

**Pe 21.11. klo: 15.30–17.00**

## **Workshop 2.1: The social psychology of social networking services**

### **1. Social media, social network services: What our user profiles do to us?**

Suvi Uski

University of Helsinki

contact: suvi.uski@gmail.com

This presentation focuses on the experience of self-presentation in social network services (SNS). Self-presentation and impression management have been popular topics to study in the field of Internet research. Yet, the stronger links to self-identity and the explanations for passivity seem to lack presence. With this presentation I focus on the experienced identity conflict and stress that derives from the experience of self-presentation in SNSs. Furthermore, I argue that passivity can be more interesting than observed activity when the overall understanding of a user is the goal. When aiming at exploring passivity in SNSs the understanding needs to reach beyond visible actions and investigate meaning making and reasoning of a user.

The experience of maintaining an SNS user profile can be a psychologically complex process due to the context of imagined audiences (Marwick and boyd, 2010) and context collapse (boyd, 2002; Wesch, 2009). That experience deserves SNS researchers and self-identity researchers' attention since the context induces psychologically unique requirements for self-presentation. What has self-presentation to do with self-identity? And how do SNS user profiles change the ways of how we see ourselves?

With a notion of profile work, that describes the complex process of strategic self-presentation in SNSs, I elaborate four different approaches of how self-identity relates to SNS user profiles, and why this relation matters. The four understandings consider profile work as an individual's experience, as an analytical tool to discern between personal and social, as an umbrella framework for the SNS research field to employ, and, as a self-identity shaping socio-cultural process. The presentation calls for discussion from a variety of fields, such as social sciences, psychology, communication and human-computer interaction.

### **2. "I have seen you naked – platform affordances, audience segregation and impression management on tumblr and Facebook"**

Katrin Tiidenberg

Tallinn University

contact: katrin.tiidenberg@gmail.com

This presentation explores trans-platform communication around selfies. It is based on a three year, larger, ethnographic study, where the researcher realized that some of her informants have, in addition to tumblr also started following each other on Facebook. Previous research with this set of informants has repeatedly underlined the 'faceted' (boyd, 2002; Farnham & Churchill, 2011) character of their identities. Thus, this case of social convergence (Van den Berg & Leenes, 2010) offers unique access to how people's self-expression is

interpreted across different platforms. Based on visual discourse analysis (Rose, 2001) of seven informants' Facebook and tumblr presence and interviews, I explore intersection of platform affordances and audience segregation strategies (Goffman, 1959) in people's image sharing and reading practices on tumblr and Facebook. On Tumblr, these informants post sexual, (semi-)nude selfies, bringing their gender, embodiment, and sexuality into the forefront. On Facebook, their content most often emphasizes the roles and social statuses as parents and professionals. This presentation spotlights the discourses of audiencing and platform affordances as well as the pertinent discourses of the self as experienced by the participants.

### **3. Monetizing Network Hospitality: Hospitality and Sociability in the Context of Airbnb**

Tapio Ikkala & Airi Lampinen

University of Helsinki & Mobile Life Centre, Stockholm University

contact: airi@iki.fi

Peer-to-peer online platforms afford novel collaborative practices related to the sharing and exchange of both tangible and non-tangible goods and services such as space, skills, time, and money. Well-known examples of these platforms include the hospitality exchange services Couchsurfing and Airbnb. The two share several key characteristics, but, there is also a crucial difference between the two: Airbnb is focused on short-term peer-to-peer rentals with a well-defined "price tag" attached to them, whereas Couchsurfing fosters hospitality that is offered with the expectation of no direct compensation, on the basis of generalized reciprocity within the community.

The social interaction and the exchange of accommodation that occur via hospitality-exchange services have been referred to as *network hospitality*. Previous studies have examined practices of network hospitality in the Couchsurfing community, where the hospitality exchange is, as a rule, devoid of monetary transactions. We add to the emergent body of research on network hospitality by examining hospitality-exchange processes that take place via Airbnb, a service that promotes monetizing network hospitality. We present a qualitative study that explores 1) what motivates individuals to monetize network hospitality and 2) how the presence of money ties in with the social interaction related to network hospitality in the context of Airbnb. Our study approaches the topic from the perspective of *hosts* – Airbnb users who participate in the network by offering accommodation for other members in exchange for monetary compensation.

We found that, while the possibility of earning money is an important factor in igniting participation, the social aspects of network hospitality play a central role in sustaining hosts' motivation to keep participating. Moreover, our analysis shows that the presence of money provides hospitality exchange with a structure and formality that contributes to the hosts' sense of control and ease of participation. The inclusion of money in the exchange alters the social roles of guests and hosts participating in network hospitality by moving them towards those of customer and service provider. This shift makes host-guest interaction less of an obligation, even for the host. It does not, however, exclude the

possibility of sociable interaction between host and guest. We conclude by discussing the implications of these findings for further research, design, and policy efforts in the domain of network hospitality and the “sharing economy” more broadly.

#### **4. More than fifty shades of mediated community – a literature review from an intergroup perspective**

Vilma Lehtinen<sup>1,3</sup>, Eeva Raita<sup>1,3</sup>, Mikael Wahlström<sup>2,3</sup>, Airi Lampinen<sup>1,3</sup>, Peter Peltonen<sup>3</sup>

1) Helsinki Institute for Information Technology HIIT, Aalto University

2) VTT Technical Research Center of Finland

3) Department of Social Research, University of Helsinki

contact: vilma.lehtinen@helsinki.fi

The ways people organize themselves as communities shift along with the ubiquitous digitalization of social interaction. The scholarly definitions of mediated community, in particular, reveal the aspects of social interaction considered to characterize community today. This article reviews conceptualizations of mediated community in four academic journals in the field of social sciences. We elaborate on the content of these conceptualizations, arguing that to view mediated community as an intergroup phenomenon is marginal in current literature. We propose considering conceptualizations of mediated community explicitly from an intergroup perspective in order to better understand the processes of forming and maintaining community in digitalized, networked settings. We suggest three themes that provide starting points for examining mediated communities from an intergroup perspective, including: a focus on (1) outgroups contributing to a sense of community, (2) interaction occurring on the borders between communities, and (3) intergroup relations delineating the symbolic construction of communities.