

DIGITAL SELF-HARM

ABOUT

Self-harm is the infliction of pain or injury onto oneself. Historically these behaviors have been relegated to the fringes of communities. Technology now enables new ways to foster and encourage these dangerous activities. The HCI field possesses few examples of scholarship focused on self-harm. This research focuses on characterizing the presentations of non-suicidal self-harm behaviors within social computing platforms.

Building on these characterizations, we can begin to look at diagnostic tools, clinical practice, and tools to better understand how we can start connecting online activities related to one's mental illness to the physical presentation, detection, and treatment related to their disease. In this research, we have characterized online activities, distilling trends of disordered activities across various social media platforms and then validated these activities with patients and providers. Additionally, we have uncovered biases within this work and explored the impact of those within the research.



Source: <https://www.vice.com/en/article/1>

TEAM MEMBERS & PUBLICATIONS

Team Members

Jessica Pater, PhD
Parkview Health

Brooke Farrington, MSW, LCSW, CEDS-S
Farrington Specialty Counseling

Tammy Toscos, PhD
Parkview Health

Fayika Farhat Nova
Marquette University

Connie Kerrigan, BSN, RN, MBA
Parkview Health

Elizabeth D. Mynatt
Georgia Tech

Alycia Brown, MD
Parkview Health

Amanda Coupe
Parkview Health

Lauren Reining, MS
Parkview Health

Publications

Pater, J.A, Farrington, B., Brown, A., Reining, L.E., Toscos, T., and Mynatt, E.D. (2019). **Exploring Indicators of Digital Self-Harm with Eating Disorder Patients: A Case Study**. Proc. ACM Hum.-Comput. Interact. 3, CSCW, Article 84 (November 2019), 26 pages. [\[pdf\]](#)

Pater, J.A., Reining, L.E., Miller, A.D., Toscos, T., and Mynatt, E.D. (2019). **“Notjustgirls”: Exploring Male-related Eating Disordered Content across Social Media Platforms**. In Proceedings of the 2019 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI '19). Association for Computing Machinery, New York, NY, USA, Paper 651, 1–13. [\[pdf\]](#)

Pater, J.A., Mynatt, E.D. (2019). **Understanding Cultural and Gender Differences of Eating Disordered Behaviors on Social Media**. Proceedings of the 26th AED International Conference on Eating Disorders (ICED). New York, NY.

Pater, J.A. and Mynatt, E.D. (2019). **Best Practices for Qualitative Data collection with a Vulnerable Patient Population. Presented at the Qualitative Research Methods for CSCW: Challenges and Opportunities**. ACM Computer Supported and Cooperative Work and Social Computing Conference. Austin, TX [\[pdf\]](#)

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Pater, J, and Fiesler, C. (2018). **Does the Punishment fit the “crime”? Online harassment policies and the case of self-harm**. Workshop paper: Understanding Bad Actors, ACM CHI Conference 2018. Montreal, Canada. [\[pdf\]](#)

PUBLICATIONS CONT...

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Pater, J., & Mynatt, E. (2017). **Defining Digital Self-Harm**. In *Proceedings of the 2017 ACM Conference on Computer Supported Cooperative Work and Social Computing* (pp. 1501-1513). ACM. [\[pdf\]](#)

Pater, Jessica A., Oliver L. Haimson, Nazanin Andalibi, and Elizabeth D. Mynatt. (2016). **"Hunger Hurts but Starving Works": Characterizing the presentation of eating disorders online**. In *Proceedings of the 19th ACM Conference on Computer-Supported Cooperative Work & Social Computing*, pp. 1185-1200. ACM, 2016. [\[pdf\]](#).

Chancellor, S., Pater, J. A., Clear, T. A., Gilbert, E., & De Choudhury, M. (2016). **#thyghgapp: Instagram Content Moderation and Lexical Variation in Pro-Eating Disorder Communities**. In *Proceedings of the 19th ACM Conference on Computer-Supported Cooperative Work & Social Computing* (pp. 1199-1211). ACM. [\[pdf\]](#)

Press

[Why digital self-harm is hidden in plain sight](#)

[We can't afford to be in the dark about digital self-harm](#)

[How pro-eating disorder posts evade filters on social media](#)

[Pro-eating disorder communities modify hashtag terms to perpetuate the movement](#)

[Instagram's banning of pro-anorexia content may have made the problem worse](#)

[What happened when Instagram banned pro-anorexia words](#)