Self-disclosure versus self-presentation on social media
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Online communication differs from face-to-face communication in multiple ways. Because of these differences, there is an ongoing debate regarding whether people disclose their true selves on social media, or whether they present an idealized or socially appropriate version of themselves. Whereas some features of online communication (such as anonymity and reduced information richness) have been argued to increase self-disclosure, there are other features (such as asynchronicity, multiple audiences, and audience feedback) that favor self-presentation. In this article, I review the literature on the effect of these five medium characteristics on whether individuals self-disclose or manage impressions on social media, and if managed, in what way.

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Introduction
Over 25 years ago, the punchline of a *New Yorker* cartoon captured one of the unique characteristics of online communication: "On the Internet, nobody knows you're a dog" [1]. Besides anonymity, there are many differences between communicating online and face-to-face, leading to an ongoing debate regarding whether people disclose their true selves online, or whether they present their ideal or best selves. On the one hand, the anonymity and lack of nonverbal cues afforded by social media may encourage greater disclosure of one's true self [2–4]. On the other hand, the greater level of control afforded by online communication allows people the time to reflect and revise their responses in order to present themselves in the most positive light [5,6]. Furthermore, people are able to present a more ideal self online because there are fewer constraints imposed by reality in online than face-to-face communication [7••]. For example, people can post information about and images of luxury brands, even if they are unable to afford those brands in real life [8]. Indeed, people are more likely to post positive information about themselves than negative information about themselves on Facebook, which can cause those reading such posts to feel envious [9]. In this article, I review the literature on whether individuals self-disclose or manage impressions online and how characteristics of the medium might lead to more honest versus managed responses, and if managed, in what way.

Although some definitions of social media are quite narrow (e.g. the Merriam–Webster dictionary defines social media as "forms of electronic communication . . . through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content"), others have adopted a broader definition. For example, according to the Cambridge English Dictionary, social media are "websites and computer programs that allow people to communicate and share information on the Internet." Similarly, in academic articles, social media are identified as "providing the creation and exchange of user-generated content, while also facilitating the interaction and collaboration between participants" [10], and as being social in terms of allowing consumer-to-consumer interaction [11]. Relatedly, I adopt a broader definition of social media as involving social interaction among individuals online, including websites that support more interpersonal relationships (e.g. Facebook, Twitter), as well as those that supply more commercial content (e.g. online reviews, brand forums).

In this article, I first review the literature on whether social media generally increase self-disclosure or self-presentation. I then focus on five characteristics that distinguish online communication from face-to-face communication, and the implications of these characteristics for self-disclosure versus self-presentation: anonymity, reduced information richness, asynchronicity, multiple audiences, and audience feedback. I conclude by reviewing the evidence on whether people disclose their true selves or manage impressions online.

Do social media increase self-disclosure or self-presentation?
Self-disclosure is defined as "verbally communicating personal information about the self to another person" [12] (p. 449), and reflects communicating a factual representation of oneself, regardless of its effect on one's public self-image [13]. In contrast, self-presentation is defined as "the goal-directed activity of controlling information to influence the impressions formed by an audience about the self" [14] (p. 871).

One way that researchers have examined whether people disclose an accurate version of the self or present an ideal self is to examine the effect of personal websites (such as Facebook profiles) on being able to predict the target person's personality ratings and idealized self-ratings [7••,15•,16]. Among the five factors of personality, observer accuracy was highest for openness to experience [7••,16] and extraversion [15•,16]. Likewise, in a recent survey, over half of participants (59%) felt that the ad preferences identified for them by Facebook captured their real-life interests, whereas less than a third (27%) said it was inaccurate [17]. Yet, not all personality traits (e.g. neuroticism) were accurately predicted [15•]. It may be that observers are more accurate when more cues are present [7••]. For example, people who are very open to experiences might post more pictures of themselves on adventures, while those who are very extraverted might post more events and pictures of themselves entertaining or hanging out with others. Still, ideal self-ratings did not predict observer ratings, thereby casting some doubt on whether people present their ideal selves on social media [15•].

Yet, self-disclosure and self-presentation are not mutually exclusive [13]. Whereas self-disclosure involves communicating facts about oneself regardless of the impression created, self-presentation involves communication designed to project a desirable public representation of the self, which may be true or false depending on whether the truth would convey a desired public self-image [13]. For example, telling others, "I go out with friends five times a week" could reflect self-disclosure by being a true statement about oneself that is expressed regardless of its effect on the audience's perceptions of oneself. However, it could also be a true (or false) statement that is expressed to impress upon others that he/she is extraverted, social, and well-liked. Thus, expressing true information about the self is not necessarily evidence of self-disclosure; people may reveal true information about themselves because it promotes a desirable public self-image.

One way to disentangle self-disclosure from self-presentation is to compare the expressions of one's actual self and true self. The actual self are true aspects of the self that are expressed in one's social life, whereas one's true self are true aspects of the self that are not expressed to others [18••,19]. There is some evidence that the true self-concept is more accessible during online interactions, whereas the actual self-concept is more accessible during face-to-face interactions, and that people express their true self more online than face-to-face [18••]. Another way of detecting whether people are telling the truth or not is to use reaction-time measures, which is based on the assumption that lying is more cognitively demanding than telling the truth [20]. Yet, because self-presentation can also occur automatically [14], a third way is to examine responses that convey that the person has generally favorable (versus unfavorable) characteristics, such

as being socially intelligent [14], physically attractive [21], or unique [22•], or whether the person admits to engaging in social taboos (e.g. regularly watching porn, taking illegal drugs [23]). In the next section, I review the evidence of self-disclosure versus self-presentation across five characteristics hat distinguish online communication from offline communication.

Characteristics of online communication proposed to increase self-disclosure
Anonymity
One key distinguishing feature between online communication and face-to-face communication is that online communication can be anonymous. Anonymity presumably frees people to disclose identities that they might otherwise wish to keep private, such as marginalized or stigmatized identities. Indeed, posting to (versus reading content posted on) newsgroups for concealable marginalized identities can increase self-acceptance and willingness to disclose one's secret identity with close others offline [4]. Likewise, people are more likely to share controversial content online when anonymous [24]. Yet, anonymity can also lead to negative outcomes, such as feelings of deindividuation and 'flaming' online [25], which might enhance concerns regarding whether and what to disclose online. Indeed, when online communication conditions favored deindividuation (i.e. lowered public and private self-awareness), people disclosed less than when private self-awareness was heightened (by having people see a picture of themselves on the computer screen) [3]. Consequently, some caution that those designing online communities need to carefully consider whether to allow anonymous postings, especially if they wish to encourage the courteous and honest sharing of information [26].

In conclusion, the results are inconclusive regarding whether anonymity leads to self-disclosure or self-presentation [7••,25,27]. Whereas some argue that the anonymity and isolation common in online communication relaxes the restraints of social norms and presenting oneself in a socially desirable way, other research suggests that group membership can still be salient and its influence may even be augmented [27]. Importantly, anonymity does not entirely eliminate self-presentation concerns because such concerns can occur with imagined audiences or due to carry-over effects [14]. Indeed, there is research suggesting that even when communicating anonymously, self-presentation occurs online [22•,28,29,30••,31,32].

Reduced information richness
Unlike face-to-face communication, online communication is less rich in the information conveyed because it often lacks nonverbal (visual and auditory) cues, such as facial expressions and tone of voice [33,34]. Although early research on computer-mediated communication concluded that the lack of such cues contributes to social oblivion [35,36], more recent research proposes that the

lack of such cues makes disclosing information less risky for those who might be reluctant to self-disclose face-to-face (those with low self-esteem [2]). Indeed, people disclose less during online discussions when nonverbal cues (via a video) of one's interaction partner is provided [3]. However, instead of social oblivion, reduced social cues may cause self-disclosure to be especially necessary in order for interaction partners to reduce uncertainty about each other. For example, they may need to ask more intimate questions of each other that are unnecessary with face-to-face or video communication (e.g. the partner's gender or age [37]). In fact, consistent with what might appear to be more honest responding, those in online (versus face-to-face) groups share a greater range and variety of attitudes [22•]. Yet, this diversity does not appear to be due to either social oblivion or increased self-disclosure: the presence and absence of visual cues (in the form of pictures of other group members) affect how people manage the impressions they have on others (i.e. to stand out or fit in) rather than whether they manage their impressions [22•]. Other research suggests that reduced information richness gives individuals more freedom in how they can present themselves, whereas providing more information (such as photographs) constrains self-presentation: those communicating online with pictures absent (versus present) felt better able to make a good impression [38].

In summary, as with anonymity, even though there is some evidence of greater self-disclosure when nonverbal cues are absent, this disclosure may be part of general introductions (e.g. asking for and disclosing one's demographics, which are often unnecessary with face-to-face communication). Indeed, as mentioned earlier, sharing true information about oneself does not necessarily reflect self-disclosure over self-presentation. Someone might reveal factual personal information because of the impression it creates. For example, even without visual and verbal cues, a 30-year-old female may reveal her true age and gender because this information conveys a desired impression on others (reflecting self-presentation) rather than because it is true regardless of the impression it has on others (reflecting self-disclosure). In fact, even under conditions when one might expect the greatest degree of disclosure (i.e. communicating anonymously and without visual or verbal cues), self-presentation has been observed [22•,28,29,30••,31,32]. Perhaps without such constraints to present reality, an individual has the freedom to present any desirable impression (e.g. the 30-year old female may wish to present herself being a different age and/or gender).

Characteristics of online communication proposed to increase self-presentation
Asynchronous communication
Lying takes time [20], especially when telling a lie that is consistent with past lies across time and contexts [39].

Because face-to-face communication is synchronous (i.e. occurs in 'real time'), it is often messy, unscripted, and spontaneous [40]. In contrast, most communication via social media is asynchronous (i.e. does not necessarily occur at the same time). As a result, it can be more controlled due to having greater time to reflect, edit and revise what is said [6]. As a result, online communication might be better characterized as deliberate and calculated rather than inadvertent [7••], during which people are able to present their 'best' self [6]. Indeed, giving people time to reflect, edit and revise what they will say can lead to anticipatory strategic self-presentation: people who write down their private thoughts on a topic before face-to-face discussion use this opportunity to strategically rehearse criteria that seem most appropriate for discussion, even if this means focusing on less important criteria [41,42]. Likewise, during online communication, people's posts appear to be shaped by what other people have said, even causing them to publicly endorse opinions that deviate from their own private opinions [42] or make suboptimal recommendation chrony further allows people the time to self-enhance by mentioning more interesting information than those communicating synchronously [29].

To summarize, theory and empirical evidence suggests that asynchrony supports the demands of self-presentation. However, because self-presentation can occur spontaneously as well as deliberately [14], asynchronicity is likely a sufficient condition but not a necessary condition for self-presentation effects to emerge.

Multiple audiences
Online communication also differs from most face-to-face communication because it is often broadcasted (one-to-many) rather than narrowcasted (one-to-one; [43]). When broadcasting, people avoid communicating content that could create a bad impression [44]. Moreover, the composition of an audience, especially on social media, often differs online and face-to-face. Specifically, an audience can be comprised those who are relatively homogeneous, sharing similar opinions and beliefs (a single audience) or can be comprised diverse individuals, with differing opinions and beliefs (a multiple audience). Although multiple audiences can occur in face-to-face conversations, they are much more common on social media. For example, social media often involve audiences comprised 'real' and 'virtual' relationships [45] as well as personal and professional relationships [46]. This creates a multiple-audience problem: how to communicate to typically segregated audiences with the same message [47]. Furthermore, because public inconsistencies in how one appears to others can create a negative impression, the version presented should not depart too much from reality during self-presentation — it must be believable [14], which may be particularly challenging if people have different personas across relationships. Such conditions

may cause people to use social media less, or to disclose less when using social media in favor of presenting themselves in ways that are likely to have broader appeal [45]. One way that people tackle the multiple audience problem is by presenting themselves with generally desirable characteristics, such as being discriminating, having high standards, as well as being thorough while considering multiple viewpoints, such as by posting a negative review after reading another's negative review and writing reviews that acknowledge diverse perspectives [30••].

The multiple audience problem may explain why there is a 'spiral of silence' online: people are less willing to talk about divided or controversial policy issues online than face-to-face [48]. This is likely because people are more willing to share opinions with an audience who agrees with them. When face-to-face, people often do not discuss such topics, and even when they do, they are typically unaware of how much they disagree. Consequently, they are often unaware of just how diverse their offline social networks are [49]. In contrast, not only might social networks be more diverse but people might be more aware of the diversity in their online social networks. Indeed, people often find conversations on social media to be less civil and informative than their face-to-face conversations, resulting in them blocking or unfriending those who offended them [50].

In conclusion, the multiple audience nature of online communication causes people to manage impressions both in terms of what topics they choose to discuss [24,48,50] as well as what they say [30••]. Although speaking to a multiple audience that includes those who know the poster in the physical world might increase the likelihood that posters present versions of themselves that are more closely grounded in reality in order to avoid negative evaluations for being unbelievable or inauthentic, this rationale for sharing more factual, realistic information would reflect more self-presentation concerns than self-disclosure.

Audience feedback
One unique feature of many social media sites is that audience feedback is available, publicly visible and quantified, such as in the form of 'likes' and comments on Facebook [51] and helpfulness votes for peer review websites such as Amazon.com. In one line of thinking, people may disclose their true selves because others provide accountability by posting on one's wall or providing feedback on one's post [15•]. This may be especially true when the audience includes others who know the person in the physical world. Thus, although one might be able to 'try on' different identities online, such rehearsals (along with audience reactions) are archived [40]. Such audience feedback can reduce self-expression and increase uncertainty [11]. As a result, feedback might cause people to present themselves in a manner that increases their chances of getting positive feedback

without departing too much from reality. In fact, even though social media expand the possibilities for how one presents oneself and one's material wealth, people's digital self often resembles their physical self and material reality [8]. Furthermore, people consider not only what to post but where to post—preferring to post on sites where their messages will be most positively received by the audience [31].

Overall, audience feedback likely increases self-presentation concerns. Thus, sharing facts about oneself would likely be done only if it has a high likelihood of being favorably received and commented upon by the audience.

Conclusions
Despite the opportunities that the Internet affords (through anonymity and reduced information richness) for disclosing one's actual self, it also has features (asynchronicity, multiple audiences, published audience feedback) that discourage disclosure. Although people expect that disclosing more online leads to more positive outcomes [52], self-presentation often prevails. Those posting on social media have become performers who present an edited version of themselves that they believe will be best received by others, often managing their reputations through what they post and managing what others' post about them [53]. In fact, such self-presentation concerns of what to post on social media can reduce enjoyment of real-life experiences [54]. This managed impression of one's online persona does not preclude disclosing facts about the self. Posters may share facts about themselves if such facts reflect favorably upon them. Future research should continue to shed further light on teasing apart whether and why people self-disclosure or manage impressions on social media by varying different characteristics of the medium. It would also be fruitful to independently vary these different characteristics in order to determine whether some characteristics dominate others, as well as whether any characteristics (such as anonymity) are a necessary and/or sufficient condition for self-disclosure versus self-presentation concerns to dictate what is posted.

Conflict of interest statement
Nothing declared.

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