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## The Facebook Gaze: Disciplining Action in Online Interpersonal Space

The Facebook Gaze expands and extends the Tourist Gaze (Urry 1990, 2002; Urry and Larsen 2011) as a way to understand how consumption, production and interactions are disciplined on social media sites. We are all tourists now John Urry (1995) proclaims as many of the practices once found only in travel activities are now seen in everyday life, and perhaps, have grown exponentially with the advent of Facebook and similar websites. Due in part to the advances in camera technologies as well as the growth of online social networks, a new kind of visual sociability is becoming increasingly prevalent. Using smartphones, individuals are now creating vacation-like, performative photographs in their everyday life and disseminating them almost instantaneously through Facebook or other social media, creating a curated life narrative and idealized performance of self for others to view. These activities are disciplined by the Facebook Gaze that, like the Tourist Gaze, structurally organizes specific ways of being, viewing and interacting by means of algorithms that dictate visibility on the site and a template infrastructure that functions through prosumption (Ritzer and Jurgenson 2010). The practice of everyday personal photography has now become an essential aspect of participating in online interpersonal spaces.

Facebook, a leader in social media, has played a major role in creating an online interpersonal space and constructing the ways in which social actors can participate. Online sociability is primarily visual and sharing personal photography is increasingly how social actors communicate, connect and express themselves. Similar to how the Tourist Gaze engenders specific kinds of performances and understandings of destinations, the Facebook Gaze constitutes a technologically and socially patterned and learned way of participating (Larsen 2014). Through templates, algorithms and user feedback, individuals' engagement and online performances are disciplined into conformity and their social visibility is mediated. Elsewhere I have argued that the literature on tourism photography provides a heuristic for understanding contemporary picture making and sharing practices (Karner 2013). In this essay, I focus on the role the Facebook Gaze plays in shaping how this new online visual sociability is both constrained and enacted.

## The Tourist Gaze and Visual Sociability

The Facebook Gaze draws explicitly and extensively from John Urry's writings on the Tourist Gaze. With the publication of the first edition of *The Tourist Gaze* (1990), John Urry proposed a sociological approach to understanding tourism that is primarily visual. Drawing on Foucault's *The Birth of the Clinic* (1976), Urry posited that tourism activities and the industry are constructed through the "exercise and decisions of the gaze" (Urry 1990: 1). Since then various scholars have sought to further develop the embodied performance of tourism against an enriched sense of place (Crouch 2002; Crouch and Desforges 2003), while noting the prevalence and essential component of photography in constructing desire for the destination to be visited, providing the semiotic markers for how to see—and thus, experience—the sites, and as a picturing practice of participants (Garrod 2009). From this work the social conventions that shape tourist photography have been identified. "Theories about 'hermeneutic circles' (Urry 1990), 'circuits of culture' (Crang 1997), and 'regimes of truth' (Bal 2003) explain the circulatory nature of practices, where social conventions, myths and signs dictate what, who, where and how photographs are produced and reproduced" (Mannik 2012: 273) in response to the *Tourist Gaze*.

Tourist behaviors—the use of the camera, the construction of idealized, iconic images, and how an audience is anticipated—are all disciplined through the *Tourist Gaze* (Urry 1990). It is the *Tourist Gaze* that marshals "the visual experience of the tourist, it transforms the ordinary visual experience, normally pragmatic and habitual, into a self-pleasing end-in-itself whose perceptual sensuality is carried over into other forms of the tourist experience" (Osborne 2000: 82–83). The gaze creates a normative order within which the tourist can be assured of having seen the relevant views and acquired the particular knowledge of the place. Travelers have been disciplined, prior to traveling, through repeated visual representations of tourist performance (Garrod 2009). Thus, traveling individuals arrive at destinations with an understanding of what to expect, how to interpret their experience and what tourist roles are available for their performance. Destination images, like the curated images that appear on social media platforms, become a kind of visual script that tourists use to refine their performance and to collaborate with other travelers.

The *Tourist Gaze*, then, is an organizing principle which structures encounters among tourists and people and places visited that constructs both what is visible and what is kept from the tourist view (Bajc 2011). This dynamic can be seen in destination images which are constructed to present a specific place brand designed to create desire to consume the experience as well as in the photographs created by the tourists that mirror the marketing images. In framing their photographs,

“tourists enact certain aesthetic preferences and draw on wider representations, knowledge and histories of a location” (Robinson and Picard 2009: 15). They seek out the “classic” or iconic views of the space, ritually reproducing the appropriate image. Tourist photographs are a “repetition of the same gesture—photographing the photographed ... a ritual behavior ... a choreography of mostly foreknown movements and encounters” (Osborne 2000: 85). The Tourist Gaze through previously constructed and circulated images educates travelers as to how to photographically consume a place and appropriately document their travel performance. This same dynamic can be seen in online interpersonal spaces as website infrastructures dictate the format in which performances can be shared, and other users socialize participants to contribute material that is positively responded to, rather than ignored.

### Visual Sociability and Photo-based Dialogue

Digital technologies and social media have provided much of the impetus for the new role photography is playing in everyday life. As never before, “We are living more photographically” (Gomez Cruz 2013) as images have become a primary currency of communication and connection. Online sharing of personal photography has become a “connection interface” between people, information, databases, networks, “clouds” and objects (Gomez Cruz 2013). Visual media is becoming a prominent way in which individuals link themselves to, and interact with, the broader social world. This new application of images as a connection infrastructure offers more efficiency, more immediate representation, and more access to social feedback than ever existed in the pre-Web 2.0 world. Making and sharing pictures is expanding into a new type of photo-based dialogue with photography beginning to play a central role in social communication.

Efficient and inexpensive, communication through images can transcend language barriers and provide a ‘co-presence’ that overcomes geographic limitations. As individuals become increasingly mobile—no longer linked to place, history, or relationships—the new technologies for self-performance and social connection have emerged with photography playing a key role. New forms of social interaction and engagement such as Facebook and other social media sites are not linked to any specific geographic location—they exist seamlessly as the individual moves through places, relationships, and jobs. In a study of media technologies, Keightley and Pickering (2014) interviewed one respondent who after posting photographs to Facebook while on vacation said she had no need to write to her friends and family as to where she had been “because they have already seen the photo and the name of the place” (p. 587). “Image making has become a form

of communication nearly as banal, instinctive and pervasive as talking” (Ritchin interviewed in Butet-Roch 2013).

Snapchat is perhaps the epitome of this new visual dialogue. Users can send simple images to each other without text; and then the images disappear after being viewed just like words do after being spoken in unrecorded conversations. These fleeting images can constitute an entire discussion. In launching the wearable device Google Glass, Google’s co-founder Sergey Brin talked about the efficiency of replying with a single image rather than typing out words. Contemporary photography has opened up new possibilities that are changing our communication practices and appear to be transforming and supplanting older practices of interaction. Social media is enabling a new kind of sociability (Alonso and Oiarzabal 2010) which is primarily visual and disciplined through the site infrastructures and algorithms.

With the advent of the smart phone, others have proposed that we have entered a “fifth moment” of photography “that is complete mobility, ubiquity, and connection” (Gomez Cruz and Meyer 2012: 217) that allows for more control in both image production and dissemination. This fifth moment is characterized not only by the camera that is omnipresent and the social media that facilitates dissemination in unprecedented volume, but also the software that allows users to basically control all the aspects of production, post production and publication from their hand held device. Not only can individuals snap pictures of their daily routines but they can easily edit video and still images framing, constructing and controlling the performance before sharing it. All seeing is innately political (Bal 2003) and photography allows the viewer to document what is being seen, or they wish to be seen, as well as render some aspects invisible by selective organization within the frame allowing for finely honed performances.

In addition to aspects of control, the sheer ease of digital photography has led to individuals to create pictures of all facets of their lives much like tourists seeking to record all aspects of their vacation. “We take pictures, now, of things or circumstances we think are curious or cool, and for reasons we probably can’t or would rather not articulate” (Ritchin 2009: 14). By isolating various moments of one’s experience—a sign seen on the way to work, the driver in the next car, sale items at the store, a pet, the new car, or drinks after work—individuals are selectively crafting the visual narrative of their life. Even the banal rituals of everyday life are now considered photo worthy (Van House 2011). With an unprecedented frequency, personal photographs are being used to document self-performances, enact shared realities, communicate curated micro autobiographies, share the mundane and the profound, and participate in everyday social interaction.

Whereas once personal images were created most often as mnemonic devices, communication has now surpassed memory as the primary function of photography (Sarvas and Frolich 2011; Van House 2011). Taking into account not only cameras but all other devices, such as smart phones, tablets and computers which have the capacity to make an image, Heiferman estimates that one third of the global population now has access to a camera (Heiferman interviewed in Brook 2013). According to Fortune magazine, 10 percent of all photographs ever made—since the invention of photography in the mid 1800s—were created in 2011 (Richin 2013). Yahoo projects that there will be 880 billion more images made in 2014 (Richin 2013). With just over 7 billion people alive on the planet, 880 billion images is approximately 126 images per person for every man, woman and child alive. Not only are we making more photographs, but we are also sharing them at an unprecedented rate—350 million images are uploaded to Facebook each day. Immensely popular, visits to Facebook account for 7.07% of all US web traffic making it the most visited website in the United States (Dougherty 2010) and a recent Pew Center Report found that 66% of American adult internet users were on Facebook, and 46% post original photos or videos online. Scholars have been furiously trying to keep pace with technological change and how it is shaping social life and individual practices (Turkle 2011), yet few have focused specifically on how photography is used on social networks and how online interaction is disciplined to produce specific kinds of visual presentations and performances.

## The Facebook Gaze

While digital technologies have increased access to cameras and other devices with picture making capacities, it is online photo upload opportunities that have provided the means to use personal images widely for communication. A relatively recent phenomenon, the rise of social networks and Facebook specifically has been rather astounding. Noted as one of the most important social trends of the past decade (Caers et al. 2013), Facebook had a reported 1.49 billion monthly active users and 968 million daily active users as of June 2015. Additionally, Facebook reports 1.31 billion monthly and 844 daily users that access Facebook through their mobile devices. “Users share four billion pieces of content per day ... and Facebook is now integrated with over seven million websites and applications” (Wilson et al. 2012). Over 350 million images are uploaded to Facebook each day. A global phenomenon, Facebook is available in over 70 languages and approximately 83.1% of the daily active users are outside the U.S. and Canada. Founded in 2004, Facebook is now the most popular social medium in the world (Giglietto et al. 2012). To put this in context, if Facebook (pop. 1,490,000,000) were a country it would be the largest in

the world—ahead of both China and India the two countries with the largest populations. The number of people that log into Facebook daily (968,000,000) is more than the number of people living in the Americas—Canada, United States, and all of Central and South America—combined. Considering that Facebook has been in existence just over ten years, and has only been available for use by the public since 2006, its growth and popularity are staggering.

### **Constructing the Gaze**

The Facebook user's activities are disciplined through the site architecture that structures specific kinds of performance and interaction. There are two basic components to the Facebook platform—the user profile (a Personal Interactive Homepage or PIH) and the News Feed (“Home”). The user profile is a “templated bricolage of personal information, used for the purposes of communication and interaction within social networks” (Davis 2010: 1104). Using templates, individuals can provide various kinds of information about themselves including photos. As such Facebook functions as a site of prosumption where individuals both produce and consume the site content (Ritzer and Jurgenson 2010). The average Facebook user produces 90 pieces of content per month and is connected with approximately 80 organization pages, groups, and events on the site (Wilson et al. 2012). The News Feed is where users see what other people have posted to the network in the form of “status updates.” Where the majority of the interaction takes place, the News Feed is also where others can comment or “like” the various updates made by themselves or others. Additionally, Facebook has a number of features built in to motivate specific types of user interaction. One study found that the birthday reminder function accounted for 54% of interactions between pairs of users who interact infrequently (Viswanath et al. 2009). Though the website has continued to change and evolve its infrastructure, these two components remain at the core of the Facebook experience.

The third component in Facebook experience is the ability to “friend” other users to create a group of connected individuals who become the primary audience for their members online performances. The majority of an individual's Facebook friends are people they know offline, while approximately 15% are people who have never met in person (Stefanone, Lackaff and Rosen 2008). Wilson et al (2012) found in their review of recent Facebook research that the average Facebook user has 130 friends that are generally similar in age and from the same country. However, in the United States the average number of Facebook friends was higher at 214. At the extreme, Facebook allows users to have up to 5000 “friends” as well

as provides the option for making public posts that could theoretically be seen by all 1.49 billion monthly active users.

Moreover, Facebook offers an ingenious “co-presence” by including a small thumbnail of the user’s profile picture with each online interaction. The profile image offers a sense—a trace—of the person through their digital image giving the impression of presence in absence. As Barthes (1981) explained, the photograph is never fully distinguished from its referent—the image is experienced as the referent and its photographicality is no longer evident. In looking at a profile image, one does not see a picture of Mary, one simply sees Mary. It is this co-presence that allows users to feel connected whenever they login. Anytime they enter the Facebook community, their friends and their audience are always ‘present’. This co-presence “connects them with the world at large, linking their networked selves into geographically distributed social relations” in ways that were never before possible (Uimonen 2013: 134).

Facebook offers mediated forms of communication that include both asynchronous (e.g. status updates, wall posts and private messages) and nearly synchronous (e.g. chat) means of interaction. A number of scholars have utilized Goffman’s dramaturgical approach to understand online performance and presentation of self (e.g., Hogan 2010; Pinch 2010). Whereas much of Goffman’s (1959) discussions focused on what he termed ‘situations’ which are bounded in time and space and take place synchronously, much of the interaction which occurs online is asynchronous where users offer artifacts (pictures or text) in what Goffman called ‘exhibitions’ to be responded to by others at a separate time. Thus Facebook provides a blend of situations (e.g., chat) which can be private or group communications and exhibitions within which users perform and manage their identity claims more widely within their friendship groups. The interaction that occurs through the asynchronous exhibitions—posts and comments or likes by others—provides the ‘behavioral residue’ that audience members can use to assess individual performances (Scott 2014). Behavioral residue refers to the responses of others that affirm or contradict the original identity claim. In a study of war-renting theory among Facebook users, Walther et al. (2009) found that viewers rely more heavily this corroborative information—responses that cannot be easily manipulated by the performer—when making an assessment about the individual. That is, comments friends make about the individual overrode self comments. This dynamic helps structure the boundaries of credibility within which an idealized performance can be seen as successful. Additionally, interaction on Facebook is guided by a unique set of interaction rules that function as social norms regarding appropriate communication channels, relational maintenance and monitoring negative consequences for self or others (Bryant and Marmo 2012).

In the brief but exponential history of social networks, from 2002 to 2008, most were operated as community spaces to facilitate connectedness and social interaction. Though in 2008, they shifted their focus to “monetizing connectivity by maximizing lucrative data traffic between people, things and ideas” and designing the site architecture to promote personal “storytelling and narrative self presentation” (van Dijck 2013: 200). Dependent upon prosumption (Ritzer and Jurgenson 2010), social networks increased their facilitation of ‘me marketing’ (Caers et al. 2013). In many ways, Facebook as the most widely used social media site, has been in the forefront of using interface technologies to shape user behavior by turning online interaction into algorithms that engineer specific kinds of performances and render others invisible that I refer to as the Facebook Gaze.

Though Facebook has received significant attention from researchers (e.g., Caers et al. 2013; Wilson et al. 2012 for comprehensive reviews), there has been only limited attention to how everyday photography practices are utilized and disciplined to communicate performances that ‘show rather than tell’ (Zhao et al. 2008) and thereby effectively mediate much of the labor in constructing the online self to be seen as authentic performances (Davis 2012). Facebook is often characterized as a platform to ‘see and be seen’ (Caers et al. 2013), where ‘cyberself-ing’ occurs (Robinson 2007), and one’s network of associations is shown in a visual format (Donath 2007). In many ways social media has engineered a shift to ‘mass self communication’ (Castells 2009). Self-promotion and self-branding has “become a normalized, accepted phenomenon in ordinary people’s lives” (van Dijck 2013:203). Savvy social media users engage in conscious acts of self-staging that are often based on celebrity role models and other lifestyle media examples. Raisborough (2011) charted self-scripts found in our “make over culture” where individuals are given models of who and what counts as a successful self. The message is one of self as a project—a work in process, an ongoing performance—that can only be accomplished through continual labor of self-improvement, with the help of experts, consumerism and engaging in ‘correct practices.’ Acceptable selfhood, then, must be earned through prescribed and normalized performances in order to be validated. On Facebook, users provide this feedback in the form of likes, comments or “shares that let the individual know if they are performing successfully.

### **Disciplining Performances and Participation**

Like the hermeneutical circle of the Tourist Gaze, where individuals learn to perform tourist roles and document destinations according to iconic views, a similar dynamic occurs through digital sharing of everyday photographs. Much like tourism destinations designed to move visitors through spaces in specific



ways (e.g. the winding lines at Disneyland), steer them toward iconic vistas (e.g. signs designating scenic views), or create “memorable” cultural experiences (e.g. The Polynesian Cultural Center), the Facebook architecture and algorithms move users through the site engendering specific kinds of participation and experiences produced through the Facebook Gaze.

The generic templates that structure the efforts of prosumers on Facebook make managing and mining large amounts of data easier for the company but constrain the users’ participation to those things allowed by the template. Like Foucault’s Panopticon, the Facebook Gaze is deployed through the infrastructure of the site itself. Creating a uniform normativity “through the technical structuring of a way of being”, users must adjust their behavior accordingly in order to participate. Moreover, Bucher (2012) outlines how EdgeRank, Facebook’s algorithm for structuring the flow and visibility of information and communication, further disciplines user behavior by the constant possibility of being rendered invisible, obsolete or irrelevant causing one’s posts to disappear from the News Feed. Hogan (2010) conceptualizes Facebook’s management and redistribution of digital content through EdgeRank as a ‘virtual curator’. Though, unlike professional curators in museum settings for example, EdgeRank is not attempting to create a specific narrative or sense making array of content but rather merely following a preset mathematical process based on individual user activities.

The EdgeRank of any contribution is calculated from an ‘affinity’ score based on the relationship between other viewers and the creator, a ‘weight’ score for the type of participation (create, comment, like, tag, etc), and ‘time decay’ factor based on how long ago the contribution was generated. As users have become more aware of the importance of algorithms in how sociality is represented and organized (Kitchin and Dodge 2011), research into strategies to optimize ones EdgeRank have proliferated (e.g. Cooper 2013). To maintain visibility and relevance—that is to have your activity show up on the News Feeds of others—one must generate comments and likes or post information that others will share with their network of Facebook friends. Thus, Facebook users assist in the disciplining of each other by choosing to engage with some content while ignoring other posts.

Additionally, friends provide the interactive context within which an individual user performs, is viewed and evaluated. A user’s EdgeRank is dependent upon garnering responses from friends that validate and verify the performance. Everyday photography plays a key role in social media identity staging and interaction (Gomez Cruz and Meyer 2012) as images are a prime means of increasing your EdgeRank score. A recent study by HubSpot found that photos uploaded to Facebook pages received 53% more likes and generated 104% more comments than the average text-based post (Corliss 2012). Posting frequent and engaging

photographs are then rewarded doubly, by positive response of other users and a greater likelihood that more people will see the image which in a circular fashion increases the chance of additional responses furthering one's visibility.

## The Performance Space

Long before the existence of Web 2.0, Goffman (1959) conceptualized social life as a performance, a dramaturgical and collaborative interaction between selves through which social reality was constituted. Facebook and other social media sites have provided a new stage for social actors to demonstrate artful self-staging, careful impression management and sophisticated role play primarily through personal photographs. Individuals use culturally recognizable signs, symbols and props to aid their performances (Liu 2008) which they document through photography so it can be shared and viewed by their online audience. Since its inception, photography has been a modern medium that social actors use to construct shared realities and sustain both individual and collective notions of identity (Schwartz and Ryan 2003:6). The impact of photography as a 'technology of the self' has expanded exponentially with online sharing. Currently, nearly half of all of American adult internet users post original photos or videos online.

In this age of ubiquitous "hyperphotography" (Ritchin 2009), social media has fundamentally changed the way individuals' make, share and view personal photographs. Online, all the interaction and communication surrounding the image happens asynchronously through the website interface. Spectators are able to self-space their viewing—spending shorter or longer time with each image—creating their own interpretation of the picture. Viewing other people's photographs has become a "form of leisure and a social activity" (Rubinstein and Sluis 2008: 18). "Photography excites us to the point that it makes us greedy to see more," explains Heiferman, "we need to see more to know more" (2012: 11). Indeed, this aspect of social media has perhaps had the most important impact on social life—the opportunity to share a constructed idealized life in almost real time and receive nearly immediate feedback—has brought immediacy and disciplined intimacy to interactions. Creating and viewing personal photographs has also become more "public and transitory, less private and durable" (Van House 2011: 125). With global mobile devices, individuals can upload or view photos from almost anywhere in the world.

On Facebook, one's friends provide the primary audience for each performance and their positive responses facilitate visibility and their lack of response leads to invisibility through the website algorithm. Contemporary individuals document their performances through photography with the expectation of sharing them with others in hopes of receiving likes, comments or shares. They anticipate the

interests and responses of their audience, imagining the idealized representation “before the button has ever been pressed” (Haldrup and Larsen 2006: 34). Much of the existing research on Facebook users has focused on how friend characteristics influence the perception of an individual’s self-performance (Caers et al. 2013; Wilson et al. 2012). Some scholars have looked at the impact of the size of one’s friend network on social attractiveness. This work suggests that there is an optimum number of around 300 and that users with more or less friends are likely to be seen less positively (Tong et al. 2008). Other research has demonstrated how impressions about users’ performances are affected by both the behavioral residue—whether their claims are affirmed or contradicted in comments by their friends—and the physical attractiveness of those they friend and are connected to (Walther et al. 2008). Savvy social actors craft specific performances in anticipation of a collaborative (reaffirming) response from their audience. Furthermore, they continue to adjust and modify their performance in accordance with the feedback they receive. Thus the Facebook audience plays an important role in disciplining the performances of users.

### **Curating the Online Self**

Facebook offers participants the means to produce and curate their online self with each image and text-based post that is shared, with each group or page that is “liked”, and even with the cultivation of specific “friends”. Online templates offer “the very tools for shaping identities” (van Dijck 2013: 213) and every “post” becomes an opportunity to perform some aspect of the desired self (Robinson 2007). In curating their online self, “Facebook users engage in a reflexive process whereby they portray certain aspects of selfhood, while ignoring or concealing others” (Uimonen 2013: 126). Moreover, users can also artfully decide which components of their online life to “share” with the public, their friends, or selected friends allowing for the carefully designated performance from multiple representations of self within the same platform. With the Timeline feature, Facebook users are encouraged to “tell the whole story of your life” (Zuckerberg 2011). Relying heavily on photographs, contemporary identities can be curated with sophistication and performed, in this fifth moment of photography, on the go within and between mobile spaces.

All image making occurs within the “theatre of life” where individuals “perform various places, scripts, and roles to and for themselves” (Haldrup and Larsen 2003: 24). Photography is “part of the process by which subjectivities are formed; it interconnects in many ways with people’s hopes, fears, memories, activities, likes, loves, and so on” (Crawshaw and Urry 1997: 195). Pictures are constructed as “self-directed identity claims” that support the desired self—“they reassure

you and make you look good" (Gosling 2008: 32). Photography as a "practice of identity construction" (Robinson and Picard 2009: 19) allows creators to make images that reflect their sensibilities. By focusing and directing their gaze and fixing it through photography, individuals can create a symbolic world that "reflects and promotes a particular look at life" (Chalfen 1987:162). "Photographs provide a space where identities are negotiated, and a flexible and accessible place for the performance of identity" (Mannik 2013: 273). Now with Facebook's move toward monetization, aestheticized commercial images are seen alongside everyday life photographs (Sarvas and Frohlich 2011) further socializing users to strive to make idealized pictures. Online sharing has promoted an insatiable visuality in which nearly everyone desires to participate (Heiferman 2012). Where once privacy may have been a concern, now it is the fear of invisibility—and thus, irrelevancy—that worries the social actor (Bucher 2012).

While Facebook and other social networks are "changing the ways hundreds of millions of people relate to one another and share information" (Wilson 2012: 204), these activities can be seen as adaptations and extensions of older practices that are still embedded in broader cultural milieus and processes (Keightley and Pickering 2014). As in offline life, by making wise use of their material and immaterial consumption, individuals offer messages about their tastes, education, class status, and aspirations (Bourdieu 1984). Good (2012) argues that social media can be seen as sites of personal media assemblages and archives that functions not only as a social performance space, but also as a historical record that documents an individual's relationships and tastes. In a study of profiles, Liu (2008) discovered that MySpace users were artfully crafting taste statements to display a sense of prestige, social distinction, authenticity and theatrical personas. However, in her research of MySpace Davis (2012: 1972) points out that to be seen as authentic performances of self, the extensive labor that goes into self construction must remain hidden so that the identity claims can appear as "spontaneous, organic, essential." Indeed from the research Walther and colleagues (2009) conducted, self claims are seen as less credible than information that does not appear to be manipulated (or constructed) by the individual. In an early study of Facebook, Zhao et al. (2008) makes the distinction between explicit 'about me' information and implicit expressions of self like photographs. From this perspective, photographic representations are considered as an individual's 'visual self' which is understood by the viewer as less constructed and thus, a more powerful performance than 'about me' claims. With the recent popularity of "selfies"—a very specific form of self representation where the individual is very consciously looking into the camera and knowingly performing—the labor of the performance is not hidden

but celebrated. With the advent of the 'front camera' on smart phones, making self photographs became much easier and so prevalent that 'selfie' was chosen as the word of the year for 2013 by Oxford Dictionaries. A relatively new social trend, selfies have yet to be studied in any depth though they seem a natural extension of previous practices. Prior to smart phones with front cameras, individuals often asked fellow travelers, friends or family to take their picture in various locales.

As in travel, everyday photography is one of the ways that individuals construct life narratives and demonstrate aspects of self by performing actively and bodily for the camera enacting themselves into being (Van House 2011: 131). On Facebook, through selective self-presentation (Walther et al. 2009), one can create and share a closely curated life with careful attention to the framing of friends, possessions, and symbolic displays of status. Like tourist photography, contemporary picturing practices are thickly social and used to facilitate social relations (Haldrup and Larsen 2003: 24). Online a self is quite literally communicated as an image—a digital self that performs and interacts online using scripted templates that allow for the creation and refinement of micro-autobiographies. With the introduction of the Facebook Timeline feature in 2011, all user content and interactions are automatically organized chronologically to "tell the whole story of your life on a single page" (Zuckerberg 2011). This new format "smartly disciplines its users into combining self expression... with self promotion in a uniform format" (van Dijck 2013: 204).

### **Disciplining Action in Online Interpersonal Space**

In this essay, I have argued that a dynamic similar to the hermeneutic circle of the Tourist Gaze which disciplines performative travel activities is at work on Facebook. Through the Facebook Gaze, users learn to construct images that echo those shared and positively interacted with by others. Images that generate a number of comments and 'likes' or are shared will be seen more widely and come to constitute a model for future successful contributions. Furthermore, neuroscientists have also found that receiving 'likes' on your posts activates the reward center in the brain, and seeming somewhat like Pavlov's dog, these approval responses predict future Facebook use (Meshi et al. 2013). In this fifth moment of photography, individuals using their smart phones can make pictures easily and regularly, and can upload them from their device for others to view and respond. Based on their EdgeRank score, images can immediately display in the New Feeds of the friends—or at least those the algorithm decides will most appreciate them—so they can 'like' or add comments. This informal, but immediate, feedback lets the individual know how well their performances are being received and assists them perfecting and refining their presentation to remain visible and included in this new form of sociality. All

this interaction is being disciplined by the Facebook Gaze which produces specific ways of being and participating through the prosumer template infrastructure, algorithms that dictate visibility and formatted user responses that provide socializing feedback on performances.

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# Social Spaces and Social Relations

Introduction by Anthony Giddens

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