Small World Ethics of Social Media and E-Professionalism for Sign Language Interpreters

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Outline

- Learning Objectives

- Introduction

- Theoretical Concepts

- Research Findings

- Q & A

Learning Objectives

After viewing this presentation, participants will be able to:

- Define e-professionalism

- Identify theoretical constructs for professional social media usage such as small world ethics and anonymous work

- Identify at least one challenge that social media brings to the profession

- Identify at least one benefit that social media brings to the profession

Have you ever seen something posted on social media that you felt was not professionally appropriate?

SOCIAL MEDIA

Theoretical Background

"health care is the most advanced in grappling with the changed nature of practice and the ethical challenges that brings to the profession" (Harshman, Gilsinan, Fisher, and Yeager 2005, p. 233).

Key Concepts

- E-professionalism

  (Cain & Romanelli 2009)

- Keyboard Courage

  (Suler, 2004)

- Online Culture

  (Anderson & Rainie 2010; Fuchs 2014)

- Small World Ethics

  (Lannin & Scott 2013)

- Anonymous Work & Promotion

  (Zweig 2014; Downie 2016; Best 2016)

- Context Collapse

  (Sibona & Walczak, 2014; Marwick & Boyd 2011)

E-Professionalism

"[T]he attitudes and behaviors (some of which may occur in private settings) reflecting traditional professionalism paradigms that are manifested through digital media…displayed through photos, videos, online group affiliations, discussion board posts, and other forms of digital representations, which are cues and signals that define one's online persona."
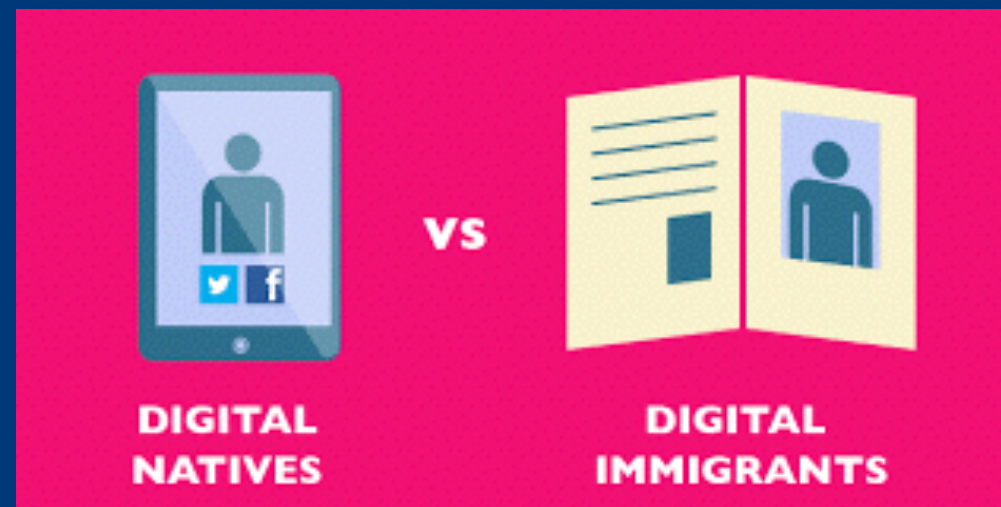
Keyboard Courage

- **Online disinhibition Effect**- the tendency for people to say or do things online that they would not typically do in a face-to-face situation (Suler, 2004)

- Verbal and nonverbal social cues are absent in digital communication

  (Cain & Romanelli, 2009)

- Impacts of indiscretions online are amplified more so than in an in-person interaction (Greysen, Kind & Chretien, 2010)

Social Media: A New Online Culture?

- A new culture is developing online (Anderson & Rainie 2010).

- Society is still determining what is and is not okay to share online (Anderson & Rainie 2010).

- Online culture is a participatory culture—it is determined and shaped by those who participate in it

(Fuchs 2014).

Social Media: A New Online Culture?

- "New social norms that reward disclosure are already in place among the young" (Anderson & Rainie 2010)

- "The Millenial generation will lead society into a new world of personal disclosure and information-sharing using new media" (Anderson & Rainie, 2010

Social Media: A New Online Culture?

- Active Social Networkers are more likely to:

    – be under 30 years of age

    – more likely to publicly comment about professional situations at work

    (ERC 2013).

- Time spent on social networking sites linked to professionally unacceptable or questionable online behaviour (Lee & Ho 2011).

A New Online Culture?

Wang, Myers, and Sundaram (2013)

- Age or digital generation is irrelevant. A person's openness to learn and willingness to use the technology frequently are what is important

Do you think that the concept of digital generations or digital fluency more accurately describes a person's ability and willingness to use social media?

A Common Sense Myth?

"guidelines for the use of social media by interpreters, with emphasis on ...**using common sense**."

(emphasis mine)

Common sense is not so common.
—VOLTAIRE

VETERANS
BABY BOOMERS
GENERATION X
GENERATION Y
MILLENNIALS

Recommendations on social media issued by heads of interpreting services. (2012, April 4). AIIC Webzine.
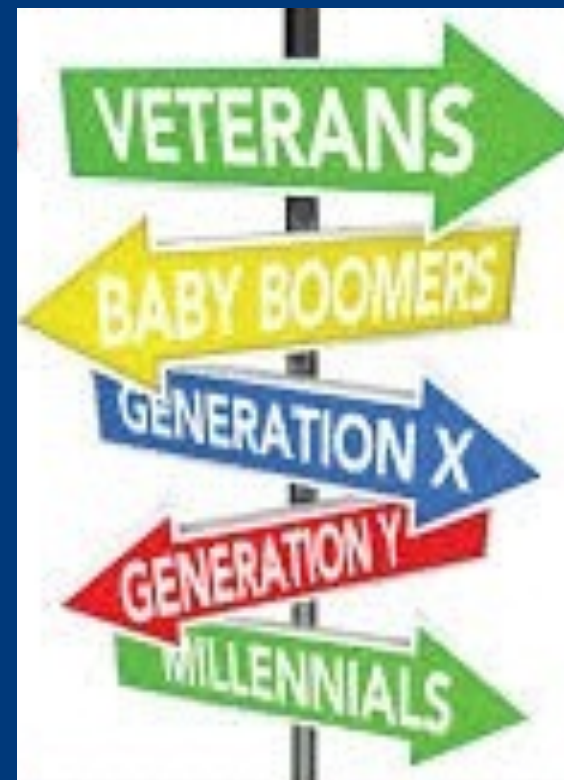
Social Media: A New Online Culture

Small World Ethical Culture

(Lannin & Scott 2013).

Look-at-me Culture

(Zweig 2014).
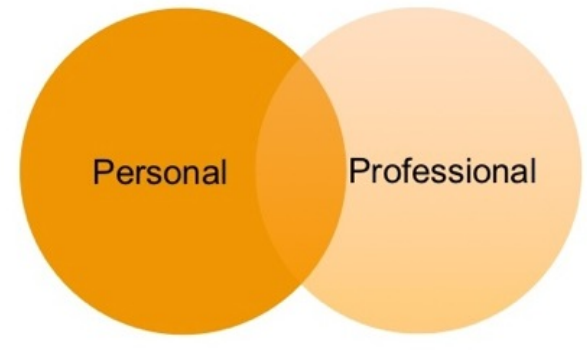
Small World Ethics

(Lannin & Scott 2013)

In a rural environment:

"greater transparency, increased self-disclosure, and unavoidable multiple relationships…boundary violations may not necessarily be unmanageable…Yet, they do require careful prevention and management."

Are sign language interpreters similar to rural psychologists?

(Best 2016)

Do you think that signed language interpreters are similar to rural psychologists and function in a small world environment?

Anonymous Work

(Zweig 2014)

Some jobs are less noticed the more flawlessly they are done.
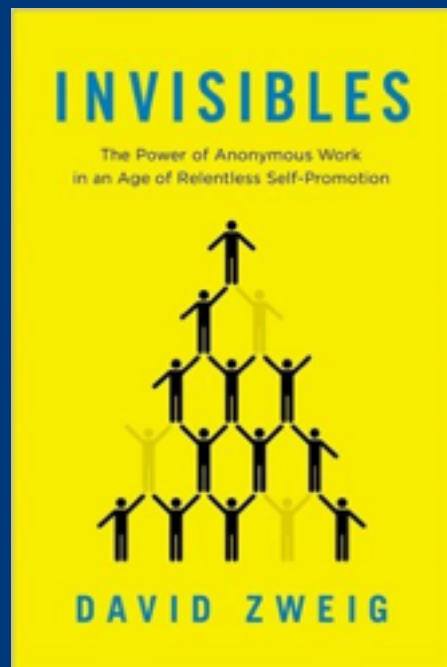
These types of occupations do not mesh well with the look-at-me culture of social media.

Freelancers and Promotion
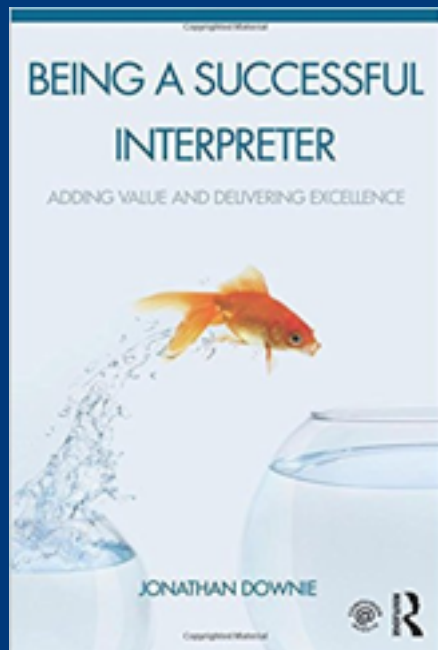
- "To be a freelance professional interpreter means *being a business*" (Downie 2016)

- Freelancers need to build a personal brand and promote their expertise (Kleiman & Cooper 2011)

- How does this mesh with the concept of interpreters and anonymous work? (Best 2016)
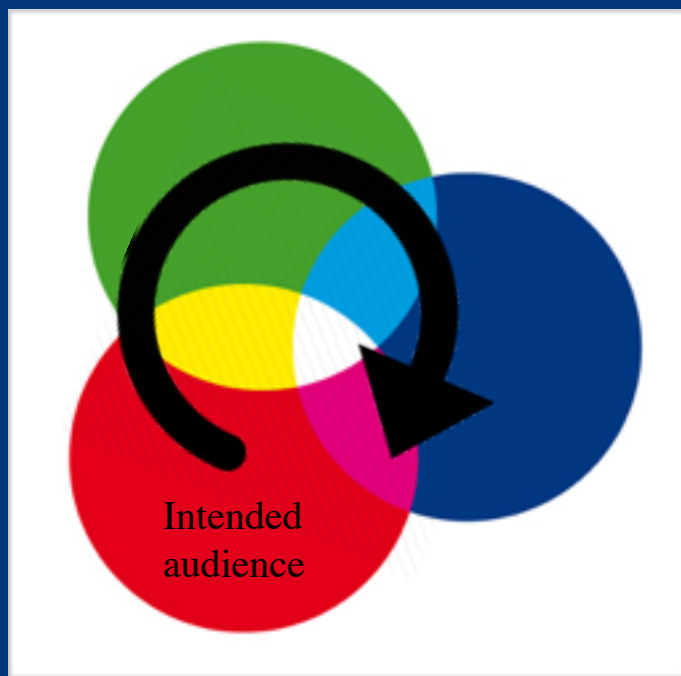
Context Collapse

Context collapse occurs when a post is made with a certain group in mind but several friends from outside of the intended target audience are also able to view the post, and those for whom it was intended may not actually see it.

(Sibona & Walczak, 2014 and Marwick & Boyd, 2011 as cited in Wendorf & Yang, 2015)

Methodology

Focus Groups

Requirements:

- Sign Language Interpreter

- Current Facebook user

- Shared language with researcher

Methodology Cont'd.

United States of America

United Kingdom

Denmark

4

4

4

- 60-80 minutes

- semi-structured

Analysis

- Verbatim transcripts

- Themes identified in NVIVO

directly relevant
to the literature

discussed by two groups

- content designation analysis

Research Group Composition

Gender

Female	Male
10	2

Age

18-25	26-33	34-41	42-49
0	4	4	3

Login Frequency

Login to FB daily	3
Login to FB more than once per day	8

Facebook friends with other interpreters?

Yes - All 11

Facebook friends with Deaf people or people with links to the Deaf community?

Yes - All 11

Facebook friends with clients?

Yes - 10*

No - 1

Follow interpreting agencies or associations on Facebook?

Yes - 10

No - 1

* 1 individual reported FB friends with previous clients but not current clients

Major Findings

- Boundary Management

- Challenges

- Self Promotion and Event Presence

- Benefits

Boundary Management Personal vs. Professional

I think there's an overlap [between personal and professional personas] because of how it's not a 9 to 5 job. It's a community we're involved in, so we do have Deaf friends as well as clients and colleagues. (British Participant 10)

Strategies:

- self-monitoring of posts

- exercising reserve with certain opinions or content

- creating professional spaces via posting only in designated groups

- posting only personal/all or mostly professional content

Challenges: Confidentiality

They don't even think about the check in.…Well, now I know where you are working because I know that there are three deaf people that work in that three block radius…people don't realise how people can put the pieces together. (American Participant 1)

I have seen people post things of every shade of gray, from right down to, "I can make a really good 90% guess of who you were working with today" to more subtle things. (British Participant 12)

(Lannin & Scott 2013)

Keyboard Courage

All groups gave examples of online behaviour which they felt would be less likely to happen in person.

Self-Promotion

Part of the reason people are on social media is not just to communicate and keep in touch with people, it's to build up a persona. To spin a story about who you are. Look at me. I'm an amazing interpreter. Here's me with [name of famous British person]. It's quite hard to avoid being sucked into that I think.
(British Participant 12)

Self-Promotion

Implicit Self-promotion

[T]o some extent one of the reasons I share a lot of publications, conferences, events, things like that is because it reflects positively on me as a professional interpreter.

(British Participant 10)

Self-Promotion and Event Presence

- Event Promotion

- Posting during or after-the-fact

There is a difference in perception when a post is event-centric and posted for clearly non-self-serving reasons as opposed to interpreter-centric.

Do you feel that there is a difference between an interpreter posting about a public event they are working beforehand versus during or afterwards?

Do you feel that it is professionally acceptable for interpreters to post pictures or information about themselves working at a public event after-the-fact?

Photos and Video

If someone is taking pictures of what's going on to go on the page of the Deaf association [it's different than] if I ask someone else to take a picture of me and the person I'm interpreting for or with, and I put it up on my Facebook page. (Danish Participant 6)

I think for me one of the biggest things I've noticed is where it starts creating power and control issues in my head, of figuring out who's putting what where, for what reason. If a Deaf person posts a picture of you while they have been working with you because they were necessarily in charge of the job, I don't struggle with that so much because actually that's them making the decision. (British Participant 9)

Benefits

- Awareness of information and events

- Professional development and networking

   (Lawson & Cowling 2015)

- Assignment prep

- Problem-solving

- Implicit Self-promotion

Applications

(Cain, Scott, & Akers, 2009; Lee & Ho, 2011; Walton, White, & Ross, 2015)

Guidelines

Bringing e-professionalism into the Changing Culture

"[S]ome of the online content that has been identified as unprofessional…may not clearly violate existing principles."

(Greysen, Kind, & Chretien 2010. p. 1227)

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