

School of Sociology and Social Policy

FACULTY OF EDUCATION SOCIAL SCIENCES AND LAW



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Using Facebook as a Research Tool

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[@gillmooney](#)



Presentation outline

- Research overview
- Why Facebook?
- Making use of Facebook for research
- Difficulties/barriers
- Conclusions



Research overview: aims

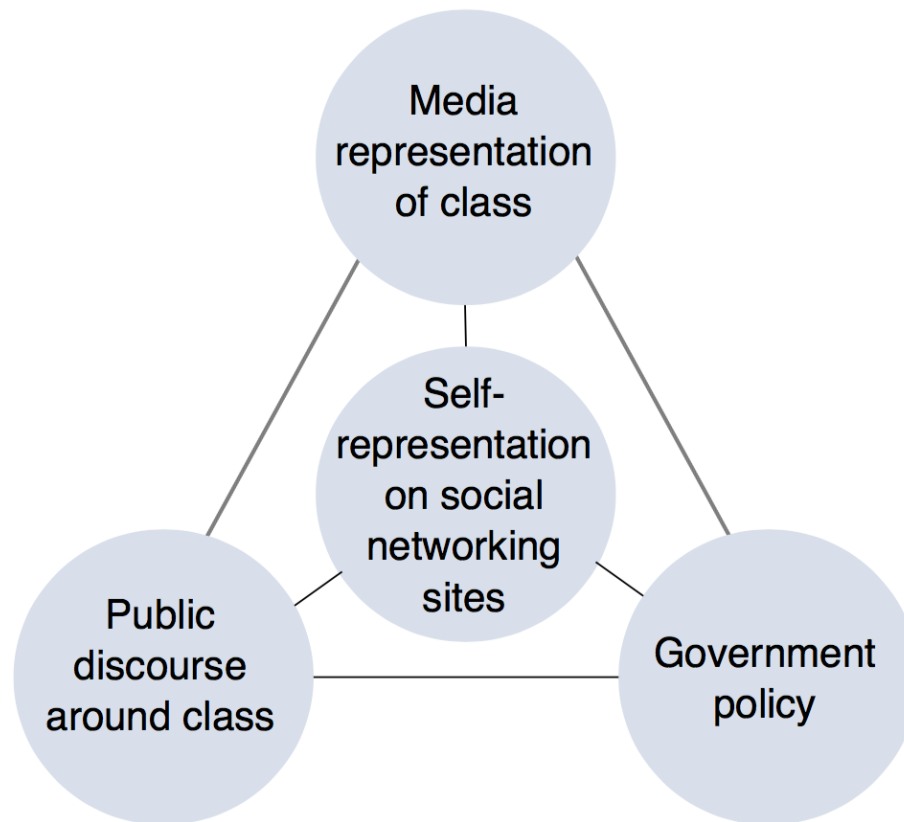
- To what extent and in what ways do people use Facebook to define and understand their own and others' class position?
- What are the contemporary indicators of class that people use to position themselves and others in terms of class on Facebook?
- How do people construct and manage self-representations of classed identities on Facebook?
- How is capital acquired, employed, displayed and exchanged on Facebook to contribute to classed self-representation?



Why Facebook?

- Popularity
- Network based on mutual connection
- Features
- Public/private blur

Why Facebook?



Each element is generative of, and generated by the others




Using Facebook for research

- Topic/site/tool
 - Recruitment
 - Communication
 - Stimulus for discussion
 - Situating the research

Using Facebook for research - recruitment

- Call for Participants



Gill Mooney ResearchLeeds
LEEDS 15 September at 11:34 · 🔒 ▼




WOULD YOU LIKE TO HAVE YOUR SAY ON SOCIAL CLASS ON FACEBOOK?
Research participants wanted for focus groups and interviews. Expenses paid. Click here for more info:

Social Class on Facebook?

Social class on Facebook? Have your say! Thank you for coming to this site. Below you will find information about the research you are being asked to take part in. After you've read it, if you are 25-35 years old and live in Leeds, please click and add "Gill Mooney"

CLASSRESEARCH.WORDPRESS.COM

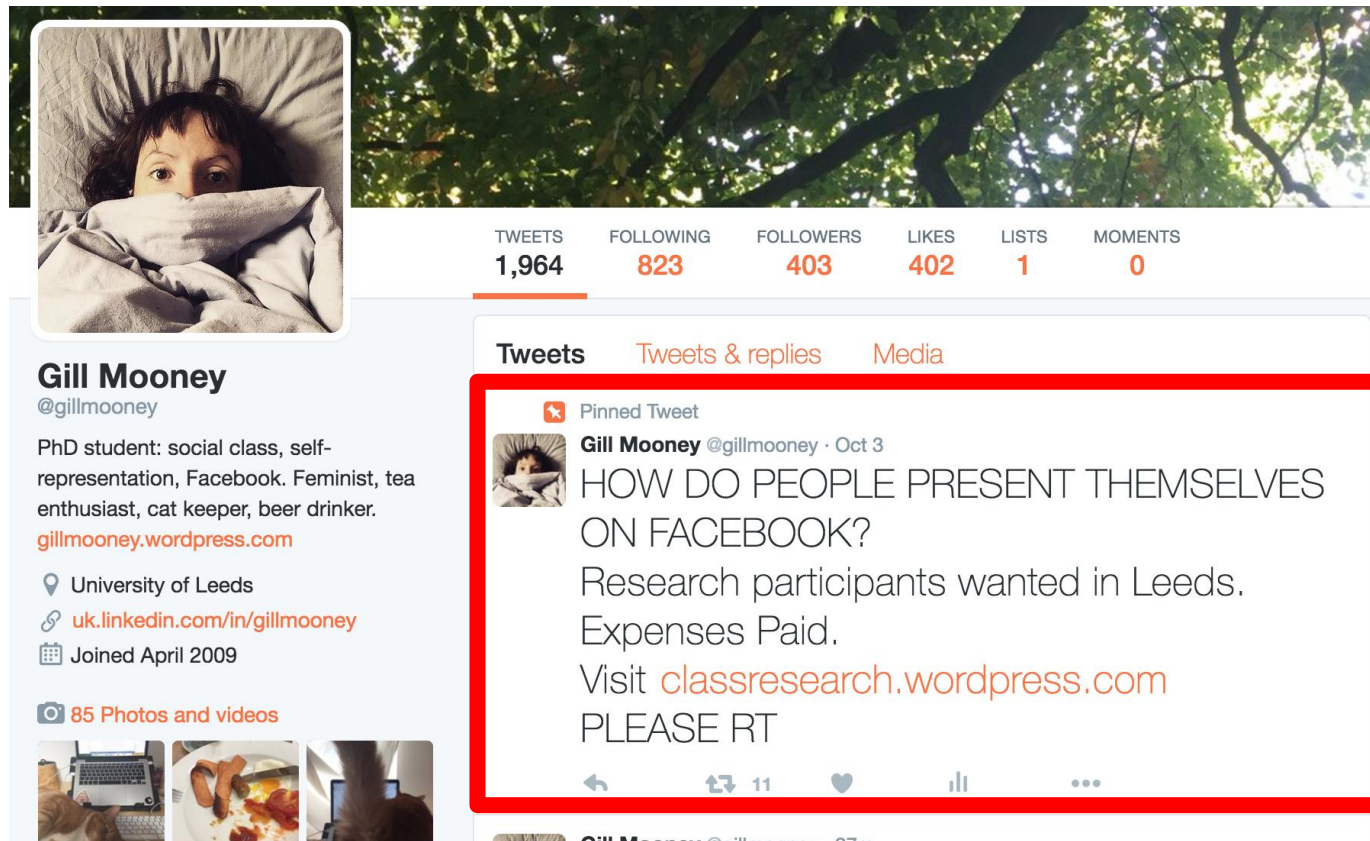
👍 Like 💬 Comment ➦ Share

 Write a comment...  

Press Enter to post.

Using Facebook for research - recruitment

- Barriers



The image shows a screenshot of a Facebook profile for Gill Mooney. The profile picture is a woman with dark hair, partially covered by a grey blanket. The cover photo is a close-up of green leaves and tree branches. The profile statistics are: TWEETS 1,964, FOLLOWING 823, FOLLOWERS 403, LIKES 402, LISTS 1, and MOMENTS 0. The bio identifies her as a PhD student in social class, self-representation, and Facebook, with interests in feminism, tea, cats, and beer. A pinned tweet is highlighted with a red border, containing the text: "HOW DO PEOPLE PRESENT THEMSELVES ON FACEBOOK? Research participants wanted in Leeds. Expenses Paid. Visit classresearch.wordpress.com PLEASE RT".

Gill Mooney
@gillmooney

PhD student: social class, self-representation, Facebook. Feminist, tea enthusiast, cat keeper, beer drinker.
gillmooney.wordpress.com

University of Leeds
uk.linkedin.com/in/gillmooney
Joined April 2009
85 Photos and videos

Tweets Tweets & replies Media

Pinned Tweet

Gill Mooney @gillmooney · Oct 3

HOW DO PEOPLE PRESENT THEMSELVES ON FACEBOOK?
Research participants wanted in Leeds.
Expenses Paid.
Visit classresearch.wordpress.com
PLEASE RT



Using Facebook for research - communication

- Staying in touch with participants

The image shows a screenshot of a Facebook profile for 'Gill Mooney ResearchLeeds' and an overlaid chat window. The profile page includes navigation tabs for 'Timeline', 'About', 'Friends 7', 'Photos', and 'More'. A post from the profile is visible, dated '15 September at 11:34', with the text '***WOULD YOU LIKE TO HAVE YOUR SAY ON SOCIAL CLASS'. The chat window, titled 'Gill Mooney', shows a message from Gill Mooney: 'through Facebook, or via my e-mail address: G.S.Mooney@leeds.ac.uk. Thank you again, Gill Mooney'. Below the message is a 'Participant Information Sheet - drive.google.com' with a 'Seen 08:46' status. The chat input field at the bottom contains the text 'type a message...'. The profile picture shows two t-shirts, and the cover photo shows a building.

Using Facebook for research – Stimulus for discussion

- Focus groups
- Interviews



The image shows a screenshot of a Facebook news feed. The top navigation bar includes the search bar, the user's name (Gill Murray), and navigation icons for Home, Friends, and Messages. The left sidebar contains navigation options for the user's profile, favourites, news feed, messages, events, saved items, and various groups and pages. The main feed area displays several posts:

- A post by Lucy Robson: "What's on your mind?" with a photo of a person and a "Post" button.
- A post by Samantha Harrison: "Craig David is well annoying." with a photo of Craig David and "Like", "Comment", and "Share" buttons.
- A post by Samantha Harrison: "It is cold. I disapprove." with a photo of a person and "Like", "Comment", and "Share" buttons.
- A post by Laura Jones: "Henry took his first totally unaided steps last night!! (Witnessed by grandma & dada so I know I didn't imagine it!)" with a photo of a baby and "Like", "Comment", and "Share" buttons.

The right sidebar features "YOUR PAGES", "TRENDING" news items (e.g., "Glynn Purnell: Michelin-Starred Chef Responds to Customer's 1-Star Review on TripAdvisor"), "SPONSORED" advertisements (e.g., "Up to 80% OFF" from romwe.com), and "8 event invitations".



Conclusion

- Ethics
- Expectations and limits
- Going forward...

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Thank you

Questions/comments?

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