Abstract – The Experience of New Social Media

Communication with friends and family around the world is something that American expats in Prague have much experience with. Throughout this study, the author has attempted to relate in-depth user experiences with social media to both new media and historical sociology concepts, in order to better understand how social media is used and understood. The phenomenological research conducted focuses on varied user experiences of four Americans expats currently living in Prague, Czech Republic. The experiences explored begin with the respondents’ adolescent experiences with social media and the internet, and continue through their current age as young adults. The sources used to interpret and understand these user experiences range from Erving Goffman and Pierre Bourdieu, to Marshall McLuhan and Karl Marx. The author’s goal in the study was to test how both historical and new media theories hold true to concrete user experiences with social media and the internet.

Keywords: user experience, media, technology, phenomenological research, social media, communication