

#ubcpsyc325  
PSYC 325 with Dr. Rawn  
Psychology of Self in Social Media

Find your Working Group!  
*See Connect for your group number.*

Syllabus: <http://blogs.ubc.ca/psychsocialmedia>

Meetings: Tuesday & Thursday 11-12:20, BUCH A201



# Society for Personality and Social Psychology Conference #SPSP2016

*Opening Keynote Address for the Society for the Teaching of Psychology  
Preconference! <http://meeting.spsp.org/society-teaching-psychology>*

- May I include in my presentation that I deliver and that I will post on my website...
  - *a class photo (no names)?*
  - *some Tweets (screenshots, so includes Twitter handle)?*
  - *some stats (only aggregate, nothing individual)?*
  - *a few examples of early Self theories (no names)?*
- If you're not comfortable about any of these, please let me know (email, office hour, in person after class).

# Relationships: Friendship and Connection

(Continuing Ethics & Methods)

- Meet your Impact Project Working Group (11:00-11:15)
  - Next class: work on your projects. Natasha & Meagan will be here to help guide. If I have proper internet I'll be available on Twitter. To prepare for class, read the schedule and the syllabus description of the assignments.
- Theme: Exploring Friendship and Connection
  - Greitemeyer, Mugge, & Bollerman (2014)
  - @Hermida Chapter 2 #WhyWeShare
  - *Methods & Messages*
  - *Designing research and Modelling the Self*

# Key Messages and Methodology Check-In

- Greitemeyer, Mugge, & Bollermann (2014 in *Basic and Applied Social Psychology*)
  1. Do you think this is translational, phenomenological, or novel research?
    - “I think it maybe can fit into the novel research method, because interpersonal neglect is an existing topic and we use archival data from facebook to study this.” – Catherine X
    - “Novel research, since social satisfaction has existed in the past, but this is using a specifically Facebook-oriented way of examining interpersonal relationships.” – Jessica Y
    - “I would consider this to be phenomenological. Before Facebook, people had birthdays and people wished them a happy birthday, but Facebook changed the way this phenomenon occurs, to some degree.” – Sasha K
    - “Phenomenological because fb has made us aware of how many people are in our social network so we quantify how many people care about us by wishing us happy bday. Reflecting on that we either feel happy or depressed.” – Felipe
    - “Uhh halfway between phenomenological and novel. Because we've definitely been able to study social rejection and social isolation before the advent of Facebook, but they also mentioned that the system Facebook has for birthdays (giving all of your friends a reminder, making birthday wishes public) is not something that ever existed before Facebook. So like, 75% novel, 25% phenomenological. ” -- Robin

Briefly compare and contrast the three types of research on the internet noted here.

*From the article + Melody's Piazza responses...*

- **Translational:** Take “traditional methods” and put them online (e.g., surveys)
- **Phenomenological:** “focuses on issues or topics that would not exist if it were not for the Internet. An example that Gosling gives us is cyberbullying. Cyberbullying would not exist without the existence of the Internet or social media which allows the bullying to be ‘cyber’” (Melody, via Piazza).
- **Novel:** “Novel research are ways to study topics of fields that already exist such as interpersonal relationships and communication (i.e. sharing information, impression management, jealousy within relationships)” (Melody, via Piazza).

# Key Messages and Methodology Check-In

- Greitemeyer, Mugge, & Bollermann (2014 in *Basic and Applied Social Psychology*)
  1. Do you think this is translational, phenomenological, or novel research?
  2. Are these experimental or correlational studies? How do you know? What does that mean for interpretation?
  3. How might you draw a diagram of their results?
  4. What are the effect sizes?
  5. What is the most important finding from this study?

# Key Messages and Methodology Check-In

## @Hermida Chapter 2 #WhyWeShare

- When reviewing the quotes from the New York Times study, it seemed that some respondents were attempting to strengthen relationships and create an impression of themselves in social media. These relate to the motivated agent and social actor constituents of Self. **After reading #WhyWeShare, I got the impression that we are, as it were, what we share. (Conversely, we share what what we are.)** – Alex
- The social actor is presented in chapter 2 of Hermida, we enact in certain roles, impression management and social status. What I find really interesting is **how we share and post certain things online that can potentially enhance our social, symbolic and cultural capital.** One clear example of this is when I am updating Linked in, you hope to gain more professional capital, which embodies social, cultural, and symbolic capital, even having people endorse you in certain skills can put you in a brighter light. This relates to the other reading, perhaps having many people respond to your post can illustrate your social capital, and depending on what you post, the post can also illustrate symbolic and cultural capital. – Cecilie
- **The desire expressed by some research participants to spread good, spread useful information online, and a sense of civic duty in sharing news resonated with me.** I feel that there are some pieces of information that I am made aware of because of particular sources I follow online, and I believe they are important and should be shared with those that may not be as privy to the information (esp. with social justice and human rights issues). – Kaitlyn T

# Recall our Course Learning Goals

**A year after this course is over, I want and hope that you will...**

- **remember and use a comprehensive model of the Self to critically evaluate your own and others' engagement in social media.**
- **notice anecdotes and personal experiences in social media as triggers of inquiry, followed by seeking, synthesizing, and identifying gaps in empirical and theoretical scholarly literature to help understand them.**
- analyze social media data to identify psychological phenomena, and attempt to explain your findings using relevant and current psychological research and theory.
- use social media deliberately to effect positive change in your own life and perhaps a larger community, and attempt to measure the impact of your actions.
- **effectively engage in a scholarly community of inquiry in various ways, including face-to-face and using tools of social media.**
- develop the skill and willingness to critically evaluate your own and others' ideas and the manner in which they are presented.

# Example of Linking Hermida to the Self

@Hermida Chapter 2 #WhyWeShare

- “Social Actor: becoming more egalitarian as we grow older, sharing or endorsing specific information that adds to our social image (who we are, our role in society, what we ought to do rather than what we really do), to be a part of a mob/cause or to show that we care (again, presenting an image of our social role)

Motivated Agent: viewing social interaction as an exchange, currency, or capital, in that we are interacting in specific ways for specific goals (eg. to inform our own decisions, to become close to someone, to persuade someone about something we believe

in)

Autobiographical Author: we share to talk about ourselves and perspectives and to fine tune/summarize snippets of our autobiography for the world” – Jessica Y

# Developing your research questions...

Proposing a **moderating** variable: *closeness of the people who (don't) write on your wall*

- “What matters to me is WHO wrote happy birthday and not HOW MANY wrote happy birthday. I’d feel crummy if my family members or my close friends didn’t write on my wall.” – Michael S
- “I believe it also depends on how close you are with your Facebook friends” – Catherine X
- “I suspect if I received 50 messages from acquaintances, but no birthday wishes from close friends or family, I would feel a sense of interpersonal neglect, loneliness, and isolation.” – Sasha K

# Noticing Opportunities for Research Questions

@Hermida Chapter 2 #WhyWeShare

- What research questions or hypotheses about human psychology (Self in Social Media) can we draw out of this chapter?

# Your research questions...

Developing a new hypothesis: *What you expect from people who write on your wall influences feeling interpersonal neglect influences self-esteem*

- “I find that the effect of said posts depends on the content. If the birthday wish reflects the bare minimum effort one can put in, and seems to be only a social nicety, I would probably feel like the poster is only sending well-wishes as a matter of convention. These messages do not reinforce my relationship with that person, and may even weaken it if I would have expected the poster to make a greater effort, given our closeness.” – Alex D
- “I totally never thought about it but I definitely have that same reaction to certain people, like "oh. I thought you'd put in a little more effort to that birthday wish there. Well then.”” – Robin R
- “Conversely, I find that if it is a very distant social connection I have (a Facebook friend I haven't spoken to in years), any kind of interaction, even the bare-minimum standard "Happy Birthday" message is a positive experience. I think it feels that way because they are putting in *more* effort than I expected from that relationship, so the disappointment in your example may stem from feeling that you've overestimated that social relationship, and you aren't actually as close to that person as you thought. ” – Marisa G

# Your research questions...

Developing a new hypothesis: *Cultural Differences, Age/Cohort Differences*

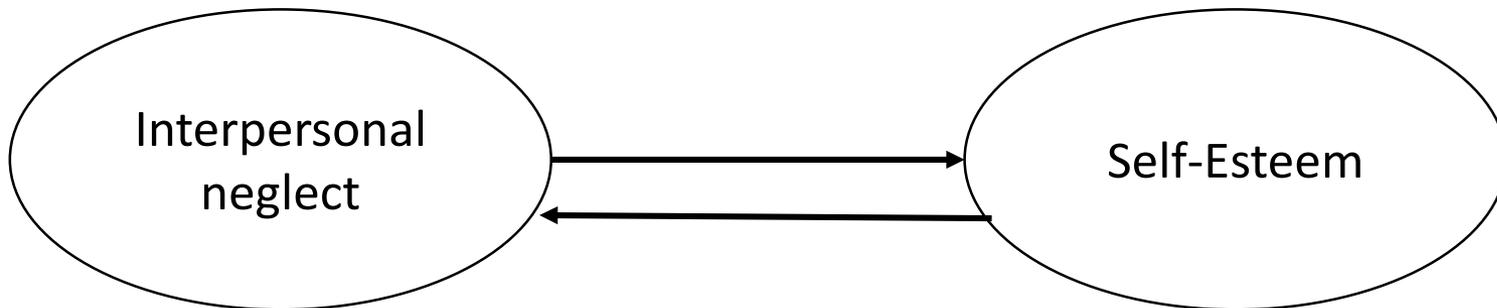
- “ I would like this experiment to be performed in age groups and see if the results turn out the same way. I hypothesize that adolescents truly feel a negative or positive impact from other sharing on their walls while older people do not care as much, because it becomes about quality rather than quantity. Adolescents have a tendency to promote popularity and fb for them is a good social measure of popularity.” – Felipe

Observations that could lead to a research question...

- “I also know some people who actually ‘block’ their Facebook walls prior to their birthday in order to limit the amount of notifications, etc from happy birthday posts, and then unblock their wall after, which is interesting.” – Daniesh
- “The part where he said "children learn that, as a society, we are expected to play nice" reminds me of some of my above comments on birthday wishing - maybe people are just doing it to be nice, to be fair, and to be polite. Because that's just what we do as a society. ” – Robin R

# Building our models of Self

- What variables related to *Self* are raised in these readings?
- How are these variables arranged? What causal arrow(s) might we draw (based on evidence or hypothesis), if any?
- Example



Work on your *model of Self*. Do these readings support/qualify/contradict your emerging model?

Pick one of the connections you developed in the last question.

- What is the precise hypothesis implied by this relationship?
- How could we test how those variables are related?
- Could we design an experiment to test for cause?