



Context collapse: theorizing context collusions and collisions

Jenny L Davis & Nathan Jurgenson

To cite this article: Jenny L Davis & Nathan Jurgenson (2014) Context collapse: theorizing context collusions and collisions, *Information, Communication & Society*, 17:4, 476-485, DOI: [10.1080/1369118X.2014.888458](https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2014.888458)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2014.888458>



Published online: 05 Mar 2014.



[Submit your article to this journal](#)



Article views: 1566



[View related articles](#)



[View Crossmark data](#)



Citing articles: 41 [View citing articles](#)

Context collapse: theorizing context collusions and collisions

Jenny L Davis^{a*} and Nathan Jurgenson^b

^aDepartment of Sociology, James Madison University, MSC 7501, Harrisonburg, USA; ^bDepartment of Sociology, University of Maryland, College Park, 20742, USA

(Received 24 September 2013; accepted 23 January 2014)

The collapsing of social contexts together has emerged as an important topic with the rise of social media that so often blurs the public and private, professional and personal, and the many different selves and situations in which individuals find themselves. Academic literature is starting to address how the meshing of social contexts online has many potentially beneficial as well as problematic consequences. In an effort to further theorize context collapse, we draw on this literature to consider the conditions under which context collapse occurs, offering key conceptual tools with which to address these conditions. Specifically, we distinguish two different types of context collapse, splitting collapse into *context collusions* and *context collisions*. The former is an intentional collapsing of contexts, while the latter is unintentional. We further examine the ways in which both technological architectures and agentic user practices combine to facilitate and mitigate the various effects of collapsing contexts.

Keywords: computer-mediated-communication; social theory; sociology; social networking; identity

Introduction

The collapsing of social contexts together has emerged as an important topic with the rise of social media that so often blurs the public and private, professional and personal, and the many different selves and situations in which individuals find themselves. Academic literature is starting to address how the meshing of social contexts online has many potentially beneficial as well as problematic consequences. In an effort to further theorize context collapse, we draw upon the existing social media literature to look at the conditions under which context collapse occurs, offering key conceptual tools with which to address these conditions. Specifically, we distinguish between two different types of context collapse: we propose splitting collapse into *context collusions* and *context collisions*, with the important distinction being that of intentionality. Recognizing the mutually influential relationship between ‘readers’ and ‘writers’ of technology (Oliver, 2005), we take care to delineate how architectures facilitate collapse, but also its mitigation, and how users, as agentic beings, circumvent architectural affordances.¹

Drawing on existing literature, we conceptually map key trends with respect to context collapse. Clarifying intentional context collusions from unintentional context collisions provides much needed specificity. This theoretical treatment acts as an impetus for future empirical work, in which these conceptual tools can aid researchers in framing and making sense of quantitative and qualitative data from the field.

*Corresponding author. Email: davis5jl@jmu.edu

Context collapse

Broadly, *context collapse* refers to how people, information, and norms from one context seep into the bounds of another (boyd, 2002, 2008; Marwick & boyd, 2011; Meyrowitz, 1985; Wesch, 2009). Meyrowitz (1985) first pointed to this as an effect of broadcast media, as journalists, no longer confined to finite audiences, spoke to multiple, invisible audiences, each of whom held different – and at times disparate – expectations about the news, and the social world more generally. Extending this idea to digital media, boyd coined the term *collapsed contexts* in 2002. She contends that collapsing contexts have become part and parcel of everyday interaction for digitally connected citizens. Although the concept is now used widely within social media research (boyd, 2002, 2008; Marwick & boyd, 2011; Vitak, 2012; Wesch, 2009), there remains ambiguity as to its precise definition. As such, our first task is to delineate what we mean by context, and in turn, context collapse.

In common parlance, *context* pertains simultaneously to physical arrangements, social relationships, situational definitions, temporal moments, and distinct locales. Here, with a focus on identity and interpersonal negotiations, we define context in terms of role identities and their related networks. Encompassing space, place, history and situation, context refers to the identity meanings activated through interaction with a particular social network. As we discuss below, the self is made up of multiple identities, each of which exists within a network of others who hold particular expectations about who the actor is. These expectations inform appropriate – and inappropriate – lines of action and identity performance. In these terms, collapse refers to the overlapping of role identities through the intermingling of distinct networks.

Importantly, our theoretical treatment of context collapse assumes that some degree of collapse is present in *all* contexts, but normative levels of collapse vary from one context to the next. That is, some contexts are more porous than others. The notion of context collapse – and our derivatives: *collusion* and *collision* – must be understood first, within the scholarly image of a particular historical moment, known as a networked era. Relatedly, these terms must be situated within the set of affordances and dynamics which distinguish this era.

A networked era refers to a historical moment characterized by pervasive and increasing digital and social connectivity (Rainie & Wellman, 2012). Within a networked era, social media platforms act as key hubs of interaction and identity negotiations. By social media, we refer to the set of interactive Internet applications which facilitate (collaborative or individual) creation, curation, consumption, and sharing of user-generated content (Davis, 2012). The Pew Internet and American Life Project indicates that 69% of Americans utilize some form of social media with over 90% under the age of 30 maintaining at least one social media account (Brenner, 2012). More concretely, Facebook, the current predominant social media platform, reports a billion active users per month as of October 2012, most of whom reside outside of the United States (Facebook.com, 2012). In short, we live in a digitally connected era, and sociality is deeply affected by emerging media technologies.

Boyd (2010) contends that this era is characterized by a distinct set of affordances and dynamics. In particular, it affords persistence, replicability, scalability, and searchability of information. Papacharissi and Yuan (2011) adds to this the affordance of sharability. With these affordances, networked individuals – those who occupy a networked era (Rainie & Wellman, 2012) – must manage the dynamics of invisible audiences, the blurring of private and public, and context collapse (boyd, 2010). We discuss these affordances and dynamics in turn below.

Persistence refers to the continued availability of content beyond the temporal moment of its creation. Even after deletion, the content may have spread and may be stored and potentially altered, in a variety of physical and digital locations maintained by other users. The content is scalable, in that users often share it with large and potentially diverse audiences, who can

further share the content with their own networks, expanding its reach far beyond the local interaction situation. Further, the content is searchable, such that it is stored on servers and becomes re-available when someone types matching key terms into a search bar. Finally, sharability reflects the tendency of networked digital structures to encourage sharing, over withholding, information (boyd, 2010; Papacharissi & Yuan, 2011). As Stutzman (2006) argues, sharability is perhaps why so many people engage so openly on social media.

These affordances of networked publics create dynamics to be managed by networked individuals. Invisible audiences refer to the obscured viewership for one's self-presentation and/or content creation. Although users often act as though their audiences are bounded, they are in fact, potentially limitless (Marwick & boyd, 2011). Moreover, networked publics are characterized by a blurring of private and public, as personal life is increasingly available for public interaction, and personal data become part of aggregated databases. Finally, these audiences (actual and potential), by default, span multiple arenas of the actor's social world; collapsing contexts that were previously segmented. It is within this historical moment, characterized by networked publics and networked individualism (boyd, 2010; Rainie & Wellman, 2012) that we further expound upon the literature surrounding context collapse, and its effects upon interaction and identity processes.

The boundary seeping of context collapse complicates a long history of social psychological theorizing about how the self operates. In particular, entire lines of theory assume that social actors hold many identities, with related networks, and that these identities and networks remain relatively separate from one another. Social actors perform multiple roles throughout the life course and simultaneously at any given moment within the life course. For instance, one may be a mother, sister, athlete, student, and exotic dancer. For each role, the social actor maintains particular identity meanings guiding who s/he is, and a network of others who (typically) share these expectations. Although the expectations across some roles may coincide neatly, it is most often the case that each role bears slightly different meanings, and in some cases, highly contradictory ones.

Social psychologists argue that we come to know ourselves by seeing what we do and how others react to us, and that through interaction, we seek to maintain the identity meanings associated with each role (Burke & Stets, 2009; Cooley, 1902; Mead, 1934). Indeed, Mead (1934) contends that for each role the actor plays, there is a separate Generalized Other, or larger moral understanding of who the person is and how the person is expected to be in the world. Social actors manage their myriad roles by adhering to disparate expectations as is situationally necessary. In this vein, Goffman (1959) demonstrates the skilful ways social actors reveal and conceal aspects of themselves for varying audiences, maintaining separate faces within distinct social arenas, while Leary (1995) discusses playing to each audience, their values, and their perceived positive opinions of the actor.

Collapsing contexts challenge clean movement between networks and across Generalized Others. Indeed, the default within social media platforms is such that diverse Generalized Others converge into a single mass, requiring the actor to simultaneously engage with family, colleagues, and drinking buddies, each of whom harbours different views of who the actor is, and different interactional and performative expectations. Concretely, this may mean that a picture of the target actor, beer-bonging at a fraternity party, is visible to their boss, and perhaps worse yet, their mother.

Further, unlike early forms of computer-mediated-communication which facilitated relatively strong actor control over the presented self (Walther, 1996), social media sites offer a significant portion of presentational control to those in the actor's networks. Indeed, social media platforms are first and foremost *social*, and each profile is co-constructed through public wall posts, tagged status updates, tagged pictures, and comments (Marwick & Ellison, 2012; Vitak, 2012). That is,

profiled content is both self-generated and other-generated. Through the warranting principle – the principle that third-party information is more believable than information actors provide about themselves – Walther and colleagues demonstrate that social media audiences give greater credence to other-generated content, than self-generated content (Walther, Van Der Heide, Hamel, & Shulman, 2009). For example, they show that Facebook audiences grant greater weight to a tagged picture than the ones the actors post intentionally (Walther et al., 2009). Networked individuals, therefore, not only manage their own performances in light of broad and diverse audiences, but also contend with the contributions of audience members, each of whom holds expectations about the actor that potentially conflict with one another.

This is not to say that context collapse is absent from face-to-face settings, or that it only emerged with social media or Web 2.0 technologies. On the contrary, weddings, funerals, and public community gathering spaces have long been sites of merging networks and divergent audience expectations (Marwick & Ellison, 2012). Moreover, as stated above, *all* contexts maintain some degree of collapse, as, for example, spouses bring stresses and successes from work into the home, workers bring family worries into the office, and colleagues meet up – intentionally or unintentionally – at local pubs. Some contexts, however, are more porous than others, allowing outside networks and roles to easily seep in, or alternatively, maintaining relatively solid contextual boundaries. Contextual porousness is exacerbated by the affordances of social media and the dynamics of networked publics. The relative segmentation of earlier times becomes more salient, just as the relative blending of networked others in the present era takes hold as a new status quo.

Largely, the literature depicts context collapse as difficult to avoid due to the architectures and normative structures of social media platforms. The affordances of Facebook, for instance, are such that users are searchable, the cost of connection is very low, and norms dictate that requests for connection (i.e. ‘friend requests’) be honoured if the actor knows the requestor in even the most distant capacity (McLaughlin & Vitak, 2012). The ease of network growth within this setting has reset the meaning of network size such that very large networks are no longer status symbols or signs of popularity, but potentially discrediting signifiers of narcissism and/or in-authenticity (Donath & boyd, 2004; Ellison, Steinfield, & Lampe, 2011; Tong, Van Der Heide, Langwell, & Walther, 2008). As we will discuss below, this porousness can hold significant benefit and is often sought out by social media users (i.e. context collusions). In other cases, however, the consequences are deleterious, and users actively work to solidify contextual boundaries, enforcing privacy and avoiding unintended spread of information (i.e. context collisions).

Like all social phenomena, one would expect context collapse and its consequences to affect different *categories* of people differently. Despite a wealth of work on context collapse, its effects, and users’ responses, researchers have paid less systematic attention to how these vary along with social and demographic characteristics. There are, however, indications that status and power disparities within the social structure reflect in these variations. First, if open networks facilitate bridging social capital (Ellison, Steinfield, & Lampe, 2007; Ellison et al., 2011), then those with the need to acquire such capital (e.g. those without jobs, in need of material resources from others, etc.) have the most to lose by avoiding collapsed contexts (Rainie & Wellman, 2012). At the same time, those who enact non-normative identities, or engage in socially reprimanded behaviours, may *need* to keep their networks segmented in order to avoid social rejection, physical harm, or even institutionalization (Lim, Vadrevu, Yoke, & Basnyat, 2012). Finally, the ability to agentically choose segmentation within a relatively porous platform is largely dependent upon the user skill level and technological comfort, which varies by race, class, gender, and age (Hargittai & Litt, 2013).

This review of the literature on context collapse suggests that many theoretical refinements are in order, only one of which – disentangling collusions from collisions – we attempt in this paper. Processes of collusions and collisions are present in other studies, though they are not labelled as

such, and their relationship has not yet been delineated. Collisions are most frequently demonstrated within studies which focus on social media privacy management (Child & Westerman, 2013; Vitak, 2012), while collusions are most frequently demonstrated in studies which focus on network building (Ellison et al., 2011). We draw on these studies in our theoretical treatment below.

Context collusions and collisions

We propose distinguishing between two types of context collapse, *context collusions* and *context collisions*. Context collusion is the process whereby social actors intentionally collapse, blur, and flatten contexts, especially using various social media. However, the instance that, perhaps rightfully, garners more attention is context collisions, in which different social environments unintentionally and unexpectedly come crashing into each other. Both are examples of context collapse, but are quite different from each other both in practice and in consequence and thus need conceptual distinction.

To situate the various conditions of context collapse, we use Nissenbaum's (2010) concept of *Contextual Integrity*. Nissenbaum offers contextual integrity as a privacy framework which avoids dichotomies of public and private, and rests instead upon the appropriate practices for collection and dissemination of information rooted in the particular norms governing any given arena. Applying this to context collapse, we argue that each site of interaction also has a normative degree of collapse, such that the norms in some settings facilitate more or less porous boundaries between networks and identities. One can expect the information presented and shared within a given setting to be available to as diverse or homogenous a group as is normative within that setting, unless the actor agentically circumvents these normative standards.

Like privacy, the degree of normative collapse is always relational and situation specific. As such, how actors manage their networks must be understood with regard to these norms. For example, one would expect contexts to be relatively collapsed at a wedding, and would need to purposefully do things to re-segment networks – like strategically setting up tables – if they wished to avoid the collapse. Similarly, on Facebook, the default is for relatively porous boundaries, so users who wish to limit this might make use of privacy settings, 'Fakebooks' (accounts under pseudonyms), etc. However, on other platforms, such as LinkedIn, the normative level of collapse is relatively low (as compared with Facebook), with networks primarily made up of professional contacts. Here, the actor would have to engage in efforts to break down network walls, for example, invite neighbours to the site, share personal information, etc. (Papacharissi (2009) for a comparative analysis of the 'openness' of Facebook, LinkedIn, and ASmallworld).

With this framework in mind, we argue that context collapse happens under varying conditions. At times, actors collapse contexts on purpose, while other times, contexts collapse by default, or possibly, by surprise. Context collapse can occur through the affordances of a particular media, or in spite of them. In disentangling the conditions of context collapse, we offer the terms *context collusions* and *context collisions*. The main difference between collusions and collisions is intentionality.

Context collusions are the purposeful, intentional, bringing together of various contexts and their related networks. Context collusions occur when we invite various social contexts to come together. This form of context collapse can often be beneficial, convenient, and it certainly predates social media. Examples of this are easy to find. A traditional Western wedding is often a situation in which different social contexts, from close friends to distant relatives and many more, collapse together into one situation. In this type of context collusion, the married individuals often invite such context collapse in order to introduce the sometimes very different people to each

other. That is, the normative boundaries of a wedding are relatively porous, and the hosts collude to bring multiple networks together in the same social space.

Similarly, much of what one does on social media is also this sort of context collusion. Understanding the porous boundaries of many social media platforms, users actively and intentionally invite various contexts, like with the wedding example, to witness status updates, photos, public exchanges, and so on. The ability to display oneself to, and engage with, various social contexts at once can certainly be an efficient way of performing the self, announcing that one exists, obtaining resources, and taking advantage of the affordances of social media.

In this vein, Papacharissi (2009) describes Facebook as a glasshouse, in which all are invited to see and participate in sociality. The less-porous LinkedIn invites only a sub-set of users' networks, but still facilitates collusion among dispersed professional contacts (e.g. people from different fields, different positions, and with different histories of interaction with the target actor), often with the goal of obtaining work-related opportunities (Papacharissi, 2009). Collusions are well reflected in social media-social capital research. Rainie and Wellman (2012) contend that the ability to transcend network walls is instrumental in obtaining social, informational, and material resources. Similarly, Ellison and colleagues demonstrate that weak-tie maintenance, facilitated by what we call social media collusions, are key in garnering and maintaining social capital (Ellison et al., 2007; Ellison et al., 2011; Hampton, Lee, & Her, 2011).

Morris, Teevan, and Panovich (2010), for example, demonstrate that people use both Facebook and Twitter to reach broad networks when asking for information, opinions, or opportunities, motivated in part by the belief that these networks are *more* beneficial than a generic search engine inquiry. Similarly, Shklovskil, Palen, and Sutton (2008) show that social media has been instrumental in disaster relief, as community members distribute information and resources across geographic barriers connecting officials, relatives, volunteers, and concerned citizens. Finally, Wesch (2009) argues that the creation and viewing of personal YouTube vlogs offers a unique opportunity for both sharing and self-reflection through connection to others across contextual boundaries.

Context collusions are those in which users draw on the affordances of interaction platforms to bring together multiple networks, for varying purposes and to varying degrees. One might elicit sympathy through a Facebook status update, elicit consulting work via LinkedIn, information via Twitter, or funds via Kickstarter. Collusions are a combined product of platform design and user practice, as users intentionally transcend network boundaries.

The key difference between collusions and collisions is intentionality. While collusions are intentional, collisions are not. We define *context collisions* as those occasions in which contexts come together without any effort on the part of the actor, and sometimes, unbeknownst to the actor, with potentially chaotic results. Context collisions are similar to what Petronio (2002) refers to as *privacy turbulence*, or the violation of privacy rules. Collisions, however, occur specifically under the condition of collapsing contexts – that is, when disparate networks overlap. Context collisions may, therefore, be thought of as a special case of turbulence, one specifically incited by collapsed contexts.

As discussed previously, each setting maintains privacy norms (Nissenbaum, 2010), and as we argue, norms about contextual porousness. When information seeps beyond what the user believes to be the contextual boundaries, a collision occurs. This could be the consequence of a mistake or naivety on the part of the individual, malicious intent on the part of another individual or group, or flawed policies by the entities that handle one's information.

Certainly, context collisions predate social media. Making a joke about one's boss and not knowing that the boss stands in close proximity is a long-standing comedic trope that demonstrates a context collision. One of the most notorious and consequential instances of context collision occurred when the 2012 Republican Presidential candidate Mitt Romney made disparaging

remarks about ‘47%’ of Americans. A discrete audience member captured these comments on a hidden camera and broadcast them widely to the detriment of the Romney campaign. The context of a private meeting with a small group of supporters came colliding for Mr Romney with the context of a general electorate who judged his language quite differently.

Familiar situations of context collisions via social media often involve authority-subordinate relations, such as teens posting information that their parents come to discover, workers getting penalized for posting information about their bosses on Twitter, or people posting their illegal activities, which, when seen by police, result in legal repercussions.

For example, Binder, Howes, and Sutcliffe (2009) show through survey data that diversity within a Facebook network is linked to tension between network members. This is particularly strong with regard to kin, as familial expectations may differ significantly from those of others in an actor’s life. Similarly, Brandtzaeg, Lüders, and Skjetne (2010) find that very large social media networks can lead to experiences of surveillance and social control, with related behaviours of conformity, especially among younger users, much of which comes in response to actual or potential negative sanctions from peers, family members, and professional contacts.

In addition to personal mis-steps, context collisions can be the result of social media companies mishandling data in ways that are unexpected for the users, making information visible to networks with whom users did not intend to share. High-profile cases include Facebook making one’s ‘friends’ and ‘likes’ more public with little warning. Google had a similar incident when their Buzz feature instantly made public the list of with whom one exchanges the most emails. In these situations, contexts did not just collapse; they collided, with potentially serious repercussions.

It is important to theoretically distinguish between intentional and unintentional context collapse, or what we call context collusions and collisions, precisely because of the drastically different processes and consequences that they have. Of note, the key difference between the two is intentionality, and neither has an inherent value judgment attached. Context collisions can create happy surprises, such as a spirited political debate or attaining key information, just as collusions can go badly awry, such as unruly political fighting or jokes, which some network members find unamusing.

Both collision and collusion, and the management of collapse more generally, are joint products of architectural affordances, site-specific normative structures, and agentic user practices. While early context collapse literature focused primarily on affordances, and in doing so, on the consequences of network porousness, a new agentic focus has emerged. Recent research examines social media users’ avoidance of context collisions, and minimization of porousness.

One means of boundary enforcement is through the lowest common denominator approach (Hogan, 2010). Here, users share only that which will be appropriate for *all* members of their networks. Participants in a MySpace study, (Davis, 2010) for instance, talk about imagining their fathers, mothers, or future employers when deciding what to post (or not to post). Others utilize privacy settings, blocking some network members from viewing certain pieces of content (Vitak, 2012). Others employ decoy profiles (i.e. Fakebooks), aliases, and private messaging tools (Marwick & Ellison, 2012; Raynes-Goldie, 2010; Stutzman, Capra, & Thompson, 2011).

This privacy management literature rightly gives attention to user practices, combating technological determinism. Pushing this research forward, however, requires that we look at how platforms themselves afford privacy management. Indeed, users do not merely navigate platforms, but their practices work back to effect design (Oliver, 2005). As such, we highlight here how new social media platforms and new versions of existing platforms, build in privacy management – or the capacity to decrease porousness.

Google+, for instance, introduced ‘circles’ allowing users to keep their networks separated within the same platform. Following this, Facebook now allows users to easily create ‘groups’ and determine the visibility of content. Twitter facilitates blocking, direct messaging, and locked profiles – making the content available only to approved parties. Perhaps epitomizing architecturally afforded collision management is the smartphone application Snapchat, a self-destructing messaging service in which text, photo, and video are sent between users, and then erased automatically after a short amount of time (between 1 and 10 seconds, depending on what the sender chooses).

That is, as users’ privacy concerns have grown, social media platforms have altered their architectures to allow for increased control over information spread and network-based identity negotiations. Privacy turbulence (Petronio, 2002), then, is managed at both the personal and structural levels. While users benefit from broad and diverse networks, they also seek to agentially circumvent this openness. In some cases, their efforts are abated by architectural affordances of sites themselves, minimizing contextual porousness and enforcing – rather than blurring – contextual boundaries.

Conclusion

In this paper, we further theoretically refine the concept of context collapse by parcelling out the conditions under which collapse occurs, and to what degree. The ability to bring various social situations together on social media has proved to be both highly beneficial at times and disastrous, too. Messages intended for one person or group sometimes leak out into others, leading to high-profile embarrassments that garner media attention and sometimes serious harm to individuals. At the same time, collapsed contexts are an important way of maintaining weak ties, making new connections, and obtaining social and professional resources. Because of its importance, context collapse requires further theoretical attention. We have provided a key refinement.

Specifically, we disentangle intentional and unintentional context collapse. We call the former context collusions, in which users purposefully bring together various social situations. We call the latter context collisions, through which social situations unwittingly crash into each other. We embed this within a discussion of the complex ways users manage context collapse, both embracing open boundaries and reinforcing contextual walls by way of social media affordances coupled with user practices. This refinement draws upon past empirical research in an effort to guide future empirical studies, providing an expanded conceptual vocabulary from which to work.

Our theoretical treatment of context collapse further demonstrates privacy and publicity, or collusion and collision as we talk about them here, as two sides of the same coin, their relationship to one another stemming from architectural affordances, designer choices, user practices, and financial interests of corporate entities (e.g. Facebook Inc.). By situating our discussion within Nissenbaum’s contextual integrity framework of privacy, we allow for variations in the relative levels of normative context collapse. With this framework, no level of network and identity merging is inherently problematic or beneficial, but takes on meaning in relation to normative expectations and affordances within a given environment. As such, one can collude, collide, or bound contexts through any medium, and the need to do so, means of doing so, as well as the meaning of doing so, will always be contextually contingent.

Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank the editors and reviewers for their insightful critiques and careful guidance. We would also like to thank Whitney Erin Boesel and PJ Rey for comments on earlier versions of this manuscript.

Note

1. The term ‘affordances’ is fraught within the literature, with some arguing its meaning is so diffuse as to hold little analytic value (Oliver, 2005). Rather than enter into a dense debate, we apply a particular definition as we use it in this manuscript. Specifically, we use the term here to indicate the architectural components of an object which guides – but does not determine – user practices.

Notes on contributors

Jenny Davis is an Assistant Professor of Sociology at James Madison University. Her research intersects social psychology and new technologies. [email: Davis5jl@jmu.edu, Twitter: [@Jenny_L_Davis](https://twitter.com/Jenny_L_Davis)]

Nathan Jurgenson is a graduate student in the Department of Sociology at the University of Maryland, a contributing editor at The New Inquiry, and a researcher at Snapchat. [email: nathanjurgenson@gmail.com, Twitter: [@nathanjurgenson](https://twitter.com/nathanjurgenson)]

References

- Binder, J., Howes, A., & Sutcliffe, A. (2009). *The problem of conflicting social spheres: Effects of network structure on experienced tension in social network sites*. Proceedings of the SIGCHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems, New York, pp. 965–974. doi:10.1145/1518701.1518849
- boyd, d. (2002). *Faceted ID/entity: Managing representation in a digital world* (Master’s thesis). Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology.
- boyd, d. (2008). Why youth heart social network sites: The role of networked publics in teenage social life. In D. Buckingham (Ed.), *Youth, identity, and digital media* (pp. 119–142). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- boyd, d. (2010). Social network sites as networked publics: Affordances, dynamics, and implications. In Z. Papacharissi (Ed.), *A networked self: Identity, community, and culture on social network sites* (pp. 39–58). New York: Routledge.
- Brandtzæg, P. B., Lüders, M. & Skjetne, J. H. (2010). Too many Facebook “friends”? Content sharing and sociability versus the need for privacy in social network sites. *International Journal of Human-Computer Interaction*, 26, 1006–1030. doi:10.1080/10447318.2010.516719
- Brenner, J. (2012). Pew internet: Social networking (full detail). *Pew Internet and American Life Project*. Retrieved from <http://www.pewinternet.org/Commentary/2012/March/Pew-Internet-Social-Networking-full-detail.aspx>
- Burke, P. J. & Stets, J. E. (2009). *Identity theory*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Child, J. T. & Westermann, D. A. (2013). Let’s be Facebook friends: Exploring parental Facebook friend requests from a communication privacy management (CPM) perspective. *Journal of Family Communication*, 13, 46–59. doi:10.1080/15267431.2012.742089
- Cooley, C. H. (1902). *Human nature and the social order*. New York: Scribner.
- Davis, J. L. (2010). Architecture of the personal interactive homepage: Constructing the self through myspace. *New Media & Society*, 7, 1103–1119. doi:10.1177/1461444809354212
- Davis, J. L. (2012). Accomplishing authenticity in a labor-exposing space. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 28, 1966–1973. doi:10.1016/j.chb.2012.05.017
- Donath, J., & boyd, d. (2004). Public displays of connection. *BT Technology Journal*, 22(4), 71–82. doi:10.1023/B:BTTJ.0000047585.06264.cc
- Ellison, N. B., Steinfield, C., & Lampe, C. (2007). The benefits of Facebook “friends”: Social capital and college students’ use of online social network sites. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 12, 1143–1168. doi:10.1111/j.1083-6101.2007.00367.x
- Ellison, N. B., Steinfield, C., & Lampe, C. (2011). Connection strategies: Social capital implications of Facebook-enabled communication practices. *New Media & Society*, 13, 873–892. doi:10.1177/1461444810385389
- Facebook. (2012). *Key facts*. Retrieved from [facebook.com/keyfacts](https://www.facebook.com/keyfacts).
- Goffman, E. (1959). *Presentation of self in everyday life*. New York: Doubleday.
- Hampton, K. N., Lee, C. J. & Her, E. J. (2011). How new media affords network diversity: Direct and mediated access to social capital through participation in local social settings. *New Media & Society*, 13, 1031–1049. doi:10.1177/1461444810390342
- Hargittai, E., & Litt, E. (2013). Facebook fired? The role of Internet skill in people’s job-related privacy practices online. *IEEE Security & Privacy*, 11(3), 38–45. doi:10.1109/MSP.2013.64

- Hogan, B. (2010). The presentation of self in the age of social media: Distinguishing performances and exhibitions online. *Bulletin of Science, Technology & Society*, 30, 377–386. doi:10.1177/0270467610385893
- Leary, M. R. (1995). *Self-presentation: Impression management and interpersonal behavior*. Dubuque, IA: Brown & Benchmark.
- Lim, S. S., Vadrevu, S., Yoke, H. C., & Basnyat, I. (2012). Facework on Facebook: The online publicness of juvenile delinquents and youths-at-risk. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 56, 346–361. doi:10.1080/088838151.2012.705198.
- Marwick, A. E., & boyd, d. (2011). I tweet honestly, I tweet passionately: Twitter users, context collapse, and the imagined audience. *New Media & Society*, 13, 114–133. doi:10.1177/1461444810365313
- Marwick, A., & Ellison, N. B. (2012). There isn't wifi in heaven! Negotiating visibility on Facebook memorial pages. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 56, 378–400. doi:10.1080/088838151.2012.705197
- McLaughlin, C., & Vitak, J. (2012). Norm evolution and violation on Facebook. *New Media & Society*, 14, 299–315. doi:10.1177/1461444811412712
- Mead, G. H. (1934). *Mind, self, and society*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Meyrowitz, J. (1985). *No sense of place: The impact of electronic media on social behavior*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Morris, M. R., Teevan, J., & Panovich, K. (2010). *What do people ask their social networks, and why? A survey study of status message Q&A behavior*. Proceedings of the SIGCHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems, Atlanta, GA, pp. 1739–1748. doi:10.1145/1753326.1753587
- Nissenbaum, H. (2010). *Privacy in context: Technology, policy, and the integrity of social life*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Oliver, M. (2005). The problem with affordance. *E-Learning and Digital Media*, 2, 402–413. doi:10.2304/elea.2005.2.4.402
- Papacharissi, Z. (2009). The virtual geographies of social networks: A comparative analysis of Facebook, LinkedIn, and ASmallWorld. *New Media & Society*, 11, 199–220. doi:10.1177/1461444808099577
- Papacharissi, Z., & Yuan, E. (2011). What if the internet did not speak English? New and old language for studying newer media technologies. In N. Jankowski, S. Jones, & D. Park (Eds.), *The long history of new media* (pp. 89–108). New York: Peter Lang.
- Petronio, S. (2002). *Boundaries of privacy: Dialectics of disclosure*. New York, NY: SUNY Press.
- Rainie, L., & Wellman, B. (2012). *Networked: The new social operating system*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Raynes-Goldie, K. (2010). Aliases, creeping, and wall cleaning: Understanding privacy in the age of Facebook. *First Monday*, 15. Retrieved from <http://firstmonday.org/article/view/2775/2432>
- Shklovski, I., Palen, L., & Sutton, J. (2008). *Finding community through information and communication technology in disaster response*. Proceedings of ACM 2008 conference on Computer Supported Cooperative Work, San Diego, CA, pp. 127–136. doi:10.1145/1460563.1460584
- Stutzman, F. (2006). An evaluation of identity-sharing behavior in social network communities. *International Digital and Media Arts Journal*, 8, 10–18. Retrieved from: <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.91.617&rep=rep1&type=pdf>
- Stutzman, F., Capra, R., & Thompson, J. (2011). Factors mediating disclosure in social network sites. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 27, 590–598. doi:10.1016/j.chb.2010.10.017
- Tong, S., Van Der Heide, B., Langwell, L., & Walther, J. B. (2008). Too much of a good thing? The relationship between number of friends and interpersonal impressions on Facebook. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 13, 531–549. doi:10.1111/j.1083-6101.2008.00409.x
- Vitak, J. (2012). The impact of context collapse and privacy on social network site disclosures. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 56, 451–470. doi:10.1080/088838151.2012.732140
- Walther, J. B. (1996). Computer-mediated communication: Impersonal, interpersonal, and hyperpersonal interaction. *Communication Research*, 23, 3–43. doi:10.1177/009365096023001001
- Walther, J. B., Van Der Heide, B., Hamel, L. M., & Shulman, H. C. (2009). Self-generated versus other-generated statements and impressions in computer-mediated communication: A test of warranting theory using facebook. *Communication Research*, 36, 229–253. doi:10.1177/0093650208330251
- Wesch, M. (2009). YouTube and you: Experiences of self-awareness in the context-collapse of the recording webcam. *Explorations in Media Ecology*, 8(2), 19–34. Retrieved from <http://krex.kstate.edu/dspace/bitstream/handle/2097/6302/WeschEME2009.pdf?sequence=1>