According to Antonia, Alex, her former partner, made numerous attempts to contact her friends in order to obtain information. However, because their relationship had been plagued by abuse, Antonia was extremely reticent to provide Alex with any information about her post-dissolution life. She stated:

He was always contacting friends of mine, via text, chat and MySpace to find out who I was seeing and what I was doing ... if they thought we had a chance to get back together. So, I thought it was all kinda, uh, creepy ... but the real pain was

trying to get everyone to not tell him anything. I, mean, yeah, lots of them were

his friends too, so I guess, maybe ... they felt they had to choose sides or

something ... I didn't want to tell him that he used to beat me, even though I guess

they knew, but ... I just wanted them to not tell him anything.

Michael's experience with Taylor also involved several different individuals whom were

contacted following the termination. Moreover, in Michael's opinion, Taylor used text

messages and her social networks site to attempt others to get others' sympathy while also

seeking information. He explained:

She tried to get my sister to get me to change my mind. She (Taylor) texted my

mom that she was going to commit suicide ... if I was seein' someone else. She

started posting really weird stuff about people who had died from a broken heart

... and how, like she would just, uh, uh, die ... unless she knew for sure that I

hadn't been with someone ... I didn't know what to do. I didn't want her to, ya

know, die and shit, but I had had enough ... Yeah, I felt like everyone thought I

was a total shitbag and I had to keep explaining that she was just a psycho ... who

need to know what the fuck I was doin and with who.

Michael's comment underscores how aggressors use the social environment to cause

harm to their target's reputation, as well as attempt to gain information from allies in their

quest to reconcile with their past intimate. Like Michael, all individuals who experienced

harm in the social environment were often confused by the actions of their aggressors, yet

were quick to add that the aggressors' actions led to a desire to close any existing privacy

boundaries with their ex-partner. As a result, following the victims' choice to no longer

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communicate with their aggressors caused irrational responses that became manifested in the technological stalking behaviors enacted upon the victims. For example, Gina stated:

> I dunno why he was actin' like this, it was like he wouldn't let go. I mean, we, we, uh, were only together, like 6 months or so. He (Vinny) told my bestie that he'd stop bugging her if I, she told me, um, well, I, I guess, talked to him, but that was all lies ... he said the same stuff to my sister, my brother that's in his class, even people, I, uh, work with ... he kept on and on about who I was hanging out with, uh, when I was working, just crap like that ... when everyone started bit, bitching, uh, complainin',, it, uh, just wore me down ... I didn't want to bad mouth him to everyone but ... they kept saying that I should just call him and get it over with ... and then he would leave them alone. So, as soon as I called him ... and tried to explain that we were never getting back together again ... but it was like ... cuz I called him ... he just wouldn't stop.

 Gina's experience highlights her confusion by the actions of her former partner. Moreover, this example shows that the involvement of others led Gina to contact the aggressor. The choice to re-open her privacy boundaries, however may have contributed to her technological stalking experience.

The exemplars in this section demonstrate how events within the relational, physical, and social environments often serve as a catalyst for the victims to re-examine their privacy boundaries with their aggressors. Moreover, the descriptions provide us with first-hand accounts of how individuals utilize the privacy rule of context in their decision to close their privacy boundary with their former partner. In the next section, I examine how the participants also use the risk-benefit ratio privacy rule as they

contemplated whether or not to close their shared privacy boundary with their former partner.

Risk-Benefit Ratio

According to Petronio (2002), rules established on this principle are formulated after one has weighed the dangers and rewards of the disclosure of private information. Past abuses within an intimate relationship were often listed as reasons why victims were hesitant to communicate with their former partners following termination. Within this theme, participants discussed how emotional, physical, and psychological abuses enacted during the relationship were factored into their decision to renegotiate their once shared privacy boundary with their ex-intimate.

Emotional abuse. This theme was predominantly characterized as jealousy during the relationship, but also was evident after the termination of the intimate relationship. Several participants perceived their former partners' reactions to their friendships with outside others as a reason to re-negotiate privacy boundaries following termination.

Michael, who had recently started college while his girlfriend remained in their hometown, had frequent arguments about his new friends. He stated:

> We was fighting all the time about my college friends. Every time I added a
> friend to Facebook or someone posted about what we did over the weekend, she
> would call and cry and bitch. If I did go home, she wanted to see my phone so
> she could read my texts and talk about who all these new people were.

Michael's experience demonstrated how the frequency of his ex-intimate's jealous expression eroded his relationship. Susanne's relationship with Steve also was marred by

chronic bouts of jealousy that eventually led to the termination of their yearlong

courtship. Here, she described how his jealousy during and after their relationship led to

the beginning of her being technologically stalked.

> When we were together ... he was always asking me about my ex-boyfriends, like
>
> if I ever saw them, what I would do if they wanted me back, and, uh, and what
>
> we, uh, did in, um, in the bedroom ... I get that he was insecure, but it really got
>
> out of hand sometimes. After we broke up, I would see him on campus and at
>
> other university functions. One day, I was sitting in my office and he pops in and
>
> starts asking me about the person I was seeing, I don't know how he found out
>
> about my new relationship, but apparently he did, and I really didn't want to tell
>
> him anything, I just said it was inappropriate to have this conversation to have
>
> here, so he suggested we go out later, I thought about and said "call me" but after
>
> talking to a friend I decided not to go. So, later that day he called my mobile
>
> about10 times and my home phone about 10 too.

Similarly, the introduction of a potential new love interest contributed to the re-

adjustment of privacy boundaries in the relationship of Cassie and Lance. According to

Cassie, although her former partner had been jealous during the relationship, they had

remained "close friends" following termination. The following example demonstrated a

situation when she told Lance about a new man she had met at work and Lance became

enraged.

> I remember it like it was yesterday, we were having drinks at the place we always
>
> went to when I told Lance about Jack. He grabbed my face and kissed me real
>
> hard and said something like "does he excite you like I used to?" and I was like

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"what the hell?" Lance then said that no other man was, like, uh, uh, good enough

for me, like he was and that I was supposed to be with him, like it was written in

the stars or something like that. So, yeah, that really freaked me out. I mean, I

really thought we were um, friends and I could, um, tell him anything, I mean we

had been together for 5 years, ya know?

The expression of jealousy also was present in Jesse's explanation of why he attempted to

close his privacy boundary with his former partner, Simone. According to Jesse, he had

tried to maintain a relationship with Simone following the termination of their

relationship. However, after he arrived at a mutual friend's New Year's party with his

new girlfriend, Simone's jealousy seemed to have been triggered. He explained "all of

sudden, it seemed like she was texting me all the time asking me to hang out and stuff.

Most of the time, I would say I was busy or had plan, but then finally said it would be

weird, that's when Simone got all weird on me."

In addition to jealousy, several participants felt their relationships were a constant

struggle to keep former partners' past demons at bay. During Delia's discussion of her

bond with Joey, she recounted her attempts to keep the relationship together and tried to

rationalize his behavior. She explained:

It was, um, ya know, it was a, very um turbulent relationship, uh Joey had, um

traumatic brain injury, um not severe, um, and he has serious anxiety, um he was

abused as a child, um, so he was always very suspicious, he was always really

jealous, he never really ya know trusted me ... he made everything very, very

difficult, like he didn't want to move to Maryland, he didn't want to live in the

house I lived in with my ex-husband, he didn't want the kids to be noisy, it's like

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there was always a reason, like something was wrong ... and I think what

happened was I finally started to say I can't make you happy, there's nothing I can

do to make you happy.

Alice also attempted to downplay her ex-intimate's actions, yet also realized his behavior

had reached such a dangerous level that she had to cease any further communication.

Brandon was bounced around so much as a kid from one foster home to the next

so of course I felt bad ... but then I heard from some friends that he had beat up a

girl at a party who looked like me, well, uh, that's when, I just, I knew, I had to

get out of his life and let him figure it all out, ya know?

The narratives in this section demonstrated how the victims struggled with their

sympathetic feelings for their aggressor while they also attempted to end their association

before and after dissolution. In the next section, the enactment of physical abuse during

the relationship was also recalled by the victims as a motivation to end communication

following termination. However, as we will see, the participants were often unsuccessful

in their attempt to either coordinate new boundaries or completely close their boundaries

with their ex-intimate.

Physical abuse. Physical abuse has been conceptualized as an act carried out in

order to cause another person to experience physical pain or injury (Gelles & Straus,

1979; Straus & Gelles, 1992). This type of abuse has been operationalized as having

been hit, slapped, kicked, punched or beaten. In cases where individuals had reported

physical abuse during the relationship, several participants stated their desire to close

their privacy boundaries with their former partner.

During Sara's 8-year relationship with Caroline, physical abuse was normative. According to Sara, Caroline's mood swings and violent outbursts had reached an "epic level" after a fundraising event for a cause they both were passionate about. In this excerpt, Sara claimed her ability to socialize made Caroline very upset. Sara explained:

> When we got home, she was so pissed; she said that I was making a mockery of our relationship by openly ... flirting with a mutual friend of ours. (pause) I tried to explain that he's uh, uh, a married man, but she wouldn't hear it, she had it in her head and that's the way it always was, she gets it in her head and I just had to let her rant, but not this time, I was tired of always being her, her, punching bag, both, uh, fig, fig, figuratively and literally... so she starts throwing things, that's nothing new... so, so, so, I just left as she's throwing my stuff around. As I was driving, I didn't know where I was going, but I knew, I just knew that I never wanted to go back and I didn't, no matter how much she begged...but, I did go back. As much as I didn't want to get sucked back in, I knew she would get me to come back. Caroline never did understand no.

The persistent physical abuse was also stated by Lucas in his narrative. In his situation, Lucas felt limited contact with his soon-to-be-ex-wife, Mindy, was appropriate following their 5-year relationship, however his fear for Amber, their 4-year-old daughter, required that he carefully weigh his options. In this excerpt, Lucas explained how an incident after he returned from his 2-week Army Reserve training led to the final dissolution of their relationship.

> I came home and she was already stinkin' drunk, I mean wasted and I didn't want to fight but I asked her where Amber was and she starts in with the whole "you

don't love me and I don't love you so just get out but Amber stays with me" thing. I searched the whole house looking for Amber and all the while Mindy is at my heels barking at me, slapping my head, just acting a fool. So, uh, I said "I'm outta here but trust me no judge will give you Amber" and what does she do? She picks up my softball bat and starts swinging. I had to lock myself in the bathroom to call the police. That's when I knew I had to just stop being with her ... but yeah, I knew I'd never be rid of her cuz of Amber.

Claudia also felt she needed to cease all communication with physically abusive Carl. Yet, similar to Lucas, she had to think about was best for her child. In this exemplar, Claudia recalled an incident where she had been hospitalized following a beating by her ex-intimate. Claudia's situation demonstrates her attempt to balance her need for the safety of herself and her family members with her daughter's need to have a present father.

After he beat me up, he never called or came to see if I was okay. But, he called my sister and told her to let him know when I needed to be picked up. Well, she said that he wasn't to come anywhere near me and he just screamed a whole bunch of garbage at her about how I was HIS (emphasis added) wife and threatened her and other members of my family, so, uh, when she told me that I, uh, I, uh, sorry this is hard, I uh, decided right away that I wasn't gonna go anywhere with him and needed to find my own place to stay, I didn't want anyone to know where I was going for a long time, I was so scared that anyone else to get hurt cause of me. I mean, I was so afraid that if he found me he would kill me and anyone who got in his way. I didn't want to ever talk to him ever again but ...

I didn't want Jacqueline (their daughter) to grow up without a daddy, uh, I know

what's it's like, but, but, oh God I mean you understand right?

In all of the situations above, the use of physical force served as the driving force for the

abandonment of the relationship and a desire to close any existing privacy boundaries

with their aggressor. However, these participants would have to continue to

communicate with their former partners in order to settle their division of mutual assets.

These conversations provided their aggressors the ability to continue to stalk and harass

their victims.

Psychological abuse. The experience of psychological abuse during the course

of their intimate relationships was also represented in participants' narratives. According

to Leary (1999), psychological abuse is defined as controlling and coercive behavior,

including isolating romantic partners from others; denigrating and dominating them; and

using recurring criticism, threats, and verbal aggression. These behaviors were present in

several of the victims' recollections of the events that led to relational termination and

contributed to their decision to close their privacy boundaries.

Sara reported her former partner, Caroline, had installed tracking software on her

laptop computer. In this excerpt, Sara recalled a heated confrontation with her past

intimate that eventually led to the discovery of the software.

I came from work dead tired and Caroline just lays into me about me house

hunting. At first, I was completely thrown for a loop because I didn't know how

she knew. I wanted it to be a surprise 'cause we had talked about getting a dog

but our apartment complex forbids it, so I was looking for a place that we could,

well, she uh, just starts screaming about me leaving her, I mean after the whole

shit about (fundraiser event), I guess she felt like she needed to spy on me ... to

keep me in line or something ... so, she says that the computer doesn't lie that she

knew what I was up to that that she had had put some kinda parental stuff on my

laptop so she knew what I was doing. Later, I took the laptop to work and had

Mike our IT guy look at it and he comes back seconds later and shows me what

she had done. I was like wow, she's become completely unhinged ... and I didn't

even want to go home and talk to her ... between this and the whole flirting thing

at (the fundraiser), ya know, I just wanted her gone from my life at that point. So,

I moved out and that's when she really, really started her vendetta against me.

Sara's experience demonstrates how one incident led to the final demise of the

relationship, yet the accumulation of denigrating and controlling behaviors enacted

during the relationship aided in her decision to close her privacy boundaries with

Caroline. Alicia's narrative also describes how constant emotional abuse in an intimate

relationship can influence the victim's decision to modify their privacy boundaries with

the aggressor.

When we met, he was very protective and I was, um, um, so smitten that I thought

it was kinda sweet. But after we were married, he became very controlling. He

always took care of the family finances. I was given a certain amount of money

each week for groceries and clothes for the family ... but, (over time) he started to

get much worse about his demands. He wouldn't let me drive to school, uh, work,

he had to accompany me to the grocery store, if I, uh, even, uh tried on clothes he

had to go into the dressing room with me ... it got to the point where I didn't want

to tell him when I was running errand because he would put another rule in place

about who I could talk to or how I should   behave ... yes, I should have known

he would just find other ways to make life miserable.

James also perceived the progression of his ex-partner's behavior from affectionate to

manipulative and controlling. He stated:

(Robert) was a bit older than me, so he introduced me to things that I had never

been exposed to before. Like, he would take me to restaurants and uh, museums

and we'd watch foreign films together. He loved to shop, so he was always

buying me nice clothes and other things. Yeah, he, uh, treated me really well, at

first. It was really exciting, but it was also confusing. Sometimes he would just

cancel plans at the last minute or not call me back for a few days, but if I didn't

meet him or answer the phone, he would get really, uh, pissed, ya know? He

would, like, uh throw it in my face, that ... he did like all this stuff for me, the

least I could do is, uh, I guess you could say, like appreciate him. I felt   really

torn until I found out, like he was still, uh he still had his Match profile up as

single ... so that made me want to kick him to the curb ... but after he updated his

profile, that's when all heck broke loose.

The exemplars in this section described how the aggressor uses psychological abuse in

order to manipulate and control the actions of their victims. Sara's case highlighted how

Caroline used denigration and coercive control in order to assert her self-perceived

dominant position in the relationship. For Alicia, her husband's constant demands were

perceived as attempts to constrain her behavior. During the interview, Alicia revealed

that she believed her husband set the rules in place to limit her contact with others who

may have attempted to persuade her to leave the relationship. On the other hand, James

perceived the gifts and experiences offered by his former partner as manipulative attempts to keep James committed to the relationship even though Robert continued to seek out other partnerships.

The incidents reported in this section demonstrate how psychological abuse enacted during the relationship led to a desire to modify existing privacy boundaries with their former intimate. Unfortunately, the attempts made by victims eventually led to increased hostility and incidents of technological stalking by their aggressor.

Within this section, I examined the perceived precursors to technological stalking reported by the participants in this current study. In response to the question if their partner had ever been abusive during the course of their relationship, nearly all participants were able to articulate at least one episode of emotional, physical, or emotional abuse. These incidents played a crucial part in the victims' decisions to vacate their relationships and modify existing privacy boundaries with their aggressors. Moreover, following the changes made to their privacy boundaries, the victims reported the onset of technological stalking.

Taken as a whole, the exemplars in this section demonstrate how unclear communication to one's former intimate about relational termination, contact made by the aggressor in person or in private, the influence of outside parties, and abuses committed during the relationship provide victims with rationales for modifying any lingering privacy boundaries with their ex-intimate. However these changes may also serve as the catalysts for technological stalking. Therefore, to increase our understanding of the technological stalking experience, the next section examines how victims reported the use technology by their aggressors in order to stalk and harass.

Research Question Two: Privacy Violations

The second research question examined how victims of technological stalking describe their experiences of privacy violations committed by their past intimate. In this current study, numerous participants reported their former partner had committed the privacy rule violations identified by Petronio (2002). First, intentional rule violations, specifically the global dissemination of once private information, were evident in nearly all of the victims' narratives. Second, victims also acknowledged that in certain situations when the private information was co-owned, the rules governing the disclosure may not have been clear-cut. Third, the victims faced privacy boundary dilemmas when felt compelled to open their privacy boundaries in order to reveal private information to outsiders as they sought to end the technological stalking or harassment. However, these revelations stirred negative reactions in their aggressors. Finally, two new categories emerged: surveillance and repetitive contact.

In order to be considered to be classified as a technological stalking experience within these themes, I used the U.S. legal statutes (18 USCS § 115; 47 U.S.C. §223) as a guide. Specifically, the victims needed to (a) utilize one or more forms of data transmittable technology (b) describe repeated instances (c) use the private information in order to cause emotional distress or reasonable fear in the victim by threatening, harassing, intimidating, or monitoring.

Intentional Rule Violations

The most common privacy rule violation reported by victims was the intentional release of private information. The exemplars in this section demonstrate how dissemination of private information was done through a variety of technologies

including: the internet, mobile phones, and through social media. Moreover, these examples reveal how repeated release of private information that instilled fear, caused embarrassment to the victim, or marred one's professional and/or personal reputation.

Mr. A's experience involved his former partner, Nicholas' use of emails to harm his reputation. Although he did not necessarily fear for his safety after the emails were released, he was embarrassed and worried about how his father and colleagues would react to the information. Mr. A stated:

> He (Nicholas) contacted friends and family through (a barrage) of emails with addresses he had taken from a mass e-mail I had forwarded to everyone ... he shared private information about me and our sex-life with others. Um, so, basically ... he "outed" me as gay to friends and family who I had not yet come out to and that opened a whole can of worms ... and I really worried that my dad would blow a gasket, he was such an asshole about things like this when I was growing up ... I also worried about how my co-workers would see or that I might get fired ... not that my being gay had any bearing on my job, but as a teacher, no matter what age, folks get snippety about these things.

Olivia's situation involved her former intimate, Jack, who was also a co-worker despite their company's ban on romantic relationships between employees. In her case, after her company began an internal investigation of this policy, Jack sent her several instant messages from his computer and text messages to her cell phone that explicitly told her not to reveal any information to the investigators. In this excerpt, she recalled how Jack's initial instant message contained an implied threat that frightened her. Moreover, her

example demonstrates that she, like Mr. A, feared that the information released by Jack would impact her professional standing.

> Everyone was nervous because they [the Human Resources Department] were uh, calling people and grilling us about who was sleeping with who, especially the interns. Jack IM'd me, I don't know, maybe a dozen or so times telling me to keep my mouth shut ... there was something in the tone of the message that made me, uh, uncomfortable ... I was so upset that I went home that day, but then (my boss) calls me at home and says he needs to see me first thing in the morning. Well, as I'm sure you know where this is going, (pause) he (Jack) ended up showing [the boss] all of the texts ... when we were, uh, dating, but the jerk that he is, he of course didn't reveal what he had written to me, so they ended up firing me because they said, said that I was the one being, uh, in, uh, inappropriate I guess you could say. When I tried to show them what he had said back to me, they said, it didn't, it didn't, uh matter 'cause I was the one that, uh, I had started it ... I later found out that he shared them with everyone at Happy Hour too.

Following the termination of his romantic relationship and end his relationship with his former intimate, Julie, Jason also saw his relational history become public knowledge. Specifically, Julie bombarded his Facebook wall with pictures and links to music videos. According to Jason "she tried to shame me or something to get me to not break up with her." He further explained:

> I finally told her to stop calling and texting me, so what does she do? She starts posting all this crap on Facebook. Shit like, pictures of us, songs that reminded her of me, uh, other stuff, yeah and like she had to write stuff about each picture,

like one I'll never forget was like a picture of my with my dog and she writes like

uh, a long thing about when we picked out the dog at the shelter, and how I was

his daddy, and how I had a chance to be a daddy but that I MADE emphasis her

get an abortion ... she KNEW that, like my mom, would uh, freak if she knew

what we had done, so yeah, she knew I didn't want anyone, ESPECIALLY, my

mom. I know she did it on purpose to fuck me over, like that was going to get me

back.

In the above situations, the information disseminated was factual.   However, other

victims report, the aggressor wreaked havoc on their lives through the dissemination of

untrue or partially true information.

Aaron's case also involved the use internet. Specifically, Johnathan, Aaron's past

intimate, posted unflattering comments on the dating website where they had met, as well

as other chat room forums used by gay men in their community in order to ward off new

suitors. According to Aaron, "he provided enough detail so a smart person could figure it

out." He recalled:

You can't believe what he said. It was like, poor me, I just got out of a horrible

relationship and need a sweet guy to mend my broken heart and all that. He said

that his last relationship was with a guy that had used him for his money and

played games all the time. He even warned people to be careful of me because I

may be on the sites saying things like watch out for any cute wide eyed blonde

boys from the country who claim they're new to this dating thing, they'll break

your heart and steal your money every time. Yeah he said that 'cause my screen

name was Country. He was such a jerk; he made me feel like everything was all

my fault.

Michael's former partner also used partially true as well untrue information via social

media to mar his image and threaten others who may be interested in him. In his

experience, most of the information was flat out false, yet also was disseminated on the

internet. Michael explained that after he broke his off relationship with Taylor, she

threatened suicide. Therefore, he contacted her to say they could still be friends in an

attempt to ease her pain. However, this re-negotiation of privacy boundaries led to

unexpected consequences.

Well, she immediately started posting shit on Facebook about how we were back

together and that all the girls at my school should back off. She posted all these

pictures of us together from way back that made us look like dopey kids in love.

It made me want to puke, seriously. She started going through my Facebook list

and every girl on there got a message to leave me alone, that we were getting

married and shit. But the worst was when she started posting things like she was

going to be on Teen Mom (the TV show) and we were going to show everyone

what a happy couple looks like.

The narratives presented in this section highlight how aggressors' used technology in

their repeated attempts to disseminate private information in order to harm the reputation

of their victims after relational dissolution. Michael's experience also showed how the

pictures taken during their time together may have been the result of a fuzzy boundary

violation. In the next section, I describe how the inability to have clear rules about the

dissemination of co-owned information contributed to the technological stalking experience.

Fuzzy Boundaries

Fuzzy boundaries are the result of unclear distinctions of who owns private information. Several participants perceived the lack of discussion with their past intimate about how to handle private information following the termination may have contributed to their victimization. Within the narratives of the victims, aggressors used the public domain to divulge information that was once co-owned and accumulated during the relationship. This dissemination of private information was used as a means to cause embarrassment to their former relational partner.

Delia's experience demonstrated how the once co-owned information of nude photographs, taken during their relationship, was released by aggressor through multiple technological platforms in order to, what she perceived were acts, inflict psychological harm and cause public embarrassment. In her situation, she believed that the pictures were her property, but acknowledges the camera where the images were stored were in his possession. Thus, who had "ownership" over the pictures is an example of example of fuzzy boundaries. She explained:

> He threatened to start an EBay auction and auction the CD of the images … He had gotten into my email account apparently he had watched me type in my password and he had emailed my soon-to-be ex-husband, my babysitter, some of my friends links to the auction, and, um,... went to my college's Facebook pages and there's like of 10 them and he posted links to the auction (pause) and like see see see, ya know, English professor nude CD, ya know… he just basically just

plastered this link, um, everywhere he could, so like colleagues saw it, students

saw it ... Um, 14 months later ... I Google my name and the porn website, Ex-

Hamster comes up... He had posted the pictures of me, pretending to be me, he

had like pictures of my face, and ya know my body, my full name, first and last,

the town where I lived, the college and campus where I teach, um all of my

personal information ... the page had been up for 17 days and it had over 3,000

views, um I, um got the page down immediately as soon as I found out, like, the

next day I got it down.

Sara shared a similar experience of the use of photos taken during her relationship with

Caroline. Like Delia, Sara never had a clear discussion about how to handle the

photographs during their relationship, however she had assumed that the mementos were

very private and should have remained between the couple. She recalled:

One of the first things Caroline did was, uh, she, emailed all of my contacts a

picture of us that we had taken of us, um, ya know, in, um, in bed, but it wasn't

like naked or, um, anything, but, um, you could, tell, that, we were, uh, ya know,

a couple. So, I start getting calls from, uh, family and stuff, asking me, if this

was, uh, my way of coming out ya know, and don't get me started about what my

mom said, that was the worst.

Emma also had previously co-owned information she did not want released in the public

sphere. She and Erik had engaged in several activities that she deemed "things I surely

didn't want my family to know about." Yet, after she rebuffed his multiple attempts at

reconciliation, Erik began a blog about their relationship complete with pictures of a

variety of locations where they had been sexually intimate. Emma explained the blog

contained revelations that were thinly veiled references to her and their sexual encounters. Erik also posted her contact information, including the address where the once lived as a couple and she still resides. She stated:

> Oh geez, he wrote all about the places we had had, uh, sex, and uh, things about, uh, well, uh they were just real graphic. (pause) and well, uh, I found out cause he had emailed the link to his blog to a mutual friend who forwarded it to me. I was so shocked that he called the girl Ella and then at the end of every post he put the tag line "Meet the real Ella" and put my real address, even with a picture of our place, uh, uh, my email, and phone number. But, no, we didn't have any, uh, conversation, uh, ab, uh, about um what was off limits. I feel pretty dumb about it now.

The exemplars in this section revealed how the release of private, yet previously co-owned information can cause mental anguish and possible physical harm to the victim, such as the inclusion of Delia's and Emma's personal contact information.

Although the release of private information into the public sphere is undesirable, some victims felt they had to resort to this tactic in order to end the abusive, technologically actions of their aggressor. In the next section, I demonstrate how some targets felt the need to open their privacy boundaries with outside others.

Privacy Boundary Dilemmas

To recall, individuals face privacy boundary dilemmas when they are forced to make choices about how to deal with private information they know about another person. Within this current study, participants faced issues when they had to decide whether to open their privacy boundaries to respond to others' inquiries about the

termination of the relationship and the aggressors' subsequent actions. The decision to open up to others, however led to further negative action from the aggressor.

Shana explained she was torn over her desire to tell her side of the break up story and her need to protect her former intimate's privacy. She described her thought making process in the following excerpt.

> Andrew had had a rough childhood, and I know a lot of what he was feeling was abandonment, but at the same time, I wanted others to know that I wasn't, uh, I wasn't a, uh, the only reason for the break up. He had made me look like evil in the things that he was posting (on Facebook) and saying to other people, so, I wanted to set the record straight, I guess, so yeah, I wrote as my status that Andrew was living out the childhood he never had, well that opened up the can of worms, my phone went crazy, he started leaving tons of messages and posting all kinds of crazy, the things, uh, uh th, the things he was saying scared the bejesus out of me. It was like, like, that one comment sent him like right over the edge.

Kimmy's attempt to save her own face also spurred her to open her privacy boundaries, but similarly enraged her ex-partner. Although her contact with the aggressor's mother was conducted privately, she also received a swift reaction from her former intimate.

> I called his mom to tell her I thought Sam was not taking his medication (for bi-polar disorder) and that I just couldn't handle things with him anymore. About an hour later, Sam texts me that he shoulda taken care of me earlier, well I thought he meant ya know take care of me, so I wrote back that we were both at fault for the end of the relationship, ya know? Like, I didn't want him to feel worse than he already did, but he was like, uh, it was something like oh no, I shoulda killed

you when I had the chance, but then it got even worse ... that night I mustta got 50

texts and each worse than the one before.

In both of these instances, the victims opened their privacy boundaries to outside others

in order to protect their reputation. However, the reveal of private information worked

against the victim because the information was communicated back to the aggressor.

Therefore, the narratives represented in this section demonstrate that privacy violations

enacted by the victim may also lead to negative consequences.

Excessive Communication

Excessive communication, as a privacy violation, demonstrates an aggressor

willful exploitation of a victim's private information through repeated attempts at contact.

Specifically, the aggressor uses the victim's personal information, such as phone

numbers, email addresses, social media accounts, to send an inordinate number of

messages to the victim. In this current study, the sheer volume of communication from

the aggressor contributed to the boundary turbulence for some of the victims. The

majority of participants reported their former partners would use a variety of platforms

(mobile phone calls, text messages, emails, and social media to send threats to their

victims. Others felt the disproportionate number of communications signaled that their

ex-partners had become unstable and capable of causing harm to the victim. In both

situations, the victims reported the excessive communication received from the aggressor

elicited feelings that ranged from annoyance to terror consistent with the legal definition

of cyberstalking.

After Rebecca left Chuck for the final time, he contacted her again after she

posted on Facebook about a new a relationship. She explained:

He really didn't like start bugging me again, until, like the end of summer, when I

like found a new boyfriend, then ... he snapped or something ... he starts texting

me, saying shit, like my boyfriend is, like, a, a douche, and that he looks, uh, uh,

poor, and crap like that and ya know I would like text back that he's the douche.

He would like write crap on my wall or make snotty comments, about, me, and

him, and like make, like, say, uh, you know, like dumb things on Facebook. But,

he wouldn't like let it go ... he sent like uh, a hundred text messages and made like

hundreds of random posts ... not to mention all the sub-Tweets that I knew were

aimed at me... it started to really freak me out.

Marilyn also faced excessive, aggressive communication through a variety of platforms.

It started with the texts, like I dunno, maybe like 50 the day Liz told him that I

had gone out on a date with Vance. He then switched to Twitter and posted under

(name deleted) and the things he said were just horrible but even worse were the

things that other people were sayin' and postin'. He even reposted the tweets on

Facebook and tagged me in every single one. Then, came the calls, I don't know

why, I, I, uh, listened to them, I mean you, you probably think I like torturing

myself (interviewer says 'no, not at all") but yeah, he was so, so awful he was

saying, saying, like 'pick up the phone, you dumb bitch' and each message just got

worse and worse.

Similarly, Camille recalled how Thomas left her uneasy after she broke off their 5-year

relationship.

After the break up, he repeatedly called me and texted me non-stop. One day, I

had 25 like missed calls. He would text me all day long, even after receiving

none or minimal responses from me. He would send me songs through Facebook

message that he said reminded him of us or that were apology songs expressing

how he felt. While I was home for holiday breaks, he would repeatedly call and

text me saying that he was going to come over if I didn't respond to him. He

would also call and leave long 5 minute voicemails rambling on about how sorry

he was and how much he wanted me back. Sometimes, his texts and voicemails

would be mean and telling me how much better he was without me, but then a

few minutes later he would send a slew of apology messages.

Camille's situation mirrored many of the other reports given by the victims. The

messages through a variety of technologies alternated between anger and apologetic. In

most cases, the technological stalking dwindled off at some point, only to re-emerge

without warning. Moreover, many victims reported the contact made also transferred

into the off-line and other social mediated contexts.

The examples in this section highlight that the technological stalking experience

may also incorporate excessive harassing behaviors. Although in some cases, the victims

reported they were not afraid, but merely annoyed by the sheer volume of the posts, texts,

emails, and phone messages. Yet, because these communications contained highly

specific and personalized information, the victim felt they may have had cause for

concern.

Surveillance

The act of surveillance also is an exploitation of the victim's personal information.

In this regard, the aggressor attempts to circumvent the privacy boundary erected by the

victim through the use of technology to locate and stalk their victim offline and monitor

her or his online activities. Specifically, participants cited social media, Global

Positioning Systems, and computer tracking software as the means for the aggressor to

monitor his or her victim's movements. Although the victims have little evidence to the

extent by which these technologies were used, several participants reported their use

constituted a threat and inflicted grave distress.

Social Media. Several participants felt their use of social media may have aided in their

ex-partner's ability to access private information about the victim's whereabouts and

behaviors. According to Michael, his former partner continued to seek him out despite a

court order.

> I really don't know if she'll ever move on. I get it that we live in a small town and
>
> it's uh, hard to not run into her when I'm home for breaks (from school), but I
>
> think she, uh, she, like goes out of her way, to find out when I'll be in town. We
>
> have a lot of friends in our hometown, so I know she checks their Facebook to
>
> find out where we're going and stuff. I mean, I shut down my old (Facebook)
>
> account and started a new one with a different name and stuff, but she still finds
>
> out. If we're at a bar and she can't go in, she just sits in her car and waits ... I'll go
>
> out for a smoke and I'll see her car and hours later, she'll still be there. Sometimes
>
> I feel like one day she's just gonna like freak out and follow me to my car and
>
> shoot me or something. I mean, all our friends know what's gone on and I can't
>
> ask them to defriend her, but, at the same time, I'm like, how 'bout some loyalty
>
> man.

In Camille's case, her ex-intimate used social media to try to reinsert him into her life

despite the termination of their relationship. Camille explained:

Thomas would also always check my Facebook and Twitter pages, and then send

me texts responding to some of my Facebook statuses or Twitter posts that let me

know he was constantly monitoring them. Sometimes he would text me

something about one of my Facebook statuses which bothered me and let me

know that he was checking my page constantly (pause). One time, I, uh, made a

status saying that I was overwhelmed with school, ya know, and like a few

seconds later he sent me this encouraging text which uh, uh, really freaked me out

because it felt so manipulative and like he was stalking my page.

The narratives in this section demonstrated how social media has made it nearly

impossible for individuals to stop their aggressors from monitoring their activities. Both

Michael and Camille claimed that they were no longer online "friends" with their

aggressors but because their other friends would post or tag the victim about upcoming

plans, this made it easy for the technological stalker to track their movements.

Global Positioning Systems (GPS). This technology also was used by aggressors in

order to provide information about their victims' whereabouts. Prior to the discovery of

the GPS made by a third party, the victims in this section reported that they had no

knowledge that the devices were being used.

Alicia's husband used the GPS tracking technology that came standard with her

mobile phone in order to obtain her whereabouts. Throughout her interview, she recalled

several instances when Dennis, her husband, would appear suddenly. After one

encounter in a grocery store parking lot had left her "unnerved", she mentioned the

incident to her attorney. In this except, she explained how her lack of knowledge about

technology may have allowed Dennis to stalk her. Alicia stated:

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When Mr. Price [her attorney] told me that was probably tracking me through me phone. I didn't even know you could do that. I was just in shock, (pause) to think that, well, it all made sense at that moment, how he knew that I ate lunch in the break room, how he always knew where Sarah (their daughter) was, he knew what stores I went to, that I was at my sister's, it just, just, made me nauseous, I, I, was, uh, so terrified, and, uh, I, uh, I think that I reached in my purse, and wanted to, j, ju, just, throw it in the wastepaper basket, and Mr. Price stopped me and said it was the best evidence and not to, to, uh, tamper with it because we could, uh, use it in the custody case.

Nicki's ex-husband George also used a GPS in their car to track his wife's daily movements. Although, by her admission, she rarely used the car, she needed the vehicle to run errands to pay bills, and go to the grocery store. She did not know of her husband's surveillance until she took the car in for service after she had a flat tire. In this excerpt, she explains her reaction to the mechanic's discovery.

Oh, yeah I was pissed, shocked, angry, so many things went through my head when Bob [the mechanic] found the thing under the car 'cause now it made sense about, how, how, uh, George always seemed to know where I had been. He used to get on me about, about, my weight and stuff, so he always looked at the Wal-Mart receipt to make sure I wasn't sneaking stuff. He always was so obsessive about buying things. But, yeah, so I admit it I would cheat on my diet and stop off at like Dunkin' Donuts or McDonalds, but to BUG [emphasis added by participant] my car! Holy crapolla, Bob shows me the thing and asks me if I know what it is, and like, I don't know and to have him explain it, well, that just

made me look fuckin' stupid. I remember that at the time I'm not sure what me

more mad, that he uh, made, made me look dumb in front of Bob or, or, or if it

was the extent that he went to to make sure I wasn't cheating on the diet ... I mean

that's what I thought it was all about. I can't believe how stupid I was.

The use of GPS allowed the aggressors in these situations to remotely spy on the actions

of their victims. Alicia and Nikki explained how the discovery of these devices

temporarily ended the technologically stalking, yet both stated that the aggressor

continued to their behavior through the use of other means, such as following and parking

outside of their homes.

Computer Tracking Software. The installation of this software on the victims'

computers allowed the aggressor to monitor the target's internet activity as a means of

privacy invasion. This tactic allowed the aggressor to track the victims' day to day

activities, as well as to observe who the victim communicated with on a daily basis.

Antonia's ex-partner Alex used computer software he had installed on her

computer to track her movements. Although she felt they had been on "friendly terms"

following the dissolution, she felt "very betrayed" and "confused" by his actions. In this

excerpt, she describes her experience.

He had come over to pick up some things and introduce me to a friend of his ...

well, while I was in the bathroom or something; his friend uh installed software

that ran in the background. It was a keystroke program so everything I typed

would be transcribed into an email and sent to a Gmail address he had set up. He

used the tracking software to find out my plans ... Why, I don't know, but it was

scary, I, I, he, he was always so insecure when we were going out, I guess he just

wanted to, like, uh, know, what I was up to, and   uh, like, if I was seeing

anyone else, but then, he started just like hanging out at my job   and by my

classes. I tried not to let it get to me, but he was always there.

Alicia's experience also represented how her husband, Dennis, used computer tracking

software to monitor their daughter's social media activities.

Susan (name changed), she's the oldest, well, she had signed up for a Facebook

account while she was at school ... the one incident that sticks out is when he calls

and says, something, like, "get your kids under control or I will." Dennis was so

angry because I, I, think, he he felt she was broadcasting the family's, uh, bu, bu,

stuff. He told me that he had, uh, access, I guess you could say, and that he could

shut her up, uh, when, whenever, he wanted to.

The use of surveillance appeared to be both a symbolic and real sense of privacy

invasion. The aggressors used the private information they culled from social media, the

GPS devices, and computer programs to terrorize their victims. In nearly every case that

surveillance was reported, the victims reported shock and horror at the lengths their

former partners went to in order to technologically stalk their targets.

To summarize, the variety of technologies used by the aggressors in this section

demonstrate how there are multiple ways an aggressor can instill fear in a target.

Through the dissemination of private or co-owned information, the victims reported

feelings of vulnerability, shame, and embarrassment when others learned of their secrets.

Moreover, many felt a loss of face when they had to open their privacy boundaries to

discuss their ex-intimate with others. The excessive communication and use of

technologies heightened the victims' sense of fear when they realized their ex-partner

could keep track their movements without having to be present. Thus, the variety of negative emotions that resulted from the privacy boundary violations led the victims to seek out ways to end their ordeals.

Research Question 3: Coping with Boundary Turbulence

The third research question explored how victims attempt to manage incidents of boundary turbulence. The purpose of this question is to understand how the participants tried to stop and to cope with their technological stalking experiences. Following the incidents of privacy violations committed by the aggressors, the victims found several methods for seeking help in order to stop the technological stalking, as well as strategies to survive their ordeals. The efforts included: asking the aggressor to refrain from contact, blocking the aggressor in order to cut off contact, as well as seeking assistance from law enforcement, friends, and medical/psychological professionals. The participants in this current study revealed that in order to request help, they had to open their privacy boundaries to outside others. This action was often met with mixed results.

Directly Contacting the Aggressor

In all cases, the first initial strategy was to make direct contact with the aggressor. At various points following relational dissolution, all participants noted that they had clearly asked the ex-intimate to cease communication. Moreover, this strategy was used multiple times, often to no avail. The lack of responsiveness was particularly acute in on/off relationship due to the routine for terminating and reuniting, as well those who had reported abuse within the relationship.

Multiple requests to cease contact were prevalent in all the participants account. In this excerpt, Monica describes how she perceived Max, her ex-intimate's lack of regard

for her desire to no longer have any contact and how she felt Max's efforts escalated due to her discomfort.

> Yeah, I called him several times to get him to stop, but, it, it was like, he got some kinda, some uh, thrill or something out of it, it was like, like, he liked seeing me all upset over it ... at that point, I knew, that that there was no talking to him, so I just had to let him have his fun, the thing is that it wasn't fun for me and it only got worse after that ... he just kept bombarding me with texts with pictures of him making scary faces and disturbing messages ... always asking for another chance.

William also recalled how he asked his past intimate, Jennifer, on multiple occasions to leave him alone, but she continued her communicative assault. "She just wouldn't take' get over it already' as the clear indicator that I wanted nothing more to with her."

During their interviews, Monica and William stated that they felt their ex-intimate's technological stalking and harassing behaviors escalated after they had rebuffed their partners' attempts at reconciliation. This perception was also shared by individuals who had been engaged previously in on/off again relationships.

As demonstrated previously, participants in on/off relationships often waited until a specific incident to make their desire to end all communication known. For example, although Marilyn and her past intimate, Joseph had gone through several iterations of breaking up and getting back together, she decided to start dating other people after their last termination. The news, according to Marilyn came as a "shock to him. I guess he just assumed that we'd end up back together again." Therefore, when Joseph learned that she was involved in a new relationship, he called her to make his displeasure known. Like other participants in on/off relationships, Marilyn was very taken aback by her

former partner's verbally aggressive messages and responded that he no longer contact her. She recalled:

> I tried to let him down easy first, but the angrier he got, the more I make it extra
> clear that we were through ... that's when he really started to spew all his garbage
> ... yeah, so finally I just said "don't ever talk to me again." But he just found other
> ways to talk to me, like Facebook, texts, you name it.

In a similar case, Charlotte also attempted to ease out of her cyclical on/off relationship pattern with Alan. Like Marilyn, Charlotte maintained friendly relations with her past partner until he found a new relationship. In this exemplar, she explains how his reaction led her to ask him to leave her alone.

> So, gives me this really scary face and says "no" after I asked him to let me go.
> He basically growled at me and backed up like he was gonna hit me ... well he
> starts saying that we ... belonged together and that no one could come between,
> that I'd see, ya know, I just got the hell out of there, but ... he wouldn't stop calling
> ... like sometimes it would be 10 times a day and others ... I wouldn't hear from
> him for days ... but every time I beg him to just ... leave me alone ... but he never
> does, he still calls, texts, and emails me.

Charlotte's experience has two elements important to our understanding of the difficulty in one's attempt to stop the communication from an ex-intimate. First, as described above, her involvement in an on/off again relationship may have given her former partner the impression that her new relationship was unimportant and he and Charlotte would get back together. Second, the relationship between Charlotte and Alan had been plagued by physical and psychological abuse. During the interview, Charlotte expressed her

perception that Alan believed he could bully her into staying with him as he had done every other time she had tried to leave him.

The incidents reported in this theme reflect the victims' attempts to directly ask their aggressor to stop all communication. Because this tactic was so ineffective, participants resorted to alternative methods. In the next theme, participants explain how they attempted to block the electronic messages sent from their aggressor.

Blocking

The primary method employed by victims in their attempts to manage the communications received by the aggressor was to "block" their harasser. The act of blocking may be defined as the ability to restrict incoming electronic communications. The participants reported they were able to stop communication on their (a) mobile phones, (b) email, and (c) social media.

Mobile phone. Several participants reported they were able to easily stop the aggressor from making contact through their mobile phones. For example, after David tried to physically assault Jane, he began calling her incessantly. Her response was to immediately block his phone calls and texts. As she recalled,

> I was talking with some of my co-workers about what David did, was doing, and
> Audrianna [Jane's co-worker] showed me how to block his calls. I was amazed at
> how easy it was. Although this did lead to him driving by my house, my work
> more often, it did stop the calls.

Shana also blocked Andrew from her mobile and home phones.

> Getting the calls and texts to stop on my cell was really easy, but the home phone
> was harder. I had to call [the telephone company] and waited on hold forever,

was transferred, was asked if I wanted to to, uh, to bundle my services, but when I

finally got through to a live person, they helped me take care of the problem.

Although Jane and Shana had little difficulty blocking their aggressors, other victims

reported the reliance on others to help program their telephone to block calls from their

perpetrator's telephone number was a challenging process. According to Jason, he

opened his privacy boundary to discuss the situation with his ex-girlfriend, Julie, but the

clerk at a local branch of his mobile phone provider showed little sympathy for his plight.

> I originally went to [mobile phone provider] to change my number which was
>
> kinda, kinda embarrassing 'cause the dude was like, "girlfriend problems, huh,
>
> wish I had that problem, ha ha," I didn't think it was funny, he even made sure
>
> that I knew how to re-add her, just in case, when I told him there was like no way
>
> that I was going back to her, he just smiled and said "sure buddy."

William also opened his boundaries to discuss his situation. He followed the directions

provided by his mobile phone carrier to block phone calls and text messages from his

former partner, but also felt patronized by the customer service representative. William

explained

> I tried to follow the directions on their website, but it was hard to figure out, so I
>
> called their, their, uh, help line. I get this old guy on the line and explained my,
>
> my, uh, situation to him, so he says, 'you're afraid of a girl, reaaaallllyy' (word
>
> drawn out by the participant). That pissed me off so I just said can you help me
>
> or not? and he comes back with the whole did you follow directions in the
>
> instruction manual, like I'm stupid or something, he eventually talked me through
>
> the process and it all just made me hate her even more.

In addition to blocks placed on the aggressors' phone numbers, many participants also reported they had blocked the aggressors' email addresses, as well.

Email. For many of the victims, one of the simpler tasks completed to cut off communication with their aggressor was to block the email addresses of their perpetrator. This was done by changing the privacy settings of their email account. However, a few participants contacted their Internet Service Provider for assistance or the submission of a formal complaint. In the next three exemplars, Hailey, Kimmy, and Michael explained the processes, while not always easy, were eventually effective.

> After Hailey informed the police of former partner Marco's emailed photo and threat, she sent him a final message stating she had informed the police about his actions and that he needed to cease all contact with her, but that only seemed to fuel his rage. In this excerpt, Hailey recalled the steps she took to end the barrage of email messages.

> > The first thing I did was I blocked all of his emails, but when I started getting messages from other accounts with names that sounded like they could be my friends, I was on the verge of, of losing it. It seemed like every day I was blocking like 20 new address [heavy sigh]. All his emails said the same thing, I miss you, I want you back, then I hate you, other stuff that was so hateful, like you'll be sorry if you don't take me back, so I finally contacted [her Internet Service Provider]. So, I call them and after being transferred to what seemed like every employee at [the Internet Service Provider], I ended up with someone who offered to help. In essence, I had to get a new address. She [the customer service person] told me that I should print off all his messages before shutting down my account, just in, just in case. That sent chills through me. I ended up having to

change my work (email) address too. That was awful, the kid, yeah, he can't be all of 21 years old, said something to the effect of "this stuff happens all the time no big deal.' I thought no big deal, my eye. Yeah, eventually the emails stopped.

Kimmy also received numerous emails from her ex-intimate. Similar to Hailey, she also was advised by her local police to make changes to her personal and professional email addresses. However, Kimmy reported her employer barely disguised his displeasure with the situation. As she recounted

> My boss was fine when I asked to change my email as long as I told my students, which was like so dumb because he said to not tell them real reason why I changed my email which, uh, it, it didn't sit well with me, but I did it, but it still sucks, 'cause, I, I don't know, I feel like he [her employer] thought it was, like my fault 'cause when I asked him not to publish my email on any of the websites, I mean that's what the detective told me to do, well, [her immediate supervisor] gave me all sorts of attitude, saying things like 'this is highly irregular and our students need to have contact with me, the whole meeting with him, it ju, it just made me feel how much Andrew made me change my life.

Finally, Michael also explained the reaction from a student employee at his school's technology services made him feel uncomfortable.

> I had to go to Computer Services on campus to get a new email. That was fun (sarcastically said). I had to fill out a form and explain why. The guy looked at me like I was ... uh, a moron or something. He said something like, 'Really, big guy like you has girlfriend that's bothering you?' I felt so fuckin' stupid.

Although both males and females stated they felt uncomfortable during their conversations with others, males seemed to take the interactions more harshly. Jason summed up this experience by stating "I never felt so humiliated in all my life" after he had to asked his employer to remove his contact information from the company website.

Social media. Individuals who reported their aggressor had utilized social media to stalk, harass, or disseminate private information, opted to "de-friend" their former partner as a means of blocking. A second common tactic was to change their privacy settings to limit who had access to their social network profile and posts. Although victims stated these methods were effective, they were not without problems.

In the following case, Rachel also explained the process she went through in an effort to stop her former intimate from posting messages on her social media wall following the termination of their relationship. The incident began when her former intimate had posted several "nasty" and "cruel" remarks. After her friends responded because they thought the messages were a joke, she felt hurt and felt "forced to make some serious changes" not only in regards to her social media account, but her friendships, as well. She explained:

> After I deleted the posts, I had to, try to get a hold of everyone on my friends list and explain he was, was, I don't know, like deranged or something. I think some of them believed me, but some of my, uh, uh, friendships, seemed, to, uh, uh, well, be different. So, I just deleted my entire account and started again with people who I knew were really uh, uh, my friends. That was a pain but ya know I was much smarter this time 'cause I know have two accounts one for business contacts and one for friends and family.

Matthew also acted quickly after his ex-intimate had posted potentially damaging information, yet, like Rachel, he, too, faced criticisms from his "friends."

> I immediately went into crisis mode, I unfriended her and completely changed my privacy settings. I posted a general comment on my wall about, ab, uh, ya know something like 'please disregard Ashley's rants, she's like mad bec, because we have broken up for good' but that kinda backfired because some friends commented things like we would get back together and that we made a great couple, it was so frustrating, couldn't they see what a bitch she was being?

The exemplars in this theme demonstrated how blocking can be an effective manner of dealing with an aggressor. Unfortunately, in a majority of the cases, the technological stalker simply created another account or shifted to another platform. As Matthew recalled " when she realized that she couldn't taunt me on Facebook anymore she shifted to Twitter and I had no idea how to stop that." Therefore, several victims reported they went to law enforcement to try to stop the aggressor.

Assistance from Law Enforcement

In order to enlist the aid from law enforcement and judicial services to end the technological harassment and stalking, participants explained the need to open their privacy boundaries. Within this theme, an overwhelming number of the participants were unable to receive assistance from these professionals. However, victims who were persistent in navigating legal system were able to secure some form of protection.

Claudia's experience required her to open her privacy boundaries to a number of individuals, but has not received the help she has asked for. She claimed her attempts to cease all communication with her ex-husband, Carl, have been difficult because they

share a daughter. During the divorce proceedings, Claudia shared with her attorney the intimidating messages Carl had sent to her sister. In this excerpt, Claudia explained her perception of the lack of aid and support she received from her lawyer.

> Mr. Johnson [her attorney] said the threats were not made directly to me, so they were of little relevance, so I showed him the one's Carl sent me and he said, 'well that's interesting, but these messages can be, be, uh, inter, uh, interpreted in lots of ways' so it would be best if I just shared custody with Carl. I remember thinking what's it gonna take for him [the attorney] to do something with all the money I was payin' him. I mean, he [Carl] still sends me texts all the time saying awful things, blaming me 'cause Jacqueline wants to come home every time she's with him. It's not my fault he's a bully and she sees that, right? I asked a cop friend of my brother's if I could do anything and he said 'not really' unless he makes a dir, spec, uh, clear threat and even then these things are hard to prove. I guess I've just given up.

Like, Claudia, Michael's situation also is on-going. Although his parents convinced him to go to the authorities after his ex-partner, Taylor, had texted his mother that she was going to commit suicide if Michael did not return to the relationship, the authorities have done little to end the years of technological and offline stalking. In this exemplar, Michael recounted his experience with two jurisdictions of police:

> My mom was so freaked out, she didn't know what to do, she tries calling me I guess a dozen times, but I had my phone off 'cause I was in class, but when I finally saw that I missed all those calls I call her back like right away and she says she's on her way to (the college). So she gets here and we go to the cops, but they

say they can't do anything 'cause no threat to me has been made, but they call the

(his hometown) cops and they promise to stop by her house and have a talk with

her. A couple of days later, I get a call from (name of the hometown Chief of

Police) who says that he received a report from some of his cops and that I need

to come in to talk to them. So my mom and me had to go to the cops and they

like begin saying things like she's very upset and to give her some time to get over

it and try to talk me out of pursuing the matter any further. So, they were no help,

but my mom wouldn't let it go. She went to the State's Attorney's office and

convinced them to issue a restraining order. So, I go in to show it to the cops and

they pretty much said that that they couldn't do much because they have better

things to do and it's a free country, crap like that, so if we're somewhere public

and she show's up, I can call them, but it's not a priority for them.

Similarly, Charlotte faced what she described as "an interrogation" by her local police

before they would act. Charlotte explained:

After I got a particularly frightening set of emails, each more hostile than the last,

I went to the [hometown] police. They took me back to a little room with no

windows and   started grilling me like I was the, uh, uh, criminal. They asked

about our relationship, our sex life, what I, I had done, I kept askin' what are you

gonna do about this and they kept saying they needed the whole story, finally I

said, well more like I screamed, you wanna know what's going on READ THIS

and I slammed the emails down on their table and reached in my bag and almost

threw my phone at the cop! He said 'okay, calm down' or something like that and

took my phone and my papers and left the room for what seemed like hours until

an assistant D.A. came in and helped me through the process of filing a

restraining order.

The exchange between Charlotte and the officer was not uncommon. One reason may be found in Delia's explanation of her first experience with her local jurisdiction's law enforcement officers. She felt the police's unfamiliarity with the legal statutes may have hampered her ability to thwart her aggressor. She recalled,

Well, it was a very um very difficult to get the police to listen to me, um since, because, I'm in Maryland and he's in New Jersey, um, I was going back and forth between, um, between 2 um police stations. Um, none of the police officers with whom I spoke knew the law enough to know that he had committed 5 misdemeanors ... everywhere I turned it was, no, no, no, there is nothing we can do, there is nothing you can do ... so ya know but the police were absolutely useless.

Although she had met with tremendous resistance after the first incident with the eBay auction, after Joey's second successful attempt to mar Delia's image by posting the naked photos and her home address on a pornographic website, she again sought police action. She explained:

This time, I got the state police involved and I managed to get an officer from the computer crimes unit to help me. He was the one who told me that he had committed all these misdemeanors the first time, but the statute of limitations had run out ... so working with this officer I found out that once again the law could not protect me. So I got pissed and I, uh, um, learned how to write a bill and I wrote a bill and I got two senators to sponsor it and I testified in February before

the Maryland Judicial Committee and it was passed into law in April and went

into effect in October. So now online stalking and harassment victims in

Maryland have much more protection than they had in the past.

The narratives in this section demonstrated the difficulty victims face when they report

their ex-partners to law enforcement. Because multiple jurisdictions often are involved,

victims must use state or federal statutes that may be unfamiliar to small, local law

enforcement. Therefore, victims often rely on friends and family members to deal with

their ordeals.

Assistance from Friends and Family

Many victims reported they were able to receive help from their friends by

limiting the flow of information to the perpetrator. In these narratives, we are able to see

how the friends and family would close their boundaries with the aggressor in an effort to

protect the victim.

After what she perceived as "vague threats" from her ex-partner Max to reveal

private information she had shared with him during the course of their relationship,

Monica took several proactive actions in order to preempt any potential damage to her

friendships and her face.

> I made a point of going to see or call all of my really close friends to explain that
>
> Max was was was uh, like, losing it and not to believe anything he said and like a
>
> few of my friends were really super supportive, but I could tell others, like the
>
> one's who had read his posts were skeptical, but for the most part I was able to
>
> convince uh, uh, everyone like Carol and Samantha and Erica, oh just a lotta
>
> people who was was my friends first to defriend him or not respond to his rants.

Delia's friends came to her rescue after Joey, her former partner, had created a fake Facebook profile that resembled her. She recalled how she was able to shut down the profile "within less than a 24-hour period, (after) 90 of my friends reported the page." Despite the fact that many participants reported their friends offered various types of social support, others, like Emma felt too ashamed to open her privacy boundaries to friends. She explained "I felt like everyone was judging me, so I just shut down ... I couldn't go to work, I couldn't answer my phone, I couldn't log on, I just wanted to lay in bed all day and pray it would all go away." This reaction was common among the participants in this study. Specifically, 16 of the victims reported feeling that they needed more help than their friends and family could provide.

Assistance from Medical/Psychological Professionals

In the cases where victims reported feelings of grave fear or psychological distress as a result of the technological stalking, psychological and medical professional services were utilized. Like the individuals who sought help from the legal system, these victims had to open their privacy boundaries when discussing their situation in their efforts to obtain treatment.

This first example illustrated how, similar to those who sought judicial solutions, not all participants who reported adverse physical and emotional effects received help. Rebecca recalled after her ex-intimate released a video of her involvement in a wet t-shirt contest, her mother took her to see their family physician.

> So I tell the doctor everything that happened and says that what I'm like going through is, like normal, I mean, seriously, like having everyone in the world see you half naked on the fucking internet is, like fucking normal. He tells my mom

it will ... pass or something, and like all that I need to, is ... not get so worked up

over this. He didn't even look at me ... when he like said it, that just made it

worse and I, like started crying, like real bad, so he like, tells my mom, that I

should see a shrink, or something like that. I mean, it was, like, so embarrassing

cuz, like, he had been, like, uh, my doctor, for like ever, and so, like we like leave,

and my mom says that we don't have the money, to uh, uh, like see a shrink, and

that since I'm not in school, we don't like have insurance, or something retarded

like that. It was, like she, and he (the doctor) was uh, blaming me for everything

that happened, he wouldn't even look at me when I as in there, he just kept telling

my mom everything's okay.

On the other hand, some victims report they were able to receive treatment after they

opened up to their physicians about their situation. In this exemplar, Alicia recounted

what led up to her "breakdown" and her subsequent treatment. Following a very public

argument with her husband, Dennis, Alicia was shown how the tracking technology on

her mobile phone enabled him to locate her. She explained:

He [Mr. Price] showed me on his computer how, uh, how it, uh, works ... I started

to wonder if Mr. Price was keeping track of me too, I mean, I felt as though

Dennis was making me into a crazy person ... that's, that's, uh, that's the time, I

had my breakdown ... I started crying and getting lighted-headed. Next thing I

really remember is being in the hospital ... so, I broke down again and told him

[the emergency room physician] that my husband was st, track, st, uh, stalking me

and it all came out ... He introduced me to Dr. Walters who has become my

saving grace. We talk about all kinds of things like how Dennis has taken

advantage of me and how I need to keep a journal ... about of all the times he

contacts me. It's been real hard, but doc says it's important to not only my health,

but also so I can give the police enough ammunition. I have a detective that I'm

working with, but it's hard ya know, somedays I can handle him [Dennis]   and

other days, I feel like the crazy person ... all over again.

Finally, Delia also sought treatment to cope with her divorce and the posting of her

photos and contact information. In this excerpt, she described a series of incidents that

culminated in an "accidental suicide attempt."

Um, well I've been diagnosed with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder with

depression as a result of, I've been with a therapist for almost 4 years ... Um, when

this happened I asked her if she would please, um, ya know, write me out for

medical leave, um, I was paranoid, I was terrified to leave my house because I

didn't know who saw me. Like when I was walking down the street leaving the

police station the day I found out 3 men were walking towards me ... I felt, just

very, very frightened, in a way of a frightened I had never felt before because I

thought what if they saw me? What if they recognize my face? Ya know, and so

I was very afraid, afraid to leave the house, I didn't know who was going to show

up at my house because all you do is just Google my first and last name and

there's my address.

Despite an accidental overdose attempt following this particular event, Delia has found a

unique way to cope with the damage her former partner inflicted upon her. Recently, she

has turned to writing about her experience in an effort to make sense of the events, but

more importantly "to help others." In this final excerpt, she describes how the process of

creating a manuscript has given her a new outlook:

> Writing about it has been difficult ... it's been a major process reliving all of it and
>
> going back. But overall now I think now if anything were to happen, ya now, I'm,
>
> I'm ready, like ya know, I'm, I almost welcome it cuz ya know it's another chapter
>
> in my book. Um, so, but, yeah, it was really, really hard, um (pause)
>
> psychologically devastating, ya know, it's taken me a long time to pull it out, and
>
> obviously I still have very strong emotional reactions (pause) to what happened.
>
> ... But, I'm creating an online presence again, so if people need help, they can
>
> Google may name   and know they're not alone.

The two exemplars in this section demonstrated that technological stalking can leave very

deep wounds. Moreover, nearly all victims acknowledged that they may "never fully be

over what happened." However, Alicia's and Delia's narratives demonstrate the

assistance they have received by friends, family, the legal system, and medical

professionals have helped in the coping process. Their narratives demonstrate that one

may need to open their privacy boundaries with a variety of sources in order to receive

the assistance necessary.

Results Summary

The results presented in this section examined the three research questions posed

in Chapter Two. First, I identified and explained how victims use contextual cues and an

assessment of the risks in order to reassess the privacy boundaries once shared with their

past intimate. Specifically, I found following traumatic events that occurred in their

relational, physical, and social environments, the participants attempted to close their

boundaries with their former partners. Moreover, many described how emotional, physical, and psychological abuse enacted during the relationship played a crucial role in their decision to cease all communication with their ex-intimate after the relationship was terminated. Unfortunately, the victims also reported the dissolution was followed by incidents of privacy rule violations.

The results for the second research question demonstrated how technological stalking victims describe their experiences of privacy violations committed by their former intimate. In addition to the intentional rule violations, fuzzy boundaries, and boundary predicaments, I also found excessive communication and surveillance as new categories of privacy boundary violations experienced by victims of technological stalking. The two new categories represent how aggressors may violate one's personal space and deny the victim the right to their own personal privacy.

Finally, I discussed how the incidents identified above led to the experience of boundary turbulence. Specifically, I discussed how targets attempt to manage incidents of boundary turbulence during their technological stalking experiences. The results show that the assistance of others, such as representatives from technology based services, friends, law enforcement, and medical professionals may not always be helpful, yet may lead to positive outcomes if the victim is persistent and resilient.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to understand the lived experiences of individuals who have been technologically stalked by a past intimate partner. At the start of this study, I argued that despite the large number of victims, very little is known about the use of technology to stalk an ex-intimate. Therefore, through this current study I have attempted to illustrate the participants' unique experiences. This chapter will provide a summation of the study's results in light of their relationship to existing theory and literature. Specifically, the following sections will demonstrate how these findings extend the discipline's understanding of Communication Privacy Management theory and contribute to the literature of technological stalking. This section also will feature a review of the practical implications for technological customer service representatives, law enforcement officers, as well as medical and psychological professionals for friends and family of the victim, and the victims themselves. Finally, limitations of the current project and directions for future research will be proposed.

Summary of Findings

The focus of this current study was to describe the lived experiences of victims of technological stalking by a past intimate. In order to meet this objective, three specific research questions were explored: (RQ1) How do victims discursively describe the context of relational dissolution prior to incidents of technological stalking? (RQ2) How do technological stalking victims describe their experiences of privacy violations committed by their past intimates? (RQ3) How do targets attempt to manage

incidents of boundary turbulence? In this section, I discuss the results for each research

question.

The Renegotiation of Privacy Boundaries

In the first research question, I explored the actions or events prior to

technological stalking reported by the participants as justifications for the renegotiation

of their privacy boundaries with their past intimate. According to Petronio, privacy rules

often "go through a process of change" (2002, p. 38), often precipitated by certain

criteria. For example, following a traumatic event, an individual may need to create new

boundaries in order to re-adjust the level of access to private information given to another

person. The current study found victims utilized context and risk-benefit criteria to create

new privacy boundaries with their past intimates following relational termination.

Context

Individuals used the context criterion when a crucial situation or event dictated

changes in the permeability of privacy boundaries. Relational dissolution is one type of

situation that may require individuals to re-assess their privacy boundaries. Following

termination, past partners may find that they need to renegotiate boundaries not only with

former partners, but also with their social networks. Participants in this study reported

incidents that occurred in three contextual environments: the *relational environment*, the

physical environment, and the *social environment*.

Relational environment. The relational environment refers to the state of the

relationship at a given time. In this theme, participants articulated that unclear

communication about the dissolution might have contributed to the onset of their

technological stalking. Research has shown communication between former partners

about the redefinition of the relationship is often challenging and fraught with ambiguity (Foley & Fraser, 1998; Kurdek, 1991). Moreover, the process of relational termination is often characterized by hostile communication when the desire for the breakup is not mutual (e.g., Davis, Ace, & Andra, 2000; Dye & Davis, 2003). According to several participants, the combination of an unclear termination message and the introduction of a new potential love interest for the victim led to nasty confrontations with their aggressors. For example, Gina stated, "I took Leo to a party and he [Vinny, her ex-intimate] just, just went ballistic, cursin' and screamin' I guess he just figured that we'd get back together, like we always did." Thus, participants in this current study who reported involvement in an on-again/off-again relationship became targets for technological stalking. This finding is consistent with Davis, Ace, and Andra's (2000) study that found frequent break ups and reunifications led to an increased likelihood of traditional stalking. The authors argue that a high correlation between expressions of love and acts of stalking demonstrate the aggressor's feelings often fluctuate between the desire for reunification and anger. Thus, the introduction of a new love interest may lead the aggressor to increase his or her communicative efforts to win back his or her ex-intimate. As a result, when reunification fails because one party has started a new relationship, the privacy boundaries between former partners must be re-negotiated. The results of this study showed a similar finding in that the state of the relational environment was perceived as a pre-cursor to technological stalking by several participants.

Physical environment. The second context sub-theme in this current study is the physical environment. This context is based on the location, place, and setting of where private disclosures occur (Petronio, 2002). For this current project, I focused exclusively

on threats that involved private information and the location where the threats were made. Specifically, I found the presence of threats made in both public and private settings were pre-cursors to the actual technological stalking experience for victims. Traditionally, *threats* are defined as, "A written or oral communication that implicitly or explicitly states a wish or intent to damage, injure, or kill the target" (Mohandie et al., 2006). Previous research by Mohandie and colleagues (2006) has categorized threats as direct (made through verbal expression) or indirect (made in writing or through symbolic gestures), and based on the location of the threat (public or private).

The literature has consistently found traditional stalking aggressors who have a relational history with their target utilize direct, face-to-face threats (e.g., Harmon, Rosner, & Owens, 1998; Meloy, 1996; Meloy & Gothard, 1995; Palarea, Zona, Lane, & Langhinrichsen-Rohling, 1999). However, recent technological stalking studies report the use of indirect threats by past intimates (e.g., Chaulk & Jones, 2011; Ogilive, 2000; Spitzberg & Hoobler, 2002). One possible explanation for the aggressor's ability to use both direct and indirect messages is the amount of private information shared between intimates prior to dissolution. Because ex-partners share relational history, aggressors often have first-hand knowledge of the victims' lifestyles and whereabouts. Moreover, aggressors know their victims' personal contact information, such as phone numbers, email addresses, as well as the social media sites used by their victims. This wealth of knowledge provides aggressors a multitude of direct and indirect ways to contact their victims.

Public setting. Several participants reported their former partner had made threats in public settings. These threats were perceived by the victims to serve two

functions. First, participants believed the aggressors' choice of location was a purposeful act to demonstrate they had access to the victims' private information, such as their daily movements. For example, Michael says, "Every time I go out with friends back home ... there she is, sittin' in her car ... it's just scary." He goes on to explain that she was cognizant of the court order he had secured, yet she blatantly flaunted her presence. Because she did not have direct contact with the victim, this event is classified as an indirect public threat, according Mohandie et al.'s (2006) typology.

Direct confrontations with their aggressors in public settings also unnerved several victims. Claudia explained that after she had been released from the hospital, her husband appeared at her sister's house and threatened her with both physical harm as well as the release of previously co-owned information. "He said that if I didn't come home, he'd kill me and my family ... he (also) said not before everyone knew, knew, that I was not a good mom cuz I was a mess." These exemplars show that threats made in a public setting can be either indirect or direct. Moreover, victims perceived that both types of threats were used with the intent to cause distress.

Private setting. For the purposes of the current study, I conceptualized communication in the private setting to be messages containing private information sent from an aggressor in a remote location to a target. The victims reported the aggressors' initial messages seemed harmless; therefore they did not classify the communications as technological stalking at that point. However, the urgency and content of the messages left many unnerved. For example, Rachel stated early messages from the aggressor were benign requests for reconciliation but spiraled quickly into threats to release private co-owned information. She recalled, "It started with texts and emails begging me to come

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back ... he then said I would be sorry if I didn't call him NOW" (emphasis made by the participant). Sadly, Rex, her ex-intimate, carried through with his threat. She explained, "Next thing I know, he posted (on Facebook) that I liked, uh, liked it, uh, I talked like a slut in bed then texted me if I didn't call he'd post more shit." William also received numerous pleas to get back together with his ex-intimate via text message. He explained, "She sent me like 50 in one night ... no, it didn't bother me, I just ignored her until the really weird ones started." These examples highlight how initial requests to reconcile are not inherently threatening, yet may escalate into technological stalking rather quickly. Moreover, these cases demonstrate that the aggressor does not need to communicate directly with the victim in order to be destructive.

Social Environment. The final contextual theme is the social environment. The social environment results indicate that the release of once private information about the victim impacts their relationships with the aggressor and outside others. Because these instances are often intentional rule violations, boundary turbulence ensues and require victims to renegotiate privacy boundaries with both parties. The results indicate (a) the aggressor's release of information threatened the victims' face and constrained the victim's autonomy and (b) the aggressor's inquires for information about the victim effected the connection between the victims and others.

Threats to the victim's face. Nearly all victims reported their past intimate revealed previously co-owned, private information to outside others. Prior to her technological stalking experience, Chuck, Rebecca's former partner, had told a group of her friends that she a prude. Although Rebecca readily admitted that her sex drive did not match her ex-intimate's needs, she felt compelled to explain Chuck's comments.

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According to Rebecca, the interactions with her friends were difficult because she perceived they negatively judged her. Moreover, Chuck's boast served his identity while also denigrating Rebecca through the suggestion that she is unsuitable relationship material.

Alice's narrative followed a similar trajectory. Her ex-intimate, Brandon, also sought a reunion following termination. After Alice declined Brandon's advances, he told their friends that she was the reason they broke up even though the information he divulged was inaccurate. She explains, "I heard I was a coke whore, I was a liar and cheat and I had to explain it over and over again to some people."

The examples above illustrate how victims often must open their privacy boundaries with outside others in order to save face and are consistent with past research. Recall that following relational dissolution, individuals create narratives in order to make sense of what went wrong in their relationships (Duck, 1995). The extant literature shows these narratives serve to enhance the positive face of the storyteller and are designed to disparage the other party. Therefore, when either party tries to present their break up narrative to outside others, the stories may affect the rejected party's relationships with others (e.g., Cupach & Metts, 1986; Duck & Rollie, 2003). Thus, when the aggressors open their privacy boundaries to share information with outside others, they boost their own image, as well as subject the victim to scorn.

Information compilation. The second sub-theme within the social environment was the participants' perceptions that their former partners tried to obtain private information about the victim from outside others. Superficially, this may seem like a benign information-seeking behavior; however, several victims perceived these actions

led to both traditional and technological stalking. For example, similar to the participants discussed in the results section, Camille believed her past partner used their friends' Facebook posts to ascertain her whereabouts on any given day. As Camille articulated, "I feel like he wanted to know when I was coming home (from college) so he could just run into me ... it got to a point where I told my friends 'don't post anything about me.'" Kimmy also believed her past partner attempted to involve others after the termination of her relationship with Sam. Kimmy reported, "He called my sister like every day saying he just wanted to talk to me ... asking questions like who I was seeing, stuff like that, like if I was out on a date ... she said ... he was a man possessed." Unfortunately, when Sam did not get the answers from her sister, he turned to Kimmy. She explained, "When she stopped answering his calls and texts he came right to the source, me... that's when it (the technological stalking) really started." Kimmy's experience demonstrates how the aggressor elicits sympathy, but also wants information. Olivia also perceived her ex-intimate and former co-worker, Jack, had mixed motives for seeking information, but for a different purpose. According to Olivia, during a probe into the organization's no fraternization policy, Jack had their co-workers text and instant message her to find out if she still had feelings for him. However, she believed he wanted to control what she was going to tell her superiors about their intimate relationship. As she recalled, "At that point, I really thought he still cared ... but was trying to manipulate me ... they said if I told on him we'd never get back to where we were." Although Jack's reason for using others to solicit information about Olivia is unknown, similar to Kimmy, Olivia perceived the communication she had with their co-workers might have contributed to her technological stalking experience. Thus, the exemplars in this theme demonstrate how

the mismanagement of privacy boundaries between the victim and their family and friends may be a component of the pre-technological stalking experience.

One possible explanation for why aggressors contacted victims' social networks may have been to seek help in their reunion efforts. Prior research has found the rejected party turns to others to aid in reconciliation with their former partner following dissolution (Bevan, Cameron, & Dillow, 2003; Patterson & O'Hair, 1992). Although this tactic has received little communication scholarly attention, research does show a negative relationship between supportive social networks and the risk of breakups (e.g., Cupach & Metts, 1994; Parks, Stan, & Eggen, 1983). In other words, if the victim's family and friends are supportive of the relationship, there is a lower risk the couple will break up. In these cases, the aggressor sought to gain access to their victim through third parties. Through the aggressor's pleas for sympathy, the family and friends of the victim may have been unwitting accomplices to the victims' technological stalking experiences because of the porous privacy boundaries between the aggressors and outside others.

Risk-Benefit Ratio

A second criterion an individual may utilize in decisions to renegotiate privacy boundaries is the risk-benefit ratio privacy rule. According to Petronio (2002), the risk-benefit criterion is taken into consideration after one has weighed the dangers and rewards of further communication with another person. In this current study, victims reported their decisions to lessen the permeability of their privacy boundaries were largely based on their relational histories with the aggressors. Specifically, participants listed the enactment of emotional, psychological, and physical abuses during the relationship as justifications to close their privacy boundaries with their ex-intimates.

Emotional/psychological abuse. Investigators in the extant literature often use emotional and psychological abuse synonymously. Past research has identified several key characteristics of emotional abuse such as expressions of jealousy, ridicule, and verbal abuse (e.g., Follingstad, Rutledge, Berg, Hause, & Polek, 1990; Simonelli, & Ingram, 1998; Walker, 1979). In addition, psychological abuse has been identified as the denigration of the victim's self-esteem through control, character assassinations, humiliation and repeated threats. According to Murphy and Cascardi, these purpose of the behaviors are "intended to produce emotional harm ... which are directed at the target's sense of self" (1999, p. 209). Thus, emotional and psychological abuses work in concert together to erode a victim's self-concept and self-esteem.

The presences of emotional and psychological abuses during the intimate relationship have been associated with traditional stalking following dissolution. Davis, Ace, and Andra (2000) found the need for control and expressed jealousy to be predictive of psychological abuse within an intimate relationship, and highly predictive of traditional stalking following termination. Similarly, the results of the current study indicate that the aggressors expressed jealousy through verbal abuse and actions designed to control their victim. For example, prior to the dissolution of her intimate relationship with Marco, Hailey recalled he often criticized her friendly demeanor. She stated, "He always said I paid too much attention to other people ... on our anniversary he thought I was flirting with our waitress ... that argument lasted days ... so, I learned real quick not to talk to anyone." Shana also explained that during her 5-year relationship with Andrew, his mood swings made her "walk on egg shells" when they were in public. "I wasn't allowed to talk to anyone if he wasn't right by my side." Specifically, she recollected one

incident following a company Christmas party where he confronted her supervisor. She explained he was so jealous that "He even asked him if I had, um, I had slept with him ... I almost prayed he would kill me so I wouldn't die of embarrassment." In these scenarios, the aggressors expressed jealousy as a means to control their partners' actions during their intimate relationships.

Aggressors also expressed jealously and enacted verbal abuse after relational termination through demeaning comments about the victims and their new love interest. For example, after Jesse attended a New Year's Eve party with his new girlfriend, his former partner, Simone, began texting hurtful comments. "First she called me a scumbag, a dick, among other things, when that didn't get a reaction ... she called my new girlfriend a blow up doll, a ho, you name it she said it." Cassie's past intimate, Lance, also was verbally abusive via texts and phone calls after informing him of her involvement in a new romantic relationship. "He said I was a fat, dumb, ugly bitch and that he was the only one who would put up with me ... like he was doing me favor being with me." When she did not return his calls or texts, he shifted his tirade towards Jeremy, her new boyfriend. "He wrote that he was a weasel face, a moron, all kinds of things, but then he says that he must be stupid to be with me." The examples in this section highlight how the aggressors use emotional abuse before, during, and after relational dissolution. Like the exemplars in the previous section, the permeable privacy boundaries allowed the aggressors to torment their victims. As a result, the participants realized they had to cease communication and close the boundaries with their ex-intimate.

The extant literature of offline stalking and jealousy offers three theoretical lenses to explain these results: coercive control theory, relational goal pursuit theory, and adult attachment theory (see Davis, Swan, & Gambone, 2012, for a review). First, *coercive control theory* demonstrates that in intact relationships, one partner uses threats, intimidation, isolation and emotional abuse in order to restrict all aspects of his or her partner's life (Stark & Flitcraft, 1996). According to Logan and Walker (2009), relationships characterized by coercive control have often transitioned into stalking after relational dissolution. Second, *relational goal theory* predicts individuals who express jealousy, experience possessiveness, and have insecure attachments are more likely to engage in obsessive relational intrusions, as well as demonstrate persistence in their attempts at reconciliation (Cupach & Spitzberg, 2004; Cupach, Spitzberg, Bolingbroke, & Tellitoci, 2011). Finally, *adult attachment theory* has linked emotional abuse with offline stalking (e.g., Davis, Ace, & Andra, 2000; Dutton & Winstead 2006; Dye & Davis, 2003). Moreover, studies that use an adult attachment theoretical foundation have found jealousy to be positively correlated with stalking-like behaviors (e.g., Brennan & Shaver, 1995; Davis, Ace, & Andra, 2000; Dutton, van Ginkel, & Landolt, 1996; Guerrero, 1998). Thus, the finding that participants' experiences of emotional and psychological abuse and expressed jealousy are precursors to technological stalking is consistent with past research.

Physical abuse. Physical abuse enacted during the relationship was also found to be a justification for participants to close their boundaries with past intimates. As Lucas stated, "She was always knockin' me 'round ... on one of our first dates she whacked me with a pool cue for tipping the cocktail waitress." Like Lucas, Sara's relationship with

Caroline was marred by physical abuse. She recalled, "Caroline loved to throw things at me ... one time, I had invited a colleague over without asking her ... so she threw the boiling spaghetti at me ... I was mortified." These examples demonstrate how often the physical abuse was a manifestation of jealousy and emotional abuse.

In this section, I have demonstrated how the victims' narratives of past emotional, psychological, and physical abuses in this current study mirror the literature that associate abuses enacted during the relationship with traditional stalking (e.g., Logan, Shannon, & Cole, 2007; Mohandie, Meloy, McGowan, & Williams, 2006; Tjaden & Thoennes, 1998, 2000). However, the shortages of empirical studies that explore technological stalking make it difficult to draw definitive comparisons. Nonetheless, the findings in this section serve as a useful first step in understanding the context during the relationship and after termination, yet prior to the technological stalking experience.

Privacy Violations

The aim of the second research question was to examine how victims of technological stalking describe their experiences of privacy violations committed by their past intimate. *Privacy violations* are breaches in the agreed upon rules made between a couple or group (Petronio, 2002). These violations may be intentional or unintentional releases of private or co-owned information that result in boundary turbulence. In this current study, I identified five specific privacy rule violations that led to victims' experiences of boundary turbulence: intentional rule violations, fuzzy boundaries, privacy dilemmas, surveillance, and repetitive contact.

Intentional Rule Violations

The first and most prevalent privacy violation discussed by the participants was intentional release of private information. Within this theme, the victims described instances of the aggressor purposely divulging private information through a variety of technologies. The results show the victims perceived the aggressors' intentions were to inflict public embarrassment or mar the image of their ex-intimate. According to Goodno (2007), the immensity of the internet allows technological stalkers to circulate revealing, humiliating, intimidating, and threatening messages quickly. Several participants recalled events when their aggressors had used the internet to disseminate embarrassing photos or private information through social networks, blogs, websites, and emails. In addition to the internet, past intimates also used mobile phone technologies to distribute information quickly to large audiences. Therefore, the results of this study are consistent with past research that found the global dissemination of personal information is one weapon in the arsenal of the technological stalker (e.g., Goodno, 2007; Ogilive, 2000; Willard, 2007).

Fuzzy Boundaries

Fuzzy boundaries result from unclear guidelines about who owns or co-owns the information (Petronio, 2002). Specifically, these violations occur in instances when individuals may be unsure or unaware of the rules guiding the disclosure. Within the current study, fuzzy boundaries often resulted from lack of discussion prior to dissolution about who should and should not have access to private information. The results show that participants believed the information was so private that it did not dictate a discussion; therefore, they had erroneously assumed that their past partner would not

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reveal the information to outside others. Delia's experience demonstrated how she never thought her ex-intimate would breach an unstated privacy rule. She explained, "I never told him not to post them online, ya know, I, ya know I didn't, obviously he wasn't going to share them, because he was very possessive." Yet, she later acknowledged that the lack of discussion regarding ownership of the photos may have led her former partner to believe they were his property because the camera with the stored images was in his possession although she believed the photos were hers. Thus, the fuzzy boundary in this situation resulted from uncertainty of whether the private photographs were his, hers, or co-owned.

A second problem with fuzzy boundaries occurs when the release of previously co-owned information surfaces and instills negative reactions from outside others. For example, after Rebecca's ex-intimate released a video of her participation in a wet t-shirt contest on Facebook, her friends commented on the clip. As she recalled, "All these people ... who I thought were ... friends were, like saying shit, like I had no, uh, boobs, and like there is no way I would've won ... even Amy (my roommate) was talking shit." Past research has identified this phenomenon as *stalking by proxy*. Bocij and McFarlane (2003) use this term to describe the process in which one encourages others such as family members and friends to aid in harassing the victim. However, Sheridan and Grant (2007) are quick to point out that individuals are often unwitting accomplices. As a result, the friends, acquaintances, and family members may not have been aware they had caused harm to the victims.

The results of this current study show fuzzy boundaries led to the disclosure of once co-owned information to outside others and resulted in feelings of shock and anger

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in the participants. These emotions are consistent with the empirical literature that finds

the emotional reactions to boundary turbulence are decidedly negative (e.g., McLaren &

Steuber, 2012; Miller, 2009; Petronio, 2004).

Privacy Dilemmas

The third privacy violation occurred when the victims' faced privacy dilemmas

about whether or not to reveal private information about their past intimate to others. In

this current study, the victims reported that they felt compelled to open their boundaries

to outside others in order to explain the breakup. This finding is consistent with Duck's

(1982) "social phase" when individuals tell their version of events due to a need for

others to approve of their choice to end the relationship. Moreover, the information

revealed clearly served the identity of the storyteller as predicted by Cupach and Metts

(1986). However, the results in this current study also show participants who disclose

private information often invoke the aggressor's ire. For example, after his ex-girlfriend,

Julie, revealed private co-owned information on Facebook, Jason contacted friends and

family members to explain the reasons he terminated their 5-year relationship. He

explained, "I know I wasn't perfect, but ... everyone kept asking if the stuff she posted

was true ... I had to finally admit that she has some serious ... mental health problems."

This exemplar illustrates how his former partner's disclosure of once private information

led Jason to reframe the breakup in order to save face with his family and friends.

Unfortunately, revelations to outside others often led the rejected aggressor to pursue the

victim with zeal. In Jason's case, he recalled, "She just kept saying that she needed me,

that I was the only one who understood her ... I thought she'd never stop." Thus, Jason's

situation demonstrates how privacy dilemmas may be part of the technological stalking experience.

Excessive Communication

The fourth privacy violation identified in the participants' narratives was excessive communication with the use of technology. Within this current study, the aggressor utilized the victim's private information in order to make repeated communications with the victim. This newly developed category was characterized by an individual's right to live a private life free from outside interference through the exploitation of the victim's private information. This theme represents a dialectical tension between a victim's aspirations for autonomy from the other party with an aggressor's needs for connection. In other words, the victim desires to be left alone by the aggressor; however the ex-intimate's excessive communication serves as attempts at connection. Thus, within this current study, this privacy rule violation occurred when the victims asked their aggressors to cease all communication, yet the technological stalkers used the victim's personal contact information in order to send electronic messages with great frequency.

Nearly all participants stated their ex-partner inundated them with communications via a variety of technologies such as phone calls, texts, emails, instant messages, and social network posts following the termination of the intimate relationship. Research has shown that persistent reconciliation requests by the rejected party are common after the dissolution of an intimate relationship (e.g. Cupach, Spitzberg, Bolingbroke, & Tellitocci, 2011; Davis, Swan, & Gambone, 2012; Haugaard & Seri, 2003; Patterson & O'Hair, 1992). Moreover, technological stalking studies consistently

find excessive phone calls as one of the most popular means to harass and stalk targets (Baum, Catalano, & Rand, 2009; Spitzberg, 2002). For example, Jane's former intimate used both her mobile phone and landline to attempt contact. She recalled, "He'd call my cell phone like 10 times each way on my commute ... then he'd call (the home phone) all night ... he knew I couldn't turn it off cuz in case my mom needed me." This example highlights how her ex-intimate used information accumulated during their relationship to select times when Jane could not ignore his telephone calls.

The addition of excessive communication as a privacy violation demonstrates the ease by which an aggressor may use technology to inflict harm upon her or his victim. This new category represents how an aggressor utilizes the private information revealed throughout the relationship (such as knowledge of victim's telephone numbers, email addresses, and preferred social media outlets) in their attempt to force the victim to respond to their demand for communication.

Surveillance

Surveillance, the second new category and final privacy rule violation, also was represented in a variety of narratives. Similar to excessive communication, surveillance is an invasion of one's right to privacy and is characterized by the autonomy-connection dialectic. When a victim is placed under surveillance, she or he has no opportunity for privacy because the aggressor accesses and exploits the private information about the victim. As a result, the use of technology permits the aggressor to locate the victim in their efforts to physically or virtually connect with their past partner. Thus, a victim's right to privacy is severely hampered by the aggressor's quest for connection.

Within this current study, several participants believed their former partners used social networks to ascertain their whereabouts. This finding is consistent with Lyndon et al.'s (2011) result that demonstrated past intimates use social media to "keep tabs" on their former partner by excessively checking the target's status updates and reading the victim's online conversations with others. In addition to social media, the victims report the use of GPS and computer tracking software to spy on their past intimates. Because these technologies are employed from a remote location, victims may be unaware that surveillance has occurred. Yet, the participants who became aware of these tactics reported grave fear and distress upon the discovery.

In terms of Communication Privacy Management theory (CPM), the privacy violations in this section represent the variety of ways aggressors technologically stalk their past partners as well as instances when a victim's own actions may contribute to the technological stalking experience. Despite the amount of research that has examined how privacy rules are broken; fewer studies have focused on how individuals manage their boundaries following incidents of boundary turbulence. Therefore, the third research question is used to frame the exploration of how victims attempt to deal with the aftermath of privacy rule violations in an effort to stop the technological stalking and manage the boundary turbulence.

Coping with Boundary Turbulence

According to Petronio (2002), when individuals experience boundary turbulence, the natural goal is to correct dissonance in order to regain control of how private information has been handled, as well as how it will be handled in the future. The management of boundaries following incidents of technological stalking often is a

difficult and lengthy process. Following privacy violations, victims must often open their privacy boundaries in order to seek help and support from outside others.

Direct Requests

The results of this current study indicate the first action taken by victims is to directly ask the aggressor to cease all communication. The results demonstrate, however, that this is lease successful strategy. Because the victim must open their privacy boundary with the aggressor, this tactic often led to increased hostility and aggression, particularly when the past intimates were involved an on/off again relationship or abuse had been enacted during the relationship. This result is consistent with Spitzberg and Hoobler's (2002) finding that confrontation with a technological stalker is an ineffective tactic. As a result, the victims in this current study utilized other methods to stop the technological harassment and stalking, as well as cope with their predicaments.

Blocking

Nearly all participants, in this current study, reported they had blocked their former partner's communications following a privacy violation. Past stalking research has identified this tactic within a cluster of behaviors labeled "moving away" (Amar & Alexy, 2010; Cupach & Spitzberg, 2004; Spitzberg & Cupach, 2003). The behaviors within this category are active strategies that limit the amount of contact between the aggressor and the victim, such as blocking access, ignoring, and controlling communication attempts. Victims advocacy groups (e.g., Working to Halt Online Abuse, CyberAngels, and the U.S. Department of Justice) that offer advice to victims and would-be victims endorse these tactics as effective means to end technological stalking and harassment. Some participants in the current study reported these strategies were a

helpful second step after direct confrontation failed. However, others stated the process of blocking was overly complicated. As a result, several participants, particularly males, felt they had to open their privacy boundaries to outside others to receive assistance from technology specialists. Sadly, these encounters, as described by the victims, left many feeling "inept," "powerless," and "humiliated."

Seeking Assistance from Professionals

These results also indicate many participants faced difficulty in their interactions with law enforcement, medical/psychological professionals, and technology specialists. Due to the lack of technological stalking research, I cannot directly confirm these findings; however studies of off-line stalking have found male and female victims face challenges when they report the crime to professionals (e.g., Brewster, 1998; Hall, 1998; Pathé & Mullen, 1997). For example, Blaauw, Winkel, Arensman, Sheridan, and Freeve (2002) found offline stalking victims do not receive "desired results due to disbelief or powerlessness of the police, insufficient evidence for sentencing, unresponsiveness or incompetence of mental health professionals, or ineffectiveness of warnings, arrests, sentences, or restraining orders" (p.57). Within this current study, these reasons, although represented in reports from both genders, were especially salient in the male participants' narratives.

In this current study, many male participants were hesitant to involve outside others, and those who did faced skepticism and ridicule. Similar to Hall's (1998) study, men reported their feelings of humiliation were exacerbated both by outside others who questioned their sexuality. As stated by Lucas, "my lawyer said 'I thought you were a tough Marine ... are you gay or something ... you're afraid of a woman calling you,

really?' [The lawyer] made me feel like I was a pussy." Mr. A also received insensitive remarks when he asked the technology specialist at his workplace for help in blocking emails from his past partner. "When I tried to explain how Nicholas outed me to everyone ... the jerk had the balls to sneer at me and say something like 'yeah, yeah, yeah, all you queers are drama queens.'" These excerpts demonstrate the male participants' reluctance to report the technological stalking to the authorities. This finding is consistent with past research that consistently shows males are less likely than females to report they have been victims of serious crimes (e.g., Catalano, 2006; Kaukinen, 2002).

Female participants also reported they were treated poorly and often with indifference. According to Marilyn, as the text and email threats from her ex-intimate increased in both volume and intensity, she became exponentially frightened and anxious. After she had used all of her vacation, sick, and personal days from her job, she called her doctor to inquire about extended medical leave. As she recalled, "I had to force myself out of the house ... only to be told ...'I don't see how this qualifies as medical issue ... he'll move on ... or you'll get back together, trust me' ... I couldn't even get a referral to a shrink." Marilyn, like many other female victims in this current study, felt because she had had an intimate relationship with the aggressor, medical professionals and law enforcement took her less seriously. This argument has been supported in past off-line stalking literature (Farrell, Weisburd, & Wyckoff, 2000; Logan, Walker, Stewart, & Allen, 2006; Sinclair, 2010). Thus, the finding that female technological stalking victims, like male victims, perceive less support from formal authorities is consistent with past research.

Seeking Assistance from Friends and Family

Finally, technological stalking victims sought support from friends and family members; however, these interactions created struggles for the victims as well. The results of this current study are consistent with past traditional and technological stalking research that has found these "informal support networks" are utilized more often than the formal channels discussed above (e.g., Buhi et al., 2009; Jordan, Wilcox, & Pritchard, 2007; Tjaden, Thoennes, & Allison, 2000). Although these studies demonstrate social support to be associated with positive outcomes, several victims in this current study report their informal networks had initially joined in the torment via posts on social media.

Researchers use the term *cyberstalking by proxy* to describe incidents when the perpetrator incites others to engage in harassing activities on the technological stalker's behalf (Bocij & McFarlane, 2003; Goodno, 2007; Willard, 2007). Several participants reported that their friends and family wrote unflattering comments on social media after their aggressors released once private or co-owned information. For example, after Erik started a blog about his past sexual history with Emma, a classmate suggested she look at what Erik had written. She recalled, "People I thought were my friends ... were posting that I was a slut, that I was a freak ... I couldn't go anywhere cuz everyone knew." Like Emma, other victims stated the information revealed impacted their ability to seek support from friends and family.The reliance on outside others was a prominent coping strategy in this current study. Ecological framework theory may be one possible theoretical explanation for this finding (Liang, Goodman, Tummala-Narra, & Weintraub, 2005). This theory has been used to explain how victims of intimate partner violence

decide to seek help and support from outside others. According to the authors of the ecological framework theory, two internal conditions must exist before an individual decides to seek help and disclose his or her experiences.

According to the ecological framework theory, two internal conditions must exist before an individual decides to seek help and disclose their experiences. First, they recognize their situation as undesirable, and second, they must see their problem as unlikely to stop without the help of external sources (Liang et al., 2005). This explanation works well with CPM because victims examine the risks and benefits of disclosure prior to opening privacy boundaries. Although my results demonstrate many victims had negative experiences when they sought assistance from outside others, they may have felt the benefits exceeded the risks. However, more research devoted to the examination of the management of privacy boundaries is needed.

In summation, the results from this current study reveal that the management of privacy boundaries in cases of technological stalking by a past intimate is an ongoing process. The decision to manage the permeability of privacy boundaries with one's former partner begins during relational dissolution and continues until the aggressor ends the barrage of privacy violations. Yet, this is not to presume there is a fixed end-point in technological stalking. Many of the victims, at the time of this writing, report that the technological stalking and harassment have not stopped. The results also indicate victims must manage multiple boundaries. In addition to the aggressor, the participants had to make their privacy boundaries less permeable in order to receive assistance and support from outside others in their quest to stop the technological stalking and harassment.

<center>**Implications**</center>

The findings from this current study have several implications for theory and the study of technological stalking, as well as practical implications for the victims and those who provide assistance. Each will be discussed in this section.

Theoretical Implications

The results of this current study have several implications for CPM theory. First, this current study extends CPM to include non-consensual relationships as a type of relationship context that researchers can explore the development of privacy rules and management of privacy boundaries. Second, two new types of privacy violations have been developed: excessive communication and surveillance. Although these categories have unique properties, both are steeped in the dialectical tradition of CPM and both demonstrate how an inability to live a private life free of interference may be viewed as privacy violations. Third, this study increases our understanding of how individuals cope with boundary turbulence following privacy rule violations. In this section, each of these contributions to the study of CPM will be discussed.

CPM is a rules-based theory that can help explain how individuals decide to reveal or conceal private information (Petronio, 2002). Past CPM research has focused on how individuals and groups within voluntary interpersonal relationships such as families, romantic pairs, and friendships develop and modify rules based on certain circumstances. However, this current study extends our understanding of CPM through the examination of a once voluntary relationship that develops into an involuntary relationship after termination. Specifically, this study has demonstrated the management of privacy boundaries can be a difficult process and may require multiple attempts. In

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addition, the management of privacy boundaries when one party (a target) does not desire future communication may require the target to open or make less porous their privacy boundaries with outside others in order to receive assistance.

The results demonstrate that dyadic communication occurs after dissolution despite the victims' wishes to terminate the intimate relationship. Through the participants' lived experiences, we can see their desire to cease communication with their former partner by alteration of privacy boundaries; however, the aggressor continues to attempt contact. For example, the findings suggest that many victims believe their aggressor technologically stalked them because they did not reconcile with their former partner despite repeated requests. Moreover, many victims thought that their aggressors violated the established or assumed privacy rules intentionally as a means for the infliction of harm. Yet other victims felt that the aggressor might have violated privacy rules for handling private and co-owned information because the privacy rules may no longer apply following the relational dissolution. Although more research in needed to investigate instances when private or co-owned information is revealed without the consent of one party, the results extend our understanding of communication in involuntary relationships.

The release of private or co-owned information by one party to outside other parties often leads to the experience of boundary turbulence (Petronio, 2002). These disclosures are identified as privacy rule violations in the extant CPM literature. In addition to intentional rule violations, fuzzy boundaries, and privacy boundary dilemmas, I found excessive communication and surveillance as two new categories that led to boundary turbulence for the participants. The inclusion of these themes broadens our

understanding of how communication can be used to inflict harm on another without the permission of the target.

The first new privacy violation, excessive communication often occurs after the victim has asked aggressor explicitly to cease all communication. Excessive communication is a privacy violation because the aggressor is attempting to constrain the victim's autonomy while also attempting to increase the connection with the victim. Specifically, the aggressor uses their relational history of the victim's contact information in order to barrage her or him with phone calls, text messages, emails, and social network posts. This exploitation of the victim's private information through repeated attempts at contact often leads the victim to alter their use of technology or change their contact information. For example, two common responses to technological stalking for victims are to shut down their social media accounts and to change their email address. These actions demonstrate how a victim loses their privacy of person due to infringements upon their autonomy. Moreover, as stated previously, traditional stalking research has shown that aggressors often fluctuate between feelings of love and hostility. The narratives in this current study also reveal these same emotions. As such, the aggressor is seeking connection through repeated attempts at communication; however the victim wants the opposite. As a result, excessive communication may be a behavioral manifestation of the aggressor's desire for connection with their victim.

Similarly, surveillance tactics enacted by the technological stalker may also be a privacy violation enacted by the aggressor in order to satisfy their need for increased connection. Although the victim may be unaware that his or her private information is being transmitted to the aggressor, the aggressor is accessing the details of the victim's

life that may lead to both traditional and technological stalking, as well as harassment, assault, and homicide. Like excessive communication, surveillance may limit the victim from using technology. Moreover, a victim may be required to limit the private information they share with others for fear that their friends and family may accidently reveal this information to the aggressor. For example, several participants in this current study reported that they had to ask their support networks to not post to Facebook any private details about the victim, as well as current or future plans that involved the victim. The victims' rationale was that their ex-intimate was still Facebook "friends" or a Twitter "follower" of many of their mutual friends, family members, and acquaintances. As a result, the aggressor would be able to learn about if the victim was in a new relationship or ascertain their whereabouts if they wanted to heighten their proximal connection. Unfortunately, both scenarios could end very badly, especially if the couple had a history of physical, emotional, or psychological abuse. Thus, surveillance is a privacy violation that may devastating consequences for the victim.

The second theoretical implication is the enhanced understanding of privacy boundary management following incidents of boundary turbulence. Due to the limited amount of research in this area, the results increase our awareness of how individuals attempt to cope with privacy violations. Previous research has found technological stalking victims use a variety of tactics to end their ordeals, yet this work, to date, has lacked a theoretical foundation. The addition of a CPM lens reveals how following a privacy violation, victims often must (re)negotiate privacy boundaries with a variety of individuals in order to seek support and assistance to resolve the turbulence. However, as stated previously, in certain instances, there are risks involved when victims open their

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privacy boundaries to seek assistance from outside sources. These dangers may be compounded if the victim must involve several outside parties, such as technology specialists, law enforcement, friends, and family. Thus, this current study demonstrates that victims must be cautious when they open their privacy boundaries following privacy boundary violations.

Technological Stalking Research Implications

In addition to a deeper understanding of CPM, this current study adds to what we know about technological stalking. Research consistently has shown technological stalking is enacted by strangers, acquaintances, and past intimates (e.g., Baum et al., 2009; Tjaden & Thoennes, 1998, 2000). However, the extant literature often uses aggregate data to report generalized findings that limit our understanding of the technological stalking experiences of these various populations. Therefore, this current study attempts to illuminate the unique experiences of one specific population: individuals who have been technologically stalked by a past intimate. The results indicate these victims report unique experiences not found in previous literature, such as abuses in the relationship prior to termination and the use of relational knowledge to embarrass or humiliate the victim after the dissolution.

Second, the results of this study add to our understanding of how past intimate aggressors use technologies to stalk and harass. The differences between traditional and technological stalking have appeared in past empirical studies, yet these reports often lack a theoretical base. Thus, the inclusion of CPM in this current study adds much needed theoretical explanations to the results. The findings demonstrate, in cases of technological stalking by past intimates, that aggressors use a variety of technologies to

commit privacy violations that often inflict grave psychological harm on their past partners. Moreover, these violations create boundary turbulence that requires victims to open their privacy boundaries to outside others. However, other theories may also yield interesting results. For example, the use of relational goal pursuit theory may help us to understand aggressors' motives for violating privacy rules.

Third, the results of this study demonstrate that both technological and traditional stalking follow similar trajectories. For example, like the extant traditional stalking literature, I found technological stalking victims often have tumultuous relationships with their aggressors prior to the breakup. Factors such as emotional, psychological, and physical abuse were cited as reasons why the participants modified their privacy boundaries with their ex-intimate during and following the breakup. Stalking research has shown relationships marred by abuse also are highly predictive of repeated reconciliation requests following a break up. According to Mohandie et al. (2006), past intimate stalkers show greater escalation in their stalking behaviors, interfered more in the target's life, and communicated more verbal insults than stalkers who are strangers or acquaintances.

One key difference between the results from this current study and traditional stalking research was the lack of support and available resources available to victims. Very few participants in this current project reported they were satisfied with the assistance they received from professionals and their support networks. One possible reason for this is that previous technological studies have argued that unlike traditional stalking, technological stalking is a new crime. As a result, law enforcement officials lack the knowledge and resources to investigate these crimes (D'Ovidio, & Doyle, 2003;

Parsons-Pollard & Moriarty, 2009; Spence-Diehl, 2003). Therefore, the findings in this study do show that traditional stalking and technological stalking share similar trajectories, yet do have important differences.

A second yet related difference is the amount of assistance received from outside parties. Specifically, the results indicate individuals often must seek assistance from several sources. Some participants stated that certain representatives from the technology sector were very helpful, yet others were treated with hostility and doubt. Although both males and females received negative treatment from these professional, males were overwhelmingly treated with greater disrespect. Because victims must open their privacy boundaries when seeking help, the negative feedback they receive from others may be detrimental to their ability to cope. Therefore, this current study may help us understand how technological stalking and privacy violations may involve some form of re-victimization.

To summarize, this current study increases our understanding of technological stalking as a unique phenomenon and provide a more complete picture of how this phenomenon occurs. In addition, this current study illuminates how technological stalkers are able to use both, data transmission devices and relational history in order to violate the privacy boundaries with their past intimate. Last, the results have started to provide some clues into how victims who were once intimate partners with aggressor attempt to cope following privacy boundary violations and boundary turbulence. Through the narratives of the participants, we begin to see how the technological stalking by a past intimate is an ongoing process.

Practical Implications

In addition to the theoretical and technological stalking implications, this current study also has several practical implications. First, the identification of factors that may be associated with the technological stalking experience may serve as a warning to individuals involved in abusive relationships. Numerous participants reported that prior to the onset of technological stalking, emotional, psychological, and physical abuse occurred within their intimate relationship with the aggressor. As stated previously, past research has linked abuse within intimate relationship to an increased risk for traditional stalking. Similar to domestic abuse, I have demonstrated that many privacy violations are purposeful attempts to denigrate, embarrass, and control one's partner. Therefore, if abuse has been enacted, one may be at greater risk for technological stalking. Although more research is needed, this finding was robust in the narrative of the participants in this current study.

A second practical implication of this current study is the lack of overt privacy rules about how to handle private, co-owned information after the breakup. Several participants acknowledged they did not have privacy rules in place prior to the dissolution. Many expressed that they assumed the information was so "private" that they felt they did not need to have a formal understanding with their past intimate. Yet, because many of the victims reported privacy violations that involved the dissemination of private information, agreed upon rules may limit the number of fuzzy boundary violations and privacy boundary dilemmas. Although the installation of rules may not prevent intentional rule violations, surveillance, or excessive communication, the results

demonstrate the importance of creating and maintaining privacy rules about private information in intimate relationships.

Third, and perhaps most important, the results indicate that victims attempt to seek assistance and support from outside others, yet numerous participants report their experiences were overwhelmingly negative. Sadly, past research has consistently shown victims report low levels of satisfaction when they seek aid from formal sources (Finn, 2004; Spitzberg & Hoobler, 2004). These findings, as well as those in the current study, have implications for those in a position to help stalking victims. Specifically, the narratives presented in this project may aid legal, medical, and psychological professionals in understanding the unique needs of technological stalking victims. Law enforcement officials must be up-to-date on the laws of their jurisdictions, and those who provide medical and psychological services to victims must recognize the potential health risks. Other populations of professionals that may benefit from this study's findings are those in the technology fields, particularly those in the customer service and technology support areas. Because victims may not be technologically savvy, they may require sensitivity when they seek assistance in blocking the aggressors' attempts at contact, tracking the source of the technological stalking, and understanding other ways of ending their association with their aggressors. The final populations the results may help are the friends and family members of the victim. Similar to Kamphuis et al.'s (2003) study of offline stalking, participants in this study reported a decrease in satisfaction with the level of social support received as the technological stalking duration increased. Therefore, those in support networks need to understand that technological stalking is a serious crime with lasting effects. In addition, members of the victim's support network may not

be aware of how their posts on social media may aid in the technological stalking and harassment. This current study may shed light on their culpability in the process.

In this section, I discussed the theoretical, technological stalking, and practical implications of the current study. The inclusion of a theoretical grounding bolsters the findings and may serve as a starting point for further research. The use of narratives has given voice to the victims that allow us to learn more about privacy rules, boundary turbulence, and the management of privacy boundaries from direct experience. Moreover, this study has demonstrated there are many benefits to investigating technological stalking by past intimates. The results may help law enforcement, medical and psychological professionals, family, friends, and victims to recognize the warning signs of technological stalking. Although this study has provided a tremendous amount of new information, the next section will discuss the limitations.

Limitations

This current study has contributed considerable new information to the study of CPM and technological stalking. However, the investigation also had a number of limitations. The following section addresses limitations related to retrospective data and the population of the study.

A significant limitation was the use of retrospective reporting. Participants were asked to recall their relationships with their aggressors. This method of data collection presents two issues that may have had a bearing on the current study's results. First, it is very likely that these reports are subject to bias and distortions that could easily be influenced by the participants' present-day attitudes toward their ex-intimates, particularly in light of the project's sensitive subject matter. A second, yet related, issue

with retrospective data is the timing of the events. Because I only included individuals who had been technologically stalked within the past two years, other potential participants were not allowed to participate. In addition, several participants interviewed for this current study continued to be technologically stalked during the time of this writing. While these participants were able to add the rich detail needed for a phenomenological study, their narratives may be incomplete if new violations occurred or if their boundary management tactics change over time.

Another limitation is the self-selection of participants in the data collection. Participants who read the recruitment advertisement on the WHOA web site may have opted not to participate because they may have felt their situation did not fit the study criteria. Specifically, the use of "technologically stalked" on the recruitment materials as opposed to the website's use of "cyberstalking" to describe the phenomenon may have confused potential participants. Moreover, the reliance on a snowball sample led to an abundance of individuals from the education sector. Of the 27 participants, 5 were college students, 3 were administrators, and 2 were faculty members. Future research should attempt to locate participants from a variety of occupations. Last, there was a noticeable lack of diversity of the types of "intimates" explored within this current study. All participants had been romantically involved with their aggressor. Researchers who include a better representation of different types of relationships may be able to offer a greater variety of experiences and results.

Future Directions

To date, very little is known about technological stalking by past intimates. This study represents an initial foray into this topic, thus leaving several areas that researchers

may pursue. In this section, I will discuss the need for the aggressors' perspectives, the further testing of the factors that contribute to technological stalking, as well as privacy violations, boundary turbulence, and boundary management processes after boundary turbulence, as well as the use of other theories to investigate this phenomenon. In addition, researchers should further investigate the physical, emotional, and psychological outcomes associated with technological stalking.

The main goal of this study was to examine technological stalking from the perspective of the victim. As a result, several participants speculated as to the cause of their technological stalking experience. While this is useful information, this in itself limits our understanding of the motivations behind technological stalking to solely the victim's perception. Therefore, an examination from the rejected party's point of view would increase our understanding of aggressor motivations and may yield different perspectives of the perceived privacy violations reported by the participants in this current study. For example, Mohandie et al. (2006) found the most common reasons listed by offline stalking perpetrators were to demonstrate affection and to attempt reconciliation. Therefore, an exploration from the aggressors' point-of-view may reveal that they do not see their actions as deviant.

Second, more research is needed to fully understand the precursors to technological stalking by past intimates. At the time of this writing, no studies have examined the role of past abuses in technological stalking. Past research reveals strong associations between psychological, emotional, and physical abuse and offline stalking. Thus, this current study may serve as a starting point for researchers. Similarly, research needs to continue regarding the mechanisms of CPM. The inclusion of excessive

communication and surveillance as privacy violations require further empirical evidence. Both phenomena have been investigated as factors of technological stalking (Spitzberg & Hoobler, 2002); however, the ability to understand these as privacy violations in other contexts may bolster this study's contributions to CPM theory.

Another area that may benefit from additional investigation is boundary turbulence and the subsequent management of boundaries. The revelation of private information has been explored in studies of families (Afifi, 2003; Miller, 2009), health disclosures (Steuber, 2012), and on-line communities (Child, Pearson, & Petronio, 2009; Stutzman, & Kramer-Duffield, 2010). However, researchers have not explored the aftermath of purposeful privacy violations. The results in this current study demonstrate that the release of private information may be a vengeful act. Therefore, how one copes with this type of affront deserves further attention.

Fourth, as stated at the beginning of this current study, investigations about technological stalking have been largely atheoretical. The use of CPM in this study represents only one lens from which to view this phenomenon. Theories are necessary to help scholars and the public make sense of complex phenomena. Therefore, other theoretical groundings may reveal additional information and perspectives about this particular technological experience.

Finally, a significant amount of research has explored the harms associated with traditional stalking, yet less has focused on technological stalking. Currently, with the exception of Sheridan and Grant's (2007) comparison study of both types of stalking, past research often examines victims as one population. This approach limits our understanding of how the experiences of individuals who were technologically stalked by

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a past intimate may differ from those technologically stalked by an acquaintance or stranger. Thus, concentrated investigations that only explore the physical, emotional, and psychological harms experienced by technological stalking by victims of past intimate may create better treatment programs for all victims.

Conclusion

The use of technology to create, maintain, and dissolve our intimate relationships has become commonplace in today's society. However, as the numbers of technologies increase, so does the ability to use these devices to inflict interpersonal harm. The results from this current study reveal a variety of tactics used to technologically stalk one's past intimate. Further, the findings demonstrate how privacy violations via technology can wreak havoc on the lives of victims. Sadly, these events leave victims with deep emotional scars due to the lack of assistance offered by professionals, family, and friends. Therefore, as new uses are developed for existing technologies, as new technologies continue to emerge, and the uses of these technologies continue to increase, we must shine a light on how these devices cause harm to victims. Moreover, we must continue to search for ways to provide victims with positive coping experiences.

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Appendix A

PARTICIPANTS NEEDED FOR
A RESEARCH STUDY ABOUT
TECHNOLOGICAL STALKING
BY FORMER PARTNERS

I am looking for volunteers to take part in a study of
relational dissolution and technological stalking.

If you are over 18 years of age, have been stalked or harassed through technological
means by a former partner (spouse, boyfriend girlfriend, close friend, or family member),
and are interested in discussing your experiences,
please contact me.

As a participant in this study, you would be asked to: fill out a demographic information
survey and participate in an in-depth interview about your experiences.

All information gathered will be kept strictly confidential and anonymous.
Your participation would involve *one* interview session that will last 45-60 minutes.
Interviews will take place in person or via Skype
based on your preference.

For more information about this study or to volunteer for this study,
please contact:

Elaine L. Davies, M.A.
Department of Communication

University of Missouri

Email: *ELDavies@mizzou.edu*

This study has been reviewed by and received ethics clearance
through the Institutional Review Board at the University of Missouri

Interview Contact Sheet

I will be conducting face-to-face interviews to discuss the experiences of individuals who have been technologically stalked or harassed by a former intimate partner (spouse, boyfriend girlfriend, close friend, or family member) during the dissolution or after the relationship ended.

If you would be willing to participate in an interview, please provide the information requested below. You need not provide your real name. In the space below, select a name that you would like to be called during the interview process. Interviews will take place in person or via Skype based on your preference at a time conducive to you and the researcher. Your confidentiality will be maintained at all times. The interview should take roughly 45-60 minutes depending on the amount of information you choose to disclose. I would greatly appreciate your help and if you would be willing to talk with me, please complete the following:

Chosen name: _____

Phone number or Skype address: _____

The best days and times to call are: _____

  _____

  _____

If you would prefer to receive an email invitation, please write your email very legibly. The subject of the email will read "Relationship Study"

_____

If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact the primary researcher, Elaine L. Davies at ELDavies@mizzou.edu

You may also contact the campus Institutional Review Board at:
  Office of Research
  483 McReynolds Hall
  Columbia, MO 65211
  (573) 882-9585

Thank you for your participation!

Appendix B

Snowball Sample Recruitment Script

Relational Dissolution and Technological Stalking/Harassment

Hello! My name is Elaine L. Davies. I am a doctoral candidate at the University of Missouri. I was given your name by a family member or friend in order to invite you to participate in the above-titled research project. The purpose of this voluntary and anonymous study is to investigate the experiences of individuals who have been technologically stalked or harassed by a former intimate partner (spouse, boyfriend girlfriend, close friend, or family member) during the dissolution or after the relationship ended.

Specifically, I am seeking individuals who are at least 18 years of age, have been involved in an intimate relationship, and have been technologically stalked or harassed by a former partner.

If you would like to talk about your experiences during an in-depth discussion, please enter all information requested on the Interview Contact Sheet, and fill out the attached Demographic Profile. All sheets will be separated upon receipt in order to secure your privacy and maintain your anonymity.

The conversation should take roughly 45-60 minutes depending on the amount of information you choose to disclose. The interviews will take place in person or via Skype based on your preference during a time and location mutually conducive for you and the researcher. Prior to the interview, you will be asked to choose a pseudonym to protect your confidentiality and privacy.

Your answers for both, the survey and the interview, will be kept completely confidential. When your results and those of other participants are combined and entered into a computer, they will not contain any identifying information that could connect the data to you. The results of the study may be published and/or presented at an academic conference but only the combined data from all participants will be made public.

If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact the primary researcher, Elaine L. Davies at ELDavies@mizzou.edu

You may also contact the campus Institutional Review Board at:

Office of Research
483 McReynolds Hall
Columbia, MO 65211
(573) 882-9585

Thank you for your participation!

Interview Contact Sheet

I will be conducting face-to-face interviews to discuss the experiences of individuals who have been technologically stalked or harassed by a former intimate partner (spouse, boyfriend girlfriend, close friend, or family member) during the dissolution or after the relationship ended.

If you would be willing to participate in an interview, please provide the information requested below. You need not provide your real name. In the space below, select a name that you would like to be called during the interview process. Interviews will take place in person or via Skype based on your preference at a time conducive to you and the researcher. Your confidentiality will be maintained at all times. The interview should take roughly 45-60 minutes depending on the amount of information you choose to disclose. I would greatly appreciate your help and if you would be willing to talk with me, please complete the following:

Chosen name: _____

Phone number or Skype address: _____

The best days and times to call are: _____

                                       _____

                                       _____

If you would prefer to receive an email invitation, please write your email very legibly. The subject of the email will read "Relationship Study"

_____

If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact the primary researcher, Elaine L. Davies at ELDavies@mizzou.edu

You may also contact the campus Institutional Review Board at:
    Office of Research
    483 McReynolds Hall
    Columbia, MO 65211
    (573) 882-9585

Thank you for your participation!

Appendix C

Recruitment Script

Relational Dissolution and Technological Stalking/Harassment

You are being invited to participate in the above-titled research project. The purpose of this voluntary and anonymous study is to investigate the experiences of individuals who have been technologically stalked or harassed by a former intimate partner (spouse, boyfriend girlfriend, close friend, or family member) during the dissolution or after the relationship ended.

Specifically, I am seeking individuals who are at least 18 years of age, have been involved in an intimate relationship, and have been technologically stalked or harassed by their former intimate partner. You declining to participate in this study or your discontinuation of participation in the study will not affect your standing in the community or student status.

If you would like to talk about your experiences during an in-depth discussion, please enter the information requested on the Interview Contact Sheet and fill out the attached Demographic Profile. All sheets will be separated upon receipt in order to secure your privacy and maintain your anonymity.

The conversation should take roughly 45-60 minutes depending on the amount of information you choose to disclose. The interviews will take place in person or via Skype based on your preference during a time that is mutually conducive for you and the researcher. Prior to the interview, you will be asked to choose a pseudonym to protect your confidentiality and privacy.

Your answers for both, the survey and the interview, will be kept completely confidential. When your results and those of other participants are combined and entered into a computer, they will not contain any identifying information that could connect the data to you. The results of the study may be published and/or presented at an academic conference but only the combined data from all participants will be made public.

If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact the primary researcher, Elaine L. Davies at ELDavies@mizzou.edu

You may also contact the campus Institutional Review Board at:

   Office of Research
   483 McReynolds Hall
   Columbia, MO 65211
   (573) 882-9585

Thank you for your participation!

Interview Contact Sheet

I will be conducting face-to-face interviews to discuss the experiences of individuals who have been technologically stalked or harassed by a former intimate partner (spouse, boyfriend girlfriend, close friend, or family member) during the dissolution or after the relationship ended.

If you would be willing to participate in an interview, please provide the information requested below. You need not provide your real name. In the space below, select a name that you would like to be called during the interview process. Interviews will take place in person or via Skype based on your preference at a time conducive to you and the researcher. Your confidentiality will be maintained at all times. The interview should take roughly 45-60 minutes depending on the amount of information you choose to disclose. I would greatly appreciate your help and if you would be willing to talk with me, please complete the following:

Chosen name: _____

Phone number or Skype address: _____

The best days and times to call are: _____

                                        _____

                                        _____

If you would prefer to receive an email invitation, please write your email very legibly. The subject of the email will read "Relationship Study"

_____

If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact the primary researcher, Elaine L. Davies at ELDavies@mizzou.edu

You may also contact the campus Institutional Review Board at:
    Office of Research
    483 McReynolds Hall
    Columbia, MO 65211
    (573) 882-9585

Thank you for your participation!

Demographic Profile

Please circle you're the response that most accurately reflects you and your experiences.

What is your gender?
- Male
- Female

Age _____

In what year were you born? 19_____

Education

What is you level of education?
- Did not complete high school
- High school graduate
- Some college but have not graduated
- Freshman
- Sophomore
- Junior
- Senior
- Graduated college
- Advanced degree (please list) _____

Racial/Ethnic Identity

Would you describe yourself as:
- American Indian / Native American
- Asian
- Black / African American
- Hispanic / Latino
- White / Caucasian
- Pacific Islander
- Bi-cultural
- Multi-cultural
- Other

For the next series of questions, please report on the former intimate partner (spouse, boyfriend girlfriend, close friend, or family member) that you will be discussing during the interview.
How would you classify your relationship with your former intimate?

- Married

- Engaged

- Seriously Dating

- Casually Dating

- Close Friend

- Family Member

How long was your relationship with your former intimate?

_____ Years   _____ Months

How long has it been since the relationship was terminated? (If the technological harassment or stalking is still on-going, report the time since you believe the relationship was dissolved)

_____ Years   _____ Months

Which of the following data transmission devices has your former partner used to threaten, harass, or stalk you? (Circle all that apply)

- Mobile Phone Call

- Instant Messaging

- Text Message

- Land Line

- Global Positioning System

- Email

- Facebook

- MySpace

- Twitter

- Skype

- Blogs

- Other (please specify) _____

How many times has your former intimate used the following data transmission devices to threaten, harass, or stalk you?

_____ Mobile Phone Call

_____ Instant Messaging

_____ Text Message

_____ Land Line

_____ Global Positioning System

_____ Email

_____ Facebook

_____ MySpace

_____ Twitter

_____ Skype

_____ Blogs

_____ Other (please specify) _____

On a scale of 1-10 with 10 representing the *most* fearful and 0 representing *not* fearful, how fearful were you of your former intimate's use of the following data transmission devices?

_____ Mobile Phone Call

_____ Instant Messaging

_____ Text Message

_____ Land Line

_____ Global Positioning System

_____ Email

_____ Facebook

_____ MySpace

_____ Twitter

_____ Skype

_____ Blogs

_____ Other (please specify) _____

FOR EACH ITEM, INDICATE THE EXTENT TO WHICH: **Your former partner persistently pursued greater intimacy with you in a way you expressly did not want by…**	Never	Once	2-3 Times	4-5 Times	6-10 Times	11-25	> 25 Times
1. Leaving affectionate electronic messages (e.g., expressed attraction or affection left on voice-mail, e-mail, I-M, social network posts, etc.)							
2. Sending excessively disclosive messages (e.g., inappropriately giving private information about his/her life, body,, sexual experiences, etc.)							
3. Sending excessively "needy" or demanding messages (e.g., pressuring to see you, assertively requesting you go out on date, arguing with you to give him/her "another chance", etc.)							
4. Sending pornographic/obscene images or messages (e.g., photographs or cartoons of nude people, or people or animals engaging in sexual acts, etc.)							
5. Sending sexually harassing messages (e.g., describing hypothetical sexual acts between you, making sexually demeaning remarks, etc.)							
6. Leaving aggressive electronic messages (e.g., expressed insults or demands on voice-mail, e-mail, instant messages, fax, etc.)							
7. Constantly monitoring, tagging, or gifting your social network site (e.g., tagging your photos, inviting your joining or reciprocity of groups, writing on your wall, asking about your posts, etc.)							
8. Monitoring you using computer spyware or "Trojan Horse" software to infect your computer or other communication technologies.							
9. Monitoring you using GPS or tracking devices							
10. Monitoring you using listening devices (i.e., "bugs" or hidden microphones or voice-recording devices)							
11. Monitoring you using covert video or digital camera devices							
12. 'Bugging' your car, home, or office (e.g., planting a hidden listening or recording device, etc.)							
13. Pretending to be someone she or he wasn't (e.g., falsely representing him- or herself as a different person or gender, claiming a false identity, status or position, pretending to be you, etc.)							
14. Altering your electronic identity or persona, that is, your *avatar* (e.g., breaking into your system and changing your signature, personal information, or how you portray yourself electronically, etc.)							

	Never	Once	2-3 Times	4-5 Times	6-10 Times	11-25	> 25 Times
15. Harassing your avatar in a group cyber-activity (e.g., spoiling your avatar's identity, following you, interfering with your, or other bothersome activities in a synthetic computer space, etc.)							
16. Taking over your electronic identity or persona (e.g., representing him or herself to others as you in chatrooms, bulletin boards, pornography or singles sites, etc.)							
17. Contacting you 'live' through electronic media (e.g., harassed you on the phone, exchanged chat or instant messages, tweets/Twitter, etc.)							

FOR EACH ITEM, INDICATE THE EXTENT TO WHICH: Your former partner persistently pursued greater intimacy with you in a way you expressly did not want by…	Never	Once	2-3 Times	4-5 Times	6-10 Times	11-25	> 25 Times
18. Exposing private information about you to others (e.g., sending mail out to others regarding your secrets, embarrassing information, unlisted numbers, etc.							
19. 'Sabotaging' your work/school reputation (e.g., spreading rumors about you, your relationships or activities in organizational networks, electronic bulletin boards, etc.)							
20. Obtaining private information without permission (e.g., covertly entering your computer files, voicemail, or the files of co-worker, friend or family member, etc.)							
21. Cyber-harassing (e.g., dumped large quantities of messages into your email, intruded in your chat or game space, crashed your computer, etc.)							
22. Attempting to disable your computer (e.g., downloading a virus, sending too many messages for your system to handle, etc.)							
23. Sabotaging' your private reputation (e.g., spreading rumors about you, your relationships or activities to friends, family, partner, etc.)							
24. Sending threatening written messages (e.g., suggesting harming you, your property, family, friends, etc.)							
25. Sending threatening pictures or images (e.g., images of actual or implied mutilation, blood, dismemberment, property destruction, weapons, etc.)							
26. Directing others to you in threatening ways (e.g., pretending to be you on chat lines and requesting risky sex acts, kidnapping fantasies, etc.)							
27. Involving others in contacting you (e.g., asked friends about you, talked to your colleagues or family to get information, etc.)							
28. Enlisting the aid or assistance of friend(s) or family member(s) to pursue, spy, follow, or otherwise harass you.							

29. Enlisting the aid or assistance of third-party professionals (e.g., private investigator) to pursue, spy, follow, or otherwise harass you						
30. Lie to or deceive persons who know you to obtain information about you or access to you, your property, or your social network						
31. Intruding upon friends, family or coworkers (e.g., tried to befriend your friends, family or coworkers; sought to be invited to social events, sought employment at your workplace, etc.)						
32. Using your social media (Facebook/MySpace, Twitter, blogs, etc.) to locate you.						
33. Using your friends' or family members social media (their blogs, Facebook/MySpace, Twitter, etc.) to locate you.						
34. Monitoring you or your behavior with your social media (e.g., checking your blogs, Facebook/MySpace pages, Twitter, etc.)						
35. Monitoring you or your behavior with friends' or family members social media (their blogs, Facebook/MySpace, Twitter, etc.)						

Appendix E

Interview Protocol

<u>**Research Question 1:**</u>

Can you tell me a bit about your past relationship?

Would you describe your termination of the relationship. (Who initiated the dissolution? Why?)

How did you or your ex-partner communicate the dissolution?

      What was said?

In what ways did your ex-partner use technology to try to communicate with you after the termination?

      Did you ask or do anything to get your ex-partner to stop contacting you? If so, how?

      What was your ex-partner's response?

      Did you discuss what you would tell others about the end of your relationship? If so, what was discussed? If not, why?

      Were there any topics that you or your ex-partner agreed not to discuss with others during the dissolution of your relationship? Why or why not?

      Were there any topics you chose not to discuss with your ex-partner during or after the dissolution of your relationship? Why or why not?

<u>**Research Question 2:**</u>

Can you describe in what instances you feel your ex-partner used technology to make you uncomfortable? Were you afraid? How often did this happen?

Did your ex-partner ever contact your family and friends via technology after the break up?

If so, what was said or done?

Were there any instances when you felt your ex-partner used technology to harm you or your reputation?

>Can you describe what happened?

Were there any instances when you felt your ex-partner used technology to invade your privacy?

>Can you describe what happened?

Research Question 3:

In instances when you felt your ex-partner used technology to harm you or your reputation, what did you do?

>How did you attempt to stop your ex-partner from further harming you or your reputation?

In instances when you felt your ex-partner used technology to invade your privacy, what did you do?

>How did you attempt to stop your ex-partner from further invading your privacy?

Did you turn to anyone to help stop the actions of your ex-partner?

>Did you turn to law enforcement? Friends? Family? Other officials, such as internet providers?

>If so, what did you say to them?

>How did they respond? For example, were the helpful or skeptical? What was said during this conversation?

How long would you say the technological stalking occurred?

Is there any other information that you would like to share at this time?

VITA

Elaine L. Davies was born and raised in DeKalb, IL. She earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in History and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Communication from Northern Illinois University in 2000. In 2003, she earned a Master of Arts degree in Communication from Northern Illinois University, as well. She completed her Doctoral degree in Communication from The University of Missouri in December, 2013.

Her primary research area of interest is the "dark side" of communication. This emphasis encompasses the destructive communicative behaviors enacted within interpersonal relationships. Presently, her work focuses on the intersections of romantic relationships and technologies with an emphasis on the harmful uses and outcomes associated with social media.