**Context Collapse And The Mediated Self On Social Media Platforms As Seen From The Workplace: An Annotated Bibliography**

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Boyd, D. (2015). identity: why do teens seem strange online? In *It’s complicated: The social lives of networked teens*. (pp. 29 – 53). New Haven: Yale University Press. Kindle Edition.

In the first chapter of her book, *It’s Complicated*, author danah boyd describes the trouble teens have with online identity. Teens are expressing their individuality and their struggle for power online in the same way they express it to their friends in person. The problem is that not only are teens dealing with context collapse, where separate worlds with different norms collide in networked publics, they must wrestle with imagined audiences and often do not discern accurately who really is their audience. Hence teens become frustrated when parents and relatives weigh in on the online and posts jokes meant for their friends. Parents can become quite concerned over statements that to the teen are a joke, but taken out of context seem inappropriate or dangerous. They are out of context for the parent because the teen fails to navigate context collapse deftly.

This chapter defines context collapse in a clear way and marks its description with specific examples of context collapse, such as a group of college kids being uncomfortable seeing their high school teacher drinking in the same bar as they are. boyd’s observations are based on months of study with burgeoning young adults. Understanding how the next generation are exploring CMC and dealing with context collapse illuminates the subject for even further study on the newest social media channels.

boyd’s work in this chapter lays the foundation for studies in context collapse in a practical manner that invites curiosity and questions. Suggestions can be developed from her work to help especially teens and adults understand what is going on when they post on social media, especially when they have a diverse friends list, including some acquaintances only. This chapter could be used to develop a process for working with teens and adults on what context collapse is, how to imagine audience and how to navigate an online identity among varied networks.

De Fina, A. (2016). Storytelling and audience reactions in social media.*Language in Society, 45*(4), 473-498. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S0047404516000051

DeFina’s (2016) article on storytelling and audience reactions in social media covers the emerging topic of computer-mediated communication (CMC). Because CMC, in the form of many platforms in multiple industries (music beginning with Napster, movies on Netflix, conversation and community on social media) has been thrust upon society rapidly, many issues regarding narration, storytelling, audience, language, participation and community are yet to be comprehensively studied. DeFina addresses the need for more analysis of classic elements of dialectical communication by analyzing a blog open to comments to determine the significant impact that CMC has on our lives through the study of the narration that CMC affords.

This source illuminates the issue of context collapse in social media because it addresses the issue of storytelling and audience in digital media that asks writers’ to evaluate their audiences, the platform on which they write, and their goals for their communication. Because in large digital media platforms audience has to be imagined, DeFina’s article affords understanding of the motivations that go into context in digital media including, but not limited to, audience.

The article addresses the notion that online writing and reading or commenting is dialectical. It is not linear. In evaluating context collapse, one must look at the role of the receiver of the information and the platform’s affording of certain abilities to the receiver, such as language. The multiple angles and concepts that comprise participatory media must also be considered when evaluating audience and context collapse. Some assessment of response will be necessary. The need for assessment is an evolving argument for analyzing context collapse. In addition, the article invokes discussion about integrating one’s identity and whether having multiple identities, according to Mark Zuckerburg (Mcconnell, et al., 2018) denotes a “lack of integrity” (p. 2).

Giglietto, F., Artieri, G. B., Gemini, L., & Orefice, M. (2015). Understanding Engagement and Willingness to Speak Up in Social-Television: A Full-Season, Cross-Genre Analysis of TV Audience Participation on Twitter. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. doi:10.2139/ssrn.2611083

Giglietto, Artieri, Gemini, and Orefice (2015) write that the way viewers receive television has changed in the last decade. In this article the authors attempt to study Twitter responses to two live television shows to ascertain viewer interest. With user-produced content making it onto mainstream media, professionally produced content struggles for access. Giglietto, et al. (2015) seek to discover the trends on Twitter that can identify and indicate the catalyzing of online audience engagement. No longer are Nielsen ratings the be all end all. Reception of TV content is now participatory and transactional because of the receiver’s ability to engage online, even as live TV is airing.

This source offers an interesting viewpoint regarding context collapse. Though it does not specifically reference context collapse, one can take the research to help create understanding of how television viewing extends into daily context. The water cooler talk and inside jokes that arise from the context of a widely viewed show could be studied through social media. These contexts, expressed on social media through individual profiles, combined with studying comments and responses on social media, might lend clues as to how, when and where most often context collapse occurs on a particular set of social media profiles.

The article is one of several that help to narrow the topic context collapse. This study indicates that there are multiple frames that our modern online content help create. We carry those contexts online ourselves as part of our personalities. Whether video games, movies, books are YouTube videos, the wide exposure we all have to these sources causes them to become a part of our culture, language and social interaction. More so than ever, it seems study is warranted on how much popular culture affects our face-to-face and even more so, our online self-presentation.

Hayes, R. A., Smock, A., & Carr, C. T. (2015). Face[book] Management: Self-Presentation of Political Views on Social Media. *Communication Studies,* *66*(5), 549-568. doi:10.1080/10510974.2015.1018447

This study examines Facebook as a place of political discourse and surveys a select group of participants on how they manage privacy, self-presentation and self-disclosure regarding political opinions. Hayes concludes that participants do make use of Facebook’s information management abilities to manage privacy and avoid context collapse. Interestingly some of the more active and opinionated followers of politics were more careful to avoid context collapse than those not as savvy, not having careful particular points they want to make but posting in a more impulsive fashion.

This source contributes to the study of context collapse by demonstrating what careful privacy and self-disclosure practices contribute to the avoidance of context collapse. One reason teens are not as proficient at managing context collapse is because they are evolving and free-spirited, not as seasoned as adults who, for example, wish to promote their political agenda while at the same time not alienating friends and family or putting their professional lives in danger.

An interesting topic of discussion to which this study could contribute would be to assess adults who act like teens online. Adults who, because of lack of exposure to social media or lack of exposure to critical thinking training, do not understand how to assess and manage context collapse on social media. Almost no topic is more contentious than politics so if some adults can train themselves or be taught to manage context collapse through self-disclosure and privacy management, as well as civil discourse, who else can be taught and how?

Kim, J. & Dindia, K. (2011). Online Self-Disclosure: A Review of Research. In K. B. Wright, & L. M. Webb (Eds.), *Computer-mediated communication in personal relationships* (pp. 156 – 162). New York, NY: Peter Lang. Kindle Edition.

In this chapter, Kim and Dindia (2011) discuss the distinction between self-presentation and self-disclosure and how self-disclosure always includes an element of self-presentation. In self-disclosure, however, one chooses to reveal certain aspects of oneself in order to gain a particular result. In online dating, for example, one would disclose things that make them look good and foster the creation of a certain positive opinion. It is not always open and honest. It is intentional. On the web there are many paths through which self-disclosure can be manipulated. The primary focus of this chapter is to analyze the differences between self-disclosure through CMC and face-to-face self-disclosure, highlighting inconclusive arguments as to whether face-to-face or online self-disclosure is more personal.

This source contributes to the understanding of context collapse in its assessment of self-disclosure. Careful self-disclosure might indicate some dishonesty but would also indicate skillful management of context collapse. If we can understand what motivates people to manage context collapse online, we can better understand how context collapse functions in the lives of people in executing a majority of communication through CMC.

Better understanding of the role of context collapse in the modern culture could indicate how this area will evolve with growing technology and how it will affect lives. With study on the affects of context collapse, tools can be developed to help people navigate their choices about self-disclosure online from multiple perspectives – cultural, political, economic, spiritual and more. Understanding the cultural context within which people self-disclose on social media fosters the growth of cultural literacy, empathy, understanding and networked communities. The evolution of this kind of global communication serves the greater good.

Mcconnell, E., Néray, B., Hogan, B., Korpak, A., Clifford, A., & Birkett, M. (2018). “Everybody Puts Their Whole Life on Facebook”: Identity Management and the Online Social Networks of LGBTQ Youth. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health,* *15*(6), 1078. doi:10.3390/ijerph15061078

In this article, Mcconnell, Neray, Hogan, Korpak, Clifford and Birkett (2018) discuss a topic critical to identity management online today, that of LGBTQ persons’ self-identification online. On the one hand, having an online community in which to be oneself no matter what networks in daily life may think, is safe. At the same time, most online publics are networked today, making it hard to avoid “context collisions” (Mcconnell, et al., 2018, p. 2). This article discusses how the young people studied managed outness in their daily lives, versus how that outness manifests on Facebook. The study outcome shows that while many young people may be indiscriminate about how much of their lives they reveal on Facebook, LGBTQ young persons are much more cautious and careful. Even if they reveal a lot of themselves, they have gone through a carefully considered discernment process.

This source is a valuable tool for creating understanding about context collapse. With such a carefully executed study comes extensive data about the caution and care put into posting online when one has an issue that requires attention to context collapse. An argument made by Boyd (2015) is that youth have a hard time understanding context collapse. They wish only to hang out with their community online and do not wish to have family members or members of other networks interfering.

The Mcconnell, et al., 2018) article, published this year, takes the latest study on online identity management and looks at it through a lens not only of context collapse, but on context collision and context collusion (p. 2). These two elements provoke inquiry on the depth of complexity of context collapse. Understanding how networks merge and separate online is critical to understanding context collapse. The careful thought processes engaged in by the young people in the Mcconnell, et al., 2018) study will inform further study on how context collapse online can be managed by everyone.

Sierra, S. (2016). Playing out loud: Videogame references as resources in friend interaction for managing frames, epistemics, and group identity.*Language in Society, 45*(2), 217-245. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S0047404516000026

In this study and article, Sierra (2016) takes a detailed, specific video game experience as one finds it laid over the real-life interactions of its devoted followers. This linguistic and cultural experience is woven into life and is used to create epistemic shifts. The language and humor of the inside jokes from the video game world allow external communicators to diffuse, and delicately shift, daily conversation through the familiarity and familiar world of the video game.

This source is helpful in understanding context collapse, almost in reverse. In this article, the video game world creates a context that does not collapse. The study encompasses those who are “in the know” about the world of the game. In the same way water cooler talk centers on the latest big show, such as *Game of Thrones*, for these gamers the water cooler talk online takes community to a deeper level. *Game of Thrones* offers users a new world in profusion, as do cult films, such as *Monty Python* films, *The Princess Bride* and more.

The article helps the reader to understand the solid context that frames built upon frames afford. Being sure of context, such as in the video game *Papers, Please* (Sierra, 2016) gives one a firm starting point upon which to question context. What if a person’s Facebook audience, for example, were to consist of *Papers, Please* players in addition to family, church friends, or skateboarding friends? What worlds collide and which collude? How difficult is it to use the comfortable frames of the video game in groups with no knowledge of it? Is this how trends and new language are formed? These questions have implications for users of social media who struggle to straddle multiple contexts between their daily and online lives. Those implications consist of understanding how to navigate self-presentation online through interests that do not span multiple networks.

Stephens-Davidowitz, S. (2018).  Was Freud right? In *Everybody lies: Big data, new data and what the Internet can tell us about who we really are*. (pp. 45 – 55). London: Bloomsbury Publishing PLC.

In the second chapter of his book, Stephens-Davidowitz (2018) explores the curiosities and sexual desires of modern people based on big data. Even a decade ago such mass data did not exist. The author uses the example of the famous psychologist Dr. Freud, who he claims would have drooled over the ability to have huge amounts of data with which to study his theories. This chapter explores Freud’s particular claim that Freudian slips and that many images in dreams represent repressed sexual desire. The author finds that according to data analysis, this theory is falsifiable. His research goes so far as to recreate Freudian slips with computers, which make these slips in the form of typos as often as humans do.

This source speaks to context collapse in that the people studied in chapter two reveal their biggest curiosities and desires online through a private search engine for pornography. One recognizes by reading this chapter that there is indeed context collapse for those studied online and can draw the conclusion that at least in one area they are successfully avoiding the problem of context collapse. Those studied employed privacy management communication to keep a significant part of themselves hidden, rather than revealing too much to colliding audiences.

Stephens-Davidowitz’s (2018) chapter demonstrates that although rashly revealing too much about oneself online is an issue in the world of CMC, there is still much people wish to keep private. In the evolving topic of context collapse it will be important to examine scenarios where people are keeping information private precisely to avoid context collapse. Perhaps the people in the study present themselves in a cohesive manner on social media. One could argue that there might be a line that most people do not cross in revealing their deepest desires on social media. It would be interesting to study whether keeping such sexual desires private online indicates that the person also avoids context collapse or whether they experience just as much context collapse as youth or LGBTQ persons on social media, but in areas social mores deem it appropriate to reveal.

Vitaki, J., Blasiola, S., Patil, S., & Litt, E. (2015). Balancing Audience and Privacy Tensions on Social Network Sites. *International Journal of Communication* 9(2015), 1485–1504

Vitaki’s (2015) article takes an in-depth look at the composition of users’ Facebook friends lists with the specific aim of understanding how users manage privacy concerns on Facebook. Participants were asked to analyze their friends lists according to how many people were actual friends and how many were just Facebook friends, or acquaintances friended as a result of the algorithmic connection maker that is the drive behind Facebook. A large percentage of participants had significantly more Facebook friends than actual friends. Some take advantage of Facebook’s network builder and others use Facebook to manage business contacts. Because of the large number of friends on the lists who are not actual friends, participants find themselves confronting invisible audiences and context collapse, which leads to particular self-censoring online.

This source provides a detailed study for use in understanding context collapse. Some participants had only actual friends on their Facebook friends lists, though they were in the minority. A Facebook friend in this study represented a known connection, whether former, current or future. Yet only being acquainted with people leaves a lot to the imagination when it comes to imagining audience and navigating context collapse.

Wasike, B. S. (2013). Framing news in 140 characters: How social media editors frame the news and interact with audiences via twitter.*Global Media Journal, 6*(1), 5. Retrieved from https://ezproxy.queens.edu:2048/login?url=https://search.proquest.com/docview/1398444355?accountid=38688

Social Media editors (SMEs) are the newest position in journalism, according to Wasike (2013). SMEs serve as liaisons between the traditional news media and social media. Their job is to understand social media audience for news agencies’ stories. This study contrasts the engagement received by SMEs who come from a television news background versus those who come from a print news background. Wasike takes a further step of studying the role of personalization in the reception and engagement of the news on Twitter, specifically. He concludes that television news personalities engaged on social media better know how to create audience engagement through personalization.

This source affords a viewpoint on context collapse from the place of the SME. In particular, the television–experienced SMEs, who gain engagement through personalization, have to assess context. With the position of SME being underdeveloped and emerging, there must be room for experimentation. Because these more successful SMEs have gravitas beyond that of the name of a single news agency, they have more responsibility and face more potential context collapse. They must know their audiences as best as possible, in order not only to avoid collision, but also to further the reputation of the news agency they ultimately represent.

The article is helpful in determining the role personalization plays in CMC. It seems that personalization is the road to success, but how much information is too much to reveal? In the handling of context collapse, each particular situation is different. What can be learned from studies such as these ties into studies in grounded theory (Charmaz, 2014). According to Charmaz (2014), the researcher personalizes his or her research through the act of being human. The researcher cannot help but influence the outcome of the study. In Wasike’s study, perhaps the personalization by the television-experienced SMEs cannot help but affect the receiver of the news. The article encourages further study on the role of the information communicator’s influence.

**Narrative**

The goal of my digital and media literacy project is to help professionals understand the benefits and importance of navigating the context collapse that is a by-product of self-presentation on social media platforms.

The communication concepts and theories relevant to my project are context collapse and social media, self-disclosure, self-presentation, and communication privacy management. It is critical to understand and employ wise use of these concepts in managing context collapse in social media posting. Communication privacy management is the first discernment step toward managing context collapse, followed by discernment about self-disclosure. These concepts combined create in part one’s online self-presentation.

Professionals today must have digital and media literacy skills in order to navigate the context collapse that occurs as part of a culture dominated by computer-mediated communication (CMC). Essential competencies, according to Hobbs (2010) of digital and media literacy are labeled as follows: 1) access, 2) analyze and evaluate, 3) create, 4) reflect and 5) act. These competencies are soft skills that can be learned in college or even in high school with access to programs that help build life skills. Hobbs’ competencies are essential elements that allow one to be a good, digital and media literate citizen.

The intended audience for my project is professional people between the ages of 25 and 45 who are in need of the soft skills necessary to manage their self-presentation online. Teens and younger people do not tend to understand context collapse because they are at a stage in life where they are more assertive and impulsive, finding their way in the world. Once employed, however, young people need the digital and media literacy competencies so they can be successful and contribute to the world. But the fun social media skills one used as a teen and young adult are no longer acceptable. It is time to move into the professional world with its norms and mores. The older section of the group in the project, those in their late 30s and 40s may have the soft skills required for digital and media literacy but because of the rapidly changing platforms and the fact that some did not grow up with exposure to CMC, may not understand how to apply these skills to self-presentation on social media. This audience would benefit from the project because those with critical thinking skills are best able to succeed in their careers.

Today, digital and media literacy is critical to success in the professional world. Communication throughout the professional world is dependent upon technology and the skills to conduct business via digital media. In this project I will argue the importance of advocating for the latest technology in the workplace, as well as offer an overview of the other four competencies and how to employ them to successfully navigate context collapse for success in the professional world.

References:

Charmaz, K. (2014). *Constructing grounded theory*. Los Angeles: SAGE.

Hobbs, R. (2010). Digital and Media Literacy: A Plan of Action. Retrieved October 7, 2018, from https://www.scribd.com/document/41889496/Digital-and-Media-Literacy-A-Plan-of-Action