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Specifics on online communication: disinhibited behavior, anonymity, self-dislosure

Online privacy

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Specifics of online communication

Specifics of social networking sites (boyd, 2010):
- Persistence: once published online, information can be stored for a very long time
- Replicability: the information and materials posted online can be easily duplicated
- Scalability: the online information is potentially widely visible.
- Searchability: the information can be reached using search engines (or other tools). Even though the owner of the information does not intend to make the information accessible for other parties, it still might be reachable.

boyd, d. (2010). Social network sites as networked publics: Affordances, dynamics, and implications. In Z. Papacharissi (Ed.), Networked self: Identity, community, and culture on social network sites (pp. 39–58). Routledge.

Disinhibited behavior?

Disinhibited behavior

- Internet as disinhibited environment – both positive and negative impact on online communication, e-education and online research (Joinson, 1998)
- Online: lower anxiety from social situations and higher self-disclosure (Joinson, 1998)
- Research of „flaming"
- Analogy with Le Bonn – „deindividualization"

Internet jako prostředí bez zábran

Charakteristiky prostředí bez zábran (Šmahel, 2003):

- **větší otevřenost**

„Vyhovuje mi ... taková otevřenost. Tam v podstatě můžu co chci, a nikdo mi za to nemůže nic udělať" (Alena, 16).

- **redukce úzkosti**

„... na netu se lidé chovají jinak. Mizí tady různé bariéry, které jinak v opravdovém životě jsou. Člověk tu dokáže být otevřenější a taky zranitelnější." (Delphie, 19).

- **absence sankcí**

„.. že se míň bojí, nepřijde nějaká sankce…. Na netu si můžeš dovolit kdeco všechno, tam se spakovat a jít si vylít duši k někomu jinýmu…" (Hanka, 25)

- **sexuální narážky**

„Myslím si , že plno kluků by se ve skutečnosti holky nezeptalo, jestli by se s ním vyspalo, přes net to hodně kluků využívá" (Karmen, 15).

- **možnost lži a přetvářky**

„Na inetu si můžu cokoliv vymyslet, je to tam jenom napsaný, v (reálném) *kontaktu to vyplyne úplně jinak"* (Martin 14)

Internet jako prostředí bez zábran

Proč „prostředí bez zábran"?

- **pocit fyzického bezpečí**

„... *když jsem na internetu, tak mě nikdo lísknout nemůže...*" (Alena, 16)

- **absence fyzického**

„*Vzhledem k tomu, že jsem strašně paranoidní na to jak vypadám, tak na netu si s tímhle nemusím dělat hlavu. Takže je to tímhle snadnější*." (Hanka, 25)

- **možnost ukončení kontaktu**

„... *naštěstí od normální komunikace (z očí do očí) je tu lehká pomoc, stačí se odpojit.*" (Sexdrogyrock, 16)

- **anonymita**

Anonymity online?

Anonymity online

- What is anonymity? „*Anonymity is usually mentioned in the context of the right to read, write, speak, and distribute content without exposing the identity of the relevant individual*." (Zarsky, 2004)

- Pseudonymity: „*use of a "virtual" personality or personalities by one physical individual when interacting in cyberspace or elsewhere*. (Zarsky, 2004)

- Self-perceived anonymity versus real anonymity

- From anonymous to social networked Internet …

Anonymity online

- Anonymity as a main factor in the online disinhibition effect (e.g., Bargh and McKenna, 2004, Joinson, 1998)
- Anonymity and moral dilemmas: anonymous poeple demonstrated higher degrees of disinhibition and reflected in flaming behavior (Kiesler et al, 1984)
- Surveys: willingness to answer extremely sensitive questions is highest within online surveys in which the social presence is minimal (Tourangeau, Couper, & Steiger, 2003).
- Eye-contact has an effect on negative online disinhibition, as well as on self-reported flaming incidents and threats. Anonymity had an effect for one measure only (i.e., threats).

(Lapidot-Lefler, Barak, 2016)

Anonymity, privacy and security online

- 86% of internet users have taken steps online to remove or mask their digital footprints – ranging from clearing cookies to encrypting their email, from avoiding using their name to using virtual networks that mask their internet protocol (IP) address.

- 55% of internet users have taken steps to avoid observation by specific people, organizations, or the government

- 59% of internet users do not believe it is possible to be completely anonymous online, while 37% of them believe it is possible.

[Pew Internet Research, 2013, Anonymity, Privacy, and Security Online]

Anonymity, privacy and security online

- 21% of internet users have had an email or social networking account compromised or taken over by someone else without permission.
- 13% of internet users have experienced trouble in a relationship between them and a family member or a friend because of something the user posted online.
- 11% of internet users have had important personal information stolen such as their Social Security Number, credit card, or bank account information.
- 6% of internet users have been the victim of an online scam and lost money.
- 6% of internet users have had their reputation damaged because of something that happened online.
- 4% of internet users have been led into physical danger because of something that happened online.
- 1% of internet users have lost a job opportunity or educational opportunity because of something they posted online or someone posted about them.

[Pew Internet Research, 2013, Anonymity, Privacy, and Security Online]

Self-disclosure

Self-disclosure

- Self-disclosure: revealing personal or private information about self that is generally unknown and not available from other sources (Derlega et al., 1993)
- Self-disclosure x self-presentation
- Depth or intimacy as dimensions of self-disclosure
- Differences between online and face to face self-disclosure – review of studies (Kim & Dindia, 2011)
- Where people self-disclosure more? - various associations, from negative to positive

What and how much poeple self-disclose?

- 84% of Facebook users truthfully disclose their birthday, 75% instant messenger name, 24% divulge their postal address (Acquisti and Gross, 2006)
- Facebook and MySpace users: 82% supply their real name, 35% present their e-mail address, 9% postal address (Fogel and Nehmad's, 2009).
- Facebook and MySpace users: 95% of Facebook users include their real name in profiles, only 63% of MySpace users do so. (Tufekci, 2008)
- Different studies indicate different percentages of disclosure.
- Accessibility of profiles?

Why people self-disclose online?

Benefits of Disclosure
- Convenience of Maintaining Relationships - The value users derive from being able to efficiently and easily stay in touch with each other
- Enjoyment - having pleasant and enjoyable experiences
- Relationship Building - being able to build up new connections to others on OSNs
- Self-presentation - being able to improve their self-concept in relation to others

Krasnova, H., Spiekermann, S., Koroleva, K., & Hildebrand, T. (2010). Online social networks: Why we disclose. *Journal of Information Technology*, *25*(2), 109-125.

Online privacy

Online privacy: definitions

- Multidisciplinary: law perspectives x social science x informatics x marketing…
- The right to be left alone
- The degree of accessibility to an individual
- Dependent on the context of use
- One's ability to control information about oneself

Yao, M. Z., Rice, R. E., & Wallis, K. (2007). Predicting user concerns about online privacy. *Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology*, *58*(5), 710-722.

Online privacy: Privacy Management Theory (CPM)

1) People perceive the private information as something what belongs to them. (Online?)
2) When people perceive they own the information, they also assume their right to control the privacy boundaries (i.e., they control who has access to the information)
3) When managing the private information, people depend on rules to control the information flow. Rules depend on many factors, i.e. culture, context …
4) When information is shared, it is in a sense co-owned with the information recipient. The recipient of private information is expected to follow rules of the owner.
5) Privacy management is a dynamic concept: privacy rules are constantly negotiated and adapted. Each person can have a different definition of privacy rules and boundaries…

Petronio, S. (2010). Communication privacy management theory: What do we know about family privacy regulation? Journal of Family Theory & Review, 2, 175–196

Concerns about privacy

- Privacy paradox: while Internet users are concerned about privacy, their behaviors do not mirror those concerns

Hargittai, E., & Marwick, A. (2016). "What can I really do?" Explaining the privacy paradox with online apathy. *International Journal of Communication*, *10*, 21.

Problems with online identities: Privacy and misuse of personal information

Smahel, D. & Wright, M. F. (eds) (2014). *Meaning of online problematic situations for children. Results of qualitative cross-cultural investigation in nine European countries*. London: EU Kids Online, London School of Economics and Political Science.

<u>Qualitative research – 2013</u>: 9 countries (Belgium, the Czech Republic, Greece, Malta, Italy, Portugal, Romania, Spain, and the United Kingdom), interviews and focus groups, 57groups, 113 interviews: N = 380 children

Privacy information online

- <u>Too much information about others</u> - negative feelings about people posting too many, silly, or private things

Interviewer: Hmm, hmm. So do you think here is too much crap on Facebook?
Girl: Yeah!
Interviewer: Yes?
Girl: Yes, and lots of useless things, like 'I'm now going to work', and things like that all the time, yeah…
Interviewer: And do you have specific friends who really post too much on it?
   Girl: Yes.
Interviewer: And do you feel bothered by this?
Girl: Yes. There is this girl, in my school, I don't really know her very well, actually I've never talked to her. But I know who she is. And she posts a picture about every hour… Yeah I really don't like that.
(girl, 16, Belgium)

Privacy information online

- <u>Too much information about themselves</u> - expressing negative feelings about the pressure to reveal information or to be constantly online, or the sensation of being constantly watched and spied on.

Interviewer: Are there any other unpleasant things that can happen online to kids and young people your age?

Boy: Stalking. For instance people like me who put up a lot of posts about what's happening and so on, there would be people who are accessing their profile and they see what's going on. For instance, you notice that this girl adds you and then she would be stalking you. She would know that last time so and so happened and you were there and it's like scary.

Interviewer: Why is it scary?

Boy: It's true that I divulged the information, but it is scary how much people can follow what you do and don't do.

(boy, 14–16, Malta)

Privacy information online

- Disclosing personal information on websites - filling in information about themselves for various online accounts, websites or contests, which prompted feelings of annoyance or worries and concerns about strangers accessing it
- Shared or tagged without permission - the practice of unwanted sharing or tagging of photos and videos by peers on SNSs, i.e. "peers posting private or embarrassing information (pictures, videos) of the respondent without the child's will," "peers tagging the respondent without her or his will," "peers modifying pictures without the child's will"
- Misused, hacked and fake accounts – i.e. "fake or impersonating profiles of others," "impersonating profile of the child used to hurt him (mock him, make fun of him)," "hacked account of child/used to send rude messages"

Privacy information online

- Fake or impersonating profiles of others -

Girl 1: And then we were writing with one of her friends I. [full name], that probably, to our fake profile...
Girl 2: Fell in love. I guess so.
Girl 1: Unfortunately.
Girl 2: It was horrible.
Girl 1: It's disgusting and A., I hate you because of it completely now.
Girl 2: We just...and it was such a moment when we began to talk with A.
Girl 1: And we're talking normally.
Girl 1: Okay well, tell me, tell me. She fell in love, right.
Girl 3: Well, she fell in love with us. And it was embarrassing, you know. Not that I would totally hate her, but I was annoyed that she does not talk with me, so I am not talking to her. And it was quite funny at the beginning and then it was really embarrassing.
(girls, 13–14, Czech Republic)

Privacy information online

- Peers sharing SNS passwords and misusing the account

If it were a friend with whom I had shared the password, because it's happened, now I've changed it but before, two friends knew my password but they weren't logging in because they didn't have anything to do there anyway. Just because I had given it to them, when I was over at their place and I was too lazy to write and they did it for me but they didn't log in anyway, yes once, during winter break, when I had spoken, I don't remember anymore, with a boy, one of them logged in and saw everything I had said and she wrote me and liked my other friend's post for which she kept calling me insisting I should like and I said I couldn't because I was on the phone and it's too stupid and I can't like posts and...and later I realized I could, and I like it, and then I got upset and when I got home I changed my password and withdrew the like for that post. (girl, 15, Romania)