

Avatarization, Another Way to Understand Cyberbullies Behaviour in the Real and the Virtual Worlds as Described by Net-Profiling

Nadine Touzeau*

Profiler, Net-Profiler-Behavioral and Environmental Analyst-Researcher, ACFE USA Member, Paris, France

*Corresponding author: Nadine Touzeau, Profiler, Net-Profiler-Behavioral and Environmental Analyst-Researcher, ACFE USA Member, Paris France, E-mail: nt.profiler@gmail.com

Received date: January 23, 2018; Accepted date: February 15, 2018; Published date: February 22, 2018

Copyright: ©2018 Touzeau N. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited

Citation: Touzeau N (2018) Avatarization, Another Way to Understand Cyberbullies Behaviour in the Real and the Virtual Worlds as Described by Net-Profiling. J Cogn Neuropsychol. Vol. 2 No. 1:1

Abstract

The arrival of the Internet did not allow time to educate and to understand this new universe in order to use it and appreciate its territory. Moreover, the virtual space, as defined, has built all by itself creating its own law, its own language, its own rules even its own occupants who have evolved in a much free and borderless way. He transposed his behavior from the real to the virtual. Not only had that, but he even experienced new situations forbidden in the real world.

Objective: This paper throws light upon the element of avatarization to understand cyberbullies behaviour in the real and virtual worlds.

Method: The descriptive method was the only method that fits the objectives of this study. Samples: Two samples have been chosen to make the differentiation between two types of avatarization used in a criminal way to understand better what differentiates virtual space from real space. The first sample is a case of one-to-one cyberbullying and the second sample is a case of a public-to-one cyberbullying operated on social networks.

Results: Avatarization can be a dangerous element used in the cyberbullying process whatever the use is, conscious or unconscious. It may be created, adopted and developed according to how a human profile wants to use it (as a second life, revenge, cybertheft etc.).

Conclusion: The role played in the virtual can be well reproduced in the real world without logical reasoning and true objectivity. Suggestions and study development: The theory of "Avatarization" as a theory I developed for many years now [1], has been illustrated in the actual study and many others. Avatarization must be considered in many professional approaches from investigation to psychiatry passing by cyberpsychology to understand better its different types of utilization especially in cybercriminal cases.

Keywords: Avatarization; Cyberbullyer; Net-profiling; Cybercriminal; Behavioral differentiation; Behavioral analysis

Introduction

We have seen many facts about virtual space attacks on people. We will take several examples that will be analyzed in a real and a virtual space, with incidences for both parts. The selected examples are from the family of cyberbullies which are considered as cybercrime cases. What I have observed in my several researches about behavioural differentiation between real and virtual area, is that some profiles in virtual space do not admit that their actions committed in the virtual world do not have the same impact as those done in the real world. This kind of behavioural deviance is detailed in my book [1] where I have developed three important theories to understand better the virtual world. It is about "Avatarization", "Virtual Intelligence" and "Transverse Zone" [2].

Cyberbullying

As defined by the founders of Cyberbullying Research Center [3] is a "Willful and repeated harm inflicted through the use of computers, cell phones, and other electronic devices". Not only young and teenagers are concerned about it. There are many ways to bully a person, which is usually considered as a target. Sometimes this target is bullied by only one person. But also a group manipulated by a leader, can bully a victim, using social network to develop the feeling of success of its members.

Victims have many common points: They are weakened by a past that has not been evacuated or a bad event experienced lately, they tend to be helpful or even altruistic, they lack of self-confidence, they have a form of naivety, they may lack of analytical spirit, they may lack of perspective. They can also let themselves be manipulated by an element that will weaken them such as love, pride, narcissism. And what is important to point to is that none of them expected such a flood of words, behaviours, people who were largely unknown or a boyfriend. In

other words, victims could not imagine that such powerful acts could occur in the virtual world.

If we analyze a bullying and cyberbullying, one of the major differences is that in the real world, bullies would not have committed as many acts as in the virtual world. For example, in real life, a person who wants to insult, slander another person, will have to develop a courage and a grudge or even a form of anger and resentment in order to face that person, in front of an audience or not, and slander his target. If a word flow can emerge, the behavioural exchanges between the two people will attenuate or amplify the situation, depending on the victim's behaviour. In all the cases, except special cases such as certain psychiatric pathologies, this bullying will quickly fall back and will conclude with a more or less evolutionary situation with an outcome, such as an excuse, a new resentment, an agreement. Doing this head-on, seeing the reactions of either party, allows the behaviours to synchronize even in disagreement. A mirror effect can reduce the pressure; a look can even stop defamation. The facts remain short, face-to-face, sometimes with witnesses, knowing that both parties often evacuate their grievances.

Let's take the case of these two people who are going to slander themselves online either in the virtual space, which we identify as flaming. The victim can receive from his executioner emails, sms, and messages through social networks, hidden or read by everyone. These messages perpetuated in time; will be more virulent, using harder words, stronger than in the real and often exceeding the initial thought. Add to that other people who sometimes don't even know the victim, but, trained by the leader, they will have fun harassing a victim. As Mark Granovetter [4] put it in his theory: "Strong and weak bonds, where bonds are characterized by a combination of time spent together, emotional intensity, intimacy and reciprocity between people. The group emulation in front of a victim who can only defend itself behind a screen, finds itself in total and totally unarmed in front of incomprehension. The victim could go from anger to indifference, from the urge to kill herself to commit suicide. The difficulty raised in my work as a net-profiler is the fact that the victim is not being able to defend it and to be heard, to even explain itself. Social networks can inflame, distract and to ridiculize what they say, that is, too often taken out of context. The press can also add more to make buzz.

Let us recall the case of Tiziana Cantone [5] who ended her life in September 2016, victim of sextape and cyberbullying by her boyfriend. The press apologized after the events, without having measured or even thought about the consequences of what they had said about the young woman who had been publicly betrayed by her boyfriend and had her story, readable all over the world and during several months. On the social networks, she was considered not as a person but as an object without feelings. Internet users assaulted her verbally on posts, insulted her, allowed herself to use her setbacks without being considered as a victim, but as a guilty person. Unknown people attacked her without even knowing her, without having seen her, without being interested in her history, her version of the facts. She took virtually a flood of malevolence, injustice and evilness, out of the context. Cyberbullies did not consider the

victim as a human, above all, a woman. They could not even imagine that she could commit suicide.

Dr. Yann Leroux [6] considers that: "In most cases, there is a relationship between the victim and the stalker". This is what we found in the examples cited below. The relationship exists because there is a communication and also a synchronization between the cyberbullyer and the victim. However, if we consider them synchronized by the exchange, by their evolution and even by their outcome, can we consider it is a real relationship they share? Especially that insofar that the cyberbullyer believing himself in his right to commit his crime, whether he is vengeful or not, does not take into account that his victim suffers, is been hurt and even destroyed?

Several cases of suicide of teenagers show that the executioners did not imagine that the consequences of their act may lead their victims to put an end to their lives. They do not realize that their act committed in the virtual, out of the virtual impacts a real person. They are aware that their target is real, but transpose their act and impact as virtual. Hence many denials to recognize the badly they did. So, if there is professional cyberbullyer, there are many cyberbullies who ignore about being ones of them.

Dr. Shaheen Shariff [7] warns against social media that can weaken the borderline between real and virtual for some people [7]. Those social networks are often used as a living room, a meeting room, a coffee place where information can be shared with some friends really known or not. Transposition of behaviour from real to virtual environment has no borderline for many people and mostly young ones. They could not imagine impact of their publication. Twitter is one of the most famous social networks considered in France as the place to practice cyberbullying. It's impressive what we can read against everything, as long as it can buzz. Some people used Twitter to evacuate bad day or some stress. But they do not think about the impact of words publish in virtual space.

The worst of this, is what about the media. More and more they try to find the buzz, the recognition, without thinking that some human could suffer of their publications. Rare are the newspapers who confessed being wrong, who excuse humans. In France, if you are attacked by a newspaper, you must have a legal right of reply. That does not mean that the press respects this right.

Avatarization

I define avatarization as an action issued in the virtual world by a person for malicious purpose. The person can create a character, an environment, a context that can be one of his or her dreams, one of his or her desires, a duty he or she considers to be a duty, a revenge or a vigilante, and so on.

Avatars are created and developed according to what the person wants to live and cannot reproduce partially or totally in the reality. It will remain active or not depending on whether the cyberbullyer realizes it or not. This is a good representation of an Avatar living also in the real and not in the virtual. It is also noted that awareness is raised by force or even violence in some cases, in front of a proven fait accompli. But very often, Avata-

rization remains nourished in the real and virtual as long as no real and concrete element can kill it.

Using avatars makes possible to a person to live in a new world, with a new personality and even produce false attitudes. The person can also even adopt an opposed profile (opposite in sex and culture, different in age and character, different in social and economic status and so forth, thus just to take revenge for a situation considered unfair, or just for living in a situation that cannot be lived in the real world (i.e: a poor woman wanting to live as a rich person). Thus, avatarization can be relatively a dangerous element leading to pathology if not well used. It is even said that avatarization “ can reveal a mental state or a psychological one [8] .

Cybercriminals using avatarization

The cybercriminals using avatarization as an essential element to target their victims, will create in the virtual world what they do not experience in the real world, sometimes even in contrast to what they experience. Thus, the cybercriminal will act in the virtual world with these elements that he creates and will use them against people. This can be to seduce, revenge, lie, play a role, steal data, swindle money... He believes what he lives and plays his part of his “own life” to such an extent that the victim does not see the trickery. The cybercriminal acts as if the victim is like him and in the same space of him. The victim receives the facts of virtual space as in reality. Verbal attacks, assaults, rumours, slander, slander, defamation, misappropriation of videos and photos, etc. received from the virtual will emotionally disturb the victim as much as in the real if not more.

So there is no true communication and no synchronization. The cybercriminal avatarize his actions and the more credible he can to alpine his victims. The person victim of the trickery does not see an avatar, but a human like her.

When the facts are committed, the cybercriminal will continue to pursue his objective regardless of the victim's statements and requests to stop the cyberattacks she receives. If the victim suffers a moral breakdown, deteriorates health or even commits suicide, this cybercriminal profile will rarely incorporate the fact that he has acted as a human against another human. Many cases have shown that cybercriminals have failed to appreciate or understand the violent nature of their actions. In fact, the cybercriminal felt himself in his universe, his « Transverse Zone » [1], avatarizing his person, sometimes reproducing all or part of his avatar in the real world, without integrating his acts and the scope of his acts on his victim.

Discussion

The CNIL [9] is concerned about the number of complaints received about "cyberbullying" cases, 30 complaints in 6-7 months. We were in 2011, in France, knowing that few people dare to file a complaint, especially since cyberbullying is not too identifiable. When we look at the number of cyberbullying cases cited in the press, especially young people who commit suicide, the number of 30 cases of cyberbullying seems ridiculous.

We will mention two cases of cyberbullying as part of my research work. The first (identified below as sample 1) concerns a young manager in a French and international group considered as sensitive. He was the victim of a sextape on Facebook. The second (identified below as sample 2) concerns the restaurateur in Nice (France), who has been harassed online by rumors the day of the terrorist attack on July 14, 2016, The choice of these two samples will show us several behavioral differentiation, the first is a case of one-to-one and the second case is a public-to-one operated on social networks.

These examples reflect perfectly the many testimonies of those victims of cyberbullying.

Sample 1

Context: Imagine a young and brilliant engineer, single (noticed on his Facebook profile) and very attractive. A calm, laid-back person with his head on his shoulders, handling difficult situations with coolness. He found a job in a famous and prestigious French group, representative in the entire world at the end of his studying. He met a girl on Facebook but without meeting her. He falls in love with her and accepted to have a sex relation by webcam. He was confident, thinking she was serious. He was a very clever man, who was treating very difficult files, as a middle manager. He could not imagine that this girl will publish a video of this sextape on YouTube. So she made a video without his consent and published it on YouTube in an attempt to harm him.

Behavior during the fact: This young man's behavior changed. He was anxious and panicked, he no longer had his bearings, did not understand why she had acted in this way and felt totally helpless and ashamed, at such a point that when I told him that the matter would be resolved in an hour, he did not believe it. For him, it was a personal injury such as a rape, according to his own words, that blocked him emotionally and intellectually. He couldn't react any more, by internalizing his pain and thoughts that everything was over since the video was systematically republished when he destroyed it.

Behavior, hours and days after: When I finished processing the file in an hour, so a very short time that reduced stress and put the feeling of this cyberattack into perspective, he did not believe it. His whole being was curled up. He felt hurt and lost. The cyberbullyer who committed this act is in fact a man of Ivory Coast origin. In the culture of this cybercrime perpetrator, hurting people doesn't have the same meaning as ours. The notion of life or death also. In fact, this cultural difference cannot be synchronized except to alpine the target. These cybercriminals play a role; they modify their person behind the screen to attract their prey. They change sex, culture, language. They develop seduction arguments in order to convince, reassure, put in confidence to obtain better from their prey what they want and then make them blackmailing. In real space, they can't act like this. They go so far as to live what they are not, either as a woman or a man, rich or poor, cultivated or ignorant, white or black, French or Ivorian. The victims get caught up in the game during exchanges with the other, convinced of the role the cyberbullyer plays. The victims have no doubt about their identity. This reassures the cyberbullyer to

live his new character, strong of this success. They live it so well and deeply those they can forget their own real person. They also forget that their victim is a real person too, not an Avatar. To such an extent that when these cyberbullies get screwed, they rarely do not understand what they did wrong. Confessions are more difficult to obtain. In fact, they think they are in their rightful place and caught not because of they are hidden by the screen.

They believe in the person they are because their embezzlement works, because their victim believes them. Their actions in virtual space are welcomed in real space. Do they make a difference? Do they know the boundary between the two? I consider that they are not because they are not aware of the acts committed, neither in fact nor by considering the victim. These elements were developed in my theory of "Avatarization" [1].

Mobile: Put a picture of a pretty white woman to attract single men. These cyberbullies know the flaws in our culture, occidental one, and how to use them to turn them against us. While our culture is not educated to receive this. The reason why the Ivorian was not disturbed to fail when I stopped him after he requested a ransom, and, as the victim could not pay, his employer's data. As the Ivorian cybercriminal has objectives of filling the coffers for illicit trafficking, without being really worried, he will continue to play the role of a pretty French woman to attract singles and steal data or finances. He will play his Avatar without scruples on the canvas being hidden behind his screen and, without knowledge, because of his culture, evil done, laws to respect, cultural differences. He pursues his cyberbullying for the given purposes, regardless of the damage to his victims, which he does not consider as such. The victim remained shocked.

Sample 2

Context: The second case is very famous in France. July 14, 2016, the French national holiday, on the Riviera. Nice, a French town, terrorist attack. A "crazy truck" rushed into the crowd watching the fireworks. A scene of panic that made people run around in all directions.

Dead, wounded, screaming and hanging palm trees to protect themselves. Some even hide in groves of trees, others searched buildings along the English promenade or preferably in the streets behind. A young woman, Nina Hoyez and two of her friends tried to enter a restaurant near the English promenade, "Le Grand Balcon". Access to the restaurant is denied. Enraged, shocked, they are sending a message on Facebook indicating the location and address of the restaurant, I quote: "I would like to point out that a restaurant instead of rescuing my friends and I literally closed the doors in front of us. This is unacceptable and shameful! A man blocked the entrance [...] when we tried to take shelter with three friends. He even pushed us and yelled at us." Karine Marro, owner of "Le Grand Balcon", gets lynched in a few hours on social networks in the midst of a terrorist attack crisis.

Behaviors during the fact: Frightened girls flee a crisis situation without perhaps having had the details, without

perhaps seeing the "crazy truck" and looking for protection. Survival instinct only thinks of getting out and protecting itself. They find the place they believe they can protect them and encounter a refusal that cannot be accepted in context. Disarmed, without thinking, without information, they will use social networks to spread their evil, this misunderstanding, thinking that they did not feel understood, that it was unfair not to welcome them to protect them, especially women. Their reflex, like an automatism, was to spread out on Facebook, the same way one evacuates his bad feelings in front of his relatives, in his living room.

They judge a situation through social networks as revenge for an unspeakable act of refusing to protect people fleeing terrorists. They probably didn't think they were going to make such a buzz, but at least, they were going to hurt or even destroy the trade of the owner of the restaurant that denied them access to secure them.

What's more, the group effect added to the panic, helps to promote such feeling of acting for "the good cause" and re-establishing "one's own justice" if you don't think you're helping them. A kind of patriot attitude act. These girls have played a tenfold role through the use of virtual space, including Facebook, by asserting their rights and playing twisted rectifiers.

They felt strong and powerful to criticize and ask for help from Internet users to destroy the restaurant that denied them the entrance. They have acquired armor by passing their message on the Internet, by judging by incriminating the restaurant in full knowledge of the facts by using the power of social networks. All the more so since the facts occurred during a terrorist attack and they relied on it to assert their rights. They have reproduced in the real world their role as "jus ticiars" used in the virtual world. The intent to harm is clearly identified, also with mass effect in groups as well. Social networks is the best solution to arrive at his target in few seconds.

Behavior, hours and days after: The three girls felt happy to have done a great job of denouncing an establishment that did not want to secure people. A wave of insults has proliferated on the Internet against "Le Grand Balcon". The mass effect on social networks, combined with the shock of the terrorist attack, disseminated information very quickly spread out by young girls without any verification. This fact lasted several days and was relayed by the press as it stood. In the meantime, Karine Marro was being insulted from all sides, on the web and face to face. She had to endure several stages of surprise, fear, incomprehension, without being able to explain herself. Knowing that the risk is to lose her business. Several days after, she was slandered, lynched and harassed on the web. The owner of the restaurant "Le grand Balcon" published a video calling for an end to accusing her of being a bad person who refused to protect three young girls seeking protection from the aftermath of the terrorist attack. This video has been broadcast widely on social networks. In her video, Karine Marro cried. She cried to tears. She said, "I'm through". She shows herself as she is, not as an owner, and lived hardly these false accusations. She also answered her accusers: the night of the attack, her restaurant was crowded. She had received instructions from the RAID (Research, Assistance, Intervention, Deterrence) [10] and

the police to protect her clients. And so, it should not receive new people (who could be terrorist) to ensure this protection and respect the orders of law enforcement agencies. Her business suffered from this situation only because of cyberbullying on social network relayed by French media. Her e-reputation was crashed too. But mostly, it is her health that has been strongly shaken. She ruled like a real woman who suffered a real attack, not a cyberbullying attack. Her executioners, when they realized their mistake, preferred to disappear from the social networks. They became aware of their mistake, but by boomerang effect, when the others opened their eyes and realized. The Avatar died at that time.

Mobile: Is it possible to consider that, according to the context, this cyberbullying had a mobile?

The girls acted in panic in the face of a new situation, in survival mode, without taking time for feedback and thinking. One stress of many, the annoyance aggravated by the fact that the girls felt in their rightful right which made them acting as accusers, thinking they were "justiciars". They used this situation to evacuate their evil like an outlet. And then regretted it. When they learned the truth, they closed their Facebook page. A classic boomerang effect when justice can be restored quickly which is rarely the case in virtual space.

Later on, the victim discovered that she was a victim of cyberbullying. The press surfed on this case without checking the sources by feeding cyberbullying. The victim also had to use social networks to spread the truth and stop insults and slander. This restorer must have shown herself emotionally naked. On her video, we read the suffering in all her being, the power of the evil that she received, her features are marked, her expressions showed the disarray and the desire to restore the truth, to convince too. She leaved her comfort zone to scream innocence on social networks like a bottle at sea with a "Help!" Fortunately for her, the social networks are interracial and spread widely and quickly, which has been able to rebalance things. It remains marked by this affair more than by the terrorist attack which takes place a few meters from her restaurant.

Conclusion

As this two samples show, whether the cyber-bullying is from one person to another or broadcasted in mass effect on the web, the victims suffer the same shocks especially that of being disarmed, helpless in the face of an element open in the world and accessible to all at any time, the Internet.

We have sketched out two cases, one of which is a professional cyberbullyer for the purpose of feeding various networks of traffickers or even terrorists; the other is a cyberbullyer who ignores himself. While the victim's behaviour remains very similar, this is not the case for cyberbullyers who will act according to the cybercriminals typology: white, grey or black Hats. The cyberbullyer of the first ex-ample is that of white Hats and shows the relatively cold, detached behaviours, knowing how to adapt to its targets without having the culture, knowing how to convince by using the flaw of its target's culture, remaining cold to put online intimate images. Even when dis-

covered, the cybercrime perpetrator does not lose his footing and does not feel guilty unless he has failed in this matter. We know that net-works are behind these Hats, making them feel even stronger.

For the second example, the behavioural classification of young girls is grey Hats, the vengeance category. They acted hot, out of fear, while evacuating a crisis situation by taking revenge on a target who had nothing to do with it. They have subsequently had to face the reality of their mistake, probably with shame that they have subsequently hidden themselves from social networks. The harm is done for the victim who has had the very rare chance to recover and has the truth heard.

These two cases of white and grey Hats and their behavior, are detailed [1]. It related exactly both situations between cyberbullyers and victims. The victims, in general, feel the same emotion, have the same behaviour, develop the same reaction, request the truth hardly, live a violent stress, sometimes they make end to their lives. They live in the real world what they received from virtual world. They live as humans not as robots, tools or computer, etc.

Cyberbullyers do not think the importance of the impact of their act committed in virtual area. They act by target to satisfy themselves. They act few times to arrive at their purpose. They do it with strategy if they are true cyber-criminals, by impulse if they operate by revenge. Both kinds of these cyberbullyers do not think a human will receive their cyber-attacks and will suffer as they can do. None of them can imagine that they could have hurt their prey so much mentally and emotionally. Often they don't even care, thinking they did well or feeling emotionally cold.

The role played in the virtual can be well reproduced in the real world without logical reasoning and true objectivity.

Suggestions and study development: Avatarization illustrated in the two samples of the study must be considered in many professional approaches from investigation to psychiatry passing by cyberpsychology [11].

References

1. Touzeau N (2015) . Net-profiling: Analyse comportementale des cybercriminels.
2. Touzeau N (2017) Behavioral Cybercriminals Differentiations between the Real World and the Virtual Space. J Forensic Res 8: 401.
3. <https://cyberbullying.org/about-us>
4. Granovetter M (1983). The strength of weak ties: a network theory revisited. Sociological theory 1: 201-233.
5. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tiziana_Cantone
6. <http://www.omnsh.org/membres?%20discipline=All&ville=All&country=FR&name=>
7. Shariff S (2014) Adolescents' moral evaluations and ratings of cyberbullying: The effect of veracity and intentionality behind the event. Computers in Human Behavior 36:122-128.
8. https://www.eldjazaircom.dz/index.php?%20id_rubrique=213&id_article=5193

9. CNIL: French National Commission of Information Technology and Freedoms, France.
10. <http://le.raid.free.fr/%20and%20https://www.police-%20nationale.interieur.gouv.fr/Organisation/Entites-%20rattachees-directement-au-DGPN/RAID>
11. <https://cresus.dz/entretiens/242-entretien-avec-le-dr-%20rahali-f-djalila-cyberpsychologue-l-addiction-a-%20internet-un-phenomene-qui-passe-inapercu-chez-nous>