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Authors
Kia-Keating, Maryam
Santacrose, Diana
Liu, Sabrina

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Photography and Social Media Use in Community-Based Participatory Research with Youth: Ethical Considerations

Maryam Kia-Keating, **Diana Santacrose**, and **Sabrina Liu**

Department of Counseling, Clinical, and School Psychology, University of California, Santa Barbara, CA, USA

Abstract

Community-based participatory researchers increasingly incorporate photography and social media into their work. Despite its relative infancy, social media has created a powerful network that allows individuals to convey messages quickly to a widespread audience. In addition to its potential benefits, the use of social media in research also carries risk, given the fast pace of exchanges, sharing of personal images and ideas in high accessibility, low privacy contexts and continually shifting options and upgrades. This article contributes to the literature examining ethical considerations for photography and social media use in community-based participatory research. We describe three key ethical dilemmas that we encountered during our participatory photography project with Latina/o youth: (a) use and content of images and risk; (b) incentives and coercion; and (c) social media activity and confidentiality. We provide our responses to these challenges, contextualized in theory and practice, and share lessons learned. We raise the question of how to contend with cultural shifts in boundaries and privacy. We propose that evaluating participant vulnerability versus potential empowerment may be more fitting than the standard approach of assessing risks and benefits. Finally, we recommend upholding the principles of participatory research by co-producing ethical practices with one's participants.

Keywords

Social media; Ethics; Community-based participatory research; Photovoice; Participatory photography; Community psychology

Introduction

Community-based participatory research (CBPR) is a collaborative approach that strives to engage and empower participants to impact social change (Israel, Eng, Schulz & Parker,

Correspondence to: Maryam Kia-Keating.

Conflicts of Interest

This research was supported by funding from the NICHD to the first author. There are no other conflicts to report.

Research Involving Human Participants

All procedures performed in studies involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional and/or national research committee and with the 1964 Helsinki declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards.

Informed Consent

Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

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2012). One way research participants can express their perspectives about social issues is through the use of visual mediums, including photographs and videos (Bergold & Thomas, 2012). Given its widespread and rising use across the globe, participants may select social media as a dissemination tool because they can share their images and messages efficiently and rapidly (Perrin, 2015). Accordingly, researchers are increasingly incorporating photography and social media into both core and ancillary aspects of their projects (Henderson, Johnson, & Auld, 2013). Thus, it is important to consider the ethical issues that may arise in this context and develop better guidelines for researchers.

"Social media" can refer to any one of the many proliferating websites and cell phone applications, including Facebook, Twitter, Google+, Snapchat, and Instagram. These applications typically enable users to create and share content (i.e., images, written material, videos), and to participate in social networking, including instant messaging, commenting, and visually indicating one's reactions through the use of icons such as hearts or emoticons (Herring & Kapidzic, 2015). As such, social media offers potential avenues for interpersonal communication, creative expression, identity building, and social influence (van Dijck, 2013). It also allows individuals to have unprecedented potential reach, an aspect that could be quite appealing for both researchers and participants.

According to recent estimates, one-third of the world's population (Chaffey, 2016), and two-thirds of individuals in the United States are active on social media (Perrin, 2015). Moreover, 90% of young adults in the United States have and use social media accounts, creating an all but inescapable network for their communication, relationships, and everyday interactions (Chaffey, 2016). With the exception of sleep, media use is how most youth spend the majority of their time (Roberts & Foehr, 2008), with teens reporting daily (92% of teens) or even almost constant (24% of teens) online use (Lenhart, 2015). Although concerns have been raised about rates and frequency of use, there are data to suggest that social media use can have psychosocial benefits. Namely, a recent review of social media use and wellbeing among youth found that social media can contribute to reduced social anxiety and increased sense of emotional support (Best, Manktelow & Taylor, 2014).

There are no notable differences in use of social media by racial and ethnic groups (Perrin, 2015), suggesting that social media has the potential to increase access to diverse populations. Thus, researchers have the potential to recruit, collect data, examine real-time variables, and use patterns from a range of demographic groups. Social media can provide a site to readily disseminate research findings, and to communicate a social action message to a wide range of targeted groups: for example, a small group within one's immediate social network, a specific community or group for whom social network sites allow greater ease of access, or even a broad national or international audience (Lunnay, Borlagdan, McNaughton & Ward, 2015).

All of these factors may have great appeal for researchers, but there are also cautions to consider, and few published studies explicitly discuss ethical issues in integrating social media into research investigations (Henderson et al., 2013). To address this gap in the literature, in this article, we present the unique, real-world ethical challenges we encountered during a CBPR study with Latina/o adolescents. Participatory photography was utilized as a

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developmentally congruent and potentially empowering method for youth participants to reflect on and share their experiences and perspectives (Kia-Keating, 2009). Because CBPR invites participants to engage in the research as equitable partners, we did not predetermine the contexts for our dissemination of images and messages. Rather, as the project progressed, social media emerged as a preferred platform for dissemination. During the project, we found ourselves grappling with how best to utilize social media, given its constant and central presence in our participants' lives. In this paper, we describe some of the ethical challenges that did not seem to be fully addressed by current ethics codes but deserved careful consideration. Accordingly, we reflect upon our own responses to these ethical dilemmas, along with a discussion that we contextualize in terms of the current literature in the field and our experiences within this specific project. Finally, we raise questions for future researchers in this rapidly expanding area.

Our Project: Addressing Violence-Related Disparities with Latina/o Youth

In 2013, funded by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, we began a CBPR project with Latina/o youth and families. The impetus for the study began in response to violent and lethal assaults involving community youth, and a cluster of suicides among Latino male gang-affiliated adolescents. The community underscored youth violence as an issue of grave concern, and early community discussions informed the foundations of the current CBPR project. The ultimate project that unfolded aimed to illuminate the Latino community's view of its own health problems related to experiences of violence, acculturative stress, discrimination, and disparities, as well as their negative effects on youth and families.

With the goal of allowing youth to fully participate in identifying the challenges and solutions for reducing disparities and violence in their community, we implemented photovoice, a participatory photography method often used in public health efforts to engage and empower vulnerable populations (Farrah, Vaughn & Wagner, 2013; Israel et al., 2012; Wang & Pies, 2008). Photovoice offers an innovative approach by providing participants with cameras, and fostering critical dialogue around community concerns (Wang, Yi, Tao & Carovano, 1998). Participatory photography programs have been historically designed as collaborative interventions with marginalized, disadvantaged groups, including youth (e.g., Killion & Wang, 2000; Wang, Cash & Powers, 2000). Such groups might otherwise end up represented as the silent subject in situations of victimization and suffering, but rarely find themselves behind the camera, gaining an opportunity to share their own vision as a photographer, artist, storyteller, and social activist. Photovoice can lead to opportunities for participants including (a) communicating with and educating others; (b) becoming productive artists and active contributors to their social worlds; (c) broadening their perspective to encompass contextual rather than solely individual concerns; and (d) facilitating the reduction of health disparities in culturally meaningful ways (Kia-Keating, 2009; Wang et al., 1998; Wilson et al., 2006).

For our study, we used photovoice as a foundation to design a curriculum that met high school requirements so that we could embed the project within a photography class. We provided 22 Latina/o youth participants with digital cameras so that they could lend their

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voices and perspectives to issues of concern in their lives. Our curriculum included photography prompts that we co-created with participants to inspire critical thinking and self-reflection. We emphasized the importance of participants' roles in building their social capital, interest in community engagement, use of imagery to impact change, and power and potential for social action (i.e., "taking photographs with a purpose"). Our staff included nine bilingual, bicultural Latina/o university students (undergraduate and graduate), three or four of whom were present each day in the classroom, serving as program facilitators and mentors to the photovoice adolescents. The project took place over a 6-month period, during which the class met daily for an hour and a half on weekdays when school was in session.

Each week, participants took photographs and prepared captions to share in small groups, keeping in mind that their central goal was to identify problem areas, potential solutions, and eventually, catalyze change in their community and school. Mentors helped to facilitate dialogues by having participants examine their photographs using the SHOWeD acronym (Catalani & Minkler, 2010; Wallerstein, 1987: What do you See here? What is really Happening here? How does this relate to Our lives? Why does this problem or this strength exist? What can we Do about this?). This process led to in-depth ongoing dialogues about the major problems faced by adolescents and their families in the Latina/o community, community challenges and strengths, and ideas for change. The youth in our study used visual and written narratives to express themselves. They were also prompted to consider how and where they could use these powerful messages to have the most social impact. Ultimately, in addition to local exhibits, our participants' images and narratives were disseminated in a video format that was shared in an open-access online website (Kia-Keating, 2014).

Ethical Challenges

Alongside our positive efforts toward social change and empowerment, we had to contend with potential risks and ethical considerations throughout the project. Our ethical dilemmas took place in a relatively novel context of participatory research efforts using visual media and an online, worldwide system for social networking and communication. For example, we grappled with typical standards for anonymity and/or confidentiality in research. Confidentiality and anonymity are similar constructs but differ in distinct ways; confidentiality refers to protecting the privacy of participants' information, and anonymity indicates that participants' identity is not tied to the information they share (for a more thorough discussion of anonymity and confidentiality see Wiles, Crow, Heath & Charles, 2006). In the case of community psychology and work for social change, anonymity may not align with the objectives of participatory action among participants, and this may inherently lead to ethical dilemmas, as it did in our study (Campbell, 2016).

Below we present some of the key challenges that we faced, and the basis for our problem-solving and responses. It is our hope that the project-specific examples and broader considerations we discuss have useful and wide-reaching application for future researchers. In our work, we turned to several standard sources for guidance, including the American Psychological Association's (APA, 2010) ethical code. We also recognized that we had to attend to the unique aspects of community research (Campbell, 2016). Therefore, in line

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with Morris' (2015) recommendations to prioritize values of community psychology alongside traditional ethical principles, we also drew from tenets of the Society for Community Research and Action (2016). Specifically, we strove to balance the tenets of empowerment, respect for diversity, improving wellbeing, and social justice, with our understanding of the vulnerability of the population, and the ethical principles and practices of the field of psychology. Many of these ethical guidelines are aspirational and broad, providing little specific guidance for novel situations brought up by photography and social media use in research. Thus, to add to the budding discourse about these issues, we share three key ethical challenges that arose in our work and how we approached our responses. It is important to note that we are using the term "response" rather than "solution," with the acknowledgment that there are various ethical responses that exist. When possible, we provide different approaches and options described in the literature.

Challenge 1: Use and Content of Images and Risk

At the outset of the process of obtaining human subjects approval, the university's internal review board (IRB) raised concerns about risks related to providing youth with cameras, such as potentially encouraging them to take photographs with risky content (e.g., photographs related to violence). Given the focus of our research study on violence prevention, we had to consider whether we would have to prohibit some content that could inadvertently place the youth in unsafe situations with potentially problematic consequences. However, if we were to fulfill our goals of equity and empowerment, it was also vital to allow youth to depict the reality of the challenges that they or their community faced without unnecessary constraint. In addition, to a certain extent we had limited control over the photographs that youth took (which were often taken on their personal camera phones, rather than on the digital cameras that we had provided) and how they shared them (i.e., on their own personal social network accounts). Assessing the implications of participants' photographic content and the potential consequences of their posting images online proved complex.

Response—Given that the youth in our study all had personal cell phones with cameras, it is important to acknowledge that they already had constant access to a form of digital picture-taking and, as such, had the freedom to be taking photographs of any content, regardless of our study. Nonetheless, we wanted to encourage safe choices, and took steps to reduce risk related to photograph content, particularly that which was connected to our study. First, we addressed this issue by providing participants with training on ethical practices in participatory photography. Trainings are a common component of participatory photography projects (Ponic & Jategaonkar, 2012; Wang & Redwood-Jones, 2001). Therefore, following Wang's (2006) recommendations, participants received an overview of photovoice during initial meetings. Emphasis was placed on the responsibilities of the role of photographer, safety issues, and how to minimize potential risks. We also discussed ways to maintain personal safety in terms of location and context of photographs. Specifically, we covered the following material: (a) the types of photographs that participants should avoid, including active domestic, school, or community violence, illegal activities, photographs of a person who does not want to be photographed, and any other image that could cause undue harm (at minimum, as thoughtfully considered by the photographer); (b) the procedures they

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should follow when taking photographs of others, including obtaining signed permission; (c) ethical considerations and respect for the privacy of others; (d) maintaining their own personal safety and wellbeing while taking photographs, including avoiding risky contexts and situations; and (e) understanding the power and authority that comes with taking photographs (Wang & Redwood-Jones, 2001). Prior to receiving their cameras, participants signed a written agreement that they would obtain consent of all individuals represented in their photographs and would not intrude on an individual's personal space, disclose embarrassing facts without permission, or place individuals in false light with photographs (e.g., release and consent forms, see Appendix I in Shimshock, 2008). Participants were also asked to respect the confidentiality of stories that others might disclose and, when needed, to protect their own confidentiality. We suggested alternatives such as talking about the experience of a "friend" instead of oneself, or bringing up an issue more generally.

Some of the formal requirements of ethical practices, such as obtaining written permission before taking a photograph, were not always embraced by youth participants who expressed that informal consent was "good enough" and that they preferred a more comfortable, "no big deal" approach for subjects of their photographs who "didn't care" or "said it's okay." The youth participants highlighted that a more informal cultural norm existed among their adolescent peers, as they frequently took pictures of each other, and were "used to" a high volume of images on multiple devices without formal consent. In response to these viewpoints, researchers engaged participants in ongoing dialogues about ethics throughout the project on topics such as safety, confidentiality, and responsibility in the role of photographer. Ultimately, because of their discomfort and reluctance to use written permissions, participants focused a majority of their photographs on imagery that served metaphorical or symbolic purposes, or depicted unidentifiable figures (e.g., someone in shadow, or photographing an individual from behind), to reduce risks and keep from having to pursue written permission.

Managing risk and participant vulnerability throughout the project became increasingly complicated as participants began to discuss major stressors and potentially traumatic experiences, including abuse and witnessing violence in the past. Some students wanted to share factors related to their resilience, as well as resources and responses that were helpful or unhelpful to their recovery. At other times, more current concerns about safety were raised. For example, a student discussed her sister's involvement as the driver of a "getaway car" in a violent assault: "I guess [my sister] got blamed for it, because she didn't tell on him, but people don't like her now so, that also has to do with my safety. I can't go [to the other high school] because of the [gang]. Since they can't find her, they'll look for me."

It is possible that disclosures such as these over social media can be empowering for participants, as it allows them to share their realities and garner powerful empathic responses and social support (Best et al., 2014). However, it can also make them vulnerable to harm, or encourage the idealization of violence, such as in the recent trend of "internet banging," which refers to gang members using social media to share details about fights, crime, or to threaten others (Patton, Eschmann & Butler, 2013). Therefore, we grappled with the question of how best to minimize participants' vulnerability while still empowering their voices. As described earlier, we found that one of the best approaches involved cultivating

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the use of metaphors and symbolism in creative expression. In other words, powerful images can be produced without necessitating the depiction of anything risky or identifying a specific person. As previously mentioned, our participants collaborated with one another to simulate representational photographs. For example, one participant depicted struggles with domestic violence and alcoholism in her environment through a photograph of empty cans and a shadow of a peer making a fist. Other youth chose to be more explicit in their photographs, but stopped short of depicting someone actively breaking the law, such as in images of youth with spray paint bottles and graffiti (i.e., the implication was clear, but no one was engaged in illegal activity in the actual photograph). As researchers, we continued to have dialogues with the participants about image content. While acknowledging that they wanted to depict the realities of their lives, we reminded participants to proceed with caution and include time for thoughtful reflection (which often included consultation with one's peers, mentors on the research team, and photography teacher) about the purpose of the images and their potential risks.

Challenge 2: Incentives and Coercion

In any research study, it is always critical to attend to the potential for coercion. At the outset of our project, the university internal review board (IRB) held concerns about the potential for coercion if we included a provision of $25 gift cards to youth participants as an incentive for participating in the research interviews. Additionally, we recognized that the goal of inspiring the participants toward social action needed to be balanced carefully with ensuring that we did not pressure participants to do or share something about which they were personally unwilling, uncomfortable, or uncertain.

Response—Some researchers have previously used incentives with youth participants in photovoice projects. For example, in one study, Latina/o teens were recruited from an afterschool prevention program that partnered with a vocational technical high school (Hannay, Dudley, Milan & Leibovitz, 2013). The teen participants received $1,000 from a job training agency for their 8-week involvement, which included six to eight 2-hour sessions of photovoice; they also received an additional $10 gift card from the researchers for their participation in a 90-minute focus group. Another project, provided 25 Latina/o youth participants with a $20 gift card for each of the twelve 2-hour photovoice sessions they attended, for a total of up to $240 (Madrigal et al., 2014). Despite these precedents, we ultimately chose not to have any financial incentive for participation in our project to reduce the possibility of coercion. Notably, our photovoice program was already embedded in the context of a high school class within which participants were getting graded and receiving course credit. Since these aspects could also be considered coercive, we assured all students in the class that their decision to continue or cease participation in the project once it began would have no consequence or impact on their grade in the class.

In addition to financial incentives and course credit, the use of social media can also be potentially coercive. For instance, showcasing one participant gaining "followers" or "likes" on social media and garnering additional praise for their dissemination efforts might unintentionally pressure other participants to engage in self-disclosures through social media "posts" in a broader and unmonitored web environment. In our study, students' work was

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exhibited around the community and/or featured in a video that was openly accessible online (Kia-Keating, 2014). Other than the video, which was disseminated at the end of the project (after photovoice sessions were complete), we did not formally use or expect participants to use social media. Had we regularly posted photographs on a social media site, such as Instagram, throughout the sessions, we may have created social pressure for the youth to participate. Because of the rapid pace of online sharing, it is possible to quickly expand the exposure of participants' stories beyond where each of them is individually prepared. Some of our participants did choose to share their photographs when they "posted" them on their personal social media accounts, often with a relevant caption from their photovoice work, but this action remained an individual choice. This issue is important to consider for other studies that incorporate social media use in their projects from the outset. In our case, youth participants retained full control over their online identities and what they shared during the project term; moreover, their personal social media use was not negotiated within the context of the study.

Challenge 3. Social Media Activity and Confidentiality

The majority of youth in our project had active Instagram accounts prior to participating in our project, and used it as their preferred method of sharing photos with friends, families, acquaintances, and sometimes, strangers who "followed" their accounts. Participants typically brought their mobile phones to school, and in the context of our photovoice program, frequently used their devices to share their Instagram photographs with classmates, mentors, and their teacher. These online activities posed challenges to preserve participant confidentiality, since participants had the freedom to share their photographs to whatever extent they chose on their own personal devices and social media accounts. Since social media accounts were unrelated to our project, account settings varied in the extent to which the content participants posted was "private" or "public."

Response—Some researchers have already presented thoughtful examinations of the competing values existing across ethical principles such as autonomy, beneficence, and justice in the context of CBPR research with youth (Chabot, Shoveller, Spencer & Johnson, 2012). We found ourselves attempting to balance these ideals as participants expressed eagerness to share their photographs publicly, particularly on social media. Thus, we began to reconsider the concept of privacy. One of the tenets of participatory research involves reducing power inequities through co-production of knowledge, and providing participants with true agency in that process: for example, allowing for their own meaning, terminology, constructs, and definitions to take precedence in the research process (van der Riet & Boettiger, 2009). Correspondingly, we strove to better understand and uphold the ways in which our participants interpreted and described privacy, rather than the ways defined by traditions in the scientific field, which most often err on the side of anonymity. For example, when opportunities arose to exhibit their work at community meetings and events, many participants wanted their names displayed with their photographs. Thus, the strict maintenance of confidentiality, often assumed as the gold standard by human subjects committees, was ultimately at odds with honoring and empowering the youth participants.

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Similar to the perspectives that we encountered in our study, research suggests that in the United States, views of privacy, particularly on social media, appear to be shifting among youth (Madden et al., 2013). Madden et al.'s (2013) survey of 802 youth between the ages of 12 and 17 years found that only 60% of teens keep their online profiles private (i.e., so that others who are not connected as "friends" on the site cannot access much or all their information). The vast majority of participants reported having a range of personal information in their profiles: 91% of respondents indicated they had a photo of themselves on their profile, 71% identified their school name, 71% listed the name of the city or town where they lived, 53% shared their email address, and 20% included their cell phone number. Finally, on average, participants were connected to about 300 "friends" on their Facebook accounts. For 33% of participants, these "friends" included people who they had never actually met in person (Madden et al., 2013). The growth of social media may be engendering shifting views about "privacy"; thus, researchers must attend to and correspondingly renegotiate what it means to be ethical in this context. A possible caution is that youth may misperceive their relative privacy related to online sharing. Specifically, communicating through an electronic medium can evoke a greater sense of anonymity; thus, users are sometimes more unrestrained and express strong beliefs more readily online (Kahn, Spencer & Glaser, 2013). One participant highlighted the issue of cyberbullying in his photographs, and discussed its prevalence. Notably, this participant and others viewed online anonymity as dangerous, rather than protective. In their view and experience, anonymity could actually lead to worse outcomes, given that digital worlds make it is easier for predators to create false or hidden identities for bullying, harassment, or "catfishing" (McCarthy, 2016).

In our project, we recognized that rigidly restricting the youth's use of social media and decisions about "sharing" on personal sites would be at odds with supporting their agency and empowerment. After weighing ethical principles alongside participant preferences, we came to the conclusion that insisting on anonymity would markedly reduce participant autonomy, and both of these concepts are valued in ethical practice (Giordano, O'Reilly, Taylor & Dogra, 2007). Thus, we did not interfere with participant-led decisions about sharing their work within their own personal social media sites.

In project-initiated dissemination, we reconciled this dilemma by sharing participants' work widely while also using protections to conceal their identities. When photographs were exhibited (either around the community or in the open-access online video), we separately paired one participant's photograph with another participant's narrative. Photographs were often more metaphorical and less explicit than a participant's direct quotes about trauma and violence exposure. Peers in the class were often familiar with each other's photographs but not necessarily with each other's traumatic histories. In addition, sometimes individuals chose to share their photographs widely on their own using social media. Thus, placing images and words together from two different participants reduced the chance that anyone's private disclosure of a past traumatic event could be tied back to a specific individual. Our approach was carefully weighed and participants grappled with us about best practice. Some participants initially expressed a desire for more authentic representation of their photographs and narratives so that their names would be clearly attached to their work. However, dialogue between participants about the potential implications of disclosing one's

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identity and the advantages and disadvantages of a relative level of anonymity (none of which could truly be guaranteed) helped them to reach consensus. Together, researchers and participants decided that developing a collective voice would best emphasize the commonalities across experiences, and provide the greatest protection to individual participants who desired greater privacy.

It is important to note that nationally, research (including photovoice) has begun to shift from the presumption that protecting anonymity is universally a best practice. Some researchers embrace the values and benefits of recognition more fully, and/or the notion that participants should be empowered to make their own choices regarding anonymity. For example, Saunders, Kitzinger and Kitzinger (2015) grappled with confidentiality and social media in their qualitative study of family members of people with brain injury. In their work, they provided an advance warning by explaining to participants that if they themselves chose to “go public” with their own stories through various media outlets that confidentiality could no longer be guaranteed because of the inherent challenges in disguising narratives while still maintaining the integrity of the data. They engaged their participants in a discussion about the possibility that there could be some crossover in shared information in the “private” research setting and the publicly accessed one.

Some researchers have more directly included names of participants in their publications and dissemination outlets. For example, in their appendix and acknowledgments, Hannay et al. (2013) provided photographs and quotes by adolescent participants alongside their first and last names. However, the focus of the images and narratives were of vacant buildings and neighborhood decay, as opposed to more sensitive disclosures. Thus, researchers may find it useful to evaluate the potential for empowerment, as well as the risks and benefits of identifying participants (or rather, allowing participants to identify themselves) on a continuum dependent on various vulnerability factors. Certainly, developmental maturity of participants, as well as image and narrative content, is important consideration in cases when participants wish to publically identify themselves.

Discussion

Our project illustrates some advantageous ways in which CBPR research can involve social media. Perhaps due to all the advantages described, many researchers have been deliberately incorporating social media into their investigations in recent years (Henderson et al., 2013). The APA ethics code (American Psychological Association, 2010) provides relevant guidelines, but some issues that are likely to arise are not adequately covered (Lannin & Scott, 2013). This article presents some of the nuanced ethical questions to consider within the context of participatory research in an increasingly digital world with nonstop, global access to social media and information sharing online. We summarize some key lessons in Table 1.

Similar to other studies, we found that using an online dissemination site (i.e., YouTube) to share our video had no financial cost, made it easy to deliver, and allowed ideal flexibility in terms of creating open access with high convenience for the viewer (Amstadter, Broman-Fulks, Zinzow, Ruggiero & Cercone, 2009; Hintz, Frazier & Meredith, 2015). We were able

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to share the video at local meetings and national conferences, and had the ability to send the link to others who could watch it on their own time. Some of our community partners also shared the video on their own because they had full access to it. Thus, our key stakeholders have continually utilized the video in their activities, such as in staff or teacher trainings. The video was also empowering for participants, who expressed pride in having an online video to share.

Although we drew from the aspirational elements of existing ethical guidelines (e.g., American Psychological Association, 2010; Society for Community Research and Action, 2016), we faced situations that were not always readily or adequately addressed by current ethical principles. In designing and carrying out our CBPR project, one lesson learned was that researchers need to consider the key question of whether taking the most "protected" route is at odds with the full benefits and intention of participatory research. Balancing the ethical principles and practices of psychology with the values of community psychology requires unique considerations. We chose to place emphasis on participants' preferences, support their voices, and encourage their cultural and individual expression. Certainly, more research and scholarly dialogues about the balance between traditional APA ethics and community psychology principles, such as that of participant empowerment, is warranted (Morris, 2015).

Social media is a particularly valuable tool when working with youth, given that 92% of teenagers use the Internet daily, and three out of every four teenagers use social media (Lenhart, 2015). In our study, it became clear that social media was a central point of reference and communication among our participants. They naturally turned to their social media accounts to post, share, reflect, and connect with others throughout the project. Thus, social media can provide an outlet for CBPR participants to express their voices, create and recreate their identities, challenge norms, transform culture (Bergold & Thomas, 2012; van Dijck, 2013; Nind, Wiles, Bengry-Howell & Crow, 2013), and foster their intimacy and identity development (Michikyan & Suarez-Orozco, 2016). One major lesson learned in our project was that research studies involving youth would be remiss not to capitalize on social media, since it is now a central location for their communication and interpersonal relationships. Thus, we recommend that social media use within a CBPR project should primarily be led by participants. We also encourage future researchers to plan ahead for incorporating social media in their projects, and to be thoughtful about major, and complex, issues such as privacy, social media connections (i.e., "friending"), and sharing.

Due to its widespread use and networking features (i.e., posting on walls or in groups, creating ads, sending messages), social media also has great potential for participant recruitment, improved access and communication with participants, and dissemination of results (Korda & Itani, 2011). For example, Lunnay et al. (2015) incorporated social media in a photo elicitation research project examining social influences of alcohol use among underage females in Australia. They used Facebook as their primary means of communication with research participants and found it extremely helpful in facilitating engagement, retention, and the sharing of data. Participants also uploaded photographs to Facebook, but these were only accessible to the research team. In our study, participants expressed a burgeoning interest in creating social media connections with project staff,

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which could be well served by a thoughtful plan at the outset of our, or any, project. Importantly, not all of the potential drawbacks or opportunities that could come from these online interactions can be known at the outset of a project. Thus, one of our lessons learned was that social media use and connections, both within and outside the research team, necessitate early planning (e.g., so that the potential risks and benefits can be clearly detailed in an informed consent), as well as ongoing dialogue and negotiation throughout the course of a project.

The American Counseling Association (ACA) code of ethics suggests that the risks and benefits of social media, the ways in which social media will be used, and the privacy of personal accounts without specific permission should be addressed in consent forms (American Counseling Association, 2014). Some researchers go so far as to suggest that participants should receive and sign both a traditional consent form and a distinct social media consent form (Lunnay et al., 2015). However, our own experience of consent, permission, and release forms was that our youth participants felt generally overloaded with these written and formal procedures, and often experienced them as unnecessary or uncomfortable. For example, when it came to permissions, it is possible that many of our participants' choices about images were influenced by what would or would not require a signed permission form. In conclusion, one of our lessons learned was that engaging in a continual dialogue about risks and benefits in photography and social media use was necessary to account for unique and multi-faceted situations that are difficult to predict. Additionally, this ongoing discussion allowed for much more nuanced and individualized ethical practice than a single consent at the outset of the project.

Given the proliferation of social media use across the globe, it is necessary for researchers to adapt to an increasingly digital world where identity and information are progressively transparent (van Dijck, 2013). In doing so, they may need to draw from "small world ethics" (i.e., informed by rural psychology), in terms of the "small world" environment that the Internet represents (Lannin & Scott, 2013). Within this ethical framework, psychologists operate at all times with a heightened awareness of boundary violations. Lannin and Scott recommend avoiding multiple relationships when possible but, when it is unavoidable, to use decision-making models developed for ethical decision-making around dual relationships (e.g., Younggren & Gottlieb, 2004). Finally, they stress the importance of developing technological competence to fully understand one's options, and the broader implications of research incorporating any online aspects.

As the popularity of participatory approaches in research and social media grows, new ethical dilemmas will continue to arise. It is important to note that social media has created a digital culture with shifting ideas about boundaries, and what is considered private versus public (van Dijck, 2013). These cultural shifts were apparent in our participants' questions about the rationale behind protecting their identities. One way researchers can approach these kinds of situations is by engaging in continual assessment, not just of risks and benefits, but also by specifically taking time to weigh the ratio between participant vulnerability and potential empowerment. As participatory researchers continue to espouse the equitable production of knowledge—diminishing power differentials and valuing the expertise of vulnerable communities in solving their own problems—social media can play

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an influential role. The co-production of ethical practices may be the best strategy to address continually changing needs and maximize possibilities in social media use within the context of participatory research efforts.

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Highlights

- Ethical guidelines are needed for participatory research, photography, and social media with youth.
- Social media and images not only pose risks, but also opportunities, for empowering youth in research.
- Researchers need to adapt to the digital world where boundaries of private versus public are shifting.
- Best ethical practice weighs the ratio between vulnerability versus potential empowerment.
- Engage in continuous dialogue and negotiation to co-produce ethical practice with youth participants.

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Table 1

Lessons learned for future CBPR researchers using photography and social media

1	Ask a key question: Is the most "protected" route in line with or at odds with the objectives, intention, and potential benefits of your participatory research?
2	Attend to whether your participants use social media, or any digital space, as a location for their communication and interpersonal relationships. Capitalize on the benefits of this space, and learn carefully about the elements of this particular online medium, keeping in mind potential risks.
3	Plan early for social media use and social media connections, both outside the research team, as well as within it. Detail the potential risks and benefits in your informed consent.
4	Co-produce ethical practice with your participants. Engage in continuous dialogue and negotiation of ethical practice throughout the course of your project, as specific and nuanced issues arise.
5	Evaluate participant vulnerability versus potential empowerment when making a final determination about ethical practice.