Networked Masculinities and Social Networking Sites: A Call for the Analysis of Men and Contemporary Digital

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Abstract

It is of course recognised that technology can be gendered and implicated in gender relations. However, it continues to be the case that men's experiences with technology are underexplored and the situation is even more problematic where digital media is concerned. Over the past 30 years we have witnessed a dramatic rise in the pervasiveness of digital media across many parts of the world and as associated with wide ranging aspects of our lives. This rise has been fuelled over the last decade by the emergence of Web 2.0 and particularly Social Networking Sites (SNS). Given this context, it is necessary for us to undertake more work to understand men's engagements with digital media, the implications this might have for masculinities and the analysis of gender relations more generally. To begin to unpack this area, I engage theorizations of the properties of digital media networks and integrate this with the masculinity studies field. Using this framework, I suggest we need to consider the rise in what I call networked masculinities – those masculinities (co)produced and reproduced with digitally networked publics. Through this analysis I discuss themes related to digital mediators, relationships, play and leisure, work and commerce, and ethics. I conclude that as masculinities can be, and are being, complicated and given agency by advancing notions and practices of connectivity, mobility, classification and convergence, those engaged with masculinity studies and digital media have much to contribute.

Keywords: social network, masculinites, digital media

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Masculinidades en Red y Redes Sociales: Análisis de los Hombres y los Medios Digitales Contemporáneos

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Resumen

Está reconocido que la tecnología tiene género y está también implicada en las relaciones de género. Sin embargo, las experiencias de los hombres con la tecnología están poco exploradas y la situación es aún más problemática cuando se trata de los medios de comunicación digital. En los últimos 30 años hemos asistido a un aumento espectacular de la omnipresencia de los medios digitales en todo el mundo y además de otros aspectos de nuestras vidas. Este aumento ha sido impulsado en la última década por la aparición de la Web 2.0 y las redes sociales (sobre todo SNS). En este contexto, es necesario comprender los compromisos de los hombres con los medios digitales, las implicaciones que esto podría tener para las masculinidades y el análisis de las relaciones de género en general. Para empezar a analizar este aspecto, planteo teorizaciones alrededor de las propiedades de las redes digitales y la integración de éstas en el campo de los estudios de la masculinidad. Utilizando este marco sugiero que debemos considerar el aumento de lo que yo llamo las masculinidades conectadas en red - las masculinidades (co) producidas y reproducidas con públicos interconectados digitalmente. A través de este análisis se discuten temas relacionados con la mediación digital, las relaciones, el juego y el ocio, el trabajo y el comercio y la ética. Mi conclusión es que a medida que las masculinidades pueden ser y están siendo, complicadas y dotando de agencia de avance a las nociones y prácticas de conectividad, movilidad, clasificación y convergencia, aquellos que se dedican a los estudios de la masculinidad y los media tienen mucho que aportar.

Palabras clave: redes sociales, masculinidades y medios digitales

I n this paper I signal potential directions for fruitful areas of research at the intersection of men, masculinities and contemporary digital media, and more specifically social networking sites (SNS)[1]. By SNS I refer to sites we might think of that incorporate user profiles and the ability to connect them including those such as Facebook, Last.FM, LinkedIn, Twitter and YouTube. I also include here other lesser-known sites, for example those based on open source platforms like Ning and, where they display typical social networking site features, those aimed for example at dating and hooking up. In this introduction, I want to briefly map out the terrain for men, masculinity and digital media as I see it. Although I make no claim to its completeness, I think the following section provides a context for the agenda I put forward.

Possibly one of the earliest pieces of research in respect of men, masculinities and digital media, is a study of Internet Relay Chat (IRC) which pointed to these environments facilitating sexual connection, social connection and identity work for gay men (Shaw, 1997). Gay men and their masculinities are a recurring theme as far as digital media is concerned. A few years later a study of Taiwanese gay academic's use of Internet chat rooms, additionally chat sites as useful political devices (Yang, 2000), and in 2002 another study explored the construction and usage of pseudonyms by Gay Men within the French Minitel system (Livia, 2002). John Campbell's key work also added to understandings of gay men's IRC mediated sociality, particularly in terms of identity construction and hegemonic masculinity (Campbell, 2004). During this time, a number of papers were also published examining the potentials for the engagement of gay men in the maintenance of their sexual health with digital media (Bolding et al., 2004; Murphy et al., 2004).

Amongst these studies are a smaller number of works that dealt mostly, though not exclusively, with heterosexual masculinities and digital media. Early work in this area examined the potentials for the development of sexual identities with web camming via CU-SeeMe (Kibby & Costello, 1999), and another focussed on Multi-User Domain (MUD) use by male and female software developers (Kendall, 2000, 2002). Kendall's work not only illustrated the prevalence of gender norms associated with the non-digital in digital media environments, but also the challenges and contradictions they can present in this respect. A later study of men, digital

media and work, further problematized simplistic associations of masculinities and technology by introducing age as a complication (Eriksson-Zetterquist & Knights, 2004).

In 2004, a special issue of the journal Men and Masculinities entitled 'Men and Technologies' was published (Lohan & Faulkner, 2004). The introduction to this issue argued that few studies had focused on masculinity and technology and called for further work in this area. In this issue technology was conceptualised very broadly and incorporated studies on sexual reproductive technologies (Oudshoorn, 2004; Thorsby & Gill, 2004) and engineering (Frehill, 2004; Mellström, 2004). Within that special issue, despite the very open call, digital media was not present[2]. Since this time, work has continued to emerge in this area though it remains relatively small in comparison to the wealth of literatures on gender and those concerned with digital media. In relation to gay men, studies have continued the theme of digital media in the facilitation of social and sexual connection. These studies have focussed on new forms of connectivity via sites such as Gaydar and PlanetOut, which have been argued to bring with them further contradictions and complications regarding the construction and representation of gay masculinities. These themes include: the links between pornography and self representation (Mowlabocus, 2007, 2010); the materiality of the digital (Light, 2007; Light et al., 2008); commercial interests/processes of commodification (Campbell, 2005; Fletcher & Light, 2007; Light et al., 2008); and processes of coming out (Gray, 2009). This strand of work also demonstrates the role of digital media in providing access to public sex venues, Cottages[3], as sites pleasure which rebuff assimilationist elements that can be present within commercial gay scenes (Mowlabocus, 2008); to engage in sexual adventuring through activities such as bareback sex (Dowsett et al., 2008) and based on a study of the Zeus Gay Club in Second Life, another points, in a similar fashion to Lori Kendall's early work on MUDs, to the implication of digital media in affirming prevailing gender norms (Elund, 2013). Work has also continued that seeks to evaluate health interventions for men who have sex with men via contemporary locative social media such as GRINDR (Burrell et al., 2012). In the past few years that also been a shift towards understanding gay men and their digital networks, where the concept of networks are placed centre stage. For example, Vivienne and Burgess (2012) examine

identity management in networked activism contexts and Cassidy (2013) interrogates the implications for young gay men of connectivity between SNS, such as Facebook and Gaydar, in terms of their privacy, identity and mental health. These two latter studies are the closest pieces of work that I have found, to date, which engage with ideas of networked publics and gender identity.

Again around the same time, we see a further strand of work that, predominantly, though again not exclusively, focuses upon heterosexual men, their masculinities and digital media. This work has examined the adoption of cybersex personas and the characterisation of cybersex practice (Attwood, 2009), the construction of dating profiles in dating sites (Morgan et al., 2010) and SNS (Siibak, 2010), the construction of masculinity in relation to digital gaming (Burrill, 2010) and the possibilities for Internet porn to facilitate a challenging of hegemonic masculinity and, ultimately the reproduction of contemporary gender relations (Garlick, 2010).

So, we are 15 years away from the very early studies directly concerned with men and digital media and almost 10 years away from Lohan and Faulkner's (2004) call for more attention to men, masculinities and technology. Whilst some very important and influential work has emerged during this time, I think there is still much to be done. I say this because the majority of work in this area focuses much more on gay, bisexual and queer men and also almost all of the work I have found is highly oriented to sexuality and sexual practice in some way. My sense is that this position has emerged because it connects with researchers' desires to challenge heteronormative assumptions. This work should continue, it is important, and I intend to be alongside others doing this. However, I think we need to broaden the scope of our research with men, their masculinities and their engagements with digital media. There is untapped power in seeking to enrol digital media engagements that go beyond the sexual and that incorporates other aspects of their lives. Men need to be gendered beyond the sexual when it comes do to our understandings of digital media. It is particularly important to do this given its increasing pervasiveness of digital media throughout many, although not all, parts of the world.

This dearth of research matters because those who study gender and technology more generally still often subscribe to the technology as masculine culture thesis - the welding of technology, masculinity and

competence (Wajcman, 1991). Even later contributions are tinged with notions of singular difference when it comes to men (Wajcman, 2007) and the area has even being critiqued for being unduly influenced by heteronormativity (Landström, 2007). If we are going to stick with the technology as masculine culture thesis, then I think further work involving a much more nuanced theorizing of the masculinity-technology relation is required. Such an engagement would also offer the more general literatures on gender and technology three further sets of contributions. First it will offer a greater range of sites within which the construction of masculinity and male difference occurs (Moore & Schmidt, 1999). Second, it responds to continued lack of attention paid to the men's gendered experiences more generally (Hearn et al., 2003). Third, if we are to continue to the work on overcoming the persistent problem of gender being predominantly attributed to women (Faulkner, 2002), then research that takes men, their masculinities, as a central unit of analysis continues to be required and the project of men, masculinity and digital media can provide a strong contribution here.

Social Networking Sites: What Scope for Men and Masculinities?

In order to being to set a preliminary agenda for work, I will highlight a range of more general cross cutting themes for research with men, masculinity and digital media. In terms of why a focus upon SNS, I think there are a number of compelling reasons to put forward. First, it has been argued that many men seek to validate their masculinity in the public world rather than the private world of family and relationships, and that we need to see power as something that circulates via the social web (Whitehead & Barrett, 2001). Although Whitehead and Barrett were writing at a time before the rise in popularity of SNS, their comments have remarkable resonance today. Mainstream SNS demand a high degree of publicness in order for them to operate, a 'social web' of publicness, and without falling for a big dollop of technological determinism, such arrangements are particularly powerful given that they may transcend time and geographic boundaries. Second, Raewyn Connell has also recently argued that i) a key part of the masculinities studies enterprise should be researching institutions in which masculinities are embedded and which have weight in

social orders as a whole and ii) in respect of masculinities, we need to think about power structures on a global scale (Connell, 2012). Again in cognisance of these two points, I am minded of SNS. Indeed, one might conceptualize such arrangements as at the heart of many men's everyday lives across and amongst a range of societies, and thus they offer a way in to a range of contemporary concerns. Third, although it has been argued that gender is influential in reasons for social networking site usage (Boyd, 2008b; Hargittai, 2007; Tufekcki, 2008) to date, gender has very much a flavour of being treated as a variable where mainstream networking sites are concerned. We need work that discusses the shaping of masculinities and such media, rather than using gender as variable to understand differences in usage.

Before I consider the issues that SNS might raise for the study of masculinities, I think it would be helpful to provide a theoretical contextualisation, a way of reading SNS. I have just pointed to the centrality of publicness to SNS and I think this offers useful anchor here[4]. In this respect, there is some significant early research that pre-dates SNS as we know them today. Deborah Johnson (1997) work articulated a framework for understanding the characteristics of communications in computer based networks. This incorporated ideas of:

- scope – electronic networks can offer greater reach over physical networks;
- anonymity – individuals can communicate via the use of pseudonyms and personas;
- reproducibility – information can be reproduced online without a loss of value - it can be recorded, observed and is persistent.

Later Mimi Ito introduced the term, networked publics, to reference a linked set of social, cultural, and technological developments that have accompanied the growing engagement with digitally networked media. Here publics is used to focus on how people respond to and are (re)makers of media (Ito, 2007). danah boyd added layers Ito's idea by affording them properties similar to those put forward by Johnson (see (boyd, 2008a; boyd, 2008b))[5]:

- scalability - the potential visibility of content in networked publics is great;

- replicability - expressions can be copied from one place to another verbatim;
- persistence - communications are recorded for posterity;
- invisible audiences – it can not be fully known who may engage with content in such arenas;
- and searchability – information can be easier to find due to indexing and search facilities.

I think the one thing that emerges, and that is I think particularly a function of the timing of the presentation of ideas regarding the features of public networks, is the approach to considerations of audience and anonymity. Anonymity in networks featured I think as an idea in Johnson's work because of the nature of networks at that time - many were based on pseudonyms. We have come to recognize a much higher degree of the use of 'real names' in public networks in the advent of contemporary social networking sites and thus we see boyd implicitly engaging this within her take on networked publics. I think both Deborah Johnson's and danah boyd's positions have resonance today. Anonymity is still possible and pseudonyms are still used – even in spaces such as Facebook, which is often held up as the gold standard when it comes to discourses regarding 'real name web' practices. Conversely, we also know that even where pseudonyms are used, this should not be conflated with anonymity (Hogan, 2013). As previous work suggests, pseudonyms can reveal much about user identities (Livia, 2002). Indeed, in contemporary digital media arrangements, where say photography is employed 'real identities' can very much come to the fore. In summary, the frameworks I bring together around networked publics allow us a way to think about themes of SNS research and what this might mean for men and masculinities. Of course I recognize there are other ways of approaching this task, but raising issues of the characteristics of networked publics in terms of scope, reproducibility/replicability, anonymity, searchability, persistence and audiences seems useful way surfacing interesting issues. My suggestion is that such a framework, coupled with accepted discourse in masculinity studies regarding the constructed nature of masculinities suggests a need for a conceptualization of, and interrogation of what I term 'networked masculinities'. Networked masculinities are those masculinities

(co)produced and reproduced in conjunction with digitally mediated networked publics and their associated properties. The reason I am keen to emphasize the concept as incorporating co-production and re-production, rather than just production, is that networked publics work often involves other people and things.   In the next section I aim to illuminate such potentials for the study of networked masculinities by referencing six overlapping themes: digital mediators, relationships, play and leisure, work and commerce and ethics.

Networked Masculinities and Social Networking Sites

To date, a good deal of emphasis has been placed upon human agency in discussions of masculinities and digital media, however, my work on Gaydar has taught me that the consideration role of digital mediators is an important consideration. For example, drawing upon Lisa Nakamura's early work on race, ethnicity and menu driven identity (Nakamura, 2002), I pointed to the role, for example of Gaydar's interfaces in the construction of masculinities and the resultant potential for marginalisation amongst and already marginalised group of people (Light, 2007). Additionally, the large and growing body of work related to SNS, and other forms of Internet mediated socialisation before that, makes it clear there is a huge diversity in potential sets of arrangements for people to engage with.   I therefore believe we need to unpack SNS and consider them as applications with comparable and differing functions.   For example, Facebook allows for status updates whereas Twitter engages the Tweet.   These two functions, whilst similar, in the sense of providing information of some kind, are different. Such differences in functionality are important as they play a role in the modes of appropriation that are generated.   In the case of networked masculinities this translates into practices associated with their construction and distribution. We also need to consider the different interfaces that the applications present to the user and how these are gendered. Furthermore, is necessary to consider the possibility for different third party applications to operate as enablers, and the functionalities they afford. Related to this is the idea of connectivity which is associated with the extent to which activity can be inputted, presented and outputted via a particular network.   In this respect, although I recognise replicability and reproducibility are usually

possible (at the most basic level for example, by reposting a screen grab) we have to unpack this and understand it works in different ways depending upon the affordances of the site in question. This points to questions too of the scope of networked masculinities. Underlying this needs to be an analysis of the roles of devices (lap tops, phones, tablets for example) in mediating access to various applications and, to some extent, the infrastructure provision allied to this (3g/4g mobile networks versus those based on fibre optic broadband for example). Whilst devices themselves mediate interactions with social networking through their material features (screen size for instance), they also afford the running of specific software which brings with it functions and interfaces. Engaged in amongst all this is a need to explore this in the context of networked masculinities on a global scale. Such mediators will be variably available due not only to macro considerations such as technology infrastructures but also those, for example, related to the local, regional and national specifics of the social, cultural and legal.

A function of the different affordances discussed in the previous section is that different SNS can offer different forms of relationships. Indeed, the literatures related men, masculinities and digital media to date highlight the potentials for the different kinds of relationships (romantic, platonic, sexual) that can be part of digitally mediated practices. In as much as I see mainstream SNS providing a way in to understand and unpack masculinities and expected performances of masculinities in seemingly heteronormative digital media structures, I think it is also necessary that non-normative, queer masculinities and relations are interrogated through such spaces. Of course here, the most obvious group would be gay men. However, it is also essential to note the presence of others. For example, sites such as Gaydar and Squirt makes obvious the role of gender and sexuality in mediating both friendship and relationship making, especially where non-normative relations are concerned such as those involving group sex, threesomes and fuck buddies. Facebook in contrast does not seemingly offer this option, however if you know the right people, you can find such activity and this opens up new avenues of research about how diverse masculinities operate and are regulated in seemingly heteronormative networked public spaces. For example, I am aware of several groups for men who are transvestites that queer Facebook. Such groups operate under

the radar via the creation of private groups and group message threads. However, some also operate in a very public fashion – mediated only by the use of a female name[6], wigs, make up and clothing deploying - an articulation of privately-public and publicly-private SNS user strategies (see Lange (2007)). Such sites additionally offer wonderful opportunities for unpacking normative masculinities, the interrogation of homosociality and of course the content and processes of men's interaction people of other genders. In sum, we know a fair amount regarding friendships and relationships as mediated by mainstream sites such as Facebook and more niche sites such as Gaydar. Taking the lead from Elijah Cassidy, we need to engage deeper analysis of the issues that arise when such practices intentionally and unintentionally converge within and across sites (Cassidy, 2013).

SNS have a variety of complimentary and independent ways for that augment relationship-making practices and/or extend into other activities of life. For many this involves play and leisure activity. Here it is the kind of games most commonly associated with SNS that I think one strand of potentially interesting and important work might focus upon. It is clear that men are engaging with so called 'casual games' or 'social games' such as CafeWorld within SNS, and with SNS via connected gaming apps. Such gameplay offers a route to understanding how such gamers construct themselves and others through public play given they are playing games that have been labelled as 'not a proper game'. The 'not a proper game' discourse, I would argue, is deeply imbued with hegemonic masculinity and requires challenging (Crawford et al., 2011)[7]. SNS also offer the opportunity to associate with games and extend the experience of games that are played via media such as consoles. These practices offer sites of investigation of men's gendered experiences with technology. Potential exemplar sites here include the hypermasculine titles such as Call of Duty (circa 875,000 fans) and Guitar Hero (over 10 million fans) as well as those, such as SingStar (circa 9,500 fans) and Mario (over 12 million), which might be thought of in other gendered ways. Play and leisure via SNS of course is not restricted to digital gaming. Another example is the role of SNS in facilitating hobbies and interest and again one might look to obvious sites such as those associated with men's sport. But additionally, there is of course a much broader range of activity to be interrogated. For

example, I have been involved in studies of boys' participation with graffiti practice via YouTube (Light et al., 2012). Whilst we did not examine gender relations as part of this, there were indications of cultures of homosociality and networked masculinities.

Another way in which SNS augment relationship making practices and/or extend into other activities of life is through the sphere of work and commerce. Here it is worth noting that, for many people, the rise of SNS has further blurred the boundaries between home and work beyond those associated with previous teleworking practices, such as working from home. In some ways we are seeing a re-networking of the personal, home and work that, in developed economies at least, has not been as widespread as it was before the industrial revolution. What we have seen with the rise of SNS is an integration of telework practices into personal networked public contexts where, for instance, single accounts are used by people for personal and work purposes. Given this, further work that considers men's navigation of the personal/home/work and the performance of masculinities as related to this is required. Additionally SNS have emerged which are targeted purely at work – LinkedIn for example. Here, there are two issues. First, LinkedIn offers an interesting site for the interrogation of networked masculinities and work for certain occupational groups – those that might be categorised as professional. But also, the existence of LinkedIn suggests absences and proposes a need to look for other occupations, those concerned with trades and service industries for instance. One might ask a question therefore about certain networked masculinities being connected in such a way that their scope maintains the subordinance of others. Not only do such public networks suggest the need to interrogate internal hegenomies, there is a broader project related to women regarding external hegemony too, both in terms of professions and other occupations. Extending matters beyond work to incorporate the commercial imperatives of formal institutions it is necessary to note that the social relations carried with and made possible by the Internet have long been recognised as having the potential for being subjected to processes of commodification (Arvidsson, 2006; Magnet, 2007). Indeed in my previous work, with Alison Adam and Gordon Fletcher, on Gaydar we have argued this specifically as related to gay masculinities (Light et al., 2008). I believe further work is necessary that interrogates the processes of

commodification at work in respect of networked masculinities. The deployment of health, fitness, body image and fashion as made evident through SNS based marketing strategies are important examples here. Notably, such constructions are based on personal data profiles, interactions in site and within other sites across the Internet. It is important to remember that networked masculinities, as with masculinities more generally, are not only, or indeed necessarily, constructed by us. Networked masculinities potentially involve the input of other people, institutions and things, and as such are subject to being inscribed with particular readings. Commercial readings, or commercially influenced readings, are perhaps one of the most pervasive and powerful, particularly in the developed world.

A final set of questions I want to raise concern the ethics of SNS and the links this might have with networked masculinities. In prior work I have undertaken a disclosive ethics based analysis of Facebook, which posited a somewhat radical notion that ultimately is it very difficult to locate ethical responsibility within SNS (Light & McGrath, 2010). I think this argument also applies to ethical considerations regarding masculinities. For example, one might ask what are the ethics of networked masculinities in terms of the philosophy feeding such constructions, and the power dynamics of those human and non-human things involved. Where does responsibility lie for an engagement with the properties of networked publics such as reproducibility/replicability or scope when these affirm hegemonic masculinities and internal and external hegenomies? I think it is particularly important here not just to rely on discourses of human agency and consider this solely in terms of developers and users. We need to take seriously the role digital mediators in particular and how these act in morally charged ways.

Conclusion

Our understandings of men, masculinities and digital media are comparatively limited in the context of other work on gender. I propose, given the prevalence and importance of digital media in many societies, that there is a requirement for, and great opportunity in, exploring this further. Drawing upon early theorizations of the characteristics of communication

in computer based networks and contemporary networked publics; I suggest that a project of the exploration of networked masculinities would prove fruitful. Importantly, although I focus here on men for the purposes of reinforcing the need to make gender stick to them, of course the project of networked masculinities can, and should, apply to people of other genders.

I have signalled the importance of certain properties of digital media networks for the construction and reproduction of networked masculinities. In summary, the scope of networks offers the potentials for hyper-public constructions of masculinity. Notions of reproducibility and replicability, offer mechanisms for thinking about the transmission, presentation and repurposing of ideas of masculinity. Anonymity offers opportunities for the performance of alternate masculinities, and of course alternate gender relations. Persistence provides for the codification and reification of versions of masculinity. The searchability of such persistence makes such 'things' findable, reproducible and replicable – again in hyper-public environments, and even ones that are more niche in nature. Finally, networked masculinities have audiences – these can be known, imagined and hidden.

These are just starting points and further work is required to unpack the idea and operation of networked masculinities. Two things are important here. First, there is a need to treat digitally mediated networked publics in a non-deterministic fashion – technologically, socially, culturally or otherwise. Even though such publics can display certain properties, it does not mean they will be operationalized, or that where they are, they are in the way we expect them to be. Second, and leading from my first point, we need to understand in much more detail how networked masculinities are constructed and reproduced. This might involve attention to networked identity work, but I think it also requires us to go beyond this. The role of the non-human in the form of digital mediators, the analysis of relationships and understanding the dynamics of spheres of life such as play, leisure, work and commerce that go beyond the sexual and into the mundaneness of networked masculinities is required. Moreover, attention also needs to be paid to issues that intersect with these, such as networked masculinity and ethics.

Without perhaps without over enrolling my own enthusiasm as a scholar of digital media, I believe that networked masculinities are important. At the very minimum, whether the idea of networked masculinities takes hold or not, I would hope that this paper at least stimulates discussion and action in terms of men, masculinities and digital media. Moreover, whilst I have focussed here on SNS, I would hope this stands as a strong exemplar that demonstrates the value of further studies of other forms of digital media. Masculinities look to be subject to further complication and agency by advancing notions and practices of connectivity, mobility, classification and convergence. Masculinity studies and digital media scholars, I would argue, have much to contribute here.

Notes

[1] I am aware of debates regarding the appropriate terminology regarding SNS. I use the term networking rather than network because I wish to emphasize the activities associated with such sites and, moreover, it allows great scope to include a more diverse range of sites particularly given that 'social network' functionality is being added into other sites and has been for some time, particularly in Queer online networks and communities.

[2] This was something that I attempted to do in the area of Information Systems, but with no success (Light, 2006, 2007). I think it is important here to acknowledge 'failure' the hiding of it is, for me at least, quite heavily tied to heroic and masculine constructions of the formation of knowledge that I do not feel sits comfortably with the feminist tradition.

[3] Cottage is a term used in the UK to describe public toilets used for sex between men. The term Beat is used in Australia and Tea Room is used in the USA.

[4] Of Course there are other ways of reading SNS, I have strategically chosen this approach to develop an idea of networked masculinities.

[5] boyd's construction of networked publics is slightly different between the two pieces of work I cite here. I have based this construction on that provided in (boyd, 2008b) adding in scalability from (boyd, 2008a)

[6] The terms for such a name are various including: dressed name, female name, femme name, gurls name, though this is in no way an exhaustive list..

[7] See Crawford et al. (2011) for an expansion of this argument.

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