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Smartphones and Face-to-Face Interactions: Extending Goffman to 21st Century Conversation

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Smartphones and Face-to-Face Interactions:
Extending Goffman to 21st Century Conversation

Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
University of New Orleans
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

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in
Sociology

by

O. Bradley Ictech II

B.A. Southeastern Louisiana University

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my mom. Without her unconditional love and support, I would not be where I am today. Dealing with my shenanigans as a child while working multiple jobs was not easy for her and at times she must have been utterly exhausted, but she persevered. For these reasons and many more, she has my greatest respect.

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ABSTRACT

The Smartphone is a technological innovation that has transformed for the better how billions of people live by enabling them to transcend time and space to remain socially connected to potentially millions of others despite being thousands of miles apart. Although smartphones help people connect from a distance, there has been much concern about how they affect face-to-face interactions. This study explored, drawing on Goffmanian concepts, how and why smartphones affect face-to-face encounters. The findings show there are three types of smartphone cross-talk: exclusive, semi-exclusive, and collaborative. With the addition of smartphone play and solo smartphone activity, interactants can engage in five different types of smartphone use during a social encounter. Smartphones can both disrupt and facilitate face-to-face encounters at any given time. A theory of cross-talk was created as an extension of Goffman's work to help explain the phenomenon.

Keywords: Goffman, Face-work, Face-to-face, Interaction, Encounter, Smartphones, Cell Phones, Mobile Phones, Conversation, Cross-talk, Attention, Distraction, Focus, Alienation, Defense Mechanisms

INTRODUCTION

In the United States, there are almost as many mobile phones as there are consumers. Recent surveys show that 94% of consumers age 16 and over own some type of mobile phone (Nielsen Holdings N.V., 2013) and that 56% of all mobile subscribers in the United States use a smartphone (Smith, 2013). Smartphones indirectly and directly affect every aspect of our daily lives and can be a major influence on the quality of face-to-face interactions. Although new technologies (i.e., smartphones) may be initially met with enthusiasm because of their promise to make people's lives simpler and less stressful, they later might reveal unanticipated consequences. The greater social concern for the unforeseen consequences can then overshadow the reality of the phenomenon. Therefore, the phenomenon of smartphone use during face-to-face interaction requires a more in-depth exploration than those conducted in the past. For the purpose of this study, smartphones are defined as the more technologically advanced version of the cell phone; often with multiple features such as a touch screen, text messaging, phone calling, a digital camera, and software applications like web browsers, e-mail services, social media websites, and games.

Smartphones on the market today consist of hardware similar to personal computers that differentiate them from cell phone features such as a processor, memory, storage, and operating system that process and execute all the functions of the mobile phone. With the introduction of operating systems similar to those found in personal computers the mobile phone took on a completely new form thus giving birth to a new generation of mobile phones called smartphones. Smartphones offer a multidimensional platform with which people can have complex social interactions that cell phones are not capable of providing. Due to the increasing affordability of mobile phones they are no longer only for the well to do, which was the case prior to the 2000s. Cell phones as well as smartphones have permeated across cultures, classes, and age groups (Katz,

2008; Ling, & Donner, 2009).

The literature on cell phones has shown that they greatly assist communication as well as cause distractions. In particular, they have shown to hinder cognitive functioning in a variety of situations, such as driving, learning in classrooms, and completion of normal everyday tasks (Smith, Isaak, Senette, & Abadie, 2011). Furthermore, several researchers have found that the distractions caused by mobile communication devices such as smartphones do not discriminate and affect all ages, ranging from adolescence through old age (Neyens, & Boyle, 2007; Strayer, & Drews, & Johnston, 2003). People often multitask to meet multiple role demands at once. Although many people think they can do two or more tasks simultaneously, studies have demonstrated, with few exceptions, the opposite to be true (Bardhi, Rohm, & Sultan, 2010; Lien, Ruthruff, & Johnston, 2006). Despite these facts, youths such as those ascribed to the Millennial generation do not seem fazed by the discourse around the negative effects of mobile phones.

Millennials are the quickest demographic to adapt to new computer technologies and thus the first to apply existing social rules to new technologies. Millennials, also known as Generation Y, refers to people born after the early 1980s up to around the early 2000s. This includes some of today's K-12 students, the majority of college students, and those starting families comprised of children belonging to Generation Z. They have grown up around computer technologies such as desktop computers, laptops, video game consoles, cell phones, and the internet most of their life, thus making the assimilation of new technologies into their lives feel normal. These individuals can be referred to as digital natives because to them it is natural to be surrounded by technology such as smartphones (Prensky, 2001). Since millennials are digital natives they tend to have a positive attitude toward new technologies. It will be this positive outlook that will shape the future relationship of technology and the self for generations to come.

There is a widely accepted dichotomy that cell phones and smartphones have either negative or positive effects on face-to-face interactions and the majority of researchers take one of these approaches (Humphreys, 2005; Turkle, 2011, Przybylski & Weinstein, 2012). While in some situations, it might be the case that mobile phones only have a negative or positive effect, taking a dichotomistic approach does not paint a full picture of our relationship to smartphones and how they play a role in face-to-face interactions and more specifically conversation. In addition, most of the past studies only examine cell phone use and face-to-face interactions because they were conducted at a time when smartphones as we know them today did not exist, were not as popular, or they failed to acknowledge the difference between cell phones and smartphones. For example, an observational study by Humphreys (2005) done in 2002-2003 was during a time when smartphones were not popular and most mobile subscribers had cell phones. Understandably, older studies such as Humphreys' (2005) do not address the relationship between Millennials and smartphones, or smartphones and the general public. Likewise, the majority of the literature speaks to cell phone use in large group face-to-face interactions (e.g., classroom) and other attention oriented tasks. They do not examine smartphone use during smaller group face-to-face encounters such as partners at lunch, friends hanging out, people walking down the sidewalk, or families eating dinner. This study fills in these gaps in the literature.

This study will be of most significance to those who are interested in how smartphones affect face-to-face interactions. In particular, this study could be used for future decisions about smartphone policies pertaining to the workplace, classroom, and public domains, as well as more personal decisions regarding smartphone use in the household. Since smartphones are different from cell phones, offering a wide range of applications, business owners can use this research to decide when and where their business could benefit from allowing smartphone use in the work

environment. Likewise, teachers can refer to this study to help them decide whether or not to use smartphones to aid learning in the classroom. Furthermore, this study can assist policy makers in law making processes that concern smartphones or mobile devices.

The main objective of this exploratory case study is to understand the ways in which smartphones affect face-to-face encounters. Face-to-face encounters occur when two or more people join each other in maintaining a single mutual focus of cognitive and visual attention, requiring special communication privileges (Goffman, 1963). What is conversed is based on the interactants' choice and the subject of conversation can cover any topic from daily plans, to video games, music, assignments, social events, or personal problems. However, 21st century conversations are typically not very exclusive because smartphones allow interactants to have conversations with others not immediately in their presence and distract them with other forms of entertainment. Some smartphone use is facilitative such as when interactants play a video game together or take group selfies. Some smartphone use is disruptive such as when one interactant begins to text message someone outside of the face-to-face encounter (i.e., smartphone cross-talk) and consequently ignores others around him or her. There are many types of smartphone use during a face-to-face encounter and many outcomes, but little is known about the types of smartphone use and their outcomes. For this reason, smartphone use during face-to-face encounters was studied.

Using Goffman's observational technique, public conversations involving smartphone use were observed and face-work techniques used by millennial students were examined. Three focus groups comprised of millennial university students served as the main method of investigation to explore the participants' lived experiences with smartphone use during face-to-face interactions. Millennial participants provided narratives and rationales pertaining to the use of smartphones

during face-to-face encounters. For millennials, smartphones function as an important prop in the presentation of self by both facilitating and disrupting face-to-face encounters. This study addressed four questions. First, how do smartphones affect face-to-face interactions? Second, how do smartphone owners use smartphones during face-to-face encounters? Third, why do smartphone owners use smartphones during face-to-face encounters? Fourth, how does smartphone cross-talk affect face-to-face encounters? Goffmanian concepts and dramaturgical theory were used to analyze the data and answer the four research questions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

ON FACE-WORK

While the study of face-to-face interaction is not new to the social sciences and our understanding of the norms and rituals related to them are well established, the smartphone is a new element of face-to-face interaction. Smartphones allow individuals to communicate with others whenever and wherever they desire, including during face-to-face interactions. There is currently no complete theory to explain how smartphones affect face-to-face interactions. This study embraces traditional symbolic interactionism grounded in Goffmanian concepts and dramaturgical theory to explore why and how smartphone owners use smartphones in their presentation of self during face-to-face encounters and thus, how smartphones affect encounters.

Symbolic interactionism affords insight as to how individuals make sense of the world around them and in particular face-to-face interactions with fellow humans. The principal concept of symbolic interactionism is that humans act towards things (e.g., individuals, living beings, inanimate objects) based on their perceived meaning of those things. The meanings of such things come from their socialization or social interactions with others (Blumer, 1969). Furthermore, Mead (1934) argued that the most human and humanizing activity to engage in is conversation. Thus, in conversation participants follow socially constructed rules of interaction while creating symbolic meaning of the social context.

Goffman is widely known for his observations and behavioral norms of face-to-face interactions. Several of Goffman's (1959, 1963, 1967, & 1971) works give symbolic interactionists a common language for analyzing face-to-face interactions such as dramaturgy, impression management, front stage, back stage, prop, face-work, cross-talk, line, face, and wrong face. Goffman's (1959) concept of dramaturgy, or the dramaturgical perspective, views social

interaction in everyday life in terms of the dramatic stage. In a theatrical play, actors attempt to convey to the audience a particular impression of the characters and scene around them. With scripted dialogues, gestures, costumes, props, scenery, and so on, actors create a new reality for the audience to contemplate. Goffman argues that if we can understand how actors convince audiences of the authenticity of their character and set designers further make the audience feel a variety of emotions by changing the atmosphere of the stage, then we can understand how individuals in everyday life manage social interactions. Goffman's observations offer micro-level understandings of the norms of face-to-face interactions in any space, private or public. Goffmanian concepts and dramaturgical theory describe many of the micro-level activities taking place during social interactions, as well as broader concepts such as face-to-face interaction and encounter.

Face-to-face interaction occurs in many forms sporadically throughout an individual's everyday life. Goffman (1959) defines face-to-face interaction as "the reciprocal influence of individuals upon one another's actions when in one another's immediate physical presence." The many forms of face-to-face interaction can vary in number of interactants, level of focus, cooperation, and the like. Goffman describes many different forms of social interaction in his works, but the face engagement or encounter is the most relevant for this exploratory case study. Encounters occur when two or more people join each other in maintaining a single mutual focus of cognitive and visual attention, requiring special communication privileges (Goffman, 1963). In an encounter, participants cooperate to sustain a focused interaction, for instance, by engaging in conversation or another mutual activity. The two main elements of an encounter identified by Goffman are those of the line and face. These two aspects of the interaction ritual are the basis of social interaction. They determine the atmosphere of every encounter and the role that interactants

perform in any given encounter.

Goffman (1967) defines face as "...the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact. Face is an image of self delineated in terms of approved social attributes." From the dramaturgical perspective, this is the mask the person wears or their projected self-image. Goffman (1967) states that a line is "...a pattern of verbal and nonverbal acts by which he expresses his view of the situation and through this his evaluation of the participants, especially himself." The line is the presentation of self that others perceive such as spoken language, gestures, and physical appearance. In order to maintain one's face the individual engages in a ritualistic process called face-work. More accurately, Goffman's (1959) concept of face-work is the way or ways one presents their self to others in face-to-face interactions while engaging in a repetitious evaluation of the situation and the views of all participants. Goffman describes face-work as follows:

When an individual appears before others his actions will influence the definition of the situation which they come to have. Sometimes the individual will act in a thoroughly calculating manner, expressing himself in a given way solely in order to give the kind of impression to others that is likely to evoke from them a specific response he is concerned to obtain (Goffman, 1959, p. 6).

This agency implies the actor is conscious of their actions to maintain face and control the interaction. When an individual acts in a calculating manner to manipulate others' impressions, they are involved in impression management (Goffman, 1959). During impression management, an interactant can present good demeanor in hope of receiving deference or at the least respect and acceptance.

Goffman claims there are two basic kinds of ritual activity: deference and demeanor.

Deference rituals are acts by which appreciation is regularly conveyed from one individual to another (e.g., compliments, salutations, apologies, offerings) that confirms their relationship to the recipient (Goffman, 1967). Deference acts are used to convey appreciation and respect, and establish or re-establish interpersonal relationships. Such acts demonstrate a sense of respect or fondness for the recipient of the act, as well as showing that the actor has made a positive evaluation of the recipient. Goffman (1967) notes the importance of deference for social interactions:

The individual may desire, earn, and deserve deference, but by and large he is not allowed to give it to himself, being forced to seek it from others. In seeking it from others, he finds he has added reason for seeking them out, and in turn society is given added assurance that its members will enter into interaction and relationships with one another (Goffman, 1967).

Deference assures social interaction within society. Goffman (1967) broadly groups the many forms of deference into two categories: avoidance rituals and presentational rituals. Avoidance rituals are the forms of deference that lead an individual to respect the face, personal space, and privacy of others (Goffman, 1967). Avoidance rituals of a more defensive nature are the primary activity in the avoidance process. During the avoidance process, an individual takes defensive measures by keeping off topics and staying away from activities that are inconsistent with the line he or she maintains (Goffman, 1967). Presentational rituals are acts through which an individual expresses how they regard another and how they will treat them during the social interaction. Thus, Goffman (1967) concludes, “avoidance rituals specify what is not to be done, presentational rituals are what is to be done.”

The positive claim to face that comes from deference drives individuals to seek out others

for social interaction. However, deference is not always a reciprocal activity and there are situations where only one individual may show deference. In social interaction between superordinate and subordinate there can be asymmetrical relations where the individual with higher status gives deference (e.g., asking about one's personal life), but the lower status person can do nothing more than accept the act because it is taboo for them to inquire about the higher status individual's life (Goffman, 1967). In contrast, there can be a situation where a person of lower status shows deference to a person of higher status and the person of higher status cannot or does not reciprocate deference. For example, a professor with a PhD title may address a student by their first name, but the student addresses their professor as Dr. [Last Name]. Both interactants are displaying good demeanor but only one is showing deference. Individuals must display good demeanor during an interaction in order to receive deference.

Goffman (1967) describes demeanor as ritual behavior that one uses to express "to those in his immediate presence that he is a person of certain desirable and undesirable qualities." Demeanor refers to attributes derived from appearance, how an individual carries themselves, the nature of their movements, their self-control, and many other forms of outwardly visible presentation of self. Individuals can construct their own demeanor depending on how they wish to be perceived by others. However, an individual can only construct part of their self image through demeanor, and must rely on the way others interpret them to form a complete self image. Likewise, to receive deference, one must exhibit the appropriate demeanor towards others. Goffman (1967) states, "individuals must hold hands in a chain of ceremony, each giving deferentially with proper demeanor to the one on the right what will be received deferentially from the one on the left." Thus, deference and demeanor bond us together in social interactions, and during these interactions people use impression management to encourage deference by adapting their

demeanor to suit the perceived preferences of others. In this respect, the higher the status a person has the more face-work that is needed to maintain the status and the less status a person has the less face-work that is needed to maintain status. People in a lower-status position tend to be more attentive to the face needs of those in a higher-status position than vice versa (Goffman, 1967). They show this by using avoidance rituals that are respectful and submissive. When an individual's line no longer maintains their face then their face or the other's is threatened.

Individuals are emotionally invested in maintaining face. If the face someone claims is not entirely consistent with his or her line then that person is said to be in wrong face. However, if the person fails to have a line, then that person is said to be out of face. Being out of face or in wrong face can result in embarrassment just the same as maintaining face can result in good feelings about one's self. More specifically, intended verbal statements or non-verbal acts whose full meaning is not appreciated by the individual who contributes them to the interaction are referred to as faux pas. Because a face-to-face interaction requires two or more participants a solitary actor does not perform face-work alone, rather it is a process in which all actors within a given interaction are expected to participate (Goffman, 1967). In situations where an individual is out of face or in wrong face, the individual in wrong face typically tries to save face or another participant in the face-to-face interaction may offer them a way to save face. Thus, there are ritual techniques that allow actors to assist each other in maintaining face. One technique is known as the corrective process, and it follows steps known as the interchange (Goffman, 1967). Goffman states:

When participants in an undertaking or encounter fail to prevent the occurrence of an event that is expressively incompatible with the judgments of social worth that are being maintained, and when the event is of the kind that is difficult to overlook, then the participants are likely to give it accredited status as an incident—to ratify it

as a threat that deserves direct official attention—and to proceed to try to correct for its effects (Goffman, 1967, p. 19).

This means that when a person has done something or failed to do something resulting in wrong face or is out of face that cannot be ignored, then that line must be corrected if the ritual order is to be sustained. This process entails a series of acts done after an acknowledgement of a threat to face. The interchange is made up of the following four phases: (1) challenge where the threat is acknowledged; (2) offering where the offender corrects the offense; (3) acceptance where the offering is accepted by the offended person; and (4) gratitude or thanks where the forgiven person conveys a sign of gratitude to those who accepted his or her offering (Goffman, 1967). The steps of interchange do not have to occur in this particular order, however, two of these steps, offering (e.g., excuse me) and acceptance (e.g., of course), are necessary if face is to be saved.

The challenge step occurs when a participant calls attention to an action or inaction that causes a person to be found in wrong face or out of face. The offender may not be aware of his or her offense or not aware that the offense is serious enough to require an offering (Goffman, 1967). The offering step occurs when the offender takes action to try to re-establish the expressive order which can either occur before or after the challenge, making the challenge unnecessary (Goffman, 1967). To end the interchange the offer can then be accepted and thanks given by the offender. Occasionally individuals claim that face threatening actions or inactions were only meant jokingly, or happened unintentionally. Sometimes a person will claim that any action or inaction that threaten his or her face were intentional and that the others within the encounter mistakenly gave the offender too much or too little face (Goffman, 1967). Behaviors such as using a smartphone during conversation could possibly put a person in wrong face or help them maintain face.

Goffman did not see a cell phone much less a smartphone during his time, consequently his

thoughts on the matter remain unknown, but he did address mediated interaction such as with the mail and telephones. Goffman (1979) notes, that these forms of mediated communication are ‘situation-like’ because they do not involve the essential element of mutual monitoring. Physical co-presence and thus mutual monitoring in face-to-face interaction facilitates the collaboration and social practices of everyday life:

When in each other’s presence individuals are admirably placed to share a joint focus of attention, perceive that they do so, and perceive this perceiving. This, in conjunction with their capacity to indicate their own courses of physical action and to rapidly convey reactions to such indications from others, provides the precondition for something crucial: the sustained, intimate, coordination of action, whether in support of closely collaborative tasks or as a means of accommodating closely adjacent ones. (Goffman, 1983, p. 3).

The close physical proximity of individuals is a necessary element for Goffman. Only in this type of interaction can individuals observe the context of the interaction, otherwise, they are ‘merely situated’ such as is the case with written correspondence (Goffman, 1963). Although Goffman does not analyze mediated communication in depth, he provides some conceptual guidance to analyze face-to-face conversations where media communication can interfere with face-work in public and private spaces.

According to Goffman (1963, 1971) there are two types of individuals in public spaces; people who are alone called Singles and people who are with other people engaged in a face-to-face interaction called Withs. Goffman describes a With as “...a party of more than one whose members are perceived to be ‘together.’” Perception of togetherness can occur in public as well as private spaces thus Withs and Singles were extended in this study to private space. In a

face-to-face encounter, one of the With partners can be involved in several different focused and unfocused interactions, creating conflicting demands on attention (Goffman, 1971). Goffman wrote briefly about cross-talk, a particular form of unfocused interaction that is applicable to this study.

Cross-talk — a conversation or conversation-like activity maintained by persons who differentially share other interaction capacities — is also possible where one member of a with momentarily sustains exclusive talk with someone who is not in the with (Goffman, 1963).

In this case, a With might feel socially vulnerable and awkward when their partner participates in cross-talk. In this study of smartphones and face-to-face encounters, cross-talk is the central concept used to make sense of participants' experiences. Smartphones facilitate exclusive conversation or conversation-like activity (e.g., cross-talk) during face-to-face encounters and thus symbolically represent the other or others who are not in the With partnership. In addition, smartphones are used as prop in face-to-face performances as well as a gateway between the backstage and front stage for digital performances online.

There are three basic roles an individual can embrace in face-to-face interactions and these roles depend on who has access to what information: (1) performers or actors as the most knowledgeable participant, (2) audience members who know only what the performers disclose and what they observe themselves, and (3) outsiders who have little if any relevant information about the performers or audience. These three roles are not mutually exclusive, thus an individual can be an actor as well as an audience member in face-to-face conversations. Furthermore, Goffman notes that these roles coincide with three distinct regions: the front stage region, the back stage region, and the outside region. The front stage is where the actor performs the face that they

wish the audience to perceive. Performers in the front stage can use mannerisms and objects (e.g., smartphone) to aid their performance. The back stage is where the actor prepares for their performance (e.g., putting on makeup), as expected by the audience. The outside region is where things occur that may be necessary to the entire performance (e.g., drinking alcohol to relieve anxiety) but the audience is not aware they took place.

Goffman and symbolic interactionism have received their fair share of criticism. Although critics find positive features, scholars like Gouldner (1970) and Schegloff (1988) are critical of Goffman's insights. Gouldner disliked Goffman's micro approach and what he thought was Goffman's disinterest in power and hierarchy. Schegloff, like many commentators, found Goffman unsystematic to the point of chaos. Goffman's approach to theory, method, and data is not very clear in his writing. Likewise, the most significant limitation of the symbolic interactionist perspective relates to it overlooking macro-social structures (e.g., power, hierarchy, culture) as a result of focusing on micro-level interactions. However, symbolic interactionists would counter that the incorporation of role theory into symbolic interactionism addresses this criticism. Role theory explains how individuals who occupy particular social positions are expected to behave and how they expect others to behave. Role theory is based on the observation that people behave predictably and that an individual's behavior is context-specific, based on their social position (e.g., class, boss, teacher) and situation (e.g., classroom, home, work). Role theory addresses the absence of explicit influences of power in symbolic interactionism's analysis of social interactions. Even though Goffman's norms for social behavior do not explicitly mention power or social class they are very much implied in the social value element of face and aggressive face-work.

Aggressive face-work is an approach to social interaction rather than a process. Goffman

(1967) explains that aggressive face-work occurs “when a person treats face-work as something he need be prepared to perform, but rather as something that others can be counted on to perform or to accept.” Often the individual engaging in aggressive face-work is aiming to manipulate the social encounter in their favor. Committing a social error when one’s partner does not have any other option but to overlook the social error is aggressive face-work (Goffman, 1967). Other aggressive face-work strategies include fishing for compliments, setting up confirmatory events, and debasing one’s self to guilt others. In situations where the aggressor has a higher status than the other interactant the aggressor can get away with doing whatever he or she pleases because those around them are expected to ignore or play along with the aggressor’s acts in order to maintain the ritual order. Therefore, aggressive face-work explains why in certain situations highly influenced by power dynamics, individuals do not challenge the social errors of the powerful.

Face-to-face interaction permits participants in the encounter to make perceptions of others’ behaviors. Through these perceptions, participants form meaning around the interaction and react accordingly to maintain face. With the purpose of understanding how and why smartphone use affects face-to-face conversation, I explore in this research the symbolic meaning of smartphones (e.g., social necessity) and how individuals construct the meaning of interactions that involve smartphone use. Smartphones are often present as a form of mediated communication during twenty-first century face-to-face interactions, thus they serve as a frequent prop in the face-work process. Concepts like face, line, face-work, cross-talk, corrective process, and alienation from interaction are useful to explain what is taking place during these conversations. The findings of this research are clarified with Goffmanian concepts, as they are a common language for fellow researchers. If there so happens to be a situation where smartphones affect a face-to-face encounter in a way in which this theoretical framework has no explanation then a new

concept will be created as an extension of this theory.

MOBILE PHONES

Cell phones and smartphones are now essential for effective communication in modern society. They help meet the need for relationship maintenance and expand user's psychological neighborhoods (Wei & Lo, 2006). Cell phone usage is motivated by an individual's interpersonal purposes such as their need to belong, relate to others, or feel affection from others (Jin & Park, 2010). The most significant functions of mobile phones (i.e., cell phones, smartphones) are their ability to assist long distance communication, access information, and provide entertainment. Researchers found that parents and children between the ages of 11-17 believe cell phones are essential for keeping in touch with each other (Devitt & Roker, 2009). Thus, cell phones and smartphones can serve as a tool to coordinate what time a child is to arrive home or as a way to connect with friends to express one's views on a matter. Essentially, cell phones and above all smartphones strengthen already established social relationships (Ishii, 2006), as well as expand one's social network by allowing them to maintain a steady line of communication with others. This section of the literature review discusses the functions of mobile phones in social interactions.

There are two types of social interactions with cell phones. Social interactions with cell phones can be instrumental (e.g., calls for safety, coordination) or expressive (Ling & Yttri, 2002). When mobile phone owners are proficient users of their device, they can experience a variety of gratifications. Wei and Lo (2006) conducted a survey on Taiwanese college students and confirmed six gratifications that can come from using cell phones. The first, information seeking, includes things like seeking updated information on traffic, stocks, events, and news. The second gratification is social utility, which involves using the cell phone to relieve boredom and pass time. Third is affection, which would be improving relations with family and friends. The fourth

gratification is fashion and status, used to maintain an image of coolness and being fashionable. Fifth is mobility, which includes the easy and ready access to a phone. Sixth, is accessibility, meaning the person who owns the cell phone is always accessible and can always try to access others or be accessed. Although the study did not address this, all of these gratifications can be experienced in and affect face-to-face encounters. Individuals, such as members of the millennial generation, who are extremely proficient users of new technology, can aim to receive these gratifications while simultaneously engaged with others in face-to-face interaction.

MILLENNIALS

The United States' population consists of approximately 77 million millennials, making them almost as large of a generation as the baby boomers (Pew Research Center, 2010). Born after the early 1980s until the year 2000, they grew up with technologies such as computers, internet, video game consoles, and cell phones playing an essential role in their lives. Even though older generations have access to new technologies and can become just as accomplished using them, the millennial generation has far less trouble understanding and adapting to new technology. In fact, Net Generation or millennials students do not define technology (e.g., smartphones) the same as older generations because to millennials technology is new and innovative, not something that is a part of their everyday environment and life like computers and mobile phones (Oblinger, & Oblinger, 2005). Millennials already speak the language of the digital world and are digital natives (Prensky, 2001), thus in order to be considered technology to them, new technology needs to challenge or alter their understanding of the digital world and way of life. However, Baker, Lusk, & Neuhauser (2012) note that the term digital native probably best describes those who are the younger half of the generation because internet and cell phone usage did not become widespread until the late 1990s and early 2000s. Therefore, with such great understanding and appreciation for

computer technologies, millennials are significantly influencing the future of technology.

The smartphone is a very popular digital device for millennials. Smith (2013) conducted a survey that found that millennials between the ages of 18-29 are the most likely age group to own a smartphone and are more likely to own a smartphone the higher their yearly income. The findings show that 77% of 18-29 year olds who make less than \$30,000 a year own a smartphone, 81% of 18-29 year olds who make between \$30,000-\$74,999 a year own a smartphone, and 90% of 18-29 year olds who make \$75,000 or more a year own a smartphone. The findings suggest that approximately 83% of millennials between the ages of 19-29 are smartphone owners leaving the rest as either cell phone owners or those who do not own a mobile phone. Clearly, smartphones are in demand among millennials and one barrier to owning a smartphone is insufficient income.

Millennials find the trendier, more portable, and powerful the digital device is the more they “need” it or desire it. A survey administered at a mid-sized, Midwestern university, revealed that the cell phone is a necessity for college students (Hakoamo, & Hakoyama, 2011). In addition, an ethnographic study found that mobile phones are also essential for high school students (Ling, 2001). The need or manufactured desire for mobile phones exists and continues to grow as they become more practical and vital for everyday life. Furthermore, millennials think that all learning would benefit from the utilization of technology and that the internet, which is accessible via smartphones, is like oxygen (Garcia, 2007). The smartphone is a powerful combination of the cell phone, computer, and internet that gives millennials a portable device they cannot resist if they wish to socialize effectively with peers.

Millennials communicate with others via their mobile phones very often throughout the day. A survey measuring the frequency of text messaging and other types of cell phone usage for American adolescents between the ages of 12 and 17 showed the participants were sending a

median of 60 text messages in a 24 hour period, with teenage girls closer to the age of 17 sending a median of 100 text messages daily (Lenhart, 2012). Even more information can be received and sent via third party applications, called APPs, from social networking websites such as Facebook. If examined in its entirety, the amount of messages sent into cyberspace via text messaging on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, in addition to text messaging one could envision a number far greater than 60 text messages per day for the average smartphone user. The survey did not ask the time and place in which interactions on the mobile phone took place therefore there is no way to tell if these interactions disrupted or facilitated any face-to-face interactions.

Millennials utilize an array of APPS to socialize with friends and family thus creating a dependency on smartphone technology for communication. According to the previously cited survey, 63% of all teens claim they exchange text messages daily with individuals in their lives. Lenhart (2012) notes that this exceeds the rate at which they pick other forms of communication such as face-to-face socializing and social network site messaging. What the survey does not account for is how many hours they spend surfing social networking sites and viewing their friends' statuses on their smartphones. Statuses or posts on social networking sites are ultimately the same as text messages just to a wider audience. This dependency on text messaging, the internet, social networking sites, and smartphones has influenced how the millennial generation and others perceive the relationship between digital devices, their selves, and sociability. Smart-technology is becoming an extension of who we are and how we perceive others and ourselves.

PHANTOM VIBRATIONS

Individuals of all ages are susceptible to extreme attachment to their mobile phones and can experience phantom vibrations when not receiving a text message or call. Some participants in

a study by Walsh, White, & Ross (2008) reported very strong attachment to their cell phones; they feel as though their cell phones are a part of them. Another study showed that members of the millennial generation are so accustomed to digital devices that they have essentially become similar to bodily appendages (Prensky, 2001). In addition, a relatively recent survey of medical staff found that almost 70% of participants experienced phantom vibrations from electronic devices such as cell phones and beepers (Arora, Kleppel, Rothberg, St Marie, & Visintainer, 2011). When an individual considers their mobile phone a part of them analogous to an arm or a leg and can feel a vibration when there is no phone in their possession this can be a variation of phantom limb syndrome. Smartphones are becoming a part of the self so much that they can cause hallucinatory symptoms that manifest neurologically (e.g., a vibration in one's pocket) and since the literature lacks a full understanding of this phenomenon an investigation is in order.

MOBILE PHONE CONTROVERSIES

Multitasking is not as simple or as effective as many perceive yet mobile phone users still attempt to multitask with their phones while doing other activities. A common misunderstanding is that people can perform two or more tasks simultaneously while giving all tasks equal attention. Research has shown that during multitasking people's attention switches back and forth between tasks as opposed to being simultaneous (Konig, Buhner, & Murling, 2005), thus slowing down productivity and hindering attention. Likewise, media multitasking creates inefficiency and disengagement among users and it takes longer to process content during multitasking (Bardhi et al., 2010). Research on mobile phones and multitasking found that using a mobile phone reduces the quality of attention for acts such as driving and face-to-face interactions (Strayer, Drews, & Johnston, 2003; Strayer & Johnston, 2001). In addition, studies have found that because mobile phone users try to multitask at home, work life spills over into time once reserved for family life

(Chesley, 2005; Duxbury, Higgins, Thomas, & Towers, 2006). This research validates concerns about cell phones and smartphones causing distractions in the classroom, workplace, and home.

There is some evidence that cell phone use in the classroom not only troubles teachers and those requesting the attention of others, but that it also bothers those trying to pay attention. A survey administered by Baker et al. (2012) reported that almost half of the millennial generation student participants felt that the use of a cell phone is generally disruptive to their learning process. A survey conducted by Tindell, & Bohlander (2011) confirmed that students felt that text messaging is a distraction for those texting and those around the texter, consequently impairing learning for those distracted. Thus, cell phone use in the classroom can be disruptive for all participants engaged in the face-to-face interaction and can impair the memory of those trying to learn.

In a successful effort to get empirical data on the effect of text messaging during class, Chaklader & Bohlander (2009) requested as an experiment that college students respond to zero, one, two or three text messages while watching a lecture video. They tested the students afterward to see how much they remembered about the video. Test performance was significantly lower for the students who sent two or three text messages. This indicated that the ability for the student to focus on and remember the material in the video was negatively affected by the text messaging. Another experiment found that the memory of students asked to watch a 30 minute video lecture was impaired for those who received a high number of text messages (Rosen, Lim, Carrier, & Cheever, 2011). The high text message group received an average of 19 texts during the video compared to the low text message group who received one or two. Even though these students were millennials they were still impacted by text messaging, which demonstrates that texting is a serious problem even for youths and not just older generations. Mobile phone communication inhibits attention and therefore can affect face-to-face interaction.

There is evidence that the mere presence of a mobile phone can affect face-to-face conversation. Turkle (2011) collected an extensive range of qualitative data through interviews that found that mobile phones can direct attention away from face-to-face conversations by making concerns about wider social networks come to mind. Przybylski & Weinstein (2012) found after conducting two experiments that the mere presence of non-personal mobile phones, unused, inhibited the development of interpersonal closeness and trust, and reduced the extent to which individuals felt empathy and understanding from their partners. They argue that a mobile phone that is silent and laying on top a table where two interactants are sitting negatively affects the quality of face-to-face interaction. These two experiments, however, did not use the participants' personal mobile phones nor did the participants use the mobile phone placed in the room, leaving these experiments unable to explain the total influence of mobile phones on interpersonal closeness during face-to-face encounters. Influences not accounted for can be as simple as sharing information (e.g., news, pictures) retrieved from the mobile phone to aid the conversation.

Technology such as smartphones can potentially make users more efficient and productive when they use them in an advantageous manner instead of as a distraction. A study of task level practices at an executive recruiting firm found that workers might become more productive and effective at multitasking when they use technology to supplement their task (Sinan, Brynjolfsson, & Alstryne, 2007). Smartphones are no different from a desktop or laptop computer other than size and computing power. Thus, smartphones can facilitate face-to-face interactions when used for asynchronous communication to aid in a task or conversation directly. Multitasking effectively with smartphones is possible, but the literature overwhelmingly speaks to the negative effects of mobile phone use during social interactions.

Society continues to become more multitask oriented as the need for more productivity in the workplace encourages workers to bring their work home and take on more tasks at once. People are adapting to continuous multitasking to a certain extent through repetition. Likewise, people find themselves at the 'beck and call' of others who are seeking instant gratification in their response, anxious from consequence of always being on (Baron, 2008). Constant access and availability creates opportunities for mobile phone owners to become distracted. If the mere presence of a mobile phone causes distractions and people are always accessible then this implies that the majority of mobile phone owners' face-to-face encounters suffer from constant distraction since mobile phones are usually on and in one's pocket.

CROSS-TALK AND MOBILE PHONES

Those who are not interacting with others in public are categorized as a single, and those who are with others involved in conversation are categorized as a With (Goffman, 1963). The latter situation is more susceptible to intruders that interrupt the face-to-face interaction or create cross-talk. Cross-talk occurs when one member of a two person conversation, or what is called a With partnership, momentarily engages in exclusive talk with someone who is not originally in the With partnership, thus alienating the excluded partner (Goffman, 1963). Cross-talk is not limited to face-to-face interaction as Goffman (1971) suggests that when telephone calls interrupt face-to-face interactions often physical bystanders will feel alienated by the intrusion of the call, thus diverting their attention to something else as a defense mechanism against the social anxiety from becoming a Single. Likewise, partners who are interrupted while having a face-to-face conversation by a cell phone call believe the partner answering the call somewhat undermining their self-image (Hubbard, Han, Kim, & Nakamura 2007). Extending Goffman's cross-talk concept, Humphreys (2005) conducted a covert observational study involving cross-talk through

cell phone calls by observing cell phone users in public and found that the alienated individual has many defense mechanisms to deal with social anxiety. The partner whom is isolated from the conversation can seek other activities while waiting such as reading something nearby, drinking their beverage, eating their food, people watching, playing on their own cell phone, or beginning a conversation with someone else (Humphreys, 2005). Humphreys' study took place from 2002-2003 when only a handful of cell phone service providers had short message service (SMS) and before text messaging became the sensation it is today, which explains why Humphreys does not observe text messaging and why it could have been considered simply playing on the phone. In addition to the gap pertaining to the effects of text messaging on face-to-face conversations, there are several other shortcomings in the literature such as the participants' motives (e.g., alienation, boredom, documentation) for their mobile phone use and their thoughts (e.g., rude, offensive, fondness, respect) about their partner's mobile phone use.

DISCUSSION OF LITERATURE

Past literature covers how mobile phones cause problems with multi-tasking and focus. There is much emphasis on larger social interactions such as those in the classroom and individual use (e.g., driving) and not enough on the idiosyncratic rationales behind such usage and how smartphone use plays a role in the presentation of self. Thus, there are many gaps in our knowledge about mobile phones and face-to-face interactions. None of the literature, Humphreys' (2005) research being the exception, addresses the role of mobile phones in face-work much less the role of smartphones as a prop. Smartphones are a frequent prop that many individuals use in their presentation of self in everyday life, and how and why individuals use smartphones during face-to-face interactions needs to be thoroughly explored. Due to the extreme popularity of smartphones, the role of the smartphone in everyday life deserves immediate attention and should

be addressed as if it were a new phenomenon.

Smartphones are unlike any mobile technology to come before and therefore should not be seen as synonymous to their predecessor the cell phone. For example, smartphones have several functions similar to personal computers and television; individuals can access information (e.g., Google and news), and use third party applications (e.g., games, Youtube, and Facebook) to entertain themselves while in the presence of others. Users can bond and enjoy the company of others via many of the applications on smartphones such as video games (e.g., Angry Birds, & Scrabble). With that said, there are many positives about smartphones to take into consideration when analyzing how smartphones affect face-to-face interactions. An exploration of this phenomenon is in order.

There is an additional gap in the literature pertaining to when all individuals in a partnership use the many text based applications of smartphones (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, Instagram) to engage in cross-talk with potentially thousands of other individuals. A partnership can become a very dysfunctional face-to-face interaction if all individuals engage in exclusive talk on their smartphones. An investigation of the effects of this phenomenon on communication would prove very valuable for all individuals, academia, organizations, and institutions concerned with having effective face-to-face conversations.

Many claim that the youth of today are the leaders of tomorrow. This is precisely why the relationship between millennials and smartphones requires investigation. The literature vaguely captures this relationship with a few survey questions. Since youths (e.g., high school students, college students) are increasingly dependent on technology like smartphones problems could arise within this generation or the next evolving from dependency on technology and particularly smartphones. The literature supports an exploration of this phenomenon.

This literature review has identified different studies regarding the mobile phone's impact on multitasking and focus. One approach to mobile phone research views the mobile phone as a negative element in face-to face interaction. The other approach to mobile phone research views the mobile phone as a practical communication device that benefits users in a positive manner. This research views the mobile phone as both a negative and positive influence on face-to-face interaction. Regardless of which view is more accurate, these readings allowed for the creation of a working theory based on Goffmanian concepts such as face-work (e.g., avoidance process, corrective process), aggressive face-work, and alienation to guide this research. Individuals are more likely to use their smartphone during face-to-face interaction the less their face is dependent on the evaluation of their partner or partners, the less smartphone use is perceived as disruptive to the ritual order, or the more alienated they are from the face-to-face interaction. Individuals are more likely to use their smartphone the more it can facilitate the face-to-face interaction. The central focus of this research project is smartphone cross-talk. Smartphone cross-talk and other types of smartphone use (e.g., one-player video games) distracts users and alienates those excluded from participating in the smartphone activity. Certain situations require smartphone users to correct their offensive behavior and other situations allow smartphone use to occur unchallenged.

METHODS

Face-to-face interactions allow interactants to use smartphones as a prop in their performance. The ways an actor uses their smartphone depends on the social context of the situation, explicit and non-explicit purpose for the use, and the symbolic meaning behind such use. Due to the complexities of exploring this phenomenon, two complimentary qualitative methods were used to gather data. The data were deductively and then inductively coded before analysis. This chapter provides a complete description of the specific steps the researcher followed when conducting research. In this chapter, there are seven sections: research design, methods, data, role of the researcher, analysis, validity, and reliability.

RESEARCH DESIGN

An exploratory case study research design was the most appropriate research design for this study as smartphones and face-to-face interaction are a relatively new phenomenon and little is known about how smartphones affect face-to-face encounters. Exploratory studies usually give suggestive rather than definitive conclusions and if done properly can dispel some misconceptions about the topic and focus future research (Babbie, 2013). Likewise, qualitative case studies can aim to understand a specific issue, problem, or concern and a case deemed appropriate for study (Creswell, 2013). Good qualitative case studies present an in-depth understanding of the case by collecting and analyzing many forms of qualitative data (Creswell, 2013). This exploratory case study involved an extensive literature review, followed by two complimentary qualitative methods of data collection, simultaneous coding of the qualitative data collected, thematizing the codes, and an analysis of the data using goffmanian concepts.

METHODS

Focus groups. The first method, focus groups, is apt to explore why participants use their smartphones during face-to-face encounters. IRB approval (See Appendix A) was required to conduct this method of data collection. The focus group method was chosen as the main method of data collection because this method increases generalizability by allowing participants from diverse backgrounds to discuss amongst each other various questions. Focus groups can generate data through participant interaction that otherwise would not reveal itself in one-on-one interviews (Morgan, 1997). Focus groups not only give a wide range of attitudes and opinions but also provide many different forms of social interaction, containing direct and subtle challenges to opinions, and the 'collective voice' strategy (Smithson, 1998). The range of argumentative behaviors (e.g., challenges, alternative viewpoints, counterpoints) and questions (e.g., probing with why questions) exhibited by participants toward other participants results in a richness of dialogue (Smithson, 1998). Thus, conversations between focus group participants can reveal data that the researcher would otherwise not be able to uncover if he or she were the only one conversing with the participants. In addition to building group consensus, focus groups allow the thoughts of individuals to be analyzed. Furthermore, focus groups provide an opportunity to observe a large amount of interaction on a topic in a limited amount of time.

The main shortcomings of the focus group method are being limited to verbal behavior and self-reported data. Smithson (1998) notes that the limitations for the focus group method include: “dominant voices, constructing the other, normative discourses, and using focus groups to study conflict and contradiction.” Dominant participants can influence the opinions of others to change and silence others from participating in fear of confrontation. In addition, moderators who are too dissimilar to the group they are studying can be seen as an ‘other’, which affects the interactions of the group. Sometimes participants may give the opinions of normative culture or repeat the current

public discourse on an issue without giving the research their individual opinion (Smithson, 1998). The issues that applied to this research were addressed in this study's second qualitative method, non-participant observations.

I conducted the first focus group session as a pretest to gauge the strength of my semi-structured interview questions. The participants for the pretest focus group were contacted via a department mailing list. After I determined my questions were adequate to address the research problem a convenience sample was taken from the student body of the University of New Orleans. The student participants responded via email to flyers (See Appendix B) soliciting participants. They were asked for their availability for the week of the focus group sessions and assigned accordingly to a session. They received compensation for their time and participation with food, drinks, and a chance to win one of three gift cards.

I served as the moderator along with my co-investigator who took field notes. To protect the privacy of the participants their names were not used during the focus group session and no personal information was asked. I received informed consent and read them their rights as participants in the focus group session. The participants answered a series of open-ended questions (See Appendix C) about smartphone use in everyday life, in face-to-face encounters, with friends, and during important conversations.

Observations. In order to understand the context surrounding the phenomenon I conducted naturalistic observations as an outsider to understand micro-level behaviors involving smartphones during face-to-face interactions. These observations were covert and non-participatory. Covert non-participant observations require the observer to remain unnoticed yet close enough to observe physical and verbal behavior. Non-participant observations offer the researcher the opportunity to make 'thick descriptions' of what people really do as opposed to

what they say they do (Geertz, 1973). Researchers often choose a particular setting for observations due to a prior theoretical interest in a particular aspect of sociocultural behavior (Angrosino, 2007). Thus, I made observations in settings where mostly millennial college students socialize on campus. The observations took place in the university cafeteria, library cafe, university center lounge, university center courtyard, and outside classrooms on the University of New Orleans' campus. The most populated setting was the university center and the second most populated setting was the library. Prior to observation, I reviewed literature related to cell phone use and millennials that offered a few pre-established behaviors to look for in the field such as cross-talk, selfies, and texting. During my covert non-participant observations, I took detailed field notes of the groups' smartphone usage, gender, number of interactants, facial expressions, verbal statements, and gestures. I remained an outsider to the situation as to not influence it while sitting close enough to hear what the interactants were saying. Being close enough to hear their responses and see their gestures added to the depth of my field notes. Prior observations helped me develop questions for the focus group interviews to follow and then later observations confirmed the focus group findings.

The day of the week and time of day varied in order to observe the behaviors of different actors, which gave this study a more representative sample. In addition to the field sessions, I targeted areas just outside of places where mobile phone use is socially prohibited, such as classrooms. In these cases, people were observed sometimes before the class started or as they exited the building. In this context, often it would be possible to observe subjects only for a few moments before they hurried on their way through the halls to their next destination. In the other environments, such as cafes or cafeterias, it was possible to observe the same people for longer periods, seldom much longer than ten minutes.

DATA

Focus groups. I gathered a convenience sample of sixteen participants from the student body. The pretest session involved three participants, the second focus group session included eight participants, and the third session included five participants. The focus group participants ranged in age from 18 to 32. There were 2 Black participants and 3 Latino participants. The rest of the sample was White. Out of the 16 participants, there were thirteen females and three males. Each focus group was approximately one hour long.

Observations. I conducted covert non-participant observations over a 5-month period to try to understand how smartphones affect face-to-face interactions. Over the course of the study, I recorded field notes on 100 face-to-face group interactions (see Table 1) where at least one individual used their smartphone. I observed in five different areas (see Table 2): the university center cafeteria, university center lounge, university center courtyard, library café, and outside classrooms in one hall. The time spent making observations ranged from a few minutes to an hour. Typically, the observations outside the classrooms did not last longer than five minutes. Thus, I decided to focus my observations on the other locations. I decided to no longer collect data through the covert non-participant observations at the point of saturation. The point of saturation was determined when new behaviors concerning smartphones no longer appeared in the field for approximately twenty consecutive observations.

Table 1: Distribution by Month and Number of Observations and Interactants Observed

| Month | Number of Observations | Number of Interactants |
|----------|------------------------|------------------------|
| October | 14 | 32 |
| November | 13 | 33 |
| December | 6 | 18 |
| January | 25 | 58 |
| February | 42 | 106 |
| Total | 100 | 247 |

Table 2: Distribution by Location and Number of Observations

| Location | Number of Observations |
|--------------------|------------------------|
| UC Cafeteria | 39 |
| UC Lounge | 12 |
| UC Courtyard | 27 |
| Library Cafe | 17 |
| Outside Classrooms | 5 |
| Total | 100 |

ROLE OF THE RESEARCHER

The qualitative researcher often brings biases to the subject of study that can be either detrimental or useful. In this case, I have a useful predisposed perception of smartphones and millennials. Being a millennial myself and owning a smartphone enables me to understand the

behaviors, attitudes, and language of the interactions being investigated. Due to previous experiences interacting and conversing with other millennials, I have a theory of how and why millennials use smartphones during face-to-face interactions. I think this understanding of what smartphones can do and how millennials interact with each other enhances my awareness. In fact, my experiences originally led me to do this research as a response to past literature that overwhelmingly supports negative impacts of cell phone use on face-to-face interactions. I have experienced both negative and positive effects of smartphones. Therefore, I was compelled to understand the whole picture by taking a holistic approach to my research.

ANALYSIS

Focus group interactions were transcribed from audio recordings into digital documents in a naturalized state. I listened to the digital recordings from the focus group sessions twice while making notes of things that caught my attention before transcribing them. The covert non-participant observations were originally recorded in both digital documents and on paper. Once both forms of data were in written form (i.e., on paper) I coded and looked for themes. The units of analysis were both the individual and the group as they interplay to shape the situation. This approach to coding avoids the fallacy of sociological reductionism that assumes that what individuals do in a group is only because of the group context (Morgan, 1997). In reality, it is a combination of the group context and the individuals' perspectives that shape the findings.

The purpose of the focus groups was to obtain data that supported my research sub-questions: How do smartphone owners use smartphones during face-to-face encounters? Why do smartphone owners use smartphones during face-to-face encounters? How does smartphone cross-talk affect face-to-face encounters? By answering these three research questions, I would answer my central research question regarding how smartphones affect face-to-face interactions.

Thus, I placed an analytic emphasis on the subjective, idiosyncratic perceptions and motivations of the individual participant. I deductively coded the transcripts for how individuals used smartphones (e.g., texting, selfie, phone call), awkwardness, ill thoughts, attention, cross-talk, defense mechanisms, wrong face, out of face, positive claim to face, corrective ritual, avoidance ritual, and aggressive face-work. I used value coding and dramaturgical coding simultaneously to produce inductive codes. Value codes reflect the participant's values, attitudes, and beliefs that represent their perspective, which is appropriate for qualitative studies that explore intrapersonal and interpersonal experiences (Saldana, 2013). Dramaturgical codes apply the terms of a 'social drama' (e.g., objective, tactic, conflict) such as those used in Goffman's dramaturgical theory to qualitative data (Saldana, 2013). Additionally I used in vivo coding to find codes such as "hold on" and "that's rude" that had summative qualities. Furthermore, since group size correlated with certain behaviors I coded for mention of group size and the group size I observed in the field. Following the value and dramaturgical coding process, I constructed themes as they related to Goffmanian concepts (e.g., corrective process, avoidance process, cross-talk) and new themes in an in-depth analysis of the data.

The main function of the observations was to obtain data to cross-check with the data collected by focus groups. I placed an analytic emphasis on the individual actions of participants and the responses to their actions. I deductively coded the observation transcripts for how individuals used smartphones (e.g., texting, selfie, phone call, social media), focus, distraction, cross-talk, defense mechanisms, alienation, challenges, apologies, offerings, avoidance, and aggressive face-work. I inductively coded using dramaturgical coding for codes such as disrespect, telling jokes, sharing smartphone, solo use, getting attention, anger, sadness, happiness, attentive, and tired. In the analysis, I constructed themes as they related to Goffmanian concepts.

The four major themes constructed were 'on face-work', smartphone cross-talk, smartphone play, and solo smartphone activity. The subthemes for 'on face-work' were avoidance process, aggressive face-work, and corrective process. The subthemes for smartphone cross-talk included: exclusive smartphone cross-talk, semi-exclusive smartphone cross-talk, collaborative smartphone cross-talk. The themes solo smartphone activity and smartphone play did not have subthemes as they are conceptually simpler compared to the themes smartphone cross-talk and 'on face-work'. Face-to-face interaction is a complex phenomenon and the sequence of acts during interaction, other than the intro and the outro, flows from one to the other in no particular order. Therefore, the codes for the data often overlapped from one theme to another. The theme 'on face-work' included codes such as wrong face, out of face, losing face, positive claim to face, corrective ritual, avoidance ritual, challenges, apologies, offerings, alienated, defense mechanism, rudeness, disrespect, high status, casual occasion, formal occasion, and aggressive. The theme smartphone cross-talk included codes such as collaboration, semi-exclusive, exclusive, rudeness, importance of attention, exclusive talk, positive claim to face, high status, enjoyment, bonding, texting, selfie, phone call, awkwardness, alienated, ill thoughts, feeling insecure, attention, importance of attention, boredom, cross-talk, defense mechanism, bonding, "hold on", and "that's rude." The theme smartphone play included codes such as having fun, bonding, excitement, positive claim to face, exclusive talk, with friends, inclusion, cooperative, and focus. The theme solo smartphone activity included codes such as information, checking time, rudeness, importance of attention, just checking, wrong face, frustration, corrective ritual, avoidance ritual, and boredom. Codes that did not fit into a theme included codes such as multiple worlds, judging others, bad parenting, difference between students, misinterpreting, past differences, and generational gap.

VALIDITY

Covert non-participant observation involves two main elements that set it apart from other forms of observation-type data gathered which improves validity. In the context of a covert non-participant observation, the environment is in no way manipulated by the observer nor is it created by the observer. In addition, the presence of the observer is unknown, which negates co-presence as an influencing factor on the behaviors observed. Likewise, validity is one of the strong suits of focus group studies because researchers know what the participants are saying based on the context of the situation and if the researcher does not then they can ask the participant to clarify.

RELIABILITY

Another concern about covert non-participant observations is reliability. The subjectivity of the observer can cause them to interpret what is going on in the situation differently than someone else observing the same situation, thus another opinion is needed in order to insure reliability. A common way of assessing the reliability of observations is to use the inter-observer reliability method. This involves comparing the observations of one or more guest observers and checking for agreement in their notes with the main investigator's notes. If both observers interpret the behaviors of the observed individuals the same then reliability is enhanced (Multon, 2010). Furthermore, the researcher can check for inter-coder agreement by allowing another coder to cross-check their codes (Creswell, 2014). If the second coder agrees with 80% or more of the codes then the data is said to have good qualitative reliability (Miles & Huberman, 1994)

Like observations, a focus group study often brings up issues of reliability, but this method has a set of techniques that rely heavily on the attentiveness of the researcher. One dominant theme in the present criticism of focus group research is that participants express one thing and do

another. This was addressed by asking what the participants thought of others so that they could speak in the third person. Speaking in the third person allows the participant to reveal details about themselves without losing face. In addition to this issue, focus group moderators need to pay close attention to situations where participants' expressions can be influenced by others in the group, pressures to conform to what the group thinks, or the influential effects of a dominant group participant (Stewart & Rook, 2006). The moderator handled these issues preemptively by not allowing one person to speak longer than other participants and getting the opinions of all participants. Furthermore, reliability was increased by asking a number of different questions about the same phenomenon and asking the same questions for each focus group session.

FINDINGS

A total of three focus group transcripts and field notes taken during covert non-participant observations were coded and analyzed. Smartphones have enabled cross-talk, which was once a public incident, to occur in private. Smartphone use during face-to-face interaction can be broadly grouped into three main categories: smartphone cross-talk, smartphone play, and solo smartphone activity. The focus of this research project is smartphone cross-talk. Smartphone cross-talk is a form of unfocused interaction that occurs during an encounter when one member of a With partnership engages in conversation or conversation-like activity, which varies in exclusivity, with one or more persons on their smartphone who are not in the With partnership. There are five types of smartphone use during an encounter. The findings show there are three types of smartphone cross-talk: exclusive, semi-exclusive, and collaborative. There is also smartphone play and solo smartphone activity. During smartphone cross-talk interactants face-work by using either the avoidance process, the corrective process, or aggressive face-work to maintain face.

ON FACE-WORK

Each participant in face-to-face interaction aims to maintain their own face as well as the face of their partner and this includes avoiding, ignoring, accepting, and correcting smartphone cross-talk. Since smartphone cross-talk and solo smartphone activity during a social encounter is often perceived as a face threatening act each actor takes measures to maintain the ritual order if there is a potential smartphone related offense to occur. They will use one of two types of basic face-work, the avoidance process or the corrective process. In addition, interactants can use aggressive face-work, which is not so much a process as it is a display of power or independence of face in instances that involve smartphone cross-talk.

AVOIDANCE PROCESS

Smartphone owners engage in the avoidance process to maintain face while in a face-to-face interaction. Goffman (1967) notes that an individual takes defensive measures by keeping off topics and staying away from activities that are inconsistent with the line they are maintaining. If an individual intends to maintain a line that portrays they are giving their interaction partner undivided attention then they must avoid smartphone cross-talk and solo smartphone activities altogether. Otherwise, they risk committing a social error and being in wrong face. Smartphones are capable of interrupting a conversation through visual and auditory cues such as ringtones, vibrations, and flashing. One avoidance technique individuals use is to keep their smartphone on silent mode to avoid the embarrassment of having a ringtone, loud vibration, or flashing interrupt a conversation, lecture, or meeting. Female participant number four from focus group session two talked about the silent mode avoidance technique as good smartphone etiquette and her fellow participants chimed in afterward:

R4: When iPhones came out I remember there was a setting that came on automatically when you type and it's making a clicking noise. So I think good etiquette would be to have your phone on silent or whatever so it's not ringing every time you get a text message every two seconds.

R3: I hate that flashing.

R2: Yeah that too!

R3: That's so annoying. *group laughter*

Certain social contexts (e.g., formal conversations, dates, classes) may make the mere signal (e.g., ringtone) of smartphone communication bad etiquette, thus putting the individual in wrong face. To avoid becoming in wrong face smartphones are put on silent mode or vibrate mode. This technique is not flawless. Depending on the phone and the surface the phone is making contact with, smartphone vibrations can be loud enough for those around to hear a buzzing sound.

Interactants can be aware they are receiving an incoming phone call or text message even when their phone is on silent mode due to flashing lights. If the vibrations or flashing lights do not put the person in wrong face then they will continue the avoidance process by avoiding potential smartphone cross-talk.

When an incoming phone call, notification, or text message is acknowledged by interactants the next step in the avoidance process would be to ignore the incoming smartphone communication. To maintain a line of undivided attention smartphone owners will ignore the incoming call while in front of their partner. When asked about their response to an incoming text message a female participant from focus group session one describes her strategy for avoiding smartphone cross-talk:

I usually ignore it. It does depend on how long my face-to-face conversation is. I try to wait until somebody has gone to the bathroom or something and then I take that time to find out what's going on.

The other two respondents in focus group session one agreed that they ignore the incoming call or message until they are given a non-threatening opportunity to check it out. Two focus group participants, one male and the latter female, from session two were quick to say, "Not answer it." and "Never answer it." to the same question. Likewise, during observations in the cafeteria and courtyard, interactants were seen picking up their phones to text message and use social media apps when their partner got up from the table. When their partner returned to the table, they either put the smartphone back in their pocket or set it on the table. Thus, individuals maintain the symmetrical social rule of mutual attention by ignoring potential smartphone cross-talk while in the presence of their partner. If they get a break from the encounter (e.g., one partner leaves to do something), they may take the opportunity to check their text messages or see who called. This is done out of sight of their partner and may never be acknowledged for the rest of the encounter.

Individuals who are offended by smartphone cross-talk may also engage in the avoidance process. The offended With partner may choose to maintain the ritual process by overlooking the affront to avoid threatening their partner's face or their own face. During observation number thirty-two, three male and two female students were conversing while sitting down in university center lounge chairs. The three males kept their conversation about sports amongst themselves. The phenomenon of interest involved the two female interactants who were talking about music festivals. One female did most of the talking while the other had her faced buried in her smartphone looking at pictures on Instagram. Over a five-minute period of conversation, the female using the smartphone occasionally responded with "mhm", "yeah", or nodded her head in response to her partner. The attention given by interactants during this encounter was asymmetrical yet the female receiving less attention continued to talk to the female using her smartphone as if nothing was wrong. In this interaction, the female getting less attention ignored her partner's smartphone cross-talk and continued the ritual process. The female on the smartphone can be said to be using aggressive face-work because she knows her partner has no other choice but to ignore her smartphone cross-talk. When an individual engages in smartphone cross-talk, they either will include others to some degree, use aggressive face-work, or the corrective process to maintain face.

AGGRESSIVE FACE-WORK

Interactants who engage in exclusive and semi-exclusive smartphone cross-talk can use aggressive face-work in its many forms to maintain face. Interactants use aggressive face-work when they approach face-work as something they expect others to perform or accept of them (Goffman, 1967). These situations lack mutual consideration. Thus, committing a social error when one's partner has no other option but to overlook the social error is aggressive face-work

(Goffman, 1967). Aggressive face-work is not independent of the avoidance process and the corrective process, but it is notably its own distinct strategy. The aggressor can be challenged by the offended and lose more than they had to gain. The offender expects their partner to play along in order to maintain the ritual order and the offended partner typically does to avoid threatening their own face or disrupting the ritual order. In the case of an intruding phone call, the interactant using aggressive face-work often expects their partner to pick up where the conversation left off when the phone call ends. Aggressive face-work is frequently used in casual situations and sometimes in situations where one partner outranks the other in terms of social status as well as other forms of power. Therefore, aggressive face-work explains why in situations highly influenced by power dynamics individuals do not challenge social errors. Aggressive face-work also explains why individuals engage in smartphone cross-talk while with close friends even though it can offend their partner and threaten their face.

“HOLD ON.”

With partners often find it hard to avoid smartphone cross-talk if the person trying to communicate with him or her warrants immediate attention. In encounters, With partners often maintain their face in the event of smartphone cross-talk by telling their partner to “hold on” or to excuse them for a moment while they take a phone call or respond to a text message. One way to deal with smartphone cross-talk using aggressive face-work is to make it known that the smartphone cross-talk is urgent and unavoidable. In other words, the one to lose face has not been given the option or the appearance of choice around the forthcoming act of smartphone cross-talk. The person announces the social importance of the smartphone cross-talk about to occur with cues such as “my work is calling”, “I just got an e-mail from work”, or “my child/parent is calling.” When asked what do you do when your phone rings while having a face-to-face conversation in

focus group session two, a female participant responded, “If it is your mom, you have to answer it.” and that she tells her interaction partner, “‘Hold on. This is my mom.’ Because people understand that.” The title mom symbolizes social status to the interactants and shows that the smartphone user is obligated to answer the phone call. This aggressive use of face-work helped her maintain face. Likewise, a female participant from the third focus group session uses a strategic form of tact to maintain face:

...If the call is important I’ll just be like you know, excuse me and step away and take the call, but like if I rather have the person I’m with think he is more important then I’m going to finish out the conversation and just get back to the call. If the call is important they will leave a voicemail or text.

Another female participant responds afterward with her strategy:

I think it also depends on who I'm talking to and if yeah basically they are more important or if it's what the consequences would be or like if I get a call from someone I don't ever get a call from. And I might you know -- I might be more compelled to answer it whereas if it's my sister who calls me like every five minutes I'm going to be like she's going to call me in five minutes so I'll answer later, so it kind of depends.

Smartphone owners judge whether their immediate social interaction is more important than the potential interaction to come from the incoming phone call. If the phone call is more important than the immediate interaction, they can use aggressive face-work to maintain face. If an interactant considers their With partner to be more important than the phone call then they are demonstrating an attachment of their face to the evaluation of their partner. As a tactic to show deference, the person receiving the call can show their partner that they are important by ignoring the phone call. The act of ignoring or avoiding a phone call symbolizes a positive evaluation of a With partner which can be reciprocated. Important conversations and important people demand a more focused interaction that should not be interrupted. If one is to interrupt the conversation with smartphone cross-talk they can justify the interruption to their partner before to maintain face or

after to regain face.

When a person engages in smartphone cross-talk, and their partner is not told the call is important, the partner evaluates the importance of the intruding phone call. They evaluate the importance of the phone call by listening in or making assumptions based off their knowledge of their partner's life. A female participant from focus group session three explains:

Sometimes if the other person ignores a call then they are really enjoying this conversation, but if they pick up the call I'm not necessarily going to be offended. I'm going to just assume it must have been important enough...

In this situation, the interactant used the avoidance process by justifying their partner's social error. This is what the interactant using aggressive face-work would expect of them. Several focus group participants described similar stories in which they assumed their partner's smartphone cross-talk was important.

Casual encounters are fertile ground for smartphone cross-talk. Social occasions where a person with partner is more comfortable and relaxed, meaning they think their face cannot be threatened, such as in a casual encounter with close friends they can engage in smartphone cross-talk or solo smartphone activities and expect their face to be maintained. A different female participant from focus group session three states her response to smartphone cross-talk depends on her level of social comfort or interpersonal closeness during the encounter:

It depends because if I'm comfortable and close with the person it's almost like the person's phone rings you kind of know just to fallback and stop talking and wait because if you hang out with someone all the time it's not weird.

The interactant finds nothing out of the norm with their friend engaging in smartphone cross-talk. Interactants can be comfortable with each other diverting their attention to another for a brief moment if they have already established long lasting positive evaluations that are almost independent of their faces. Aggressive face-work can be lighthearted and without strategic intent.

Other types of aggressive face-work with smartphone cross-talk can be manipulative acts and demonstrations of power.

In other encounters, a With partner might abuse their social status or position of power and show disregard for the ritual process of social interaction when using their smartphone as they think their face is independent of others' opinions of them. One female respondent from focus group session two describes a job orientation where the manager used their position of power to maintain face when offending her with smartphone cross-talk:

I've had a person be on their phone while I was doing a job orientation. The person who was training me, the manager – her phone would be lighting up and she would text or do whatever and she was telling me to 'do this and do that' and she was texting... It just makes the respect level go down.

The focus group participant was expected to accept the manager's line as the manager exhibited disregard for the ritual process. The manager did not feel that their face was threatened, but in fact, it was threatened. In this situation, the one being offended by smartphone cross-talk had to accept the offender's line and overlook it as she was trying to win a positive evaluation from the offender. In encounters when it is not possible for With partners to overlook the social error one partner makes it an incident and begins the corrective process.

CORRECTIVE PROCESS

In the corrective process, the ritual order can be reestablished and face saved by correcting the social error. Newly single partners, just alienated by smartphone cross-talk or a solo smartphone activity, can begin the corrective process with a challenge to their partner's offense. Challenges can either be aggressive or passive aggressive. Those alienated by smartphone cross-talk often express aggravation and other ill thoughts through their challenges. Aggressive challenges are typically straight to the point and often address why the action of the offender was a social error. Passive aggressive challenges often come in the form of self-narrated actions or

sarcasm. A male participant from focus group session one described being in wrong face when aggressively challenged in public:

At Popeye's... I had my hand up and I was talking on the phone to someone and I was next in line and [the cashier] said, "Put your phone down that's rude!" and I said "ouch.", she did point out how she felt about that.

A With partner challenges an offense because they acknowledge that because of the smartphone cross-talk they are not receiving their partner's undivided attention. The With partner then, if shamefaced, makes an offering to explain their action or an apology to the offended partner. "Ouch" is a weak offering that symbolizes the recognition of challenge and the offender's shameface. Stronger offerings take the form of a verbal apology or a symbolic apology. Sometimes the offended cannot accept the apology, but remain in good demeanor and finish the encounter. Which might have been the case for the cashier this participant offended. If the offended With partner decides to accept the apology then the ritual order is reestablished and face is saved. Not all challenges are as direct as the one in the example above.

Occasionally the challenge is a passive aggressive line that does not directly address why the smartphone cross-talk is offensive, but instead returns the offense verbally or by action to catch the attention of the offender. The partner addressing the affront takes an 'eye for an eye' approach to his or her challenge. Female respondent number two from focus group session one talked about when she had to use a passive aggressive challenge in the corrective process:

I have also called people out on them being on their phone like in a group of four people where I'm the only one not on my phone. I say, "Alright, I'm going to text somebody!" And I'll say it out loud and it's obviously passive aggressive on my part.

Many focus group participants agreed that they also used an eye for an eye tactic to express their displeasure with their partner or partners' actions. One participant noted that sometimes they get on their smartphone and ignore everything their partner says to them. Furthermore, when called

out, respondents noted that they either were shamefaced or understood that their partner took offense to their smartphone cross-talk. Passive aggressive challenges may be preferred during interaction because it is unbecoming for an interactant to aggressively challenge their partner's offense. Passive aggressive challenges allow individuals to give their partner a way to save face by challenging an action in a less abrasive manner. The offender then can make an offering afterward so that their face can be maintained and the conversation can continue. In addition to verbal challenges, interactants can use non-verbal passive aggressive challenges to signal something is wrong with the encounter.

Interactants can passive aggressively challenge social errors by way of body language. If an interactants commits a social offense, by using their smartphone, it can be challenged by their partner's facial expression, gesture, posture, or anything perceivable by the eye. During observation number seventy-three, a female non-verbally challenges a male's smartphone cross-talk. The interactants were eating fast food at a table in the university center courtyard. The male was commenting on Facebook statuses and ignoring the female. While he was engaged in smartphone cross-talk, the female stared at him with an angry expression. When he finally noticed her challenge to his social error he said, "My bad." and she responded, "You always do this." He then made an offering with, "I know I'm sorry I just had to comment on this status" and put his smartphone down on the table. After the offering, they continued the ritual process. An encounter can become dysfunctional and cease to exist if the offender does not make an offering. Interactants, often make an offering without there being a preceding challenge.

The challenge is not always the first step in the corrective process. Those who are aware they have committed a social error can be the first to acknowledge the social error with an apology.

A female participant from focus group session one talks about how she makes an offering during a face-to-face encounter with her parent:

Sometimes I am stuck in a conversation with my mom when she's been talking non-stop for an hour and a half and so I try to make the sorry guys look at them and say I am sorry. Then I cover it up and try to get it away from myself a little bit.

The individual used a non-verbal and verbal apology as their offering because they knew smartphone cross-talk was a social error in this situation. In addition, the female followed up her offering with an assurance that the ritual code was intact when she covered up her phone and moved it away from herself. Interactants can become embarrassed or in wrong face by engaging in smartphone cross-talk when it is not deemed socially acceptable by their partner or partners. When an individual is in wrong face during or immediately after a social error, a challenge is not necessary to make smartphone cross-talk a forgivable incident; only the good demeanor of the offended is required. Once an apology is accepted, the interaction may continue with the ritual order maintained.

SMARTPHONE CROSS-TALK

There are many ways for smartphone cross-talk to occur, each with its own unique influence on the face-to-face interaction. The type of smartphone cross-talk influences the likelihood an interactant is in wrong face or maintains face. That is, individuals are more likely to engage in cross-talk the less they value the positive evaluation of their partner or partners or the less disruptive it is to the face-to-face interaction's ritual order. Likewise, people assign symbolic meaning to smartphone cross-talk when it occurs based not only on social context of that immediate interaction, but also on their understanding of face-work (i.e., aggressive face-work, avoidance process, and corrective process) already established. Three subcategories of smartphone cross-talk are identified in this study: exclusive, semi-exclusive, and collaborative. Each type of

smartphone cross-talk corresponds with a pattern of behavior and rationale that distinguishes it from the rest although they may have a few commonalities. Furthermore, the types of smartphone cross-talk are not mutually exclusive and can occur in any order.

EXCLUSIVE SMARTPHONE CROSS-TALK

The first type of smartphone cross-talk occurs when one or more persons in a With partnership engage in exclusive cross-talk by way of text messaging, social media, video game, or phone call. I use the term exclusive because the individual using their smartphone keeps their activities private and excludes their partner or partners from the smartphone cross-talk. When an individual engages in exclusive smartphone cross-talk, they have the most potential to threaten their face by not paying attention to their partner or not showing their partner mutual respect. In the event of exclusive smartphone cross-talk, the excluded With partner often does not expect to be invited to give their input even though this might save their partner's face. A female participant from focus group session two explains why exclusive smartphone cross-talk is rude during an encounter.

I don't think you should text if you are on a date or something... Because it is really rude and if you're like texting somebody and you're with your significant other it's just like well 'who are you talking to? You are with me' type thing and it always brings up like an argument or something and like it.

Exclusive smartphone cross-talk often threatens the alienated individuals face and can put the offender in wrong face. The rudeness of their partner's activity reflects a disregard for the ritual process and a negative evaluation of their face. If the person involved in smartphone cross-talk is perceived as not paying attention to their With partner then they are said to be rude, impolite, annoying, or disrespectful. The focus group participants often expressed ill thoughts about those who engage in exclusive smartphone cross-talk while in their presence. A male from focus group session one expresses his annoyance with the lack of attention he gets when his partner engages in

exclusive smartphone cross-talk: “It annoys me if I’m right next to a person and they are texting somebody else and the whole point of me being around them is to hang out with them.” Perceived conversation with someone outside of the With relationship is viewed as against the social norm and breaks the symmetrical rule of focused attention. With partners are expected to pay close attention to each other and not to outsiders during encounters. Other forms of exclusive smartphone cross-talk such as using social media to communicate with others also threatened the face of smartphone users.

Social media websites often revolve around the regular documentation of one’s life and as in face-to-face interactions, a pattern of self presentation must be maintained through communication. If an individual engages in smartphone cross-talk on social media, they begin an often sporadic dialogue with many others on the social media platform. Sporadic in the sense that the person involved in this type of exclusive smartphone cross-talk does not know precisely who will respond to their social media post. This is unlike text messaging, where the individual knows whom they are talking to and there is an expected progression of the dialogue. The act of exclusion from perceived communication with others on social media (e.g., Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, and Snapchat) did not sit well with respondents. A male respondent from the second focus group session notes his challenge to smartphone cross-talk and amount of attention received or lack thereof:

My brother he’s about to turn 19 and when you’re talking to him he will be Snapchatting other people and it’s like ‘come on dude.’ He’s there with you but not really.

Focus group participants showed concern about receiving attention from the person engaged in smartphone cross-talk and expressed a hint of annoyance in this regard. The expression “come on” implies that the ignored individual wishes for his partner to reestablish the ritual order and regain

the focused encounter. A female from focus group session two expressed annoyance about being put on hold when her friends wanted to take pictures and post them online.

I've had more casual moments when you're hanging out with friends and you're all eating and getting your food and then they are like, 'Hold on, don't eat yet. I want to take a picture of your food.' and it is like, okay I have to wait until you're done Instagramming.

Often in an attempt to maintain face prior to smartphone cross-talk the one who is about to use his or her smartphone gives a verbal cue such as "hold on", which is an aggressive use of face-work as they expect their partner to accept the line they have taken without threatening their face. With partners did not always accept this verbal cue because it was perceived as less polite than other aggressive face-work lines such as apologies, or they themselves uphold the symmetrical social rule of focused attention. The one expecting his or her partner to give them undivided attention often engaged in the corrective process by challenging the social error or avoided the challenge by overlooking the social error.

Throughout the covert non-participant observations it was noted how people respond when their partners receive phone calls. If one's partner did answer the phone and excluded him or her from the conversation, they often exhibited signs of social anxiety and aggravation such as scowling. If the offender sees a scowl on their partner's face then it becomes a challenge. Signs of social anxiety manifested as defense mechanisms (e.g., reading a book, eating food, using a smartphone). On the other hand, if an individual's partner ignored the call then their partner's face was maintained and the partner who did not receive the call thought he or she was receiving the other's undivided attention which put them in positive face. In focus group session three, one female described how she responds to intruding phone calls:

When other people ignore the call for me I like that... I hate when people answer calls and then fifteen minutes later they are like 'okay where were we?' and I'm like 'I don't know I zoned out for 15 minutes.'

When the individual's partner ignored the phone call it pleased the individual and when their partner answered the phone call it displeased the individual. Exclusive smartphone cross-talk broke the focus of the encounter and there was no longer mutual attention. When the exclusive smartphone cross-talk (i.e., phone call) ended, it was difficult for the interactants to return to the prior conversation. Several of the respondents laughed and agreed that phone calls interrupted their train of thought and flow of the conversation making this type of exclusive smartphone cross-talk the most disruptive. Since exclusive smartphone cross-talk by way of a phone call involves having a constant line of communication with an outsider it has the most potential to put a With partner in wrong face. The alienated partner can take measure to relieve the social anxiety of becoming a single by engaging in defense mechanisms.

Interactants often turn to defense mechanisms when faced with intruding smartphone cross-talk. Defense mechanisms relieve their social anxiety associated with becoming a single by making it appear that they are more interested in their activity than their conversation partner who is now engaged in exclusive smartphone cross-talk. Reading a textbook can give off the impression that they are not concerned with the offense. Whereas defense mechanisms such as text messaging or looking at social media on a smartphone make the alienated partner simultaneously appear socially desirable and not concerned with their partner's undivided attention. Two female participants from focus group session three talked about using their smartphone for a defense mechanism when alienated by an exclusive phone call:

R1: I usually just take it as a signal to order another drink or go look at my own phone for some random thing. Like it kind of signals me to maybe use my phone during that time if it's a one-on-one conversation. If it's like a group then I'll just talk to whoever else was there.

R4: That was a really good point. I am really likely to start using my phone if someone has to use their phone during a conversation.

Moderator: You said it signals you to use your phone. Can you all tell me more about that?

R4: That's what I was thinking. Is it because I'm trying to not be awkward or am I really interested? I guess it would depend on if I needed to check my phone, but I would probably look at it whether I need to check it or not anyway.

This dialogue demonstrates that interactants not only use their smartphones as a defense mechanism they also want to use their smartphones because of its social importance. The benefit is two-fold. Interactants do need to use defense mechanisms if the With partnership includes more than two members, thus they can continue to converse with the other partner or partners.

MILLE-WAY INTERACTION

In the field, With partners were observed for a considerable amount of time mutually engaged in exclusive smartphone cross-talk without offending each other. Mille-way interactions occur when all persons engaged in a face-to-face interaction exclude others simultaneously from their smartphone cross-talk and there are no social anxieties, wrong faces, or ill thoughts. I use the Latin word mille, meaning thousand, to describe this interaction because each participant is potentially engaged in conversation or conversation-like activities with thousands of individuals at once via text messaging, social media, and the like. This ritual does not appear to involve the use of aggressive face-work as all the partners accept smartphone cross-talk as the social norm and do not take offense to it. In addition, the social anxiety often associated with smartphone cross-talk does not exist and is replaced by using one's own smartphone to engage in smartphone cross-talk. Mille-way interactions occurred in the field when interactants had nothing to talk about and appeared to be trying to kill time. During observation number eighteen in the university center courtyard three interactants were all engaged in exclusive smartphone cross-talk simultaneously. None of the interactants showed any signs of ill thoughts (e.g., scowls, sighs, frowns) and appeared

content. Occasionally one of them would chuckle or smirk while they paused their scrolling to read something on their smartphone screen. In mille-way interactions, smartphone cross-talk is the dominant activity and face-to-face interaction comes secondary to each partner's smartphone activity. This is not to say that With partners cannot come in and out of the mille-way interaction to engage in semi-exclusive or collaborative smartphone cross-talk.

SEMI-EXCLUSIVE SMARTPHONE CROSS-TALK

The second type of smartphone cross-talk occurs when an interactant in a With partnership engages in semi-exclusive cross-talk by way of text messaging, social media, video game, or phone call and shares information about the smartphone cross-talk. The encounter is still unfocused as the With partner not engaged in smartphone cross-talk receives some attention from the other partner but not their undivided attention. In an effort to avoid alienating one's partner and maintain face an interactant can show their partner content on their phone. They can further include their partner by asking for their partner's thoughts about the content. When a With partner shares information about smartphone cross-talk they invite their partner to open a dialogue about the topic. One female participant in session two describes how her smartphone cross-talk facilitates conversation:

So say you go out to lunch with a friend and y'all start taking pictures for Instagram of like your food and then you're on your phone on Instagram and it's like 'hey look at that' and then you start talking about that, so I think it sparks conversation.

This act shows that they appreciate their partner's input and that they want to have a focused encounter therefore they use information obtained from their smartphone cross-talk to bring up a new topic for discussion. Furthermore, if the partner sharing the content of the smartphone cross-talk decides to comment on the content, they comment as though they have not received input from their partner, thus the presentation of self (e.g., selfie, direct quote, tag) from their

partner is not included in their digital presentation of self. I use digital presentation of self to refer to the ways in which a person presents their self online (e.g., social networking sites, social media) such as selfies, statuses, and media. Often a partner takes it a step further and includes their partner in some fashion in their digital presentation of self.

COLLABORATIVE SMARTPHONE CROSS-TALK

Smartphone cross-talk can be a collaborative act between With partners when one partner includes his or her partner or partners directly into the cross-talk interchange, but remains ultimately in control of the smartphone communication. Collaborative smartphone cross-talk involves With partners working together to produce a digital product such as a selfie, video, text message, blog post, or status. Often the smartphone user either begins or ends the collaborative act with exclusive or semi-exclusive smartphone cross-talk and then invites their partner or partners be a part of their digital presentation of self. In these situations there is often a direct insertion in communication with others through speakerphone call, text messaging (e.g., [Name] says “this”), and social media (e.g., tag, quote, selfie, video).

Interactants can take a group selfie of the With partnership with a smartphone and then proceed to post it on a social media website for others connected to them online to view. In focus group session three, three female participants indicated they do in fact have a rationale behind taking selfies and that selfies are not random acts.

Respondent 5: I take pictures with me and all of my friends so everyone knows what we are doing.

Moderator: What does it tell the other person when you include them into your selfie?

Respondent 4: That you’re projecting your relationship with them to the world and you know social media, reality, or whatever.

Respondent 1: Like you're proud to show – you're okay with people knowing you're friends with that person.

Interactants collaborate to produce a group selfie, which is then presented online in the form of a digital photograph. Many participants in focus group session two explained the act of taking a selfie as a positive experience and one that occurs regularly during social occasions such as concerts, clubs, and other outings. When focus group two was talking about selfies a female participant said, "I take a lot of pictures but it's just because I want to remember." The act of including another into a digital product such as a selfie symbolizes that the individual values his or her partner's friendship and that they are pleased to include them into their digital presentation of self. In addition, it symbolizes overall that the With partner taking the photo is giving a positive evaluation of their partner.

With partners can further collaborate in the selfie process by going through the photos to decide which picture is the best to post online. Observation number sixty-five was of two females sitting down at a bench outside the university center. They talked for a few minutes and then decided they would take a selfie and then Snapchat it to their friends. After taking a couple of selfies they began to look at the pictures on the smartphone. The female not holding the smartphone said "Oh no delete that one. I look bad." and the other said, "Okay, what about this one?" and she paused for a moment and then said, "Yeah that's fine." The female holding the smartphone looked down at her phone and then said, "What should the caption be?" and the other female replied, "Um... how about too fresh?" she then said, "Okay" and they both laughed. This situation demonstrates the collaboration that goes into posting a group selfie. Although not all group selfies contain this much collaboration they act of taking a group selfie alone is a collaboration.

SMARTPHONE PLAY

Smartphones are not only used for communication or looking up information but they can also provide endless entertainment. Smartphone play occurs when interactants are sharing a smartphone or smartphones to some capacity for entertainment and fun. In these instances, the smartphone owner is not engaged in exclusive smartphone cross-talk or any other form of exclusive smartphone use, but is using their smartphone in cooperation with their partner or partners to engage in an activity for enjoyment. Smartphone play can be the most inclusive form of smartphone use during encounters. Smartphone play facilitates interaction by providing entertainment (e.g., video games, music videos, viral videos, music) and introducing new content into the conversation. For example, a With partnership can play a game of scrabble on the same smartphone while not engaged in conversation with anyone else but themselves. Other partners might watch funny videos together on YouTube. Playing together with a smartphone facilitates social bonding as well as helping each partner maintain face. A Female participant from focus group session three describes excitedly how she plays games on a smartphone with her friends:

Respondent 2: ...I like playing games on the phone even at a bar, like if you're outside, and there's games like trivia games that you put on your forehead. *puts her hand up to her forehead* It's like mad gab or something like that where people are trying to make you guess what the word is, but you can't see it.

Moderator: On your phone?

Respondent 2: Yeah and it's awesome, but I can't remember the name of it right now but it's a lot of fun. But I guess there's a lot of ways you can use your phone together that I don't think are weird. Like I don't think it's weird that people will bond over a device instead of just with themselves.

The individual enjoyed playing smartphone games with her friends and recognized that it facilitated bonding. Respondent five in this focus group agreed strongly with head nods and acknowledged she experienced this too by saying “oh yeah” to respondent two when she was

talking about her positive experience with smartphone play. The acknowledgement of smartphone play as fun demonstrates that the individual had a positive evaluation of her partner's and a positive claim to face. Interactants involved in smartphone play are often in an exclusive encounter with each other unless interrupted. Smartphone play is less common than smartphone cross-talk as a smartphone's main function is a communication device. Nonetheless, smartphone play facilitates face-work and is possible with any smartphone. The same cannot be said for cell phones as they have limited capabilities.

SOLO SMARTPHONE ACTIVITY

Smartphones can be used during encounters for purposes other than smartphone cross-talk and smartphone play. Solo smartphone activity refers to the ways in which an interactant uses their smartphone exclusively or semi-exclusively during an encounter to obtain information or be entertained by means other than smartphone cross-talk and smartphone play. This type of smartphone use is often exclusive and if semi-exclusive, it only contributes in minor ways to the interaction as a whole. For example, an interactant may look at the time on their smartphone and announce to their partner that it is time for class. There are several apps. on smartphones that do not require communication with another individual. Solo smartphone activities may include looking up the news, time, weather forecast, schedules, prices, hours of operation, and playing a one-player game (e.g., angry birds, candy crush saga, chess). These activities are subject to the same social norms as smartphone cross-talk. Interactants still expect mutual attention whether or not their partner is reading a news article or talking to someone not in the With partnership. Occasionally, solo smartphone activities such as playing a video game can easily become semi-exclusive and cooperative activities to save or maintain face. Interactants can use aggressive face-work and share information about their solo smartphone activity to justify why they are using

their smartphone. Video games interestingly cross over into all three types of smartphone use: smartphone cross-talk, smartphone play, and solo smartphone activity. What is a one-player game one moment can become a two-player game the next.

A diagram was made to display the relationship of level of inclusion and the four types of smartphone use (See Figure 1). A four set Venn diagram (See Figure 2) was constructed to illustrate all the possible relations between cross-talk, face-work (i.e., avoidance process, corrective process), maintaining face, and wrong face. To clarify, the cross-talk set includes Goffman's original concept of cross-talk as well as smartphone cross-talk as smartphone cross-talk is a subcategory of cross-talk. These diagrams visually represent some of the findings presented in this research.

Figure 1. Level of Inclusion Correlated with the Five Types of Smartphone Use.

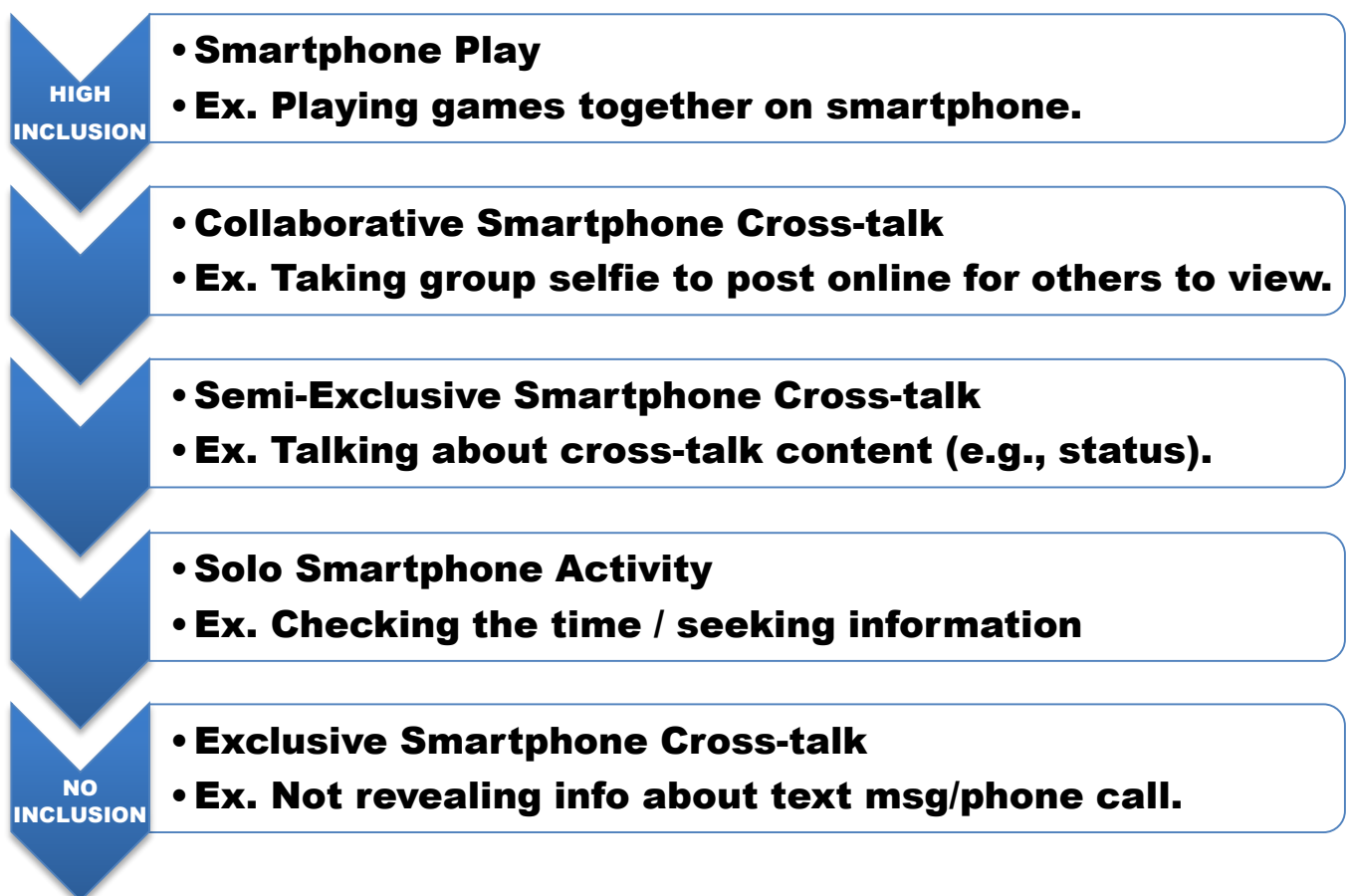
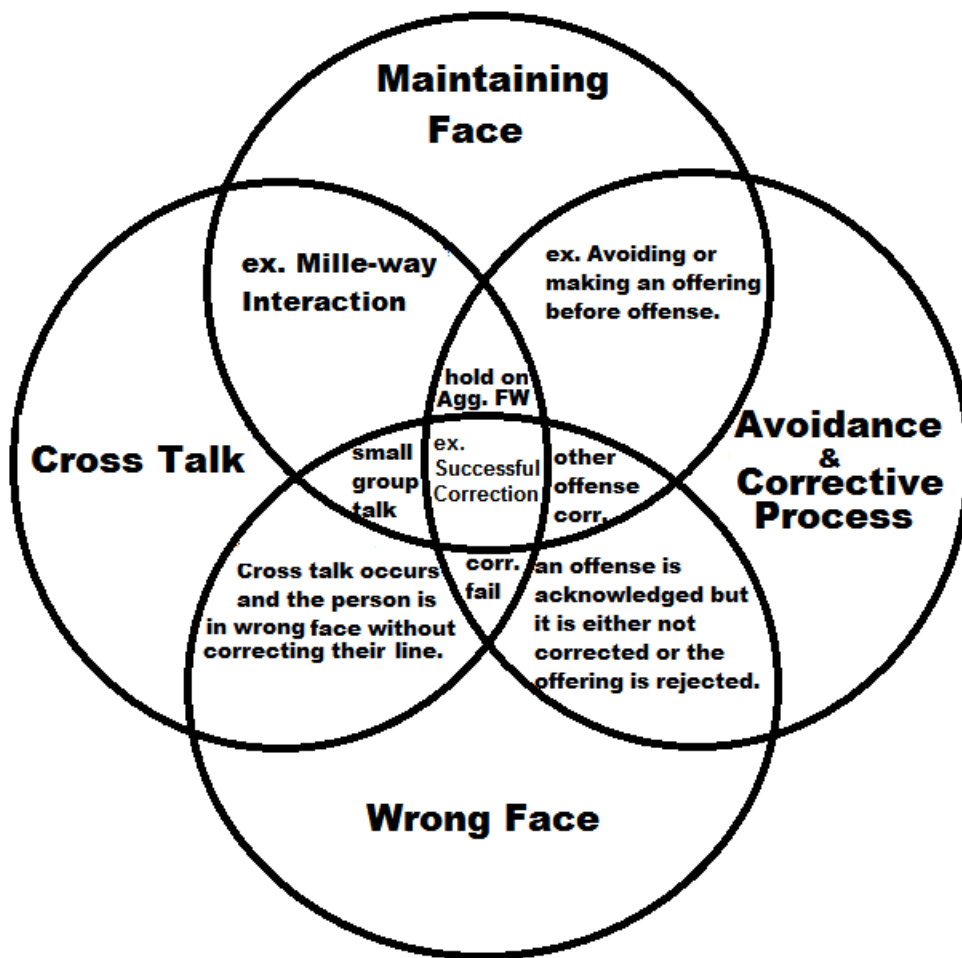


Figure 2. Venn Diagram Illustrating Possible Relations



The findings reflect that Goffman's theory and concepts are still applicable to 21st century conversation with only a few updates, all of which concern smartphone use during face-to-face encounters and cross-talk. Smartphones are an extremely consistent prop used in the presentation of self in everyday life and smartphone users still perform face-work and interaction rituals as described by Goffman. Although, the social norms applied to cross-talk during the early era of mobile phones have become more lax people continue to use the avoidance process and corrective process to maintain face. Often, the main threat to face stems from one of the With partner's lack of attention toward the other or others. In the corrective process, the threat to face is addressed by

either partner, but in the avoidance process, the threat to face is not typically turned into an incident by either partner and the interaction continues. In addition, there are situations where the regular use of a smartphone during a face-to-face interaction does not threaten any person's face or involve aggressive face-work and the ritual order is maintained.

As Goffman (1971) proposes, in face-to-face interaction where cross-talk is present people are subject to expectations from both the person on the phone (in this case it is often many people on the phone) and the person physically in their presence. This still holds true, as the person engaged in cross-talk determines how much attention is paid to whom by evaluating the social importance of who is on the phone compared to the social importance of his or her relationship partner. Often, the act of managing the expectations of one relationship can be detrimental to the other relationship yet people still use their smartphone during face-to-face encounters because social norms revolving around mobile phones have altered to reflect society's expectations.

Millennials, like many other individuals, think it is necessary for them to have a smartphone so that they can communicate with their family, friends, and coworkers in a timely manner. Since smartphones are capable of an instantaneous form of communication that can immediately satisfy the social needs of users and most smartphone owners carry their smartphones on their person for most of the day there is a golden rule effect on smartphone communication that fuels smartphone cross-talk. To be exact, smartphone users respond timely to others as they wish for them to respond timely to them. Goffman (1963) calls this a symmetrical social rule. Millennials recognize the social importance of smartphones and that current social norms now reflect this importance. The perceived social necessity of smartphones makes face-work involving

smartphone cross-talk more complicated for individual's who wish to maintain face in immediate interaction as well as during digital interactions.

Smartphones, unlike any other props widely used in face-work, offer millennials a means to partake in conversation and conversation-like activities simultaneously on multi-fronts with potentially thousands or even millions of others on social media apps and websites. Millennials find engaging in dual-front performances normal and necessary for their social life and they remain physically close to their smartphones, often keeping them in their hands, pockets, or laying on top of an object in front of them. Millennial smartphone owners find it hard to resist using their smartphone because it perceived as a necessary part of their social life. Smartphones offer users an instant portal into the acted lives of others, temporarily gratifying their desires to connect and socialize. The mere presence of a smartphone can tempt one's social being to engage in the gratifying act of multiple conversations even though he or she might already be participating in an enjoyable social occasion with others. The gratifications of social connection and entertainment attainable with smartphone apps create many opportunities for people to become distracted from the present encounter. Often all it takes is the simple vibration in one's pocket or a blinking light within one's sight to draw one into smartphone cross-talk.

The first addition to Goffman's theoretical framework that this study contributes is the concept of smartphone cross-talk, which builds on Goffman's original concept of cross-talk. Smartphone cross-talk is a form of unfocused interaction that occurs during an encounter when one member of a With partnership engages in conversation or conversation-like activity, which varies in exclusivity, with one or more persons on their smartphone who are not in the With partnership. In this case, the partner committing the smartphone cross-talk can be in wrong face and the With partner might experience social anxieties and/or think ill thoughts of their partner

because the offending partner alienated them from the conversation. Once a With partner becomes alienated by cross-talk they become a Single who is subject to the sometimes unfavorable judgments of those around. One female participant from focus group session two talks about her experience of smartphone cross-talk and alienation while out to eat with her significant other:

...if they are on the phone and I'm just sitting there awkwardly it makes me feel uncomfortable and as a significant other you should not try to make somebody feel that way.

Many participants acknowledged the symmetrical rule of focused attention during an encounter was necessary for maintaining face. Participants also found the social awkwardness that comes from becoming a Single unpleasant and often a sign that the other person was not interested in them and in turn threatened their face as well. There was not one particular way best suited to help deal with these social anxieties. Instead, the participants and those observed in the field employed multiple tactics to return the ritual order to its functioning state and to maintain face. Individuals who are alienated from the interaction can ignore the affront and turn to a defense mechanism, or they can correct their partner. Turning to a defense mechanism to relieve social anxieties does not necessarily mean that their partner has threatened their face although in some situations a threat to face and a defense mechanism are nearly simultaneous. As observed in the field, the most common defense mechanism is to use one's own smartphone to engage in the gratifying act of socializing. In these instances, smartphone owners can use text messaging to communicate with friends and social media to socialize with potentially thousands of other social media users. Alternatively, the person engaged in cross-talk can extend a line that welcomes his or her With partner to participate in the conversation with varying degrees of inclusion.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Goffman's works on face-work, encounters, and behavior in public spaces was used to examine how millennial smartphone users understand the social relations around smartphone cross-talk as well as how they negotiate these relationships in face-to-face encounters. Smartphones enable users to have multi-front interactions in which they have to maintain face with their immediate partner or partners as well as partners they communicate with digitally through smartphones. Individual's now carry the ball and chain of their life, for everyone and everything in an individual's life is somehow connected to their smartphone thus they drag the weight of those relationships, good or bad, around with them everywhere they go. Due to conflicting demands of attention from an individual's With partner and conversation partner or partners on the smartphone, smartphone cross-talk is a likely occurrence during face-to-face encounters.

Smartphone cross-talk is the newest type of cross-talk phenomenon and little is known about its social implications. Cross-talk was applied to face-to-face social settings, landline type telephones, and cell phones in past research, but little acknowledgment was given to its complexities. Smartphones have become more prominent in everyday life, thus smartphone cross-talk deserves a full examination. I found that there were three subcategories of smartphone cross-talk. Exclusive smartphone cross-talk, semi-exclusive smartphone cross-talk, and collaborative smartphone cross-talk all refer to the degree in which one with partner includes their partner or partners in their smartphone cross-talk. Exclusive smartphone cross-talk is the most disruptive and offensive form of smartphone cross-talk because it breaks the symmetrical social rule of focused attention with the exception of mille-way interactions. Mille-way interactions are face-to-face encounters where all partners sustain exclusive smartphone cross-talk simultaneously and show no signs of an incident or social anxiety. Semi-exclusive smartphone cross-talk is the

second most disruptive and offensive because smartphone users do not always approve of a semi-focused or unfocused encounter. Collaborative smartphone cross-talk disrupted and offended interactants the least as it often facilitated the encounter rather than disrupting it because the individual engaged in smartphone cross-talk directly included their partner in their communication with others. Each of the three types of smartphone cross-talk can be broken down into four categories of type of communication: phone call, text message, social media, and video. Social media was the most common type used by With partners and video the least common.

Smartphones can disrupt the symmetrical social rule of focused attention associated with encounters, but they can also add information to the conversation and entertainment for enjoyment. Unlike research conducted in the past, the facilitative factor found in this research is new and will change how scholars view smartphones in relation to face-to-face interaction. Past literature reflects the role of the cell phone in an encounter as a mere distraction that brings almost nothing positive to the encounter. Whereas smartphones can disrupt encounters similar to cell phones, they also can play an equally significant role as a prop in face-work to create positive outcomes. This new discovery is partly due to an advancement in mobile phone technology and the creation of apps. Scholars thought that Goffman's work on face-to-face interactions was a good start to help understand the societal impact of mobile phones, the breadth of his knowledge was overlooked, as his work contained in several books can be applied directly to explain this relatively new element of face-to-face interaction. Although Goffman's work on cross-talk does not address situations where cross-talk facilitated the encounter nor did he have the capability to explore how smartphone cross-talk shaped encounters, the fundamental concept of cross-talk remains applicable to everyday life. Therefore, the next step in applying Goffman's work to understand

how smartphones affect face-work is to combine his concepts to create a theory that explains why and how cross-talk occurs during encounters.

Individuals are more likely to engage in cross-talk the less their face is dependent on the evaluation of their partner, the less it is perceived to be disruptive to the face-to-face interaction's ritual order, or the more alienated they are from the social occasion. Prior to and during an encounter, partners evaluate the social context of the encounter to determine whether cross-talk is acceptable or unacceptable. Thus, if cross-talk occurs during an encounter then the participants use either the avoidance process or the corrective process to maintain face and the ritual order. If indeed a partner thinks a particular type of cross-talk can facilitate the encounter then they engage in cross-talk while including their partner to some degree as a tactic to maintain face. The more an individual includes their partner in their cross-talk then the more likely they are to maintain face in addition to experiencing the positive benefits of maintaining face. Situations where cross-talk is recognized as an incident and cannot be corrected then the With partnership as it was ceases to exist and partners exit the encounter.

There are some concerns regarding this research such as the age group of the sample population, time allotted for data collection, and researcher bias. I began this research with a bias as I am millennial who is well acquainted with internet-based technologies and owns a smartphone. This bias gave me an understanding of the lived experience of millennials with smartphones and allowed me to ask the appropriate questions and observe all the smaller details that might be overlooked by a researcher with minimal knowledge about smartphones. Past research about mobile phones and face-to-face interactions no longer seemed relevant and I never would have realized this if I did not have the knowledge acquired from being a millennial smartphone user. Another concern about my research is that I did not have enough time to conduct

more focus groups, which could have further enriched my data. I often found myself wanting to ask more questions after reading the transcripts for each session. Nonetheless, I collected enough data to the point of saturation, as I did not observe any new behaviors after three focus groups and eighty observations.

The age group of the sample population is a concern. The sample population consisted of individuals between the ages of 18 and 32 attending the University of New Orleans. Some could argue that the average college student behaves much differently with smartphones than their elders and those with professional careers. I do not think this is the case and will address this issue in future research. Millennials are not the only demographic increasingly adopting smartphone technology: they are simply the highest percentage of adopters while others are now adopting at a faster rate (Smith, 2013). This implies that maturity is not a factor in the decision to own a smartphone. I studied how and why millennials use smartphones during face-to-face encounters to describe how smartphone use affects face-to-face encounters for youths now and other demographics who adopt smartphones, and with this evidence show the future of face-to-face encounters.

The understanding of the use of smartphones in public and private face-to-face encounters assists those who wish to have effective communication with others. The findings of this study can be used for future decisions about smartphone policies pertaining to the workplace, classroom, and vehicle safety, as well as more personal decisions regarding smartphone use in the household. Since smartphones offer a wide range of apps, ranging from simple organizational tools to complex social networking platforms, business owners can use this research to decide when and where their business could benefit from allowing smartphone use in the work environment. Likewise, teachers can refer to this study to help them decide whether or not to use smartphones to

aid learning in the classroom and private tutoring. Additionally, those trying to befriend others or build rapport with clients can use collaborative smartphone cross-talk or smartphone play to facilitate face-to-face encounters. This study found that smartphone play and smartphone cross-talk could, contrary to popular belief, help people communicate with each other and create a focused and richer interaction. The implication of this finding is that future policies about smartphone use may become more complex and take into consideration the positive aspects associated with collaborative smartphone cross-talk and smartphone play.

A number of research projects should be considered for future studies in this field in order to better establish, modify, or reject the findings of this exploratory case study. One study with a large sample could explore the presentation and experience of emotions in encounters involving smartphone cross-talk and smartphone play. Goffman identified an emotional attachment to line and face, as playing a significant role in face-work as he described. With partners' experiences of shameface or positive claims to face. Several of the previous literatures examined in this thesis have not addressed this point nor has this thesis gone into depth about emotions related to positive claims to face and shameface. Identifying emotions attached to maintaining face or being in wrong face in complex situations, however, is no simple task and will require numerous in-depth interviews. Observations would be a great supplemental form of qualitative data for such a research project. The research could observe facial expressions, body language, tone of voice, blushing, eye contact, and nervous laughter as they all play a role in expressing emotion. For a study to explore the role emotions play in face-to-face interactions involving smartphones they will have to pay special attention to the thought processes of the individual in addition to their verbal and non-verbal signals. A change in tone of voice might symbolize perceived importance of the encounter. Compliments could indicate positive emotion and insults may indicate negative

emotion. Qualifiers could indicate uncertainty, passive engagement, or low emotional attachment to a topic or encounter. Naturally, the study would explore these patterns of behavior in relation to smartphone use in order to understand the relationship between them.

Research on this subject using the ethnomethodological approach and conversation analysis could provide insight to the methods and practices interactants use to make sense of their interactions during smartphone cross-talk (Garfinkel, 1967). Using conversation analysis, the researcher can explore the relationship among words or phrases, not the relationship between interactants during smartphone cross-talk. Conversation analysis can examine the methods interactants use to take turns speaking during smartphone cross-talk. For example, the researcher can analyze how each interactant adjusts toward the other's turn and the positioning of his or her own turn (Rawls, 2012). This study would enrich the contextual understanding of smartphone cross-talk strategies.

Future research projects should address the relationship between smartphones and the embodied self. One study could explore the ever-increasing necessity of mobile technologies and how this phenomenon leads mobile technologies to become smaller and more fixed to the body. This study can focus on a particular culture sharing group such as millennials, cyberpunks, or cyborg enthusiasts to gain understanding of how the self relates to technology. This study should aim to recognize patterns of incorporation of technology into self-image within history, understand society's current relationship with technology and self-image, and predict possible future relationships between mobile technologies and self-image. Smartphones appear to be another sign that technology is becoming more a part of the self and this researcher plans to explore this phenomenon in the future.

Another area of interest for future research is the construction of the self in relation to social technology. Postmodernists argue that social technology saturates and fragments the self. Gergen (1991) claims the self has been erased in postmodernity because it has been saturated "...with a multiplicity of incoherent and unrelated languages of the self (Gergen, 1991). Postmodernism further posits that signs and symbols have become separated from the everyday social interaction (e.g., corporate products sold to the masses via media). Jameson (1991) notes that in postmodernity the simple and indivisible ego-self has ended in the postmodern era and given rise to the fragmented self that has no essence and is decentered with a kind of emotional flatness or depthlessness, made up only of images. The fragmented self is characterized by a liberation of feelings and emotions, little historical awareness, knowing diverse bits of information that cannot be integrated into a meaningful whole, and the inability to organize past and future into coherent experience (Jameson, 1991). Gubrium and Holstein (1999) disagree with Gergen and argue that the postmodern condition does not erase the self; rather, it increases the amount and intensity of social situations where self construction is a primary concern or "going concern."

Theorists have been studying multiple parts of the self (e.g., situational, core) for many decades (Cooley, 1902; Mead, 1934; Goffman, 1959, 1963). Many theorists cite Goffman's work as a precursor or inspiration for the fragmented self because he largely concentrates on the situational self present in face-to-face interaction. However, Goffman did not believe only in the situational self as he recognizes in several of his works the self outside of the interaction ritual. Goffman (1959) discusses a more permanent self in his dramaturgical theory when he describes the back stage where actors let their guard down and present facts that were not shown in their front stage performance. These are but two parts of the self conceptualized by Goffman; a performed self and a non-performed self. To further cement Goffman as a modern theorist who

wrote about the situational self with a core, in *Stigma* (1963) Goffman proposes a three-fold typology of identity: the social identity, the personal identity, and the ego identity. Goffman's concept of personal identity is more in line with the core self than any of his other concepts. This research project explored smartphones and self presentation, not the construction of self or the parts of self as they relate to smartphones. Thus, future research should explore the latter relationships.

This exploratory case study provides evidence that the presentation of self in the 21st century is the same as it was over fifty years ago before postmodern hype and proposes that smartphone users have a strong concept of self and agency. Individuals can choose any information, social attributes, or props they wish to incorporate into their presentation of self. The smartphone creates many social situations, but this does not mean the smartphone user is uncontrollably absorbing anything and everything into their self from smartphone interactions. Smartphone users have agency and can make conscious decisions when face-working with smartphones. They also experience emotions attached to the self during encounters such as when they take group selfies, experience wrong face, or become offended by exclusive smartphone cross-talk. In addition, smartphone users have an aspect of self that is present in both their immediate face-work and digital face-work. It appears that smartphones may make the self more cohesive as interactants can now perform simultaneously on the face-to-face front stage while also composing their performance on their digital front stage (e.g., digital face-work on Facebook) from the back stage. The commonality of audience for these multi-stage performances often requires interactants to maintain a similar face online as they do in person. Future research addressing the debate about whether or not social technology fragments and saturates the self can benefit from this research project's findings.

It appears that smartphone technology has not changed the self but merely the lens which we see the self through. This study demonstrates that the rituals used in the presentation of self are fundamentally the same as they were over fifty years ago. Interactants use smartphones during encounters for an array of reasons. Sometimes the way the interactant uses their smartphone disrupts the ritual order and sometimes the way they use their smartphone facilitates the ritual order. The effects of smartphones on face-to-face encounters are not so black and white, as some scholars and mainstream media would have their audience believe. This study addresses one of the complexities of smartphones and face-to-face interaction in depth by examining smartphone cross-talk. There is much more to learn about how smartphones affect face-to-face interaction. Smartphone technology is gradually evolving and with each step in the evolutionary chain smartphones come to play a bigger role in our everyday lives.

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Appendix A

University Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research University of New Orleans

Campus Correspondence

Principal Investigator: D'Lane Compton
Co-Investigator: Omar Bradley
Date: November 13, 2013
Protocol Title: "Smartphones and Face-to-face Interventions: Extending Goffman to 21st Century"
IRB#: 02Nov13

The IRB has deemed that the research and procedures are compliant with the University of New Orleans and federal guidelines. The above referenced human subjects protocol has been reviewed and approved using expedited procedures (under 45 CFR 46.116(a) category (7).

Approval is only valid for one year from the approval date. Any changes to the procedures or protocols must be reviewed and approved by the IRB prior to implementation. Use the IRB number listed on this letter in all future correspondence regarding this proposal.

If an adverse, unforeseen event occurs (e.g., physical, social, or emotional harm), you are required to inform the IRB as soon as possible after the event.

Best wishes on your project!

Sincerely,



Robert D. Laird, Ph.D., Chair
UNO Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research

FREE FOOD, DRINKS, & RAFFLE PRIZES FOR JOINING OUR FOCUS GROUP STUDY!



FOCUS GROUP INFO

- **DATE & TIME:**
DEC 6th 1:00 PM
DEC 9th 4:00 PM
TBA
- **LOCATION: MILN.
HALL CONFERENCE
ROOM 183**
- **RSVP: ictechsoc
@gmail.com**
- **BENEFITS FOR YOU:
STRENGTHEN YOUR
RESUME BY GAINING
REAL EXPERIENCE AS
A PARTICIPANT IN THE
RESEARCH PROCESS.**

JOIN US TO ANSWER SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR SMARTPHONE USAGE.

We want to hear your opinions!

Participants must be between ages 18-32 and own a smartphone.

Upon completion of each focus group, participants will be entered into a raffle to win gift cards. Food and Drinks will be supplied.

Only 3 groups of 6-8 participants each will be conducted so rsvp!

RSVP: ictechsoc@gmail.com

Appendix C

Focus Group Questions

1. I would like you all to tell me about the role your smartphone plays in your everyday life?
2. Give me a description of when you would use your smartphone while having a face-to-face conversation with someone?
3. Please talk about a time during an important conversation such as at work or school when you received a phone call or text message.
4. Tell me about a situation when someone used their smartphone while they were talking one-on-one with you?
5. Describe to me how you use your smartphones while with a group of friends.
6. Talk a little bit about what you see others doing with their smartphone in a group of people.
7. Please talk to me about a time, when someone either told you directly to get off your phone or showed you in some way that you should not be on your phone.
8. Talk to me about when you don't use your smartphone while in a face-to-face interaction
9. What are the consequences, if any, of using a smartphone while in a face-to-face interaction?
10. From your perspective, talk about what, if any, etiquette should be followed with smartphones?

VITA

Brad Ictech is a technology and social interaction theorist interested in how technology affects society and the self. He was born and raised in the Greater New Orleans area most of his life. He obtained his Bachelor's degree in Sociology from Southeastern Louisiana University in 2011. He joined the University of New Orleans' sociology graduate program to earn a MA degree in pursuit of his greater goal of earning a PhD degree in Sociology. Ictech starts Louisiana State University's PhD Sociology program in Fall 2014.