LOLZ OMG, I'M DEAD. The Rise of Performative Behavior in Social Media, and Its Implications for Digital Ethnography

KATHLEEN HARTNETT
SapientNitro

Performative behavior is an action taken specifically with an audience in mind, to elicit a response or reaction. Digital Ethnography encounters this on a daily basis, as we study behavior on social & digital networks where performative behavior is rampant. As a research source, social media behavior is often dismissed because of it’s orientation towards performance – but as people lead more omni-channel lives, the distinction between online and offline lives is becoming harder to discern. As such, we need to start viewing performative behavior as extensions of fully formed individuals. This means today’s Ethnographers need to become Digital Ethnographers as well, to better understand individuals as the sum of both their online & offline personalities.

Kathleen Hartnett lives in Brooklyn, NY and works at SapientNitro, where she leads the Social Insights capability within their Consumer Intelligence Practice. She is passionate about understanding how social media impacts human behavior, and works to infuse those understandings across cross-functional strategy design and technology teams. Kathleen.Hartnett@gmail.com