# Online aggression and current youth

Dr. Hana Macháčková

- Seemingly ubiquitous
- Everyday experience? Discussions: increased hostility, prejudices, intolerance, aggressivity...

HATE JIII HATE

JIIII HATE

• Without boundaries?





- In the form of direct interpersonal attacks
  - E.g. discussions on SNS
- In the form of shared information and materials
  - On a specific websites
- Often both
  - E.g., comments below the articles

#### Aggression

Broad and complex term

 Aggression is...."any form of behavior directed toward the goal of harming or injuring another living being who is motivated to avoid such treatment" (Baron & Richardson, 2004, p.7)

It can take many forms:

- Direct/nondirect
- Verbal/physical/sexual....
- Other-oriented/self-oriented
- Interpersonal/intergoup
- Etc.

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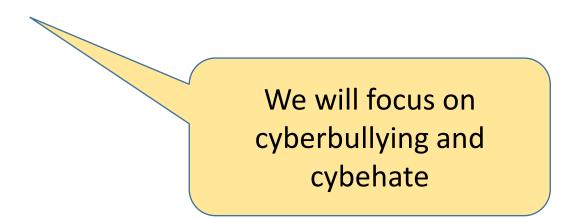
- Direct/nondirect
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Need to specify type of aggression we are talking about

Online / offline

- Various types
  - Mirroring offline ones
  - Cyberbullying, online harassment, cyberhate, cybercrime, cyberterrorism...

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- Various types
  - Mirroring offline ones?
  - Cyberbullying, online harassment, cyberhate, cybercrime, cyberterrorism...
- Interconnection with offline life
  - Extension, augmentation, blending...
- Cyberspace: Important aspect of everyday life
  - "virtual" but "real"
- Cyberspace: specific social environment

#### Differences from offline environment(s)

- Computer-mediated communication (CMC)
  - Text, visuality, hypertexts
  - A/synchronic communication
  - Absence of many cues
    - Currently, more rich (emoticons, audio-visual cues etc.)
    - "say it with gif", memes



#### Differences from offline environment(s)

Control of self-expressions

- Asynchronous communication
- Visuals (graphs), hyperlinks
- No others clues (gestures, posture, voice, speach)
  - The lack of cues as a source of misunderstandings
  - BUT, they may pose a barrier in communication offline
- Distance, anonymity, invisibility....
- Storing, sharing, spreading
  - Materials and information
- 24/7 accessibility
  - countries with high internet penetration
  - Digital divide

#### Online disinhibition effect (Suler, 2004)

- Anonymity, invisibility, asynchronicity, solipstic introjection, dissociative imagination, minimization of status and authority
- Toxic and benign
  - hostillity x self-disclosure and support
- Developed before web2.0
- Anonymity???



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Psychological vs. informatial

- Developed before web2.0
- Anonymity??? Still applicable



- Cyberbullying: do you know the term?
- Highly medialized
- Contrast with empirical evidence









- Cyberbullying: do you know the term?
- Highly medialized
- Contrast with empirical evidence

Kowalski et al. (2014): 10% - 40% Also 3% - 70% Table 18: Ways in which children have been bullied in past 12 months, by age

	Age				
%	9-10	11-12	13-14	15-16	All
In person face-to- face	13	13	12	15	13
On the internet	3	5	6	8	6
By mobile phone calls, texts or image/video texts	1	2	3	6	3
Has been bullied at all, online or offline	17	19	18	21	19

Definition of school bullying (Olweus, 1991) – criteria of

- 1) Intentional, causing harm
- 2) Repetitive
- 3) Power imbalance

Also many forms:

- Overt/covert
- Relational/Physical/Social
- Physical/verbal attacks, degradation/humiliation, blackmailing, destroying things, social exclusion, ignoring...

Cyberbullying: intentional and aggressive act carried out through electronic media, which may be repetitive in nature (Nocentini et al., 2010; Tokunaga, 2010)

What are the forms here?

- Verbal attacks, insults, threats, gossips...
- Spreading of personal and sensitive information
  - Without consent
- Identity theft, mascarade
- Social exclusion, ostracism
- Publishing of harmful audiovisual material (changed)
- Happy slapping

•

We are talking about cyberbullying if the aggressive attacks :

#### are conducted via internet or mobile phones

- are intentionally harmful (conducted by individual or group)
  - and are harmful for victim
- are repeated (however....)
- there is power imbalance the victims can't easily defend themselves

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- there is power imbalance themselves

victims can't easily defend

Harm is not always present! Difficulties of harm assessment

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Repetition: problematic online *"once published, always online"* Important in messaging (email, phones...)

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Digital skills? Always online Aggressors' anonymity (not so common)

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- are intentionally harmful (conducted by individual or group)
  - and are harmful for victim
- are repeated (however....)
- there is power imbalance the victims can't easily defend themselves

If these criteria are not fullfilled: online aggression/harassment

"New bottle, old wine"?

What is "new"?

No time/space limits – no escape

Distance – the victim does not have to be present (adding comments, likes, spreading of information....)

Wide audience - potential

Spreading and sharing – easy and fast, unlimited

• No control over the content

Can be "hidden" – out of control of adults

"New bottle, old wine"?

What is "new"?

Victims – offline often vulnerable In cyberbullying: potential for new vulnerability Remember "diminishing of authority", anonymity?

More often: frequent internet users, users of webcams and IM

Cyberbullying: detrimental effect on victims

• Similar to offline bullying

Including:

- Internalization and externalizing behaviors
- Emotional problems (depression, anxiety, suicidal thougths)
- Social problems
- Lower self-esteem
- Helplessness
- Academic problems
- Etc.

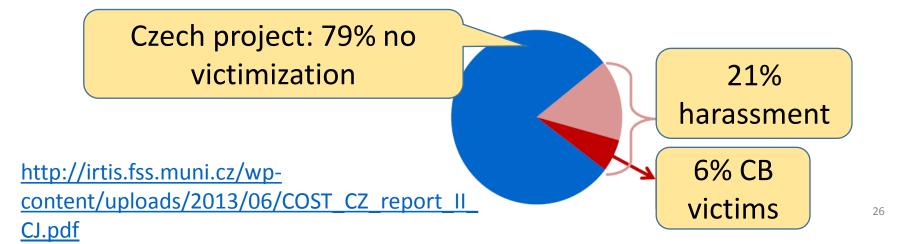
The impact depends on the severity of the attacks

- importance to distinguish cyberbullying and harassment!

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Differences in prevalences and impact Cyberbullying: **less common, but more severe** 



The impact depends on the severity of the attacks

- importance to distinguish cyberbullying and harassment!

Could be more harmful then offline

• Especially cases of public forms, and especially including audiovisual materials (Sticca & Perren, 2013)

Depends on the interconnection with offline bullying

- usually connected ("double whammies")

Also depends on coping with cyberbullying

Coping with cyberbullying Many different strategies Emotion/problem focused Mal/adaptive?

Similar to offline responses

new – "technological coping"

Question of effectiveneess in coping with online attacks

	 Victir	ns of	
	online		
	harassment		
	%	n	Chi
Technological coping			
I deleted the person from my contacts.	66%	173	2.71
I changed my settings so that the person could not contact	59%	161	0.88
me anymore (e.g. blocking the person, filtering).			
I changed my phone no./email/profile/nickname.	18%	49	12.62**
I searched for advice on the internet.	7%	20	20.85**
I deleted my profile on the web pages where this happened.	14%	34	2.20
I reported this to the administrator.	21%	55	2.07
Reframing	04.0/		
I thought to myself that the person was pitiful and stupid.	91%	263	1.14
I thought to myself that whoever is doing this to me is not worth my time.	78%	218	0.83
I thought to myself that something like that could not hurt			
me.	46%	126	13.16**
I thought to myself that it was actually nothing serious.	41%	111	37.58**
Ignoring			
I decided to ignore it.	65%	189	1.14
I didn't pay attention to it.	44%	108	17.28**
Dissociation			
I thought to myself that if something similar were to happen			
in real life, it would be much worse.	56%	144	0.02
I thought to myself that such things simply happen on the	<b>CE</b> 0/	470	40.75**
internet.	65%	172	10.76**
I thought to myself that he or she wouldn't do something	41%	99	0.89
similar to me in real life.	41/0		0.05
I thought to myself that it was only happening online, and	25%	62	6.71*
that it wasn't actually real.			
Cognitive avoidance			
I tried to focus on something else to avoid thinking about	68%	180	12.36**
what happened.	500/		ac 70**
I simply took it lightly.	58%	160	26.72**
Behavioral avoidance			
I started avoiding the person in real life.	39%	87	25.45**
I deleted the messages, which troubled me.	62%	163	0.28
I stopped visiting the web pages where this happened.	10%	26	26.65**
Seeking support			
I told someone about it.	70%	199	2.32
Confrontation			
I tried talking to the person on the internet or via cellphone	38%	102	5.96*
to persuade him or her to stop.			
I tried face-to-face talking about this behavior with the person or somehow persuade her or him to stop.	42%	106	0.94
Retaliation			
I did something similar to the person, face-to-face (in real	23%	58	3.49
life). I did the same thing or something similar to the person online			
or via mobiles.	12%	31	0.31
Note: * P < .05, ** p < .01. The percentages are computed from valid values.			

Strategies applied	
CB victims more active	
Cognitive strategies: - reframing to depreciate the bully and avoided or purposefully ignored then - cognitive distancing - not much disociation	n
Tech. Coping – not so ofte	n

Machackova, H., Cerna, A., Sevcikova, A., Dedkova, L., & Daneback, K. (2013). Effectiveness of coping strategies for victims of cyberbullying. Cyberpsychology: Journal of Psychosocial Research on Cyberspace, 7(3), article 5. doi: 10.5817/CP2013-3-5

Note: \*  $P \le .05$ , \*\*  $p \le .01$ . The percentages are computed from valid values.

		Victir		
			ine	
		harassment % n		ch!
	4	70	n	Chi
Technological coping				
I deleted my profile on the web pages where this happened.		79%	23	0.72
I changed my settings so that the person could not contact		89%	126	3.74
me anymore (e.g. blocking the person, filtering). I deleted the person from my contacts.		87%	139	7.14**
I changed my phone no./email/profile/nickname.		89%	41	8.84**
I searched for advice on the internet.		78%	14	1.91
I reported this to the administrator.		80%	40	3.73
Reframing		0070	40	5.75
I thought to myself that whoever is doing this to me is not worth my time.		92%	187	2.91
I thought to myself that the person was pitiful and stupid.		94%	235	22.75**
thought to myself that something like that could not hurt				
me.		89%	110	5.91*
I thought to myself that it was actually nothing serious.		93%	95	4.08
Ignoring				
I decided to ignore it.		84%	151	4.79*
I didn't pay attention to it.		85%	87	4.73 5.17*
Dissociation		0370		3.17
thought to myself that it was only happening online, and				
that it wasn't actually real.		89%	48	3.77
I thought to myself that he or she wouldn't do something				
similar to me in real life.		80%	74	4.67*
I thought to myself that if something similar were to happen				
in real life, it would be much worse.		67%	90	0.56
I thought to myself that such things simply happen on the		c.c0/		
internet.		66%	108	15.42**
Cognitive avoidance				
I tried to focus on something else to avoid thinking about				
what happened.		91%	159	6.08*
simply took it lightly.		94%	140	30.55**
Behavioral avoidance				
stopped visiting the web pages where this happened.		83%	20	0.53
deleted the messages which troubled me.		85%	134	0.82
started avoiding the person in real life.		83%	68	7.79**
Seeking support				
told someone about it.		92%	169	0.06
Confrontation				
tried talking to the person on the internet or via mobiles to				
persuade him or her to stop.		71%	66	1.94
tried face-to-face talking about this behavior with the				
person or somehow persuade her or him to stop.		74%	74	3.13
Retaliation				
did something similar to the person, faœ-to-face (in real				
ife).		85%	45	0.49
I did the same thing or something similar to the person online				
or via mobiles.		79%	19	0.25

#### Strategies helping emotionally

- generally, less often effective among CB victims

- effective cognitive strategies

 not all, exceptions: "taking it lightly" it "happens online"

Note: \* P < .05, \*\* p < .01. The percentages are computed from valid values of those who used the strategy.

		online		
		harass	sment	
		%	n	Chi
Technological coping				
I deleted my profile on the web pages where this happened.		97%	29	7.58**
I changed my settings so that the person could not contact		88%	130	15.70**
me anymore (e.g. blocking the person, filtering).		8870	130	15.70
I changed my phone no./email/profile/nickname.		91%	38	12.19**
I reported this to the administrator.		78%	38	4.92*
I deleted the person from my contacts.		80%	116	25.39**
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Seeking support				
I told someone about it.		58%	76	0.05
Confrontation				
I tried face-to-face talking about this behavior with the		66%	59	17.39**
person or somehow persuade her or him to stop.		00%	59	17.39
I tried talking to the person on the internet or via mobiles to		62%	53	17.13**
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pr via mobiles.		72%	18	3.17
I did something similar to the person, faœ-to-face (in real		0.00/		46 53**
life).		88%	44	16.52**

Victims of

Note: \* P < .05, \*\* p < .01. The percentages are computed from valid values or those who used the strategy.

#### Strategies helping stop the attacks:

technological copingbut not all (and often not applied)

#### Ignoring

Confrontation or retaliation not very effective

Outcome also depends on the context

Including responses of others – the audience

Bystanders in cyberbullying much more common than victimization Czech project: 53%

What can they do? (online and offline)

Support the victim: emotionaly, advice provision, confrontation of aggressor...

Reinforce the bull pining in, reposts, sharing, likes, comments... Passivity: most n

Helpful: decreases impact, can stop the attacks, help to cope

What can they do? (online and offline)

Support the victim: emotionaly, advice provision, confrontation of aggressor...

Reinforce the bully: joining in, reposts, sharing, likes, comments...

Passivity: most cornon

Increases the impact, especially when wide audience, causes of repetiveness...

What can they do? (online and offline)

Support the victim: emotionaly, advice provision, confrontation of aggressor...

Reinforce the bully: joining in, reposts, sharing, likes, comments...

Passivity: most common

Harmless? No Increases impact, may be interpreted as silent approval by both victim and aggressor Metadata: visits, views...

Who helps victim?

Empathy, prosocial behavior, norms, relationship with the victim...

Who reinforces bully?

Low empathy, aggressive beliefs, relationship with aggressor... Who stays passive???

Despite common antibullying norms



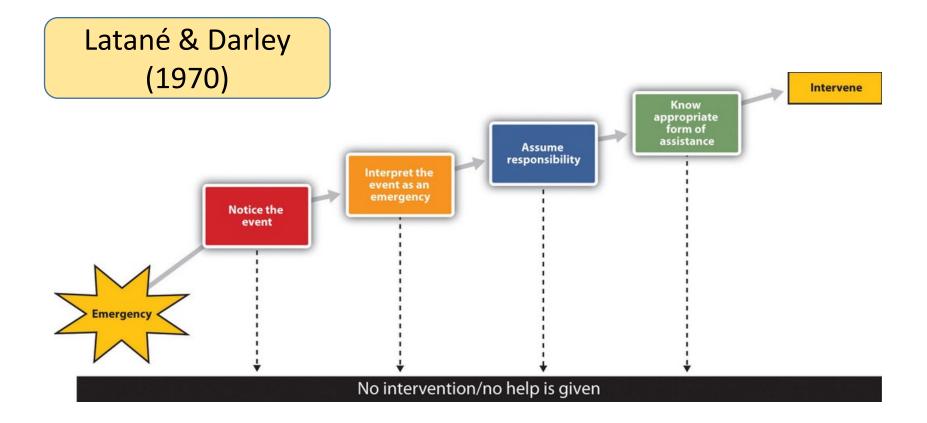
# Cyberbullying and online aggression (harassment)

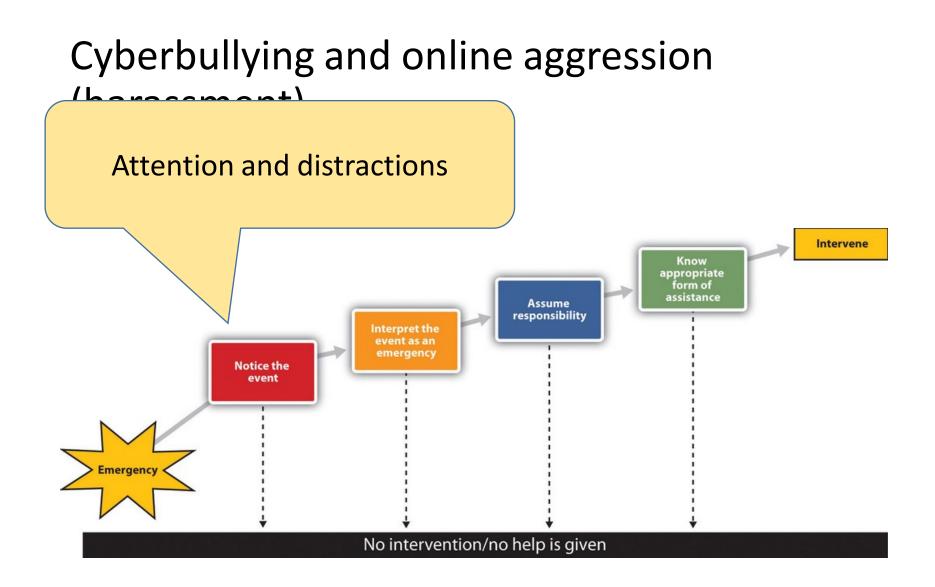
What is "new"? – Context

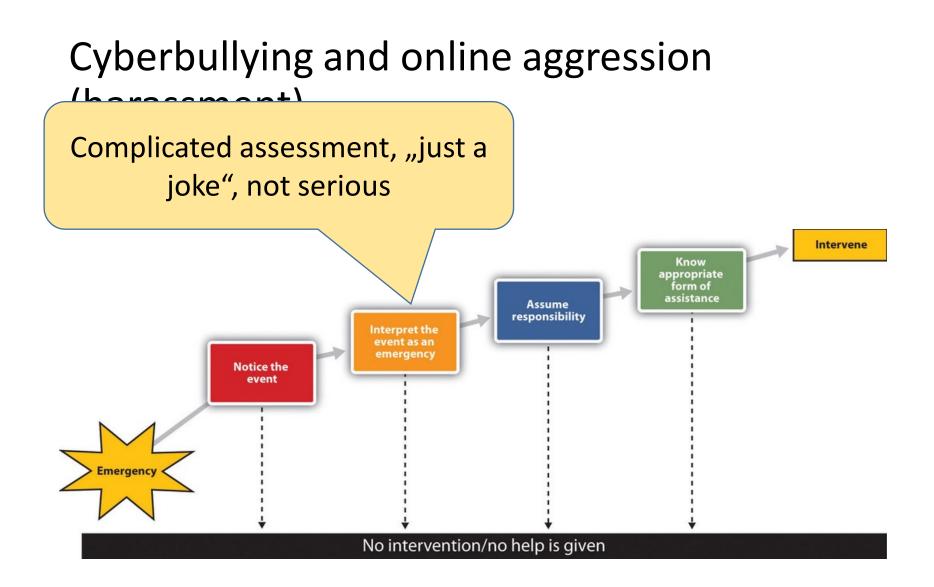
Specific communication and environment

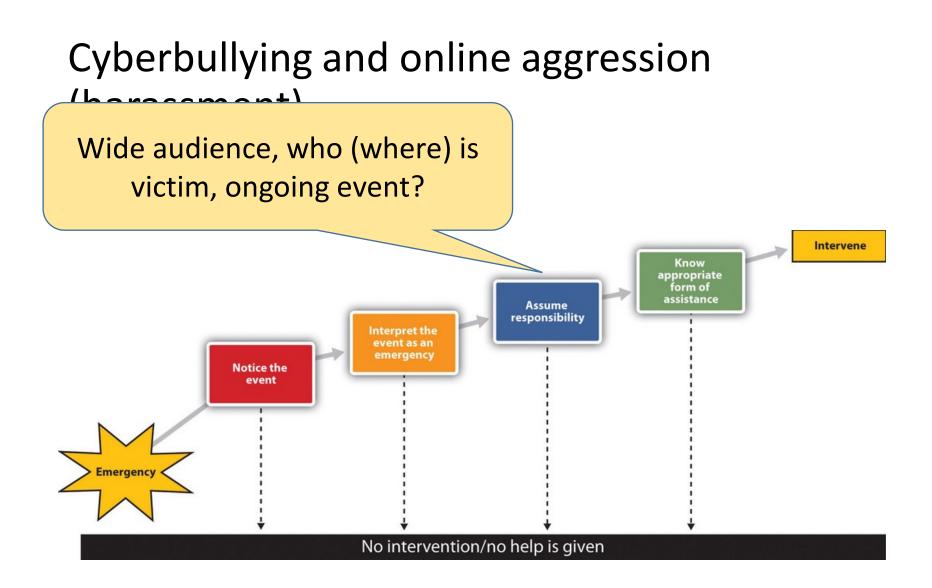
Distance Lack of cues Wide audience

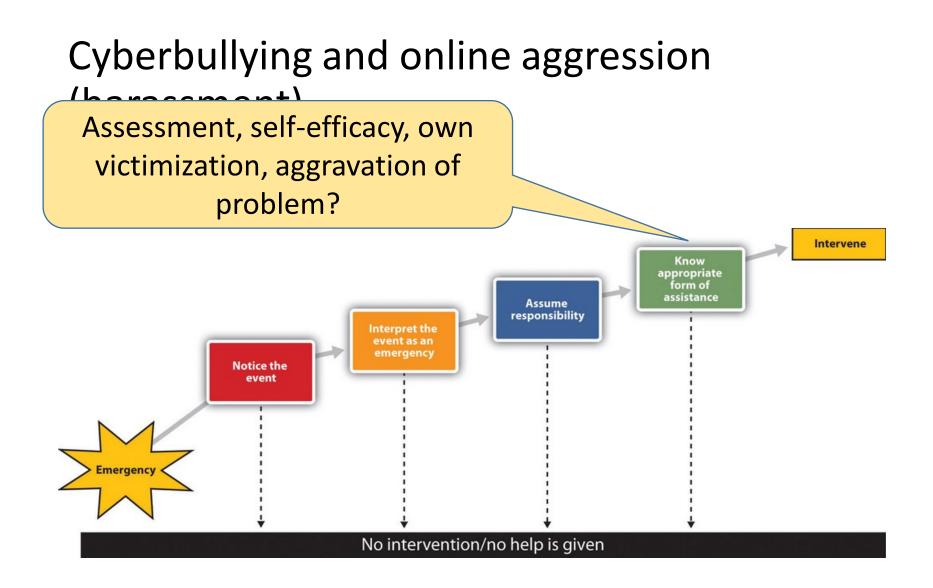
# Cyberbullying and online aggression (harassment)











#### Audience in aggressive events

- These aspects concern also responses to other aggressive events
- What is your experience with online aggression?

- Another type of aggression encountered on the internet
- Intergroup aggression

The potential for reaching very wide audience Detrimental effect for individuals and society

Today one of major topic on international level

#### Hate speech, cyberhate

Greenawalt (1989): hate speech causes offence, may deeply wound those targeted, might provoke a response of violence, have a degrading effect on social relationships within any one community

Council of Europe, 2013:

- Hate speech has no particular definition in international human rights; it is a term used to describe broad discourse that is extremely negative and constitutes a threat to social peace.
- It covers all forms of expression which spread, incite, promote or justify racial hatred, xenophobia, anti-Semitism or other forms of hatred based on intolerance.
- (http://www.coe.int/en/web/freedom-expression/hate-speech)
- Cyberhate: "similar to cyberbullying, but online extremist and hate material aim the abuse at a **collective identity** rather than a specific individual" (Hawdon et al., 2015)

Roots in offline world

- Attitides, opinions
- Social norms
- Group identity
- In-groups and out-groups
- Prejudices

Online Increasing? (increasing internet use) Dispersing?

- many new platforms
- prominently SNS

- Online disinhibition
  - Hostility
  - Anonymity, invisibility, asynchronicity, solipstic introjection, dissociative imagination, minimization of status and authority
- SIDE model
  - Strengthening of social identity (Tajfel, Turner)
  - Potential for expression of normatively negative attitudes, behavior
- Anonymity vs. identifiability
  - still no such constrains to join such group/express an attitude

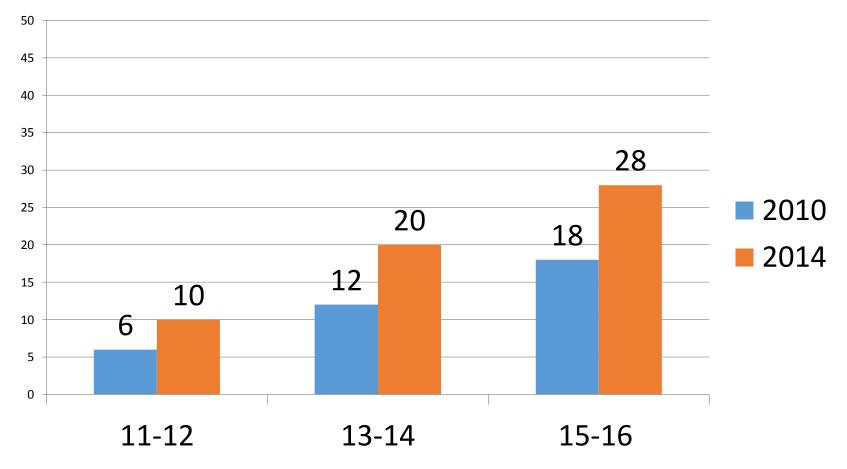
#### Anonymity

- Lower anonymity connected to **decrease** of aggressive comments in online discussion (Cho & Kwon, 2015)
- Czech study: Constent analysis of 1,080 comments under 54 posts on 9 FB pages arguing against specific social group (1.1. 12.4.2016)
- The more anonymous autor is, the more vulgar comment and the more negative "atmosphere" of the statements

#### Group processess

- The more negative attitudes towards out-group by administrators, the more negative emotions in following comments.
- (Jitka Čurdová (2016). Vliv anonymity, deindividuace a skupinové normy na míru vyjadřované agrese v komentářích na sociální síti Facebook. Diplomová práce, Masarykova Univerzita.)

#### In the past 12 months, have you seen websites where people discuss hate messages that attack certain groups or individuals ? (EUKO, 2010; NCGM, 2013)



"In the past three months, have you seen hateful or degrading writings or speech online, which inappropriately attacked certain groups of people or individuals"?

"I have personally been the target of hateful or degrading material online".

AGE 15-30

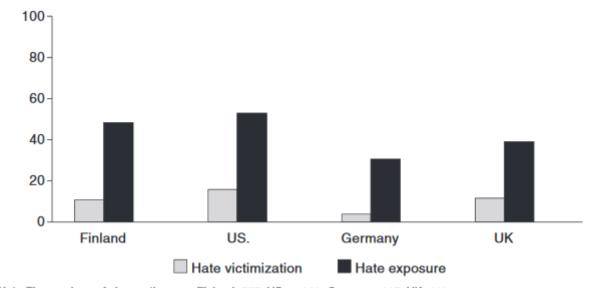


Figure 1. Exposure and personal victimisation to online hate by country (per cent)

Note: The numbers of observations are Finland=555, US.=1,033, Germany=987, UK=999.

Hawdon, J., Oksanen, A., & Räsänen, P. (2015) Online Extremism and Online Hate.

	Finland	US.	Germany	UK
Facebook	48	63	77	64
YouTube	37	48	44	37
Twitter	4	21	9	26
Tumblr	3	14	4	13
Wikipedia	2	5	4	5
General message board	41	19	15	15
Newspaper message boards	22	6	14	7
Blogs	16	13	8	8
Home pages	5	5	6	2
Photosharing sites (e.g., Instagram)	4	7	3	4
Online games	5	6	5	4
Instant messengers	2	4	4	4
Pop-up sites	2	6	2	5

Hate exposure in SNS sites and online environments by those exposed to hate Table 1. material (per cent)

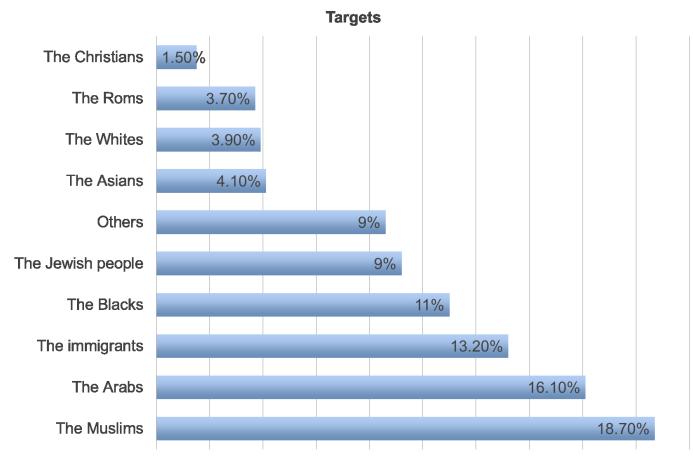
Note: The numbers of observations are Finland=266, US.=551, Germany=299; UK=387.

Hawdon, J., Oksanen, A., & Räsänen, P. (2015) Online Extremism and Online Hate.

#### French study on cyberhate

Online questionnaire survey with students aged 11-20.





Blaya, C. et al. (2016). The involvement of the young people in cyberhate. Presented at the ECREA conference, Prague.

# Hateful information online

- Internet as a source of information
  - Huge diversity
  - Sources, mediums, channels

The information and messages are shaped by social environment they are coming from and embedded into

- "Facts", "information" socialy constructed
- "Depending on" the character of the source
- Creating, spreading, sharing...
- Selecting specific type of information to present (and to conceal)
- We often pre-select the sources which we use
  - Similarity to our opinions
  - Confirmation bias
- Echo chambers which information is faciliated, repeated? Which is absent?
  - specific social spaces in which is/are certain information/attitudes/views predominant
  - Based also on diverse algorithms (Google, Facebook...)

#### • ONLINE COMMUNITIES

- Specific online places in which and through which people interact
- Shared interests, goals, identity (sense of belonging)
- Opportunity for self-expression
  - Individual and group level
- Opportunity for sense of belonging
  - And in-group behavior
- Discourse, materials
- Source of biased information
- Reinforced by the members

- Positive and negative outcomes
  - Sometimes very hard to untangle
  - For whom?
- Clash of different (offline) communities online
- Attacks on and from specific (online) communities/groups
- Example: extreme right communities

• "Link, educate, recruit" (Douglas, 2007)

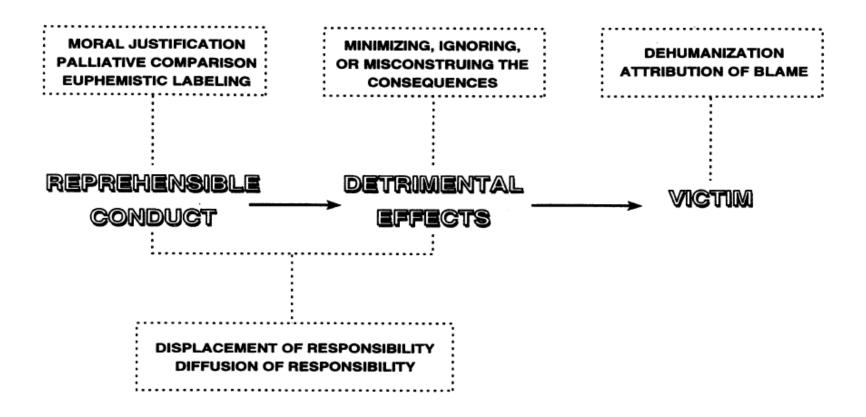
Persuasion:

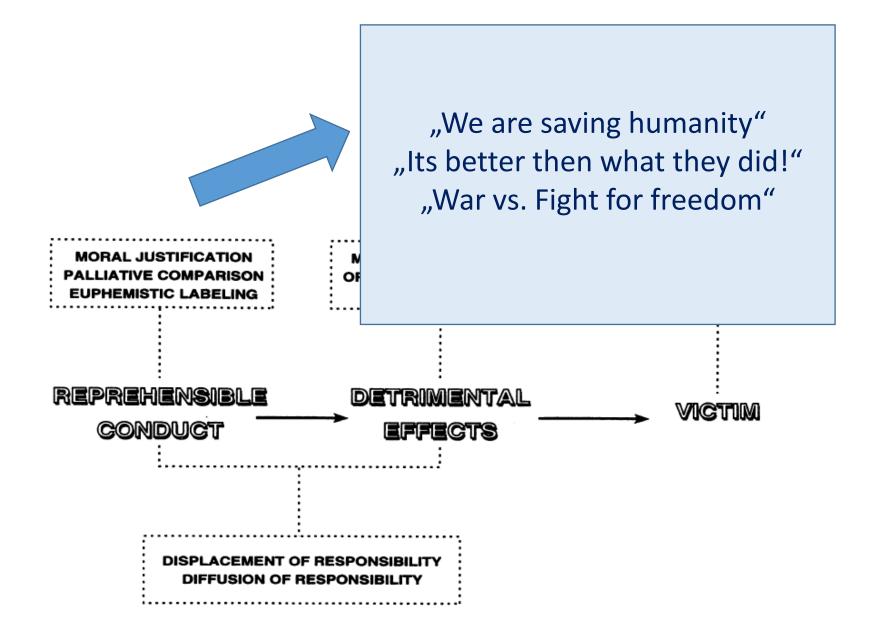
- Not often advocating violence as such
- "Objectivity"
- Establishing specific discourse and norms
- In-group

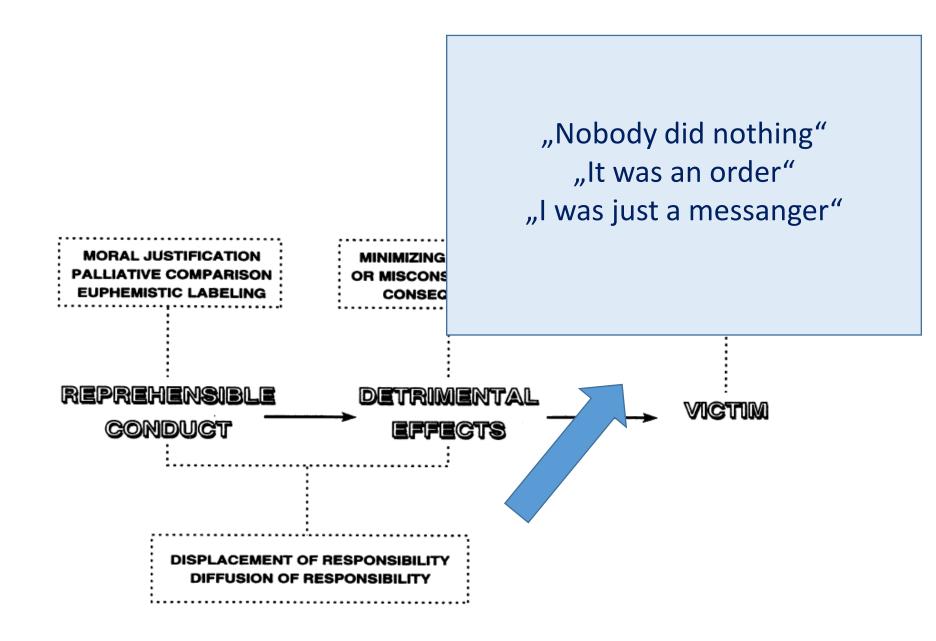
# "Socialy creative" Moral disengagement

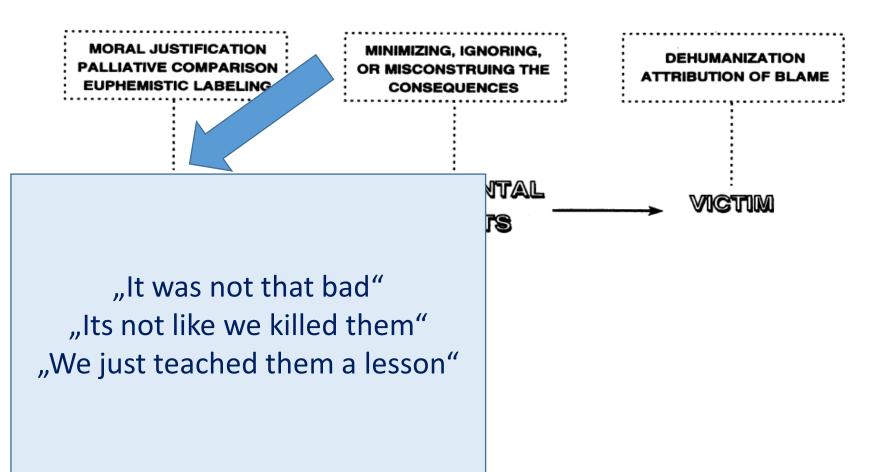
Bandura: Morality – norms, social and internalised sanctions

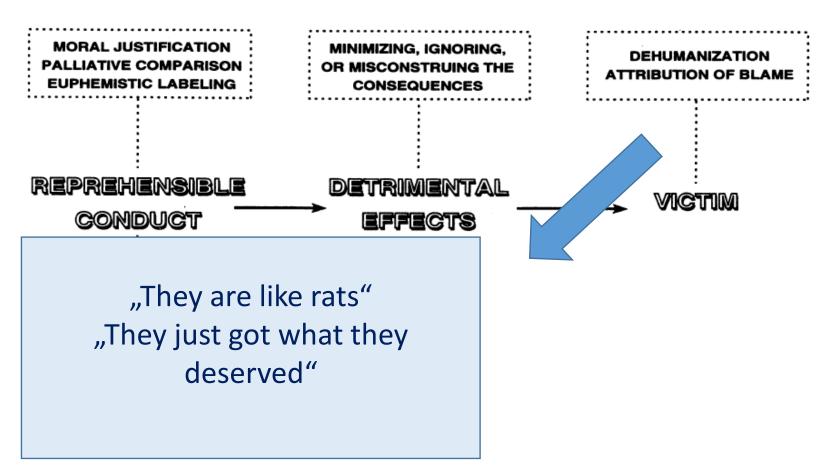
- Self-monitoring, evaluation, regulation (affective)
- Moral disengagement: cognitive restructuring of inhumane conduct into a benign or worthy one
- 1. moral justification, sanitizing language, and advantageous comparison;
- 2. disavowal of a sense of personal agency by diffusion or displacement of responsibility;
- 3. disregarding or minimizing the injurious effects of one 's actions
- 4. attribution of blame to, and dehumanization of those who are victimized.
- Bandura, A. (1999). Moral disengagement in the perpetration of inhumanities. *Personality and social psychology review*, *3*(3), 193-209.











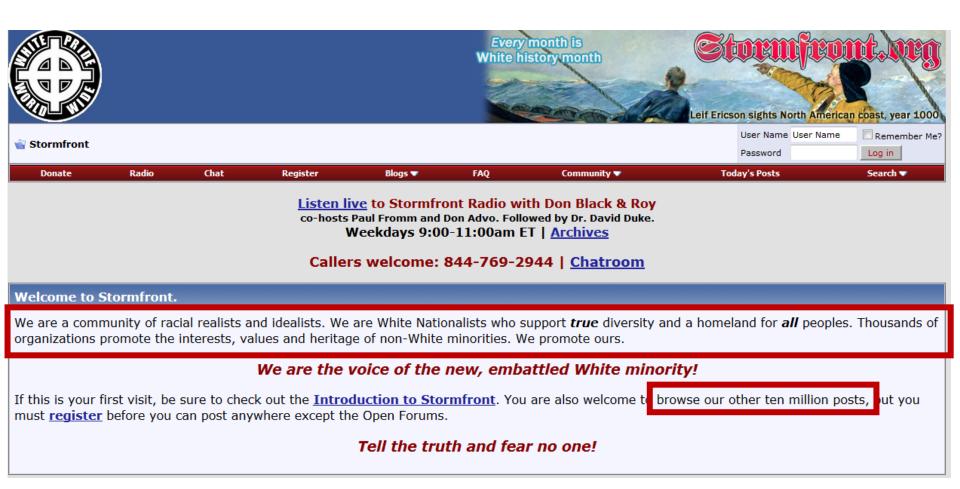
- Concentrated materials, information selected discourse, concealment and repression of opposite views
  - support in the community
  - approving comments
  - reinforcement of attitudes
  - shared identity, belonging
  - providing space for self-expression
  - delineating out-group ("media", "liberals",…)
  - framing aggression as a mean to seemingly justified end

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  - delineating out-group ("media", "liberals",…)
  - framing aggression as a mean to seemingly justified end



- Specific discoursive space
- Supporting one ideology
- Strengthening social identity

# Example: https://www.stormfront.org/



### Combating hate online?

Problem with evaluation

What is normal? What is moral? Legitimate? Legal? Normative?

Across cultures?

Back to conceptualization aggression – different types Different purposes

Treshold?

# Combating hate online?

Problem with evaluation ...and freedom of speech

- Ban
  - Resistance, strengthening of identity?
  - Free speech?
- Law
  - no united international law
- General protest
- Humor, sarcasm
- Trolling
- http://www.adl.org/combating-hate/
- http://www.hatefree.cz/
- https://cs-cz.facebook.com/CeskeObludarium

#### We do not want islam in the **Czech Republic**

#### We do not want Iceland in the **Czech Republic**



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#### ISLAM

#### Islámofob dne – Mustafa Kemal Atatürk (†10.11.1938)

islám v ČR nechceme

by Bender • Listopad 11, 2016



Vyšlo na IVČRN dne 11.11.2016 - Ke včerejšímu výročí úmrtí Kemala Atatürk přikládáme zálohu Islámofoba dne z blogu M.Konvičky. Kdyby se "otec Turků" Attatürk (nar. 1881 v ještě osmánské Soluni, zemř. 1938 v tureckém Istanbulu) nějakým zázrakem ocitl opět na světě,

Read more →

#### Pojďme zvolit Martina Konvičku do senátu

by admind • Říjen 6, 2016



Senátní volby 7. a 8. října nejsou samozřejmě jen o islámu. Ovšem ti, kteří nejsou schopni vidět rizika budoucnosti jsou jen úředníci, ne opravdoví politici. Naší zemi musí spravovat lidé, kteří dohlédnou dál než na konec volebního období. Potřebujeme rouzumné.



#### IVČRN NEWS

Jordánský spisovatel obviněný z urážky islámu byl při cestě na soud zavražděn Září 25. 2016 Ozbrojený muž jménem Hamid Makar se zabarikádoval v hotelu - jednalo se prý o blázna



#### Island v ČR nechceme

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Island v ČR nechceme přidal(a) novou fotku. únor · Θ

"We just want to say that our site does not have anything against normal Icelandic people, because those are just victims of the criminal ideology and perverted lifestyle called ICELAND! Help us to stop this filth which wants (similarly to volcano ash) to cover our beautiful country!