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***Mobile Phones as Autobiography
Young Women, Delinquency and Self-hood***

This paper explores how girls and young women (aged 15-20 years) develop a sense of self through their use of mobile phone technology and how this relates to their other forms of communication: social, verbal, internet-based. It will consider how their use of their phones intersects with the world and other realities – for example that of family, friends, school, study, work, other places / people. In particular how they use their phone as part of their creation of ‘public’ and ‘private’ memory and reality; for example in the posting of images to web-based platforms such as Facebook, the collection of ‘private’ images and the posting of ‘public’ ones, the use of text and other forms of verbal communication and the use of passwords and other features on their phones to protect privacy.

The research explores this creation of self with two samples of young women; those who attend London South Bank University (one of the most diverse university communities in the UK) and a sample of girls who have experience of the Youth Justice System. The research and paper will consider how the young women portray themselves and others and if the effect of delinquent behaviour can be observed as part of this process; so for example do girls and young women record acts of delinquency and how is that mediated by their presentation of self/understanding of self?

The paper will present the findings in the context of the current research in this area, which is small but growing and which indicates the relevance of a gendered approach. Further, it is innovative in its consideration of delinquency as a factor in young women’s concept of self with regard to their use of mobile phones and other web-based platforms.

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