

Hello? Their phones have changed, but teenaged girls have not

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Cellphones come in many shapes, colors and sizes now, but the teenaged girls who use them may not be very different than the young women who were learning how to use telephones more than 40 years ago.

A University of Alberta study published in the May issue of *Journal of Youth Studies* revealed that a group of teen girls aged 14 to 17, while attracted to the cool and hip images of cellular phone advertisements, expressed that a series of advertisements they were shown published in

issues of Seventeen magazine from 1960 most reflected their experiences as users. These ads for Bell telephones showed young ladies the uses of a telephone, including helping friends with homework and talking about boys.

Many of the teens interviewed identified with these ads and the importance of friendship and responsibility that they showed, said researcher Rachel Campbell, author of the study and a PhD student in sociology at the University of Alberta in Edmonton, Canada.

In contrast, the freedom-filled world presented in many of today's cellular phone advertisements was not a reality in the eyes of these young women. They viewed their opportunities to 'go out' as limited, particularly when compared to their male friends.

Campbell's study also found that most of the girls she talked with were given cellphones by their parents to keep them safe - a safety that the girls believed was a real concern. The young women recognized their parents' worry and emphasized wanting to be good, responsible daughters.

Despite this, some of the girls admitted to occasionally wasting their parents' minutes, "fibbing" about where they were, or refusing to answer the cellphone's ring. Yet, Campbell said, "these actions never deviated far from what was expected by their parents. They still carried the cellphone and called home. They just wanted to create a space for themselves. With the cellphone many even said they 'felt safer.' "

Source: University of Alberta, by Bev Betkowski

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