

INTRODUCTION

- Social media and identity
- Learning outcome: Demonstrate an understanding of competing definitions and debates around the following key terms: identity (and social media)
- Ideas re possible dissertation topics: Friends on Facebook. Social media as spectacle. Presenting oneself on social media (and many others)

SOCIAL MEDIA

- Different ways of analysing cyberspace
- Concepts of the social and social theory
- Exploitation –
 - E.g. google as the world's largest advertising agency
- More surveillance

Social Media Surveillance



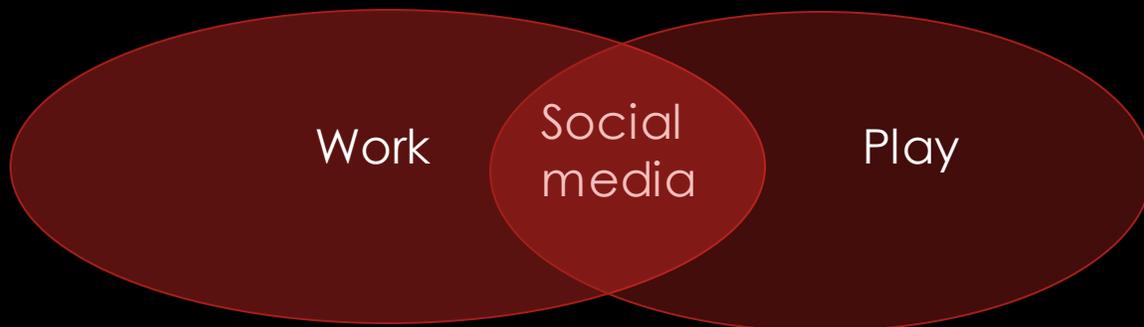
ONLINE ADVERTISING
MORE VISITORS AND BUYERS, FOR EVERY BUDGET



Google
AdWords

SOCIABILITY

- Boundaries between play and labour (work) are blurred
- Corporations do dominate social media
- We give digital labour freely

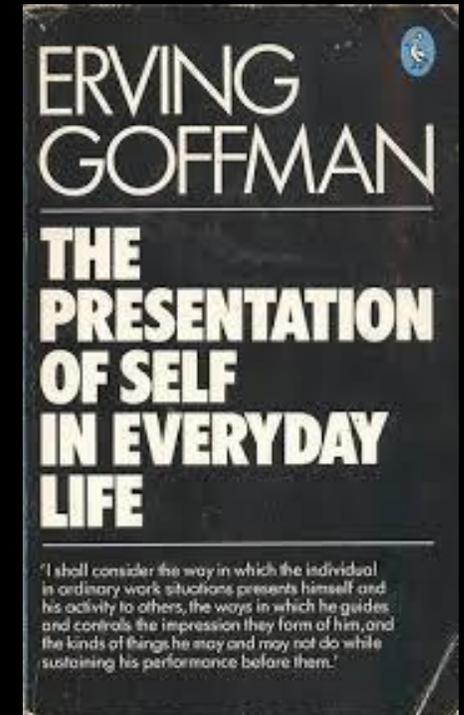


SOCIAL MEDIA AND BIG DATA

- Web 2.0 and social media popular for describing WWW applications
- Web 2.0 termed by O'Reilly (2005 of [O'Reilly Media](#))
- Social media promotes marketing and advertising techniques into relationships and social behaviour
- Neoliberal logic of competition and individualism
- Acquiring online cultural capital and social capital – through followers, friends, likes etc.
- Marketisation of the self – the presentation of the self

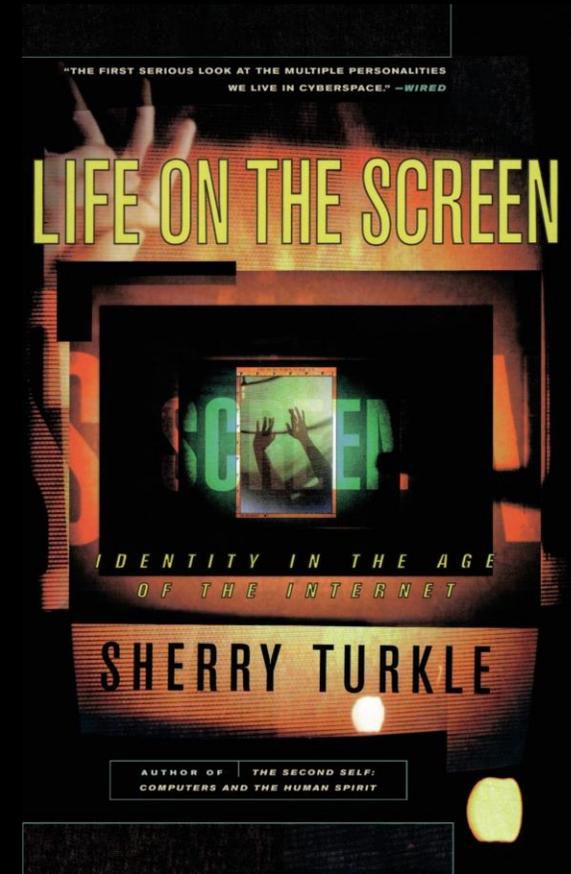
IDENTITY

- Goffman – showing multiple sides of our self online
- Virtual contexts allow us to experiment with our selves
- Imaginary play
- Social media allows us to send gifts, play games etc.
- But some encourage real person with real identities



FRAGMENTATION

- 1980s and 1990s concern about fragmentation of self from the different roles we play
- Sherry Turkle – life on the screen – highlighted the shifting roles we play



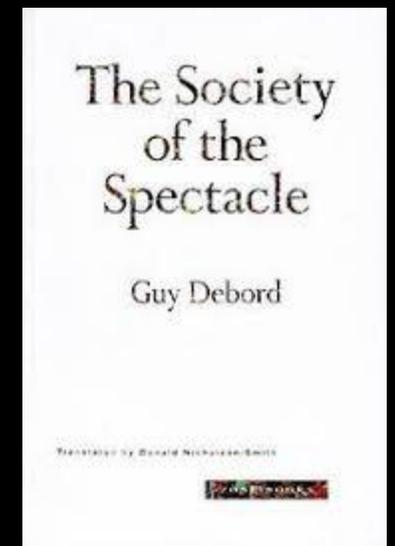
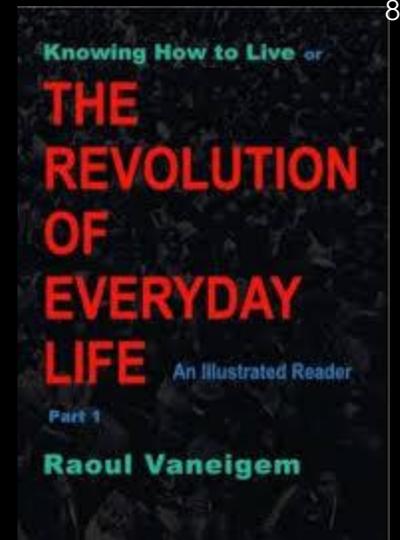
FRIENDS ON FACEBOOK

- Friend on Facebook are those with whom we play
- Friends can be a competitor in a game
- Unfriending someone might have consequences



SPECTACLE

- Situationist international
- Artists and philosophers 1957- 72
- Guy Debord – the society of the spectacle
- Vaneigem – the Revolution of Everyday Life
- Everything that was directly lived has receded into representation
- Our lived experiences appear before us as spectacles



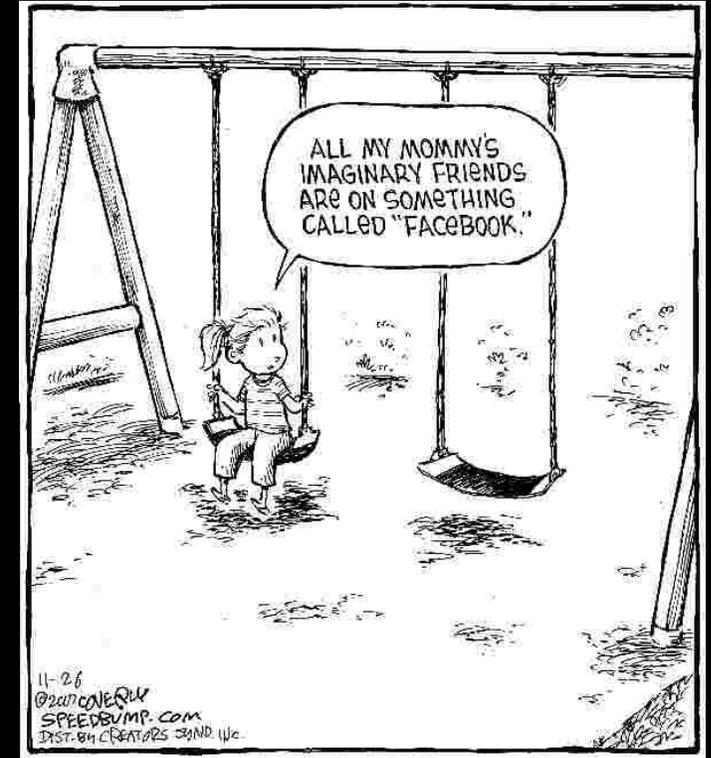
DEFINING THE SPECTACLE

- Debord – the spectacle as the mass of superficial relations between people, mediated by commodities and images
- Clothing is not just clothing, but is fashion
- This alienates people from each other and themselves
- Mass media symbolises the spectacle
- The spectacle becomes the truth – e.g. the real world is transformed into images
- Restricting us from experiencing anything real



DEFINING THE SPECTACLE

- Debord: spectacle as a social relation between people mediated by images
- Mediation – defines social media – through processes and structures
- Pseudo world – representations dominate our experience.



DEBORD

- The more we identify with the images imposed by the spectacle
- The less we understand of our own lives and desires
- The spectacle is everywhere
- People have become passive spectators removed from enjoying authentic experiences.

FACEBOOK (AND OTHERS) AND SPECTACLE

- Passivity and inauthentic experiences can be applied to Facebook and other social media
- By bombarding us with images of activity, participation and belonging.
- But social media does offer user interaction.
- Corporations seduce us into thinking ourselves and others in relation to the ideas diffused by such corporations



CRITICISM

- Social media communications may have commercial business
- But power is diffused
- People can resist the spectacle
- Can resist and subvert the spectacle

SITUATIONS

- Situations are moments of life that are constructed by various events and character and atmosphere of a place
- E.g. ImprovEverywhere's [Freeze Grand Central](#) (2.22 mins)
- Forced spectators to encounter their own activities from the outside



DERIVE AND DÉTOURNEMENT

- Derive - French – to flow, pour out, Latin – to lead off, draw off
- where people drop their usual everyday habits and work
- To appreciate meaning/impact of experiences like walking, smelling things, shapes, colours.
- Détournement – rerouting/hijacking
- Ad busting, culture jamming (4.51 mins)
- Where symbols break free of the spectacles constraints



FACEBOOK AND SOCIAL MEDIA

- The Facebook newsfeed offers a constrained online derive
- By jumbling together ironic postings, updates, news stories
- Pessimistic view: we are tricked into thinking we are part of a community actively participation in life
- We are passive spectators under an illusion
- Some argue this is a new spectacle
- Optimistic: we can find movements of action, community, surprise, openness on social media.
- Which can translate and transform our lives.

SUMMARY

- Social media dominated by corporations and digital work
- Marketisation of the self
- The shifting roles/identities online
- Situationist international
- Society as spectacle – all we know is through images
- Alienated from real lives.
- We can challenge the symbols/images

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