12 A Networked Self

Identity Performance and Sociability on Social Network Sites

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The self, in late modern societies, is expressed as fluid abstraction, reified through the individual's association with a reality that may be equally flexible. The process of self presentation becomes an ever-evolving cycle through which individual identity is presented, compared, adjusted, or defended against a constellation of social, cultural, economic, or political realities. Goffman (1959) described this as an information game; "a potentially infinite cycle of concealment, discovery, false revelation, and rediscovery" (p. 13). This somewhat ego-centered approach has been related by other sociologists to contemporary historical developments, which render the self more liquid (Baumann, 2000; 2005), reflexive (Giddens, 1991), or self-identity a process (Jenkins, 2004). Self-identity in public and private life thus traverses distinct yet connected planes of interaction or networks. Technology may provide the stage for this interaction, linking the individual, separately or simultaneously, with multiple audiences. Online social networks constitute such sites of self presentation and identity negotiation. This paper focuses on what it means to present the self in online networked environments.

Social network sites enable individuals to construct a member profile, connect to known and potential friends, and view other members' connections. Their appeal derives from providing a stage for self presentation and social connection. SNSs provide props that facilitate self presentation, including text, photographs, and other multimedia capabilities, but the performance is centered around public displays of social connections or *friends,* which are used to authenticate identity and introduce the self through the reflexive process of fluid association with social circles. Thus, individual and collective identities are simultaneously presented and promoted. Online social networks like MySpace, Facebook, Cyworld, Orkut, LinkedIn, and Bebo reinforce the social affordances of online environments, by fostering interaction that is primarily interpersonal, and founded upon norms of everyday interaction adapted to the online setting. Enabling both identity expression and community building, SNS are initially structured around a niche audience, although they frequently expand beyond that target market. SNSs cater to a variety of cultural and social interests, and vary to the extent that they support additional services such as blogging (e.g.,

LiveJournal), audio/visual content sharing (Flickr, Last.FM, YouTube), professional orientation (LinkedIn), focus on status updates online and mobile connectivity (Twitter, Dodgeball), exclusive membership (ASmallWorld), or specific ethnic, religious, sexual orientation, and/or particular content genres (Orkut, CyWorld).

The individual combines the affordances of both older and newer media to construct a social sphere that lends autonomy and fluidity to the way in which sociality is managed. A model of networked sociality emerges on online spaces, the architectural affordances of which inform human activity, by suggesting possibilities for interaction. Working in ways similar to the architecture of physical spaces, these affordances "organize an ensemble of possibilities and interdictions," which are then left to the individual to actualize or reappropriate (de Certeau, 1984, p. 98). The architectural environment presented through these affordances places the individual at as the center and source of all interactions, which typically emanate from a locus that permits an online connection. Frequently this locus is domestic, although workplace and mobile connections introduce elements of flexibility and ubiquity to the sociability sustained via social network sites. The common element, however, among all these access points, is that they command a private sphere of interaction, meaning that the individual engages socially through a private media environment located within personal and private space. This private sphere of social interaction is rhetorically established by the individual by utilizing existing and imagined geographies of place. Social activities may be pursued, then, through private domestic environments or via temporary moments of privacy attained at the work place, via mobile access, or in other public environments. These privée spaces are socially enabled via networked technologies, and social network sites support this form of networked, mobile, and flexible sociality. The networked architecture of these sites affords publicity, in a manner that frequently does not distinguish between public and private boundaries.

These private spheres of sociality are sustained through SNS member profiles, networks of friends, and communicative capabilities different SNSs offer. It is within this architectural plateau that the networked self is actualized, taking advantage of the expressive and connective affordances of SNSs. Online social networks allow the individual to connect to local and remote spheres of family members, friends and acquaintances, and strong and weaker social ties. They further expand the communicative channels individuals may dedicate toward the cultivation of social networks. The flexibility of online digital technologies permits interaction and relations among individuals within the same networks or across networks, a variety of exchanges and ties, variable frequency of contact and intimacy, affiliation with smaller or larger, and global or local networks formed around variable common matter. The individual gains access to a variety of multimedia tools that enable the possibility of more controlled and more imaginative performances of identity online, or allow users to

create a "face" for each interaction and developing "faces" for a variety of situational contexts (Goffman, 1959). These performances are enabled by a performative palette that combines multimedia elements with cultural references, elements of play, denotative and connotative expression, and a variety of tools. Goffman (1959) has described such performative palettes as the "setting," for the presentation of the self, that is, the "furniture, décor, physical layout and other background items which supply the scenery and stage props," with which the individuals articulate the "front," or a general introductory performance of the self, as opposed to the "backstage," where a more authentic self resides (p. 97). SNSs expand the *expressive equipment* at hand, possibly allowing greater control of the distance between the *front* and *backstage* areas of the self; what is presented and that which is reserved.

The process of self presentation is complicated in the context of SNSs that combine a variety of audiences, of variable privacy or publicity, into a single crowd of spectators observing the same performance, but from a variety of vantage points, depending on their relationship to the performing self. The individual must then engage in multiple mini performances that combine a variety of semiological references so as to produce a presentation of the self that makes sense to multiple audiences, without sacrificing coherence and continuity. The process of modifying behavior so as to be palatable to a variety of audiences is not new for individuals. In every day cycles of self-presentation and impression formation, individuals perform on multiple stages, and in doing so, they blend social spheres online that may have been separate offline, thus confusing private and public boundaries. Meyrowitz (1986) describes these circumstances as subtle changes in the "situational geography of social life," and argues that electronic media frequently reorganize private and public boundaries in ways that expose individuals to a variety of potential audiences, some intentional and several accidental (p. 6). The architectural equivalent of lifting all walls physically separating rooms, houses, offices, buildings, and all concrete structures, this rearrangement of boundaries results in a loss of the unique connection of interaction to place, or in Meyrowitz's terms, the loss of *a sense of place*. Social interactions taking place on SNSs could be interpreted as suffering from a similar lack of private/public boundary delineation, and consequently, a sense of place.

While it is possible for this convergence of boundaries to displace the situational character of some communication, non-verbal and verbal cues afforded by technology enable the mediation of situational information. Following the initial, and rather dramatic collapse of place described by Meyrowitz, individuals become familiar with a multiplication of place, which emphasizes the propagation over the consolidation of audiences. Scannell (1996) has referred to the same process as a "doubling of place," explaining that in late modern life, "public events . . . occur simultaneously in two different places: the place of the event itself and that in which it is

watched and heard. Broadcasting mediates *between* these two sites" (p. 76). With converged technologies, the effect is further multiplied, creating a plurality of overlapping or mutually exclusive social audiences, which is the "doubling" or "multiplying" metaphor may be a more accurate reflection of the role played by technology (e.g., Couldry, 2000; 2004; Moores, 2004; Scannell, 1996; Ross, 2004). Consequently, social relationships are multiplied, creating the potential for multiple performances of the self occurring in a variety of different stages (Moores, 2004). This multiplication of social audience does not *imply* a lost sense of place, but it does necessitate performances that are more aware, so as to make sense to a variety of audiences. These performances are crafted in fragments of polysemic pertinence, which are interconnected by the SNS member profile. The resulting space is a converged continuum of sociality that is "homogeneous, yet at the same time broken into fragments" (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 342).

Given that identity is performed to multiplied audiences, via multiple tools and on multiple stages, what are the consequences of these polysemous performances for sociality? The growing popularity of social network sites frequently leads scholars, the media, and the public to ask what sorts of individuals these networks produce: More or less social? Research typically reveals that following an initial phase during which avid use of a new medium displaces other habits, individuals return to their everyday routines, which now include a healthier integration of the new medium. Therefore, for most people, new media contribute to, rather than permanently dislodge social, and other routines. As a result, individual spheres of sociality are not necessarily enhanced or restricted, but they are reformed. Important as it may be to consider the impact of the technology on social behaviors, a binary focus on effects invites metric tendencies that are inherently misguiding. More meaningful questions lie in determining not sheer amount or presence of sociality, but rather, the patterns of sociality that emerge.

Similarly, the growing relevance of social network sites invite questions regarding the social character of these platforms, leading us to ask: Are these tendencies reflective of more or less social media? By definition, communication media connect (and disconnect), thus inherently possessing social attributes. Decades of social science research on communication technologies have shown that media do not render people more or less social; they connect, and in doing so, afford all situations they mediate social properties. All media are social. Without question, media will foster some form of social connection; more interesting questions lie in investigating who they connect, who they disconnect, and how.

Finally, popular interest in social network sites revolves around the extent to which these present more or less social spaces. Given the ability of people to populate space with activity that is social, via media that intrinsically permit connection, more interesting questions involve what makes a space social; why some activities are present in certain social spaces and

absent from others; and how properties of space inform the ways in which we perform our sociality.

ONLINE SOCIAL NETWORKS AND SOCIAL NETWORK SITES

Research on online social networks examines the formation and maintenance of online networks that support existing and new social ties (Wasserman and Faust, 1994; Wellman and Berkowitz, 1997). The unit of analysis is the interaction or relation between people, measured in terms of ties held by individuals maintaining a relation, the types of exchanges, frequency of contact, strength of ties, intimacy, qualitative elements of relations, size of networks, global or local span of networks and numerous other variables (Haythornthwaite, 2000; 2001; 2002a, 2002b; 2005; Haythornthwaite, Wellman, and Mantei, 1995; Haythornthwaite and Wellman, 1998).

Earlier online social network research examined communication and medium use (e-mail, phone, fax, and videoconferencing) in a work network of co-located researchers, to find that pairs of individuals possessing stronger ties tended to communicate more frequently, maintain a greater number of relations and communicate more frequently (Haythornthwaite, Wellman and Mantei, 1995; Haythornthwaite and Wellman, 1998). This finding has re-surfaced in a variety of networks and context, including distance learning (e.g., Haythornthwaite, 2000; 2001; 2002a, 2002b), organizational contexts (e.g., Garton, Haythornthwaite and Wellman, 1997), and social support networks (e.g., Hlebec, Manfreda and Vehovar, 2006) allowing researchers to finetune the concepts of *social network relation* (type of exchange or interaction, characterized by *content, direction* and *strength*), *tie* (pairs who maintain one or more types of relations, developing *strong, weak* or *latent* ties), *network* as web of person-to-person connectivity (distinguishing between *ego-centered* or *whole* network analysis, which may examine *range, centrality* or *roles*), and *media multiplexity* (the tendency of more strongly tied pairs to make use of more available media). Studies focusing on *Netville,* a wired suburb of Toronto, revealed that online interaction frequently supplemented or served as an alternative to face-to-face interaction, in ways that had positive effects on social capital (Hampton and Wellman, 2000; Hampton, 2002; Hampton and Wellman, 2001a, 2001b, 2003; Wellman, Haase, Witte, and Hampton, 2001).

Social network sites represent a natural extension of this work, as they connect networks of individuals that may or may not share a place based connection. Social network sites are defined as "web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system" (boyd and Ellison, 2007). They host social networks that are articulated online, and as such, they present one

iteration or aspect of social network research. On most SNSs, users are not looking to meet new people or to network, but rather to sustain contact with their existing group of friends and acquaintances (boyd and Ellison, 2007). In doing so, presenting a profile and displaying connections with others publicly forms the basis for interaction on SNSs (boyd and Ellison, 2007; boyd and Heer, 2006; Donath, 2007; Donath and boyd, 2004). SNSs support varying types of interaction on diverse and differing platforms, and SNSs like Friendster, MySpace, and Facebook have had a significant influence on the orientation of most other SNSs (for a timeline of SNSs, see boyd and Ellison, 2007).

SOCIAL NETWORK SITES AS SOCIAL ARCHITECTURES

Research on SNSs generates interdisciplinary interest and evidence of evolving social behaviors online. Self presentation online and impression management presents a common starting point for most researchers. boyd and Heer (2006) studied user profiles on SNSs as conversational pieces, and found that Friendster users display friends to suggest or "signal" aspects of their identity to potential audiences. In this context, "public displays of connection" present the center of identity performance, and are typically viewed as "a signal of the reliability of one's identity claims" (Donath and boyd, 2004, p. 73). Users frequently compete for who possesses the most or most coveted friends (Cassidy, 2006; Slotnik, 2007). Furthermore, SNSs reinforce the social character of online environments, by fostering interaction that is primarily interpersonal, and founded upon norms of everyday interaction adapted to the online setting. Donath (1998; 2007) found that individuals combine reliable, yet costly to produce *assessment* signals, with not as reliable or costly *conventional* signals to communicate authenticity online. To this point, Donath (2007) elaborated that site design promotes the development of particular culture or behaviors and identity presentation.

Several researchers employ the architecture of the SNS as starting point, to discuss and investigate a variety of related topics. Stutzman (2006) tracked the types of personal information most likely to be disclosed on SNSs, pointing out that lexical or architectural differences among these SNSs (Friendster, MySpace, and Facebook) contributed to tendencies or variations in personal information disclosure. Gross and Acquisti (2005) further examined how individuals disclose information and protect privacy on Facebook, finding that most users share personal information openly and few modify their default privacy settings for increased protection. For members of a YouTube community, "publicly private" (private behaviors, exhibited with the member's true identity) and "privately public" (sharing publicly accessible video without disclosing member's true identity) behaviors were developed within the architectural confines of the system to signal different depths of

relationships and to communicate empathy, respect or inclusion among members of the network (Lange, 2007). On MySpace and Friendster, displays of interests were carefully selected and arranged so as to communicate affiliation with a particular taste culture or fabric (Liu, Maes, and Davenport, 2006; Liu, 2007). Activities and behaviors can also be structured to facilitate particular discussion or interest genres (Byrne, 2007a; 2007b). These trends are reflective of behaviors that are need oriented, and are developed around the customization of social attributes of technologies, effected for the communication of social information. They suggest a confluence of user motives, media attributes, and social ties or outcomes that have been previously examined in media research within the approaches of uses and gratifications, social networks, and through a discussion of media attributes or affordances of particular media genres or platforms.

In these networks that are particularly ego-centered, individuals at the center of their own networks take charge and adapt network norms to fit personal, cultural and social context (boyd, 2006a). Moreover, SNS users frequently interpret cues deposited in member profiles, such as message on Facebook "walls" or pictures of member friends to make inferences about the member's character (Walther, Van Der Heide, Kim, Westerman, and Tom Tong, 2008). In a context that is markedly non-western, such as Cyworld, architectural SNS features are adapted to match the cultural norms of the users and the high-context relational dialectics of Koreans (Kim and Yun, 2007). These empirical data further document reappropriations of technology that cater to the fulfillment of particular needs associated with the sustenance of social ties with a variety of circles or networks.

Finally, several studies develop around Facebook, the most popular of social networks at present. In particular, studies of Facebook find that users employ the network to learn more about individuals they meet offline, thus further documenting the connection between online and offline behaviors and tendencies (Lampe, Ellison, and Steinfield, 2006). Further studies reveal a strong association between bridging social capital, which expands social opportunities and enhances information sharing among primarily weak ties, and individuals reporting low satisfaction and low self-esteem (Ellison, Steinfield, and Lampe, 2007). These findings underline connections between user orientations and subsequent generation of social capital, which map out a credible intersection for U&G and the social networks approach.

Moreover, it becomes apparent, from relevant research, that online social networks simultaneously suggest genres of behavior through their architectural elements and submit the same architectural elements to the behavioral idioms of their users, who customize them to better connect offline and online interactions. So, while the architecture of SNSs is suggestive, it does not have to be inherently limiting, depending of course on the culture and orientation of the online social network. Learning from previous examinations of online social networks, this study examines SNSs as space, and

investigates differences and similarities that develop among three SNSs that make distinctly contrasting uses of online space.

THE AFFORDANCES OF CONVERGENT TECHNOLOGIES

The architecture of the technology that belies these networked platforms of interaction rests upon principles of convergence, which enable multiple and overlapping connections between varieties of distinct spheres of sociability. The social platforms or spaces sustained by convergent technologies accentuate confluence, flexibility, and reflexivity of media content. Jenkins (2006) has broadly defined convergence as "a word that describes technological, industrial, cultural and social changes in the ways media circulates within our culture . . . a situation in which multiple media systems coexist and where media content flows fluidly across them" (p. 282). Jenkins emphasizes that convergence references several common ideas, including the flow of content across media platforms, overlap between media industries, financing that serves the interest of combined processes of media production, migratory behavior on the part of audiences that virally follow content, and of course, the ability for audiences to interact with content as both consumers and producers. The convergent properties of media render them both *remixed* and *remixable*; the product of institutions and independent socio-cultural agents. It is helpful to understand social network platforms as hosting social resources that are both remixed and remixable, allowing to reference content that has been reworked and can be further reworked as we construct performances of the self.

Needless to say, convergence as a property is neither exclusive to nor defining of all communication technology. While characterized by a confluence of information communication services and platforms, convergence of technologies brings forth and is sustained by a convergence of practices within and beyond technology, thus also proposing a convergence of spaces and practices. To this point, Deuze (2007) suggests that convergence "is not just a technological process," and must therefore also be recognized as "having a cultural logic of its own, blurring the lines between production and consumption, between making media and using media, and between active or passive spectatorship of mediated culture" (p. 74). The confluent properties of information technologies suggest particular possibilities for interaction, which tend to be structured around the potential for interaction to converge social spheres, remix social resources, and reorganize the time and space contours of sociability. It would be sensible to characterize these properties as the affordances of convergent technological architecture, that is, intrinsic potentialities of technologies that make them "easier to use them for some purposes than for others" (Buckingham, 2008, p. 12). Open to re-appropriation by individuals, affordances are negotiated and

re-deployed, characterizing technology that is both "socially shaped and socially shaping" (Buckingham, 2008, p. 12; Williams, 1974).

Several studies of social network sites reflect how, in the absence of sufficient relational cues, individuals in SNSs actively renegotiate the architectural attributes of websites so as to craft identity performances that are more authentic (Fono & Raynes-Goldie, 2006). SNSs users transplant the process of cultivating friendships within the architecturally imposed structure of "friending or not," and organize hierarchies of friends with varying privileges (boyd, 2006a). Individuals also frequently deposit or interpret cues in member walls, pictures, or comments thus employing enriching the virtual architecture of the site with social information (Walther, Van Der Heide, Kim, Westerman, and Tom Tong, 2008). These behaviors document a selection of virtual spaces motivated by felt needs for socially driven communication. Subsequent customizations of space appear to be connected to expectations of specific social outcomes. These behaviors are driven by the socio-psychological premise of the U&G approach, and are directed toward the generation of varying types social capital, in manner that suggests optimal use or even a remixing of the social affordances of convergent technologies.

THE USES, NETWORKS, AND AFFORDANCES OF CONVERGENT TECHNOLOGIES

The networked context of converged media necessitates that we abandon theoretical preferences of the past that connected specific user orientations to distinct media, and rather, come up with a theoretical model that examines converged media, converged spaces, and, converged media practices. In the next few paragraphs, I summarize three studies that have combined elements of the three approaches, and present examples of how we may integrate theoretical approaches to understand convergent user orientations and adaptations of these technologies.

The first study is based on a theoretical framework that combined U&G with the social network approach to study how motives and social-psychological traits affect Facebook use, social network structural factors (size of network, density, types of ties) and social capital generated (Papacharissi and Mendelson, 2008). College students in a large urban university were surveyed on their uses of Facebook, social ties sustatined, and a variety of social and psychological antecedent variables. Prevalent motives that emerged form the analysis included the motives of habitual pass time and relaxing entertainment, both of which combined motive categories for traditional media. Not only did this reflect the converged nature of the services provided by Facebook, but it also suggested salient uses for most users tended to be of a ritualistic and relatively passive nature. Qualitative and quantitative responses on dominant uses of Facebook pointed to a user state that shifts between the socially active and idle, much like status displays

on online environment do. Alternatively, and rather colloquially put, this actively passive and passively active mode of social engagement is reflective of a social couch potato: Users happily connect with others socially, as long as they may do so from the comfort an electronically mediated couch, in a state that permits the stationary pursuit of social activity.

This paradox is befalling of our everyday ecologies, which blur spheres of work and play, friends and co-workers, public and private life. Social networks and online technologies further support the routines that we have created for ourselves. While the affordances of social networks sites may remediate aspects of our habits, our ecologies are defined by contemporary trends that include globalization, trasnational mobility and work, social spheres that are local, global and glocal, and in general, with what some have a more liquid pace of life (Bauman, 2005). We are accustomed to think of sociability as an extroverted and active behavior. These results highlight practices of sociability that are physically static, and attain mobility and flexibility via the social affordances of online technologies. From a relaxed state that converges passivity and sociality, social network site users traverse spheres of social interaction to learn about and interact with others they connect to. They are motivated, they are networked, they engage in behaviors that both goal driven and ritualistic at heart, and they are influenced but also possess the ability to influence the technology they use. The theoretical perspective that examines their behavior must not only acknowledge all these aspects but also find a way to theoretically converge them.

The second study examined the use of photo galleries as an instrument of self presentation and a means of visual autobiography online (Mendelson and Papacharissi, 2010). Photographs have long served a significant function of preserving biographical memories. The manner in which college students portray themselves and tag others through photographs on Facebook is a contemporary means of introducing the self and performing one's identity. Inspired by Chalfen's (1987) examination of "how we construct, manipulate, interpret, live with, participate in, and generally use visual symbolic forms" (p. 5), we examined how visual imagery is employed to present the self and everyday college life via Facebook photo galleries. Results indicated the use of convergent properties of media to communicate polysemic performances to converged audiences, all aimed at sustaining a ritual view of communication, that is, community integration and belonging through the sharing of common experiences and values (Carey, 1975).

The commonality of the images within each student's collection and between all the students demonstrated that while the outfits and locations change, the types of events documented and the nature of the poses do not. The same stories are told and retold in these photographs. Because pictures are posted by multiple people, the photo galleries are dynamic or liquid. The collections of photos are potentially always changing, thus presenting a confluent plane of activity upon which performances of the self are enacted, and "tagged." This convergent context simultaneously references

spaces and evolves beyond space, presenting what de Certeau (1984) has termed *a moving map*, upon which visual depictions of memories are pieced into narratives through the practice of "tagging." The fluid context upon which performances of the self are enacted affords reflexively shaped personal narratives of the self, which are indicative of what sociologists have described as a constant state of flux or liquid modernity (Bauman, 2005; Giddens, 1990). What is compelling then, is the way in which individuals employ remixed content, like a tagged and commented upon photograph, and further remix it so as to continue crafting an identify performance that multi-tasks: It establishes autonomy for the self, *and* underlines the importance of group membership and cohesion.

Finally, a third study examined three social networks to understand how architectural features influence iterations of community and identity in Facebook, LinkedIn, and ASmallWorld (Papacharissi, 2009). This comparative analysis examined symbolic representations of everyday communicative routines that these social networks create for their users, so as to understand the significance of virtual architecture. Architecture was operationalized as the content, structure, and design of social network sites. The analysis focused on the underlying structure or architecture of these sites, on the premise that it may set the tone for particular types of interaction.

Four themes emerged, highlighting the *private/public* balance present in each SNS, styles of *self-presentation in spaces privately public and publicly private*, cultivation of *taste performances* as a mode of socio-cultural identification and organization, and the formation of *tight* or *loose* social settings. Facebook emerged as the architectural equivalent of a Glass House, with a publicly open structure, looser behavioral norms, and abundance of tools members use to leave cues for each other. On the other hand, LinkedIn and ASmallWorld employed their own architecture to suggest behavioral norms for their members, and required behavior consistent with the taste ethos of the network. The resulting spaces produced were tighter, offering less room for spontaneous interaction and network generation. Looser online spaces highlighted user autonomy, but required higher literacy levels and technological know how of the users, so as to protect privacy and negotiate identity performances. Tighter architectures sacrificed user autonomy for the provision of structural, content, and design-related elements that provided some privacy and behavioral orientation.

A synthesis of these three studies suggests that future research on online media should move away from linear understandings of user motivations and social outcomes, to networked theoretical conceptualization that permit us to follow the organic generation of developing forms of sociability (Walther et al., 2010). So-called social media enhance a particular type of sociability—networked sociability. And they contain affordances that permit persons maintain the individuality of their private sphere as they traverse to sociality. Networked and remixed sociabilities emerge and are practiced over *multiplied* place and audiences, that do not necessarily

collapse one's sense of place, but afford sense of place reflexively. A sense of place is formed in response to the particular sense of self, or in response to the identity performance constructed upon that place. This presents the modus operandi for the networked self, and the context of newer patterns of sociability and routes to sociality that emerge. The ability for individuals to efficiently avail themselves of the potential of social network sites depends on the individual level of access, literacy, and general comfort with socially networked platforms of interaction. Adept navigation of the social landscapes of SNSs implies that identity is performed, but is also edited across multiplied and converged audiences. It requires some mastery of the expressive equipment at hand, or the ability to maneuver in what Castells (2001) termed, the *technical geography* of social network sites. The ability to edit, or *redact* one's own, multiple self-performances, may afford a sense of place, even if temporarily so, for the individual. As such, redactional acumen becomes a survival skill, as individuals exercise, become comfortable with and play with a networked sense of self.

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