

Audience labour struggles in social media



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Audience labour theory



Audience labour theory

In the digital age



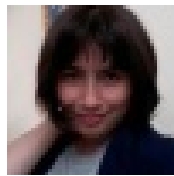


*Class in
itself*

*Class
for itself*

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A regular post....



Jessica Gronski

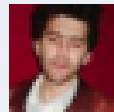
Second time today — at Starbucks with Philip Zigoris.



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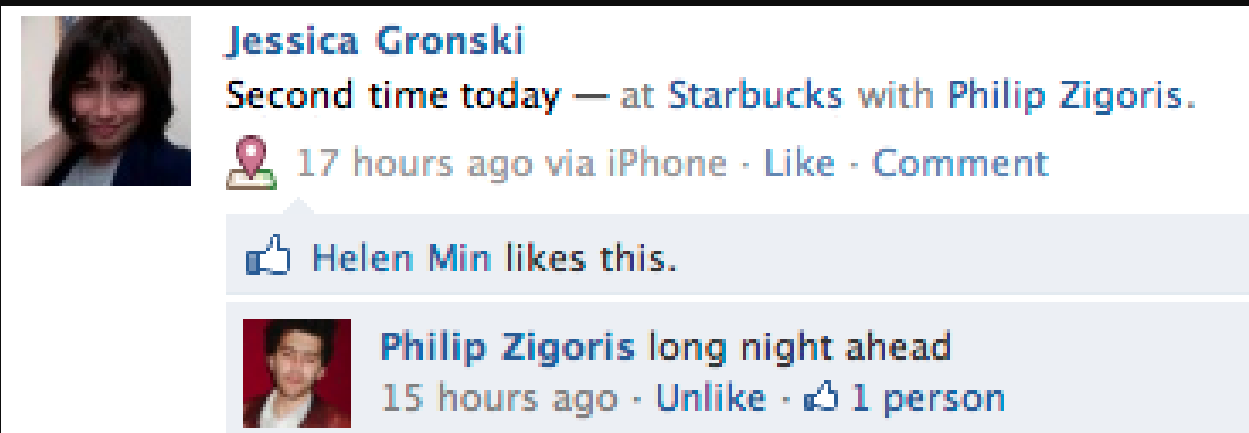
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Philip Zigoris long night ahead

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Sponsored Story

 **Jessica Gronski** Second time today — at Starbucks with Philip Zigoris. ✕

 Starbucks

💬 1 👍 1

Audience labour in social media

Consumption: The audience is a commodity sold to advertisers

Production: The audience produces data

Dissemination: The audience constructs and maintains communication networks

Sponsored Stories: class action suit

Sponsored Stories: class action suit

| Permission
| Remuneration

Sponsored Stories: class action suit

	Permission	control
	Remuneration	ownership

Sponsored Stories: class action suit

Permission	control	alienation
Remuneration	ownership	exploitation

Sponsored Stories: class action suit

Social communication as economic value

“[n]othing influences people more than a recommendation from a trusted friend. A trusted referral influences people more than the best broadcast message. A trusted referral is the Holy Grail of advertising”

-- Mark Zuckerberg, Facebook's CEO

Sponsored Stories: class action suit

Social communication as economic value

“[m]arketers have always known that the best recommendation comes from a friend ... This, in many ways, is the Holy Grail of marketing. . . . When a customer has a good experience . . . on Facebook, the average action is shared with the average number of friends, which is 130 people. This is the elusive goal we’ve been searching for, for a long time; [m]aking your customers your marketers”

-- Sheryl Sandberg, Facebook’s COO

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Surplus-value of social communication

“On average, if you compare an ad without a friend’s endorsement to an ad with a friend’s ‘Like,’ these are the differences: on average, 68% more people are likely to remember seeing the ad with their friend’s name. A hundred percent ... more likely to remember the ad’s message; and 300% more likely to purchase [the service or product]”

-- Sheryl Sandberg, Facebook’s COO

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Commodification of users' persona

“Users have articulated a coherent theory of how they were economically injured by the [commercial] misappropriation of their names, photographs, and likenesses for use in paid commercial endorsements...”

-- Verdict, Farley vs. Facebook 2011

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Commodification of users' persona

“Plaintiffs assert that they have a tangible property interest in their personal endorsement of Facebook advertisers’ products to their Facebook Friends, and that Facebook has been unlawfully profiting from the nonconsensual exploitation of Plaintiffs’ statutory right of publicity”

-- Verdict, Farley vs. Facebook 2011

Sponsored Stories: class action suit

Commodification of users' persona

“... in the same way that celebrities suffer economic harm when their likeness is misappropriated for another’s commercial gain without compensation, Plaintiffs allege that they have been injured by Facebook’s failure to compensate them for the use of their personal endorsements because ‘[i]n essence, Plaintiffs are celebrities—to their friends’”

-- Verdict, Farley vs. Facebook 2011

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Do users' personae have exchange value?

“[Facebook] does not deny that [users] may assert economic injury, but insists that, because they are not celebrities, they must demonstrate some preexisting commercial value to their names and likenesses...”

-- Verdict, Farley vs. Facebook 2011

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Social media users as micro-celebrities

“While traditionally advertisers had little incentive to exploit a non-celebrity’s likeness because such endorsement would carry little weight in the economy at large, Plaintiffs’ allegations suggest that advertisers’ ability to conduct targeted marketing has now made friend endorsements ‘a valuable marketing tool’, just as celebrity endorsements have always been so considered”

-- Verdict, Farley vs. Facebook 2011

Sponsored Stories: class action suit

Social media users as micro-celebrities

“Though Plaintiffs are not models or celebrities per se, the Court agrees that they have a vested interest in their own right of publicity...”

-- Verdict, Farley vs. Facebook 2011



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Summary

- Social media use is work not service
- Social communication creates surplus-value
- Users struggle collectively for “wages”
- Critique not radical but liberal-democratic, even neoliberal