

The Opening: Concepts, Corporate Environments and Central Characters

Learning Outcomes:

- Provides an overview of the conceptual framework and develop greater awareness of the main bodies of theorization used to underpin the text
- To be cognizant of the empiricism used in the development of the text
- To identify issues with human resources and people management which seeks to control and performance manage aspect of social media use in and beyond work
- To evaluate the links between dramaturgy, identity, misbehavior, power and employment relations practices in this domain.

This section introduces the reader to the key areas of theorisation which are used to underpin the main line of enquiry in this book. A conceptual framework is provided to visually illustrate the interlinking bodies of conceptualisation and a brief explanation of how these fit with managing social media in and beyond work.

This text relies on empirical study which was used to develop greater understanding of social media use in different corporate environments by social actors who hold interlinking professional roles at work. The empiricism creates a multi-perspectival lens from which to explore social media use and the impact this has on employment relationships at work.

The social actor narratives and characterisations used in the text to provide a range of case studies and vignettes which provide a sensemaking of personal life-worlds, differing multiple identities and professional experiences of using or management of social media at work. The aim is to enable students of management and HR to critically reflect on the regulatory methods and practices observed in these major corporations. Using these, readers may critically reflect on approaches and use these to encourage adaptations and responsible HRM approaches in the future.

The conceptual framework

The conceptual framework consists of six key theoretical bodies of literature (see **Figure 1**). The framework can be used as a central map for readers and moves beyond over simplifying and describing social media (SM) as a thing-like, commodified device (Bell, 2005).

The interlinking areas of literature are:

1. The employment relationship
2. Social networking platforms and activities
3. Surveillance and control
4. Employee voice, resistance and sousveillance
5. Dramaturgical performances
6. Identity exploration

< Call out: INSERT FIGURE 1 The conceptual Framework >

Each theoretical area is now briefly outlined.

The *employment relationship* is fundamental in anchoring the main debate on how social media impacts on workplace interrelationships. The discussion centers on corporate power dynamics and regulatory approaches used to govern and control social media use at work. This highlights emerging trends in observation, monitoring and *surveillance* of employees using social media. This premise is used to reflect on the ethicality of these practices. This debate is vital in moving discussion beyond an oversimplification of social media which

are all too often portrayed as benign business tools enabling workers to network, market corporate brands, sell goods or services.

This conceptualization draws attention to emerging *sousveillance* practices where social media devices are used by workers to observe management using *sousveillance*. This element conceptually demonstrates a growing reality where workers use social media to observe corporate leaders to capture management (mis)behaviors or misdemeanors which is rarely debated in management literature. The discussion provides readers with greater insight into the complexity, competing interests, struggles, ambiguities and dilemmas associated with social media use in work and the impact this has on our self-identity. Each theoretical area is now discussed.

The central importance of the employment relationship

Employment relationships are an enduring concept of employment relations study which is a theoretical derivative of Human Resource Management (HRM). HRM is a collection of practices associated with people management approaches in work. Employment relations are principally designed to direct corporate labour processes and are strongly associated with controlling employees in work (Cappelli and Neumark, 2001; Dessler, 2015; Dundon and Rollinson, 2011; Guest et al, 2003; Martin et al, 2009; Milkman, 1997, Townley, 1994). Yet social media now goes beyond work. So we are witnessing management techniques, policy and practices which are controlling us beyond the working day.

Employment relations practices, therefore inform and drive the employment relationships we have with our employers. These aim to leverage productivity and high performance, a perspective which infers workers need tight management control in order to achieve strategic corporate goals successfully. This suggests controlling workers requires the

ongoing development of corporate rules and regulations to drive worker performance.

Work rules and regulations are said to be “*formal and informal, structured or unstructured*” (Bain and Clegg, 1974:95). These are achieved through the development of professional behaviours, skills, and competency characteristics (Boxall et al, 2014; Boxall, 2013; CIPD, 2022). Employment relationships are, therefore, an economic exchange which aims to secure the basis of agreement between employees in their capacity for work with the corporation (Blyton and Turnbull, 2004). Employment relationships, are not cozily social or psychological, they are fiscal and political (Lewis et al, 2003:6).

Extant management and HR literature reemphasizes a need for corporate practices which create a stable, ordered workforce (Godard, 2014). Employment relationships, therefore, merge conflicting principles where employers seek to direct and control work, and where workers simply adhere, comply, and submit to management control. The employment relationship therefore infers there is a “...*power to command and a duty to obey*” (Kahn-Freund, 1972:9). Yet, these common interests or “agreements” between employers and their workforces cannot naively be assumed or easily coordinated into existence (Blyton and Turnbull 2004). This conception has its roots in the Master and Servant Act 1823, where the employer had (hegemonic) power to control workers and still does to this day.

Employment relations practices are considered a neo-liberal ideology which encompass three identifiable agendas: the individual, organization, and society (Boxall, 2013). Social media and their use are located at this intersection and uniquely straddle all three agendas using them personally and in work contexts. Yet these conceptions underestimate the impact of social media which have created a fragility and extra layer of complexity due to their boundary spanning use which segues between both the public and private domains of life (Moussa, 2015).

This creates space to more deeply explore and understand management actions which seek to control and monitor use of social media and the impacts this has on HR, management and workforces (Biro, 2011; CIPD, 2013; McDonald and Thompson, 2016; McDonald et al 2019; Taylor and Dobbins, 2021). This text aims to do just that.

A growing body of literature has focused on Human Resource Management (HRM) and employment relations strategies in this context. Particular emphasis is placed on how organizations seek to legally protect their assets online. Much of this work is around quantitative studies which seek to understand social media policy development and practices. A growing body of work centres on forms of surveillance and observation of workers. This text builds on these developments.

A further area of discussion in this text will be to focus on the disciplinary and punitive nature of social media use in work. Predominantly, how organizations disseminate policies which aim to ensure greater employee awareness of information, communications, technology (ICT) regulations and legislation. Essentially, how employees require training and development to be more knowledgeable and competent in their online and social media activities (Ulrich, 2010).

Yet, this area of work is increasingly murkier and more nebulous. There are many ethical challenges for HRM and management practices, including the growing use of observation and surveillance of employees through their digital activity which is more invasive (Edwards and Wright, 2001; Huselid, 1995; Kalleburg and Moody, 1994; McDonald and Thompson, 2016; McDonald et al; 2019 Taylor and Dobbins; 2021). An exploration of such practices are provided further in this text.

Social media rules, policy and guidance

Factually, employers have a right to direct and control employees and their SM activity in work. This is supported by a range of corporate regulations and practices, often captured in formal employment contracts. These legally binding documents provide employers with the power to strategically place a value on employees as a resource (Townley,1994).

Employment contracts outline how employees are expected to perform and behave and may include how we are to be controlled or managed by corporations (Spooner and Haidar, 2006).

Social media policy and regulatory protocols are uniquely developed and differ in each corporate environment. The approach of embedding policy with practice is often cascaded via induction processes and reinforced through employee handbooks or intranet sites which articulate or provide additional guidance on appropriate online behaviors and practices. These approaches set the parameters of social media use such as which social networking sites (SNS) are accessible and wider protocols for internet, email and other wider technology use.

In this text I suggest these regulatory frameworks are often obscured and unclear for workers. Further the success of appropriate professional behaviour is dependent on the robustness of management, HR development and mandatory training in this area, which is often overlooked in this area. Extant literature has enlivened the debate on social media

policy and guidance (Broughton et al, 2010; CIPD, 2013). Quantitative studies have long sought to understand whether corporations have adequate policies in place or whether employees are aware of ICT or specific social media policies (Broughton et al, 2010; CIPD, 2013; Deloitte, 2009). Common findings suggest employees are often unacquainted with such regulations. Moreover, few organizations can distinguish or articulate what reasonable employee or management effort on social media looks like (Emmott; 2015). This suggests following regulations requires employees to be highly self-disciplined. The discussion throughout this text calls for employers to provide clearer, coherent regulations and practices in this area of work. Particularly, as we are increasingly working in evermore hybrid contexts. How corporations regulate or provide development for skills in this unique area of work is therefore critical.

Empiricism has focused on developing greater understanding of how corporations use social media to extend the boundaries of control. Indeed there are increasing concerns regarding the depth of power organisations have to direct, coordinate, organize and control digitised work (Briken et al, 2016; Jacobson and Tufts, 2013; McDonald and Thompson;2016).

Yet social media use appears to have blindsided traditional management and HR practices, which are mostly based on calculability, rationality, hierarchy, and employee adherence or compliance of formal rules. A fundamental flaw with such notions of control is how corporate management perceive social media use can be easily contained (Taylor, 2018). A rising plethora of case law and social media misuse illustrates this growing conundrum and begs the question how do organizations and management seek to *fairly* control this rapidly developing technology?

Growing digitalization and use of social media, therefore must be counterbalanced with a corporate duty to protect individual human rights. The right to privacy and the right to

freedom of expression are increasingly problematical. Growing management surveillance, societal and worker discontent illustrates how we symbiotically exploit social media to draw attention to workplace issues and contestations.

Further tensions illustrate how corporations, political and societal elite invasively access and harvest online personal data to manipulate opinion and silence workers. This includes censoring collective and individual online material and manipulating algorithms to court or change societal beliefs. These complexities have led to wider debate about the duty for social media corporations to address inappropriate online behaviors; particularly those which may incite hate, vitriol or cause harm to individuals.

We need to be more informed as citizens and workers about how corporations gain greater access to our digital footprints. In the current context it is relatively easy for organizations and powerful elite to interrogate our online activity. They use our profiles and online commentary to make value judgements about personal appearance, identity, and personas (Taylor, 2018). Thus, our privacy in digital environs is diminished, and these “decisions” may impact on our career progression and longevity.

Of course, one can argue online digital activity is in the public domain. Therefore, it is in the corporation interest to mitigate and address any damage caused to members of society, the workforce or the corporation, particularly where any such activity brings an employer brand into disrepute. Moreover, these competing views highlight how the once boundaried nature of work is further eroded and challenged. Simply put we cannot easily segregate work and our private lives. Moreover, these contexts are vastly visible to huge audiences. This contributes to the widening struggles which exist between management and workers (Keenoy and Kelly, 1998; Taylor and Dobbins, 2021).

This is not all bad news. Such contestations raise societal awareness of workplace

inequalities and allow greater understanding of issues such as sexual harassment, abuse, coercive or predatory behaviors, racism, misogyny, employee voice, precarity and low wages, which may be individual or collective in nature (McDonald and Thompson, 2016). In some cases, these views have drawn greater attention to management (mis)behaviours which were previously easy to cover up and hide. Therefore social media allow for greater worker democracy, transparency and equity to a degree. This context therefore illustrates how social media use impacts on power dynamics, employee resistance and forms of conflict to manifest in work.

< CALL OUT INSERT DISCUSSION BOX 2 HERE >

Power, conflict and resistance in work

Emerging digital technology and online contexts demonstrate how device such as social media (SM) contribute to the hidden vestiges of power in organisations (Foucault, 1980; Lukes, 2003; Thompson, 2011; Townley, 1994). Foucault prophetically suggested power is apparent everywhere and used to control, observe, and discipline workers (Foucault, 1981). None more so than the use of social media contributes to this argument.

Corporations and societal elite use these devices to increase their range to monitor, observe and widen power to control workers. As employees we are now more easily and deeply surveilled. Sadly, forms of surveillance are not always observable to employees (Lukes, 2005; Taylor, 2018).

Conceptions of power, conflict, and resistance are linked to three dominant employment relations frames of reference: unitary, pluralist and radical HRM. These conceptualizations are explained to aid reader understanding of how power is filtrated in organisations and how differing corporate beliefs shape approaches which seek to harmonize and control workers through their employment relationships (Cradden, 2011; Fox, 1966; Lukes, 2005). The different empirical case studies presented in this text use these typologies.

Unitary

A unitary perspective portrays corporations as a singular, harmonious entity. This view unifies the interests between the employer and their employees (Fox, 1966). The unitary perspective emphasizes a shared corporate common purpose which is reliant on the mutual co-operation and loyalty of employees (Bingham, 2016; Cradden, 2011). Management have the legitimate power and authority to lead decision making in this perspective (Edwards,2003). A clear distinction with a unitary frame of reference is the perception workplace conflict is irrational, pathological or mischievous (Dundon and Rollinson, 2011). A clear criticism of unitary perspectives is the presumption employee interests coincide with those of management. A unitary style organization develops corporate mechanisms, therefore, to address any manifestations of employee conflict or resistance which may be punitively dealt with. This may engender worker discontent and mistrust of corporate leaders (Bingham, 2016).

Pluralism

A pluralist perspective focuses on the collective nature of corporations. This view recognizes workforces are made up of divergent sub-groups and stakeholders who equally

have legitimate aims and leaders (Dundon and Rollinson, 2011; Edwards 2003). The regulation of workplace concerns, conflict or resistance in this typology are both expected and inevitable and are contained in wider organizational discourse (Cradden, 2011).

Management approaches in pluralist perspectives, therefore, accommodate and may seek to resolve the differing viewpoints of key stakeholders such as trade unions.

Trade unions are legitimately included in labour processes to support with the effective management of employee workplace concerns or issues. Collective bargaining is often the main method used for reducing tensions in the employment relationship. These processes are often orchestrated by corporate management through practices such as negotiation, consultation, and shared decision-making to resolve workplace tensions (Cradden, 2011; Bingham, 2016).

A common criticism of the pluralist approach is management may not relinquish their authority on every aspect governing the employment relationship, particularly on issues such as key strategic financial decisions (Bingham, 2016; Edwards, 2003). Similarly, employees legitimately use their association with key trade unions in their respective role of sector to rail against their employers. Forms of activism undertaken by trade unions may protract workplace issues if common ground cannot be reached or agreed upon with management. At the time of writing we are witnessing an upsurge in worker activism. Social media are widely incorporated to garner support for the differing sides in these arrangements. Thus, workplace malcontent is more visible to us all and is something which management and unions alike need to navigate so any online commentary does not go incendiary.

Radical HRM

A Radical HRM perspective is a derivative of Marxian philosophy (1894/1974). This perspective focuses more closely on the corporate need to control means of production (Dundon and Rollinson, 2011). Radical HRM perspectives illustrate the discord which exists and occurs between the divergent worker sub-groups and hierarchical stratifications in work and society. Forms of resistance are used creatively to reconfigure approaches or resolve workplace issues (Cradden, 2011; Edwards, 2005). These are expressed in workplace conflicts which affect the status quo of employment relationships (Bingham, 2016). Ongoing workplace inequalities highlight the uneven distribution of power which exists between the buyers and sellers of labour. In this perspective, employers use discretion to harness the talents of employees whilst simultaneously controlling workers to maximize outputs, which is considered a structural antagonism (Edwards, 2005) which highlights how conflict in work is both inescapable and contradictory.

These key perspectives illustrate how differing frames of reference are adopted in organisations to maintain control of workforces and ensure corporate power and authority are maintained. The differing approaches are perceived to integrate five differing management styles to further enhance cooperation as follows: *traditional*, *sophisticated paternalist*, *standard modern*, *sophisticated consultative* and *sophisticated constitutionalist* (Purcell and Sisson;1983). These are briefly explained.

Employment Relations Management Styles

A *traditional* management style echoes a unitary perspective where management typically hold a legitimate right to manage without hindrance from other parties. There is little or no room for trade union presence. Therefore, management in this typology, would view trade unionism with a sense of distrust (Bingham, 2016). *Sophisticated paternalist* style adopts

a soft human resource approach which incorporates a strong desire to support effective employee performance. Trade unions in this perspective may be viewed as an obstacle. Therefore, management may allow employees limited involvement within wider labour processes, treating the workforce with a degree of tolerance to engender trust and productivity (Purcell and Sisson;1983).

Standard modern, sophisticated consultative and constitutionalist management styles engender a pluralist frame of reference. These typologies integrate trade union working approaches to accommodate employee views and their divergent interests in work. A *standard modern* managerial style may be more adversarial in nature. Management may focus on addressing a narrow range of recognized issues as they arise and potentially utilize wider legislation to secure compliance. A *constitutional* managerial style may seek to mitigate against perceived conflict to contain employment relations with trade union stakeholders, using processes, rules, and regulations to secure situations. Conversely, *consultative* managerial styles focus on developing joint-partnership arrangements with trade unions, typically encouraging employees and management to work together to resolve workplace issues.

The employment frames of reference and managerial styles illustrate variances in corporate contexts and differing approaches to influence power dynamics within contemporary employment relationships (Lukes, 2005; Townley, 1994). These will either work in favor of the employee or the employers and demonstrate whether there is an incentive to protect workers in this context. These approaches are used within the case studies throughout the text.

< CALL OUT: INSERT DISCUSSION BOX 3 >

Social media networking, platforms and activities

This section outlines what is meant by social media and social networking sites. Social media (SM) are web 2.0 services which are used across organisational and personal environments. These devices allow people to interconnect, share and exchange ideas (Boyd and Ellison, 2007; Reid and Reid, 2004). SM technologies are increasingly relied upon for social communications and networking purposes (Cammaerts, 2015).

Social networking sites (SNS) are different platform sites used to interconnect and engage with different online audiences where we interconnect with other users to stimulate interest, observe one another or to increase collective intelligence. Additionally these sites can be incorporated in work and contribute to business effectiveness (Bradley and McDonald, 2011). Significantly we use a plethora of different platforms for social purposes. Thus, there is a crossover between the different elements of our private identity, persona and behaviours which may diverge from our corporate, professional persona all of which is observed online.

Social media increase the speed and expediency of work due to their multifunctionality. They offer huge opportunities to trade, market, collate data and recruit or attract talent to corporate brands (Headworth, 2016; Uldam, 2017). In the UK statistics from the recent *Adult Social Media Report* (OFCOM, 2023) show YouTube is highly popular with 80% of adults commonly using the platform. This is closely followed by WhatsApp (79%), Facebook (77%) and Instagram (57%). All these sites have had a significant growth in their base usage year on year (see figure 2 Adult social media users UK).

< INSERT FIGURE 2 Adult Social Media Use UK (OFCOM, 2023) >

< INSERT FIGURE 2a Adult Social Media Use in last 3 months UK (Mintel, 2023) >

< INSERT FIGURE 3 Popular Worldwide Social Media Sites (Statista, 2023)

For the purposes of this text, I am focusing solely on the use of these devices and not the technology itself. The technologies I refer to in this text are the internet, social networking sites (SNS), emails, internal corporate intranet sites, staff portals, individual online blogs and vlogs. These technologies are widely incorporated for business and personal use; often interchangeably.

In the UK nine in ten (92%) UK adults use the internet at home or elsewhere, which includes work. Findings from Ofcom (2023 p.5) suggest we access internet sites to gather information on topics such as education, entertainment and to build our social connections which they state reflects the blurring nature of ‘life’ and ‘life online’. Whilst internet use is almost certainly universal the way we use it and social media have little homogeneity. Each app or social media site we use differs markedly by age.

What can be gleaned from any information out there is the popularity of social media sites has exploded (see figure 3). Currently, Facebook has billions of users and X, formally known as Twitter exceeds over 140 million users worldwide. Both sites are used and lauded in business (Jacobson and Tufts, 2012). Facebook originally had a high penetration of users across all age groups, however this has shifted with the site recently being favoured by the over 65yr age group.

Facebook users are saccharinely called “friends”. The notion of friend in this context to me is spurious, ambiguous and intriguing. This dynamic includes persons who are unknown to us as social actors (Ellison et al, 2007). So not a true “friend” in the traditional sense which I

think alters how we perceive what we think we can say and do online.

Whilst there is a sense Instagram, Snapchat and Tik Tok have lower usage rates these are expected to grow. Snapchat and TikTok have overtaken Instagram as the main social media platform used by 16 -24 year olds and few younger social media users (23%) cite Instagram as their favoured social media platform (-30%) (OFCOM, 23). A number of new social media sites are growing in popularity such as BeReal and Threads, these will naturally gain greater market share as audiences grow.

What is most apparent is we are increasingly using a wider selection of sites. One in five (22%) internet users have more than one profile on the same social media platform. This is a growing feature of use. This rises to more than half of internet users in the 16-24 yr old market (53%) (OFCOM, 2023) and illustrates how immersed social media are within younger generations. Instagram is the preferred platform for users with more than one profile (OFCOM, 2023). The reason for creating a number of profiles on the same sites are to garner interest and to connect with kindred spirits who may share in our pursuits and interests such as make-up, cooking, sports and entrepreneurial endeavours.

< CALL OUT: INSERT FIGURE 3 POPULAR WORLDWIDE SOCIAL MEDIA SITES
(Source: Statista, 2023)

Another changing factor regarding multiple site use is we are getting fed up of juggling more than one site. Ofcom suggest this has reduced since the CV19 Pandemic. This is thought to be

because we now have less on-screen time availability to dedicate to the upkeep of these sites. This shows how much more complicated this endeavour is.

There are growing concerns regarding the amount of time spent being online. Psychologists have long documented the increase in screen-time younger users devote to technology and social media. There is a perception online behaviours and interactions have reached addictive proportions reportedly spending increased amounts of time online (Rosen, 2008/2010). Little has changed and is a growing feature of life.

My point here is to urge parents, educators, future HR practitioners and managers to see the need in constantly reviewing the implications of being more digitally immersed and the effect this may have on multi-generational workers. These statistics will grow and therefore, the rules and practices we use to supposedly control workers will need to adapt in line with how we evolve over time.

Combined our social media activities now truly supplement our social and work routines. We routinely follow friends, companies, brands, celebrities and influencers and people with similar interests (Source: Ofcom, 2023). Moreover, the methods deployed by these technologies encourage us, algorithmically, to engage in a constant daily feed of personal discourse and narratives. This ultimately increases a psychological need to increase the visibility of our various personal identities. When we do this we get personal high from the interactions. Dr Anna Lembke author of *Dopamine Nation* has raised concerns about our relationship with our personal devices and the effect this has on our neurological states. Each time we swipe or like something we receive a dopamine hit which keeps us hooked and locked into using these technologies.

< CALL OUT INSERT TEXT DISCUSSION BOX 4

Conceptually, social networking is conceived of as *homophily*. This is defined as a conscious or unconscious tendency to associate with people who resemble us (Christakis and Fowler, 2011). Let's face it, social media corporations capitalise on this need and our want to be liked and loved. They have set up their devices to constantly hook us to interconnect across a plethora of platforms. This allows co-workers, consumers and service users to interact together online. Such approaches establish new modes for in work communications. Employee voice, is a common mechanism where workers and management engage in forms of communication and expression to inform business decision making or air workplace concerns (Holland et al 2016; Kaufman, 2014; Taylor and Dobbins 2021).

Social media discipline and case law

Clearly, we use social media to engage with workers, this includes allowing employees to have a voice. This suggests workers have a legitimacy to share their opinions, ideas, personal or organizational interests through formal or informal mechanisms and via internal intranet or external SNS sites (Mowbray et al., 2015; Wilkinson, Barry et al., 2020). This must be balanced against the issues of associating with each other in any online fora. This clearly adds to wider corporate concerns and risks.

Online content and freedom of expression therefore may incite conflict between organisational expectations of being “professional” and what is considered an outward appearance of rebellion against the corporation (Ackroyd and Thompson, 1999; Ezzamel et

al, 2001). Social media are simultaneously used to share concerns about the workplace. In doing so we have further reduced and blurred the traditional boundaries which previously existed between employment and personal privacy (Archer-Brown *et al.*, 2018; Jacobson and Tufts, 2013; Lam, 2016; Siegert and Löwstedt, 2019). The different employment frames of reference will determine whether sharing concerns are considered part of the employment deal or irrational employee (mis)behaviour.

Hence, management practices now incorporate more observation and monitoring of SM use. These devices attractively give management capability to synoptically observe differing individual identities or viewpoints (Fernback, 2013). There is a growing virtual sense of individual and corporate “every-where-ness”. Interconnected users are observed as four-dimensional beings who are omnipresent (Scott, 2015). Therefore our digital corporeality means as individuals we are less containable, which has ramifications for the ordering of subjects at work (Barrett, 2002).

This has increased fears our online activities and ever-changing self-identities, which are prone to constant renegotiation, may damage corporate reputation (boyd and Ellison, 2007; Richardson and Hessey, 2009; Webb, 2006). Undoubtedly there has been a rise in online misbehaviours which in turn has caused a spike in case law. The main emphasis of these are now discussed to ensure management and HR practitioners are comprehensively aware how freedom of expression in online fora are subject to wider formalities, restrictions or penalties in law, as per article 10, European Convention on Human Rights (1953).

A litany of UK legal cases in the last decade demonstrates the problematical nature of SM use. Primarily, in work, (but not limited to) this is where individuals have engaged on different platforms to voice radical ideologies, obscenities, post abusive materials, air workplace discontent with organizational conditions or to make abhorrent comments about their peers or managers.

Examples of these have become mainstream news. Some of which really centered on voicing concerns in work. These include the Bullied Blogger column (Times Higher Education Supplement Online) and the seminal UK legal case *Gordon v Waterstones* (2005). In both examples digital platforms were used to publicly voice feelings about the workplace and work colleagues. Both share contradictory views of working life, management styles and practices.

It is my view that more research was required to probe behind the veil of these cases. Hence why I focused my study on worker assumptions and experiences of using social media at work. Whilst on the face of it these blogs certainly bring the corporation into disrepute. However, using social media the creatirs effectively lifted the stone on corporate practices and how these are enacted in different institutions by managers or powerful elite (Macky and Boxall, 2008).

Extant literature rarely focuses on ethical concerns about corporate management practices or behaviours. My aim here is to set an agenda to more broadly discuss issues in work and methods which seek to monitor, observe and control employees through use of SM and technology (Moussa, 2015). My view is these cases are not the sole fault of the employee.

Underneath that stone there are some shady management practices which need eradication. We never seem to focus on these because we are too busy in corporations trying to shift the blame.

I have included discussion on UK case law as this further highlights and problematizes how we use platforms in work such as LinkedIn. Primarily, literature focuses on an oversimplification of how we use this site for business and professional use. LinkedIn is widely used in business for customer relationship marketing, career progression and the recruitment of the self and others. Yet this perception underestimates the extent LinkedIn significantly blurs business boundaries or approaches. Case law in this area is of particular interest. Particularly, how LinkedIn is blended with the ownership of the means of production.

A key contestation is who owns LinkedIn contacts? This has proved to be a confounding area of employment legislation which principally centres on the commercial threat individuals pose to businesses. In *Whitmar Publications v Gamage* [2013] EWHC 1881 (Ch) LinkedIn contacts were used by an employee to create a new business venture. This was perceived as a clear conflict of interest. The employer terminated the employment contract due to the perceived threat the venture posed to their business. However, for most workers rules on how to engage on LinkedIn will prove nebulous.

LinkedIn is culpable in this area as it encourages us to visibly develop our professional identities with the sole ideation this will somehow advance both our employment and careers. As an educator we encourage young graduates to regularly stage and display their skills or attributes this is to advertise their labour potential. This suggests we are open to

wider career opportunities. For this reason, LinkedIn, creates additional tensions between employers and employees who tout themselves as looking for work or wider. In *Flexman v BG Group plc ET/2701998/11* this form of self-advertisement led to the constructive dismissal of the employee. Table 1 highlights a range of early UK case law, worker SM (mis)behaviour and misuse.

< CALL OUT: INSERT TABLE 1 EARLY UK CASE LAW >

The rise in case law illustrated in table 1 shows how a lack of coherence in guidance, management practices and policy exists in this context. This demonstrates overtime we need to adapt, amend and strengthen regulatory and management practices in this area of work (Broughton et al, 2010; Van Gramberg, 2014).

I wish to be clear employers have a legitimate right to regulate, monitor and punitively act upon perceived misconduct. The case law illustrates the power dynamics at play and how this is unequally weighted in favour of the corporation and rarely favours the employee in this domain (Biro; 2011).

Interestingly, case law demonstrates how human rights law fails employees defending their social media actions which in the current context is an important area of debate. The case examples highlight a right to freely express oneself is unlikely to succeed. This demonstrates the far-reaching power corporations have to challenge freedom of speech. The issue of a right to privacy is equally challenged by the mere fact much of

what we post is highly visible, even within closed groups. This forms part of a wider moral debate about censoring social media content. Curbing freedom of speech is unlikely to halt harmful forms of expression or misbehaviour. Additionally, those seeking wider regulation to censor content are also subject to censorship treatment and poses the question could this lead to more regulation and even forms of tyranny? (Steel and Petley et al 2023).

Currently in the UK The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (2000) and the much-awaited Online Harms Bill (2023) illustrate political and legal attempts to address perceived online (mis)behaviours legally. The latter legislation thinly outlines the extent public organizations use covert surveillance. Yet such governance is not explicitly shaped for all commercial organisations to ensure harmful content is minimised.

What of an employee's right to maintain privacy though? This discretion is rarely cited in corporate social media policy. Moreover, employers are rarely explicit about detailing when and how they access or use our data generally, let alone how they use our social media data or profiles (Rifkin, 1994, Smith, 1993).

My point is monitoring and observation activities are becoming abstract terms which are "*remote from everyday concerns*" which are hidden behind a veil of corporate practices (Cornelius and Radlund, 2010:3). I wanted to illustrate how this occurs which you will observe in the later *Acts*.

You probably don't even give being observed through social media a second thought. We all do it don't we? Therefore this activity has easily slipped into everyday social

activity and has enabled corporate management to capitalize on our SM endeavours.

This allows them to integrate these devices to deeply observe workers beyond work, judging and comparing us. Thus, we have taken our own privacy for granted.

Worryingly, it is not just corporations who are using social media to observe workers on SM. Governments are using SM, often potentially breaching equality and human rights legislation. They undertake hidden checks and monitor the online activity of potential critics of their governmentality, compiling secret dossiers on individuals with the sole aim of stopping them from speaking out at public events (The Observer 18/11/23). So if the people who decide legislative measure to control SM use it for unlawful surveillance purposes what hopes do we workers have? My aim here is to highlight there are major implications for all of us regarding how freedom of expression impacts on privacy and to show how very little we understand the daily inspection of our online activity.

< CALLOUT INSERT DISCUSSION BOX 5 HERE >

Social media surveillance and control

Clearly, as the case law shows corporations will take great exception to anything we may say online about the conditions of work or colleagues. This is dicey stuff and therefore this warrants surveillance, monitoring and observation “in work” which they claim are used to counteract supposed forms of employee misbehaviours. But it is how this is achieved which needs more scrutiny.

Surveillance and monitoring are not new per se. however, the rapid increase in digitalization means corporations can get away with more sneakily monitoring employee online endeavours which may or may not be associated work-related conduct. The growing range of surveillance activities in my view illustrates a deeper schism in the asymmetry of power relations at work and society in this domain (Dundon and Rollinson, 2011; McDonald and Thompson, 2016).

Surveillance, has a deeper connotation and derives from the French '*sur*' meaning above or over and '*veiller*' meaning to watch or observe (Foucault, 1975: 201; Mann & Ferenbok, 2013; Townley, 1994). Foucauldian disciplinary discourse emphasizes how employees are subjects of work and rendered in a permanent state of visibility (Lukes, 2005). None more so than in SM contexts.

Foucauldian theory associates conceptions of surveillance with an architectural feature; the *panopticon*. The panopticon is a tower, platform or mechanism which creates a lofty position from which to observe employees or inmates (Bain & Taylor, 2000; Foucault, 1975; Sewell & Wilkinson, 1992; Townley, 1994).

Watchtowers are concretely built into corporate entities such as call-centres or factories. From these fortress-like entities management elite have wider capacity to gaze down and observe employees for the purposes of driving organizational effectiveness or for disciplinary approaches in work. An example of this is when I worked in a sales call centre management sat on raised platforms so they could view the sales floor. As technology advanced systems were integrated which informed management of our individual activity; They knew how many calls were being taken, by whom and the type of call, wither

incoming or outbound or how many minutes an individual had been inactive. This dictated how they viewed our productivity. This also dictated the behaviour they displayed towards us. With inactivity this prompted a lot of shouting and eyeballing to shame workers into production.

Technology and digital networks therefore widen the concept of the panopticon. They enable corporations to observe individuals or groups more deeply via use of platforms and networks, signifying a *digital panopticon*. Such ethereal corporeality creates a sinister sense of the employer possessing an all-seeing-eye which is Orwellian and big-brother-esque in nature (Briken et al., 2017; Foucault, 1975; Scott, 2015; Thompson, 2003).

Digital technologies are so sophisticatedly incorporated to reimagine control methods within contemporary employment deals we don't give these much thought either. Yet such technologies allow corporations to track employees (Moussa, 2013), acting as an "electronic leash" (Towns and Cobb, 2012: 205). Increasing forms of control include: filtering software to inhibit access to SM platforms or websites (Riedy and Wen, 2010). More sinister surveillance practices include invasively microchipping employees to track our whereabouts. And using our PCs so we can be monitored at home through cookies and data usage.

When working at home, the management distrust grows exponentially, probably since the Covid Pandemic (2020). Hybrid working meant there was a reduction in *eyeball* management where management can see and watch us visibly in the workspace. Working at home our lack of physical presence and productivity are viewed skeptically by management. Our esteemed leaders may therefore access our social media profiles to cross compare this with work activities. They may be surprised! Or more likely they will come to a negative

conclusion that we are somehow less productive. Thus, we need to debate widening management philosophies regarding the attempts to observe and monitor workers which have greater ethical implications (Adams and Purtova, 2017).

My aim here is to highlight how social media visibility is increasingly more subjective and oftentimes has little to do with criteria which links to job specifications and roles.

Surprisingly little is known about management attempts to scrutinize employees through these platforms. In extant literature there is critical reflection on surveillance occurring, yet little regarding the actuality of management practices in this domain. Given the rise in subjectivity through online observation the accounts in this text will recast this by substantially to highlight this may include widening forms of bias. Such forms of management (mal)practices are rarely discussed or challenged.

In my discussion and empiricism I seek to illustrate how there is very little scrutiny of management per se and further very little challenge on their approaches to use SM for monitoring employees. Simply put this is left well alone and subsumed into everyday management practices (Islam, 2012; McDonald et al, 2016; McDonald and Thompson, 2016; Moussa; 2015, Taylor; 2018; Taylor and Dobbins, 2021).

Critically this implies forms of social media surveillance are left unchallenged, reified and forgotten about by wider HRM practices and senior leadership in corporations. Reification involves: “...seeing people in ‘thing-like’ terms, treating their aspects as inert properties rather than as subjective expressions” (Islam (2012:41). Reification reduces employment relations practices to the allocation, deployment and cost of human capital involved in the production of tasks (Islam; 2012). This perspective denies human emotion and infers all employees are supposedly self-disciplined, including management. This conceptualization

fails to acknowledge how SM surveillance practices contribute to an undermining of employee morale, fostering a deepening mistrust between workers and management (Kizza and Ssanyu; 2005).

The growing impact of surveilling employees via social media is much more invasive than we think. Employers are accessing deeper biographic and personal materials where our online identities are more on show (Moussa, 2015). Corporations legitimize such surveillance practices under the guise of improving effective and productive use of company time. The purpose is to minimize issues such as work-related gossip, cyber-loafing, pilfering and emerging workplace deviancy such as online gambling, accessing pornography to name a few (Moussa, 2015).

Clearly, there is a growing trend in complex varieties of worker (mis)behaviour which is only just being debated. Moreover, the narrative on misbehaviour rarely discusses how management actors may also misbehave, my aim is to build on these discussions and suggest they are equally capable of criminal, irregular, subversive and abhorrent behaviour in work and online (Ackroyd and Thompson, 2003; Taylor, 2018). The surveillance practices captured in this text build on existing literature including pre-profiling, observation and monitoring of work-related blogs and posts.

Pre-profiling involves gathering information from individual social media profiles or search engines. This occurs typically during pre-recruitment processes where personal, online, biographical materials are used to supplement background information checks on recruits (McDonald et al, 2016). This extends the visibility of prospective recruits beyond the utilization of the traditional curriculum vitae or online application processes (Harrington, 2009; Tripathy and Kaur, 2012).

Accessing personal online content asserts an employer's right to legitimately protect organizations from negligent hiring (Blackwell, 2004; Shea and Wesley, 2006; Zeidner, 2007). Significantly, many employees are potentially unaware of pre-profiling practices (McDonald et al, 2016; Taylor 2018). We are rarely asked do we give consent for the employer to view our online content. This is not necessarily a personal violation as much of our content is in the public domain. My point here is to highlight a greater need for individual users to consider what they wish to share in the public gaze (Ehrenreich, 2000/2001). Moreover, it is understanding if our online material or posts are considered defamatory, corporations may take decisive action regarding our employment.

I wish to illustrate how SM profiles and posts are often used as evidence in HR processes which seek discrepancies between the information supplied by existing employees such as feigned illness, absences, appearance, and horseplay issues (Taylor, 2018).

Online monitoring is rooted in employment law and embodied in social and economic infrastructures of our societies (Ehrenreich; 2000/2001). Sadly, employees have little protection from such employer practices or procedures particularly if monitoring and observation of SM is cited in organisational policies (Biro, 2011).

Controversially, given that most UK social media case law cited an infringement of privacy there is no universal definition of workplace privacy (Ehrenreich, 2000/2001; Jeffery, 2002a; Miller and Weckert, 2000). Furthermore, in the UK there is currently no fully formed guidance for employers on how to establish ethical surveillance practices. Therefore there is no recognised best practice motif for how surveillance practices are applied (Taylor, 2018). Indeed, Clark and Roberts (2010) suggest surveillance practices are potentially harmful for society. This debate is especially more important since the incorporation of the

Online Harms Bill (UK) where observation, monitoring and surveillance practice are called for and thus will increase. Therefore, alongside this perhaps workers have the right to seek clarification on when and how management monitoring of social media takes place. More importantly what punitive action will be taken should management breach protocols (Taylor & Dobbins, 2021).

These activities illustrate deeper mental fences which workers must overcome (Zerubavel, 1991). Previously, it was possible to delineate and segregate professional and personal hemispheres of life (Rothbard and Ramarajan, 2009). Our use of SM has created a bleed or seepage between these hemispheres to the extent they collapse into each other (Wesch, 2009). Little is known about SM monitoring and the impact this has on how traditional workplace boundaries are managed (Malaterre et al (2013). A prominent discussion in this debate is how corporations manage and take punitive action over risqué or controversial SM content.

< CALL OUT: INSERT DISCUSSION BOX 6 >

Often our SM content becomes more akin to gossip-mongering (Kuo et al, 2015). We now use SM for strategic means including we also use this to socially compare each other and gain instant cultural information. This may include cues about what we look like to create archetypes or reducing ourselves to one up-man-ship over fellow employees (Manaf et al, 2013). These contribute to emerging forms of online worker resistance or (mis)behavior (McDonald and Thompson, 2016). Importantly, this allows management to further use SM content to categorize employees as things of beauty or recalcitrant, disobedient workers

(Ackroyd and Thompson, 2003). Equally, we become eye-witnessers and informants on each other. Thus, contributing to wider understanding of SM (mis) behaviors was important in this text.

One such area is the use of facades or masking on digital technologies. Social media allow individuals to remain cloaked using anonymous blogs or fake personas. These are often created to put forward defamatory or irreverent online content. This is harder to police and has led to an increase in abhorrent social behaviours such as misogyny, sexual harassment, and coercive behaviour. This illustrates how SM allows us to create multiple persona. We may have everyday visible identities such as a director or accountant and we may enact these online. We need to get better at detecting this.

Equally, we may choose hidden identities such as an avatar, catfish or troll. These are not widely understood. Thus, I have tried to provide some greater exploration of these behaviours to address the overlap in workplace contexts where employees are the subject of harassment or subjugation in digital contexts. My aim here is for future HR practitioners and managers to be more vigilant and skilled in alternative, ulterior practices. Moreover to understand how workplace conflict may manifest in order to develop better support measures to address the long-lasting psychological damage these instances may have on good workers.

Subversive use of SM, if caught, may lead to criminal cases and dismissal from work (McDonald and Thompson (2016; Taylor, 2018)). Employees can try to challenge disciplinary, legal action by appealing against dismissal in employment tribunals. The main line of defense tends to rest on how what they posted fell outside working hours. However, employers may consider any online activity and conduct falls within their jurisdiction, regardless of working boundaries. Therefore, a burgeoning issue with the increased use of

these technologies is the implications for intensifying management practices, additional work pressures and unclear reporting boundaries.

Equally, these issues further de-personalise work by further altering a sense of justice and adding to wider inter-organisational inequalities. This may include the loss or creation of new jobs, affect and tilt the balance of power dynamics between differing stakeholder groups and create the shaping of new organizational forms (Bondarouk and Brewster; 2016:2664).

This sections highlights skepticism, tensions and conflict associated with forms of management surveillance and disciplinary actions (CIPD, 2013; Jeske and Shultz, 2015; McDonald et al, 2015, McDonald and Thompson, 2016; Van Gramberg et al (2014). Yet surveillance practices provide a mono-account of SM use. Therefore, I introduce wider debate by illustrating emerging *veillance practices* where SM use allows workers capacity to reverse the digital, panoptical gaze on those in power.

Social Media Sousveillance and Employee Voice

A failure in the discussion of surveillance is it widely assumes employees are passive and submissive (Taylor, 2018; Taylor and Dobbins, 2021). Chiefly, such assumptions ignore how employees engage on SM to air their employee voice and disgruntlement at work. Equally, the issue I have is that this assumption also largely ignores how SM allows employees to interconnect and converse with corporate elite, which means, significantly, workers can and do observe and monitor those in power through their use of SM. Workers therefore may use SM to specifically challenge or resist hegemonic management practices and observe management (mis)behaviours (Marler and Parry, 2015; Martin et al, 2015; Taylor and Dobbins, 2021).

Employee voice (EV), conceptually, has many definitions and involves a variety of processes or alternative structures in work including the ability to contribute to decision-making in organisations (Bingham, 2016; Boxall and Purcell, 2003; Budd, 2014). Conventionally, EV channels are devised by management who scope conditions for both communication and engagement in workplace issues (Holland et al, 2016). This incorporates a variety of domains and topics such as procedures, policies, compensation, workplace conditions and work methods (Wilkinson, Barry and Morrison, 2020).

EV conceptions in literature are often narrow, differ by discipline and are located from a unitarist lens (Barry and Wilkinson, 2016; Wilkinson et al 2020). This offers an asymmetrical, imbalanced perspective of power where workers have limited capacity to engage in EV channels. Yet HRM practices for EV are deployed to mediate conflict, control behaviors and e-communications for both the employer and employee in this context (Ulrich, 2010). Definitions of EV are therefore often unsatisfactory due to the emergence of digitized contexts which does not account for how employees may controversially speak out about work experiences via SM networks offering strong opinions or alternative views of the employer online (Bingham, 2016).

Simultaneously, corporations use SM to positively engage with employees and allow real-time dialogue to address workplace issues (Martin et al, 2015). Management, in this scenario purposefully use the immediacy of SM responses to harness employee opinions to advance the organization (Holland et al, 2016). This requires management and leaders' preparedness to incorporate SM as part of the employment deal (Martin et al, 2015). There is a paucity of research on how leaders incorporate SM for positive organisational communication and EV

purposes.

Additionally, Trade Unions utilise SM to recruit, campaign and organise workers (Geelen, 2015). This illustrates how SM devices enhance EV to include dialectical interactions which are oppositional to corporate views (Martin et al (2015). SM has been used to shape societal protest and collective disputes which management or the government are not necessarily able to control. Examples include the Junior Doctors Strike UK (2016), Black Lives Matter Campaign (2013), the storming of Capitol Hill, Washington USA (2021); and protests against the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill (2021). Employees have also used social media and mobile devices to capture dire working conditions and oppressive work regimes in major corporations such as Amazon, Foxconn and Sports Direct, (Chan and Pun, 2010; Briken, 2016 and Taylor and Dobbins 2021). In this context SM offers employees and people greater power and capability to invert the process of surveillance and power.

This allows an alternative perspective and veillance practice of *sousveillance* to emerge.

Sousveillance is where the observer becomes the observed using digital technologies (Mann et al, 2003). The etymology of sousveillance is again derived from the French “*sous*” meaning below and “*veiller*” as before, meaning to watch and observe. Sousveillance, therefore allows employees to observe management or those in authority (Taylor and Dobbins, 2021).

Mann *et al* (2003) were not specifically referring to SM when they discussed sousveillance.

They suggested mobile technologies could be used to film, photograph and record data. I have simply extended this view to include SM as a growing space for employees to record, monitor and take control of workplace or societal concerns using these devices. Thus, sousveillance problematizes conceptions of surveillance and employee acquiescence.

Moreover, employees, may use SM to observe management to collate evidence of management (mal)practices. Thus, sousveillance, increases the equity between the surveiller and those being surveilled (Taylor and Dobbins 2021). As a divergent approach sousveillance affords workers to be both masters and subjects of a panoptical gaze and is considered a wider form of worker resistance.

Foucault, failed to adequately construct a theorisation of resistance which is defined as a “...constant process of adaptation, subversion and reinscription of dominant discourses. This takes place as individuals confront, and reflect on, their own identity performance, recognizing contradictions and tensions and, in so doing, pervert and subtly shift meanings and understandings.” Townley (1994).

Sousveillance, therefore, further develops a subtle re-conception of communicative worker voice conflicts adding to a micropolitical view of resistance (Thompson, 2016). Resistance manifests itself in all forms of organisational behaviour. This highlights competing efforts to shape and fix meaning on expected worker behaviour norms (Mumby,2005). Thus, SM use is stimulated by complex, contradictory and alternative subject positions which highlights oppositional discourses and differing individual interests in work (Thomas and Davies, 2005). This therefore is a core fundamental issue for employee relations and HR practices.

Sousveillance contributes to a much deeper narrative about worker control, which in my view is never absolute, as employees will: “... constantly find ways of evading and subverting managerial organization and direction at work”. (Ackroyd and Thompson: 2003;47). Lastly, little is known about the extent or practices of sousveillance which adds to the intrigue. I have sought in this text to uncover some truths in its growing use.

< CALLOUT INSERT DISCUSSION BOX 7>

Dramaturgical performances on social media

An important trope in this book is that SM platforms represent differing online “auditorium” or stages which we use theatrically as individuals to dramaturgically shape identity and advance personal power (Kerrigan and Hart, 2016). Dramaturgy uses notions of theatre as a metaphor by suggesting human interactions are stage-like performances (Goffman, 1959). Performativity, links to a rehearsed discourse of power which produces the phenomena it regulates and allows beliefs to be formed (Butler, 1993).

The theorization of dramaturgy suggests that it incorporates ideological concepts of a front and backstage persona which we create at specific times for differing on and offline audiences (Butler, 1993; Goffman, 1959). On social media we can create personas, characterizations and identities which are less delineated and performed more fluidly online (Kerrigan and Hart, 2016). In this context we have multiple versions of ourselves in targeted online platforms which are used as visible front stages to present desirable, staged images of the self (Bullingham and Vasconcelos, 2013).

My aim here is to suggest this creates falsehoods and adds to a more sinister version of the looking glass self (Taylor, 2018). Like Narcissus we gaze on ourselves constantly online. We develop overly staged and aesthetically pleasing online personas which we refine and edit to look more appealing. We have a growing neediness to have a constant feed of likes. This fuels excessive positioning and posting to vie for attention in different fora.

As managers and HR practitioners we need to be more aware of the asinine allure of the impact staging of the self may have on workers and colleagues. We also need to unpick more carefully narcissistic, socio or psychopathic personality disorders which are increasing in prevalence which may require support or conversely discipline.

Therefore we need to have more awareness of how SM activity allows us to create more liminal digital personhoods. The idea of ulterior identities interlinks with notions of conflict. Liminality is defined as a transition of being which occurs as actors' move between and betwixt differing states (Turner,1960). Our different states involve the creation of professional personas or more ulterior sense of self-online. There is little empirical evidence on how such online transitions manifest themselves or how these are managed in work.

As social actors we use SM to incorporate four dramatic techniques to enhance power as follows: scripting, staging, performing and interpretation (Benford and Hunt, 1992). We exploit our identities using these to create pastiches of the self in order to survive work (Carbado and Gulati; 2000). This involves adopting strategies to signify hard-work, team orientation, personal goals and trustworthiness. These are positively observed and liked off and online. For example, we use LinkedIn to script or stage a positive narrative of career successes and triumphs. This enactment of self-identity is important as it lends itself to labour processes as part of our employment relationships. Equally, our SM profiles act to conceal evidence or contradict official constructions of the self (Raghuram, 2013; Hunter-McDonnell and King 2013). This links to the use masking, where we hide and manipulate differing interpretations of the self, yet another theatrical gadget or metaphors (Goffman 1982).

Significantly, our dramaturgical performances link well to performativity in specific professional roles. Each role performance is a blended and pre-agreed version of identity in work. Organizations provide actors with different settings to perform, experiment or even enforce roles (Benford and Hunt, 1992; Simpson and Carroll, 2008). This intensifies how workers engage in impression management to stage or dress their sense of self online.

We all love to be liked. SM contexts seemingly fuel a need for mass adoration. This links to costuming and properties and other theatricalized gadgetry. There is a rise in individuals who obsessively post images of themselves, using software to filter and enhance aesthetic qualities or appearance. We post scripted soliloquies as leaders, managers or workers to gain notoriety, increase or boost our profiles. This is referred to as a discretionary effort made by actors to control information used to influence perceptions about themselves or organizations by others (Giacalone and Rosenfeld, 1990; Goffman, 1959; Richey et al, 2016; Schlenker and Wowra, 2003).

Online Emotional and Aesthetic Labour

Our unconstrained online conversations and identity portrayals allow employers to participate in making subjective evaluative comments about work related issues, including what we look like. This has led to a rapid rise in forms of emotional and aesthetic labour (Nath et al, 2016; Hochschild, 1983). Emotional labour is defined as the management of feeling creating a publicly observable bodily and facial display (Cited in Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993).

Aesthetic labour is defined as characteristics, embodied capacities and attributes which are

possessed by workers” (Warhurst et al., 2000) which focus on corporate expectations of how employees look, sound and dress in work. Thus, aesthetic labour consists of the appraisal of workers who look appealing a (Warhurst and Nickson, 2007). Thus, SM further commodifies workers by assessing our delivery of emotive and aesthetic performances at work (Witz et al., 2003). The pressure to perform to large audiences online demonstrates a worrying trend in emotional and aesthetic labour, worker appearance and body modifications in organizations (Nath et al, 2016; Timmings, 2015).

We therefore use emotional labour to manipulate the feelings we experience within work routines to create appealing observable facial and physical displays (Hochschild, 1983).

These online manifestations objectify workers in more visible ways. This illustrates a murkier, shallower side to SM use and wider societal assumptions on what is deemed objectionable or un-aesthetic about employee appearance, behaviours and our identity which requires further ethical debate.

Identity Exploration and Sense-making

Identity is conceptualised as a set of central, distinctive, and enduring characteristics that typify a person or a line of work (Albert and Whetten, 1985; Ashforth, 2001; Kreiner et al 2006). Identity incorporates how we choose to represent ourselves and is core to our sense of being (Erickson, 1964). Individual identity exploration in SM contexts is an interesting part of this debate. Primarily, because as previously discussed our identity portrayal is more fluid and increasingly staged. This is due to the constant renegotiation of our identities in the variety of differing platforms (Kerrigan and Hart, 2016).

Therefore, identity fluidity poses significant challenges for HRM and management to understand and more relevant to this discussion control (Cooper and Inglehearn, 2015,

McDonald and Thompson, 2016).

My aim here is to highlight how observing and monitoring employee identity differences in online contexts is nuanced, highly complex and open to interpretation. Actors in key management and HR roles must, therefore, be more discerning to ensure they are not bigoted and do not breach wider legislation such as the Equality Act (2010). This legislation harmonises several laws which seek to protect different individual characteristics such as sex, sexuality, race, religion, gender, disability and age. The identification of identity, therefore, links to concepts of the self in relation to distinct categorisations which impact on work, role and our demography (Brewer, 1991; Hogg and Terry, 2001; Oakes, 1987; Webb, 2006).

Erickson (1964) suggested identity exploration required being true to one's actions. Yet being true and authentic online is problematical, particularly when social actors use SM to develop identities which are dictated by corporations. These may be conflictual with our own personal expectations and perceptions which in part are driven by our own individual need to be distinctive. We seek to cultivate, craft or elevate differing identities to boost audience interaction. This has implications for our employers, particularly, in how we choose to both interact and present self-identity across these multiple levels (Van Gramberg et al, 2014). A core tenet is whether these multiple versions of the "self" lie in tension with the professional self.

Clearly, as we have witnessed in the last few years prominent social actors in the world of entertainment have produced online content which has caused a furor. Such online comments jar with employment requirements to be impartial and objective and for us as employees to not harm corporate reputations.

Josselson (1996:28) stated: “*Identity is what we make of ourselves within a society that is making something of us*”. This links to the employment relationship and how we are regulated at work. Our identity therefore influences our work experiences, addressing two central questions: “Who am I? and “how should I act?” in work (Cerulo, 1997).

This involves a critical appraisal of the self to construct a coherent and positively valued work identity (Alvesson et al, 2008). This involves “...*forming, repairing, maintaining, strengthening or revising the constructions that are productive of a sense of coherence and distinctiveness*”. (Svenningsson and Alvesson, 2006:1165). In creating a coherent sense of self, we are required to sense-make of identity work. This is particularly complex during individual liminal transitions or online crises where our identity work involves a radical transformation of the self (Ibarra, 1999). These variations in self-identity create a perceived need for corporations to increasingly control our identity beyond work to ensure the corporation looks and sounds great (Webb, 2006).

Sense-making is something which emphasizes the importance of understanding and discernment for HR and management actors. This requires them to understand the fragile interrelationships between knowledge and information and to act within a non-judgmental code of conduct.

This is defined as “*meaning making*” or “*feeling making*” and requires individuals to reflect on and make sense of behaviours and social-emotional human experiences of interaction (Schwandt (2005:182). Weick (1995:20) claimed the “*maintenance of identity is a core preoccupation in sense-making*”. This is problematical in digitized contexts. Managers and HR practitioners need to understand more nuanced digital identities. Actors in these roles must make sense of newly acquired information about each other constantly as they interact and observe each other in real time online. The CIPD (2023) has developed a code of

conduct which requires HR practitioners to be competent in promoting workplace cultures where ethical values and behaviours are embedded. They suggest practitioners make difficult decisions regarding work and therefore must think carefully regarding the implications and consequences of decisions and actions taken. This suggests that sense-making is hugely important and has a need to respect key virtues in work which champion and create positive working practices which are fair and equitable all.

Schwandt (2005) suggested sense-making processes are dependent on the development of a sense-making framework and characteristics of the sense-making process itself. This occurs by developing understanding from social cues. However, sense-making of online identity may exhibit large variances between where meaning is attributed to. This may include making greater moral or ethical judgments about fellow co-workers which requires a further moral courage.

Identity theory in corporate contexts focuses on the: “...*categorisation of the self as an occupant of a role, and the incorporation, into the self, of the meanings and expectations associated with that role and its performance*” (Stets and Burke; 2000:225). Sense-making is critical when moments of tension, paradox, or ambiguity occur or where the sense of the environment is affected by a disruption. Sense-making of identity in this context is vital as managers and powerful elite will use cues within these organisational environments to make “*expedient and decisive actions*” (Schwandt (2005:177).

Additionally, extant literature suggests actors in elite or management roles author hegemonic identity narratives which are refined and shaped by reactions of co-workers (Humphreys and Brown, 2002). Identity formation therefore adds dimensions to the staging of power displays at work. In doing so this builds tensions where SM narratives act as both a central and sub-plot in the ongoing dramatic achievement of the self. We don't

truly author a set script for the staging of self-online. Thus, any deviations and improvisations of self-hood are fraught with major problems which pose problems for sense-making accuracy in how actors are understood at work (Reissner, 2010).

This is linked to the development of a moral identity, which is a psychological function concerned with living a moral life (Blasi 1995; Damon and Hart, 1992; Erikson, 1964). This is not easily reduced to possessing the requisite skills of sophisticated moral reasoning or being committed to the attainment of moral goals as my later *Acts* will show. A moral identity cannot be simply reduced to personality traits or linked to prosocial behaviour such as conscientiousness, agreeableness, or generativity; traits which require greater action (Hart et al,1998: 515). Developing a moral identity is a further complex undertaking. This requires individuals to possess moral standards and impose self-sanctions which are considered important predictors of a person's moral behaviour (Bandura,1999; Bandura et al1996). This conception requires individuals to critically reflect on their own discourse and behaviours and importantly, to use moral reasoning when observing co-worker online posts, identities and behaviors, which straddle private aspects of life. Such critical reflection in online contexts is rare.

The missing practice of critical reflection

Critical reflection enhances organisational learning and significant change (Høyrup, 2004). SM networking is positioned as an aspect of work which requires both. Appraisal of the literature demonstrates SM is used increasingly in cybercrimes (BBC March 2017) such as revenge porn and harassment. The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS 2016) reported a rise in *Violence against Women and Girls* and cites SM use as a growing area of sexual criminal activity. Sousveillance is used for public disclosures on abusive activity in organisations such

as national care homes, prisons or grooming informants (BBC 2010- 2017). These case examples illustrate key failures in HR and management practices to challenge inappropriate on or offline behaviours. Thus, the development of a more moral identity, reasoning and critical reflection should have been used to address these techno-misbehaviours.

Reflective practice (RP) is a determinant of HR professional behaviour. The Chartered Institute for Personnel and Development (CIPD) suggests RP requires critical awareness, capability to make well informed decisions and to challenge assumptions (CIPD no date: produced by Owen and Fletcher last accessed 2017). Further studies on RP which focused on part time MSc Students who worked in HR suggests these HR practitioners view forms of self-reflection with a great deal of skepticism and feel RP is too introspective (Bull and Taylor, 2014). This suggests practitioners dislike reviewing their own behaviours. This text is positioned, therefore to encourage and provide space for greater critical reflection and thought, about HR and management practices in the ever-growing digital terrain of work.

< CALLOUT: INSERT DISCUSSION BOX 8

These bodies of literature were presented to foreground and explore the complexity of SM use. They have been carefully positioned to elucidate on the different perspectives which surround contemporary employment relationships in this context and the implications this has for worker control.

The next section focuses on the empiricism used to underpin this text.

Behind the Scenes: The social actors and their staged worlds

This text is supported by empirical research which is now briefly outlined. The methodological approach was developed to triangulate a multi perspective of social media use in work within several large UK corporations. Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was used to allow a deeper exploration and to develop understanding of key professional social actors and their experience of managing how social media devices were integrated, regulated and managed in each context.

The key social actors who took part in this study all held distinct corporate professional roles in HR management, operational management and frontline operational roles. These roles are perceived to form the bedrock of contemporary employment relationships. This approach allowed a deeper sense-making into the social actor's sense of agency in these corporate roles. The study purposively explored how each actor used social media as part of their corporate existence collectively, personally, socially, and professionally (Smith and Osborn, 2006). The approach sought to understand their professional roles in shaping practices to develop rules and control use of social media. Further to understand how they individually adhered or circumvented these regulations leading to greater understanding of emerging forms of misbehaviour and discipline in this domain. Furthermore, this approach explored how social media was used to enhance forms of employee voice and resistance in work.

To do so the in-depth study comprised of thirty five semi structured interviews. The interviews were conducted using a purposive sampling approach. Each interview lasted between 30 minutes and 2 hours; these were recorded, transcribed and analysed using an iterative, hermeneutic process which captured four superordinate themes which underpin the subsequent chapters in this text.

Each interview took place in several differing corporate environments, adding further dramaturgical dimensions to the staging and use of social media. The difference in using and regulating social media in each context, and by the individual social actors was cross compared to highlight divergent approaches. These provide a greater critical reflection of the social media phenomena.

Phenomenology

Phenomenology refers to the study of a phenomena, which is described as anything appearing within or to a social actor as a conscious experience (Gill, 2014; Moran; 2000). In this text the phenomenon studied was the corporate and social actors use of social media and how each context controlled or managed this work to ascertain what can be learned and understood from each environment.

Phenomenology is core to interpretive research paradigms (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000; Geanellos, 1998; Gill, 2014; Koch, 1995; Le Vasseur, 2003; Lopez and Willis, 2004). As a philosophical perspective phenomenology focuses study on the fundamental nature of human experiences, seeking to more deeply understand how actors live through differing phenomena. This involves their human wholeness and ability to care (Geanellos, 1998; Moran, 2000; Tymieniecka, 2003; Wojnar and Swanson, 2007). This was important for ensuring understanding ethical and moral issues associated with management of social media use in work.

Phenomenological inquiry similar to an artistic endeavour as it allows a *“linguistic description that is holistic and analytical, evocative and precise, unique and universal, powerful and sensitive.”* (Van Manen, 1990: 39). This suited both the research endeavour and

the underpinning of this text. Linking to the belief that when we use social media we are staging and acting out a variety of characterisations in dramatic and creative ways.

IPA links with a Heideggerian philosophy and conceptually frames phenomenology as “*the science of the being of beings*” (1927:35). A Sense of being is hugely important to a hermeneutic understanding of social actors and their life worlds which does not occur remotely from their temporal, social and cultural contexts (Geanellos, 1998). Hermeneutic inquiry uses scaffolds and structures from human creations as an armature which enables possible creative self-interpretations (Guignon, 2012). This links with how we fluidly create fluid identities online.

Dasein or there-being on social media

A factual sense of worldliness and reality becomes present in this study through a sense of *Dasein* or *there-being* in the world (Heidegger;1927). Humans act on differing possibilities or desires to satisfy urges such as impulsivity [*epithemia*]. Impulsivity is important when considering the social media phenomena. Social actors post online impulsively, viscerally, and lovingly. On social media our impulses are often improvised and use dramaturgical approaches which cause great impact on corporate environments. Hermeneutic inquiry was used in this study to explore how each key social actor navigated impulsivity on these devices, requiring grounded reasoning for action via their own reflections.

Dasein is not an instrumental device, it is achieved by being thrown into the world, which may or may not be of our choosing. This culturally fits with social media contexts. These devices potentially shape who we are. They inform the places we work, the professions we choose and or the characteristics we adopt to create our personalities, identity or alternative personae (Guignon, 2012). The principles of *Dasein* and *being* are

applied to the specific organisational roles to create a scaffold of understanding in how individuals interact with each other on and offline. This draws reference to human agency in institutions and corporate environments (Alvesson and Skoldberg, 2009).

Importance of professional role

The three key professional roles were focused on in the program of study. These are inextricably interlinked in work as they anchor employment relationships and have transferability to most corporate environments. These roles are now briefly outlined.

Human Resource Management (HRM): these roles are typically entrusted with creating strategies for coordinating the effort and control of people in organisations. These roles link to the nature of human agency and being a subject in work. HR roles are integral to shaping the construction of organisational rules, policies, procedures, productivity, employee performance and expected work behaviours. This includes particular use of corporate ways of being associated with appearance, language, symbols and mechanisms which shape people management practices. HR practitioners play a key role in disciplinary processes, coordinating investigations into misbehaviour and supporting management to develop disciplinary or grievance outcomes. HR roles interviewed to underpin the empiricism in this text were employment and social media policy development leads, HR directors, HR managers, HR business partners, HR development and employee relations specialists.

Operational Management: Management roles are of central importance within organisational life. Management is a broad term however largely individuals in these roles are perceived to embed and enforce regimes of control and lead the performance management of workforces. Management roles are apparent across all corporations in functions such as marketing, finance, production etc. HR practices are routinely devolved to

wider operational management. Thus management take on HR practices such as the coordination of labour processes and involves the appraisal, performance management, observation, calculability, power, control, and surveillance of employee offline and online behaviours (Townley, 1994).

The empiricism sought to observe how actors in management roles develop their own agency and interpretation of social media policy and practices. Management roles are synonymous with establishing disciplinary tactics to control and manage worker effectiveness and productivity; including the discipline of worker distractedness and misbehaviours which links with the misuse of social media (Moussa, 2015; Moqbel et al 2013). The corporate roles interviewed to support the empiricism in this text included top tier operational and supervisory management actors in a variety of functions such as production, manufacturing, IT, customer support, marketing and sales.

Frontline Operational roles: workers who hold operational roles are expected to adhere and comply to regimes of control and management practices (Townley, 1994). Employees in frontline roles pose a challenge for management and HR where it is often assumed employees are perceived to break regulations, particularly when using social media. The empiricism therefore sought to explore employee experiences and perceptions to develop a critical social construction of how management control and develop rule setting agendas to which impact on frontline operational workers. A key aspect was to capture employee actor understanding of the social media rules. Additionally to capture how they may use this digital landscape to voice concerns regarding surveillance at work, both in offline and online interactions with management. This was purposefully done to develop understanding of wider ethical considerations for management and HR. Employee roles interviewed in the

empiricism to support this text included assembly workers, support officers, administrators, sales advisors and union activists who have dual roles. Trade union representatives are vital in work contexts as they often mediate on the development of regulatory processes and provide support during disciplinary or grievance procedures, workplace negotiation and consultation. Actors in trade union roles are significant as they protect wider employee rights which are vital in the growing use of social media. The operational actor narratives therefore are used to add greater critical perspectives on approaches for employee voice and union partnership working.

Professional roles are often dismissed as archaic or clichéd (Mangham,1996). Yet, professional roles are deeply embedded in a social constructionist view of the world. These were deemed to be useful in developing a framework for understanding role agency and performativity. How we embody our role and make sense of the professional practices which are needed to effectively perform at work and within strict codes of professional conduct.

Our sense of role informs the ordering and purpose of the self in organisations (Townley, 1994). Importantly the status of professional roles may determine and inform our view power dynamics in work. Immersion in our professional role is akin to a dramaturgical performance. We may don the robes of power or adopt many masks to survive work; developing ongoing constructions and notions of the self (Goffman, 1959). Our identity enactment and embodiment of role makes institutions come alive often through our improvisation. We don't always follow ready-made scripts for our roles. We use unwritten libretto's which are drama or play-like (Berger and Luckmann; 1966). Therefore, professional role was consciously built into the development and scoping of this text as

roles are something it was felt we could all relate to. We all have a manager or operational colleague in work. We will have had interaction with HR or people management roles through recruitment, appraisals, development and other work based interactions.

Corporate Staged Environments

The commercial settings of work are hugely important in shaping performativity, identity and ways of being (Bennett, 2006). Corporations are classed as physical entities in social theory and are often considered beings or actors themselves (Rowland, 2008). Each corporation in this text is positioned as a stage or auditoria as they contextually comprise of ergonomic, scenic spaces, logos, imagery, uniforms and cultural “scripts” used by workers which further shapes corporate culture and the enterprise aesthetically (Johnson and Scholes 1999; Strati, 1999). Significantly, each corporation manifests themselves as digital entity with a presence online, where the organisation stages itself across many digital platforms to vast audiences, further adding to the sense of theatre.

Eight differing corporate contexts are presented in this text to highlight differing employment relations frame of reference, management styles and cultural ways of being in work and though their social media use. Each corporation was anonymized to protect true identities. The corporations used in this text are as follows:

1. Aedis Housing – A UK social housing provider.
2. Alumno University – A modern university.
3. Charta – A UK office supplies provider.
4. Pala Communications – A global telecommunications corporation.
5. Pharma PLC – A global chemical engineering corporation.
6. Senes PLC – An international healthcare technology provider.

7. Tiro Hire – A leading UK recruitment agency.
8. Vita Care – A leading UK healthcare provider.

These organisations operated in the UK and are sizeable national, international or global employers employing between 3,000 - 700,000 employees. Each organisation had an established HR management department. Corporate size and scale are shown here to emphasize the legitimacy for the organization to develop social media regulations in an effort to protect brand or service reputation online. Reputation illustrates the corporate standards which are assumed or often taken-for granted (King and Whetten, 2008).

The cast of characters

Literary and theatrical works use a cast of central characters who bring central themes, tropes, intrigues and relationships to life. This was a major driving force in developing this text, where I have sought to bring greater humanness into human and employment relations practices. These are not imagined characters. These are real social actors; workers, managers, and human resources professionals who participated in the in-depth study. They work amongst us.

Extant management and HR literature uses the terms *Leader*, *Manager*, *Worker*. These are devoid of humanness or emotional affiliation. This text purposefully, brings these characters to the foreground, repositioning them as agentic in the utilisation social media. My aim was to help readers connect and identify with these characters as people, rather than as abstract terms. Each actor was given a pseudonym to protect their real identity. A brief biography of each actor is now provided and includes an overview of their role, qualifications (if known), credentials and experiences as follows:

Aedis

Alex: HR manager, CIPD accredited. Qualified in MSc Occupational Psychology. Alex appeared to be quite reflective and had experiences of differing HR contexts. In their role Alex had developed corporate values and behaviours in fast changing organisational environment. Alex had experience of coordinating social media misbehaviour and disciplinary cases. Alex held a unique perception that social media corporate policy was unnecessary to control employee use. Alex used LinkedIn and Facebook.

Alan: Head of Property Services, managing a facilities operational team. Alan held a strong managerial ambition to build cohesive team. Alan was studying at MSc level to supplement management knowledge. Alan managed several cases of social media misbehaviour and harassment in the team. Alan used highly informal networks to control his team. Alan used LinkedIn.

Anne: Engagement Coordinator. Anne had experience of using social media in various roles for collective and community participation internally and externally. Annes approach was highly radical and causing tension with management. Anne was frustrated by a lack of forward thinking in the organisation and using social media to enable housing tenants to have a voice. Anne used Facebook and LinkedIn.

Alumno

Davina: Head of Policy Development, CIPD accredited. Davina had experience of addressing social media misbehaviour cases in public sector. Davina was involved in partnership working with trade unions. Davina was responsible coordinating the social media policy development group. Davina limited her personal use of social media choosing to

“lurk” and observe friends and peers online. Davina used Facebook and LinkedIn sparingly and manipulated her online activity to stage a professional identity.

Debbie: HR Policy Development Manager, CIPD accredited. Debbie had experience of managing online misbehaviour cases. Debbie was the co-chair of the work policy development group. Debbie managed formal discussions with recognised trade unions. Debbie felt she used social media to positively support the organisation. Debbie used LinkedIn and Facebook.

Dahlia: Operations Manager, MSc qualification. Dahlia had experience of investigating and disciplining social media misbehaviour and loss of productivity. Dahlia incorporated management methods of observation, monitoring and developed performance management techniques to control use of these devices. Dahlia was frustrated by a perceived lack of corporate social media policy and guidance which she viewed as a *grey area*. Dahlia chose to develop her own interpretative approach to these regulations deviating from wider policy. Dahlia used Twitter and LinkedIn which she used strategically to develop professional connections.

Darcy: Senior Officer, MSc qualification. Darcy supervised a support team. Darcy used social media to reflect the aims of Alumno. Darcy had experience of addressing employee social media misbehaviour and misuse which caused tensions within her team. Darcy felt she lacked management support and felt she needed further development. Darcy used Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter.

David: Academic, PhD, entering retirement phase. David was an ex-trade union chair and representative. David was involved in negotiating and developing social media policy at university level. David was a member of the policy development group. David was reflective on how social media policy development affected the protection of union members, their

human rights, freedom of expression, privacy and punitive discipline approaches which he was seeking to challenge. David used LinkedIn in a very limited way.

Charta

Fiona: HR Manager, CIPD accredited. Fiona used social media to interconnect for personal and work purposes. Fiona had led social media disciplinary cases. Fiona felt social media policy was dictated by other stakeholders such as Marketing and ICT departments. Fiona was frustrated by the lack of social media training and development to support appropriate use. Fiona connected widely online with colleagues at all strata or functions within the organisation on SM. Fiona heavily utilised Facebook and LinkedIn to showcase her identity.

Flo: Learning and Development Manager, CIPD accredited. Flo felt frustrated by the lack of corporate scope to utilise learning and development to improve and strategically develop employee social media use. Flo felt the organisation used a hegemonic management approach. Flo mainly used LinkedIn.

Frances: Credit Control Supervisor. Frances incorporated a transactional, hard HRM managerial approach to establish team performance. Frances incorporated regular surveillance and observation of her team. Frances improvised management tactics to control employee mobile device use and social media including a mobile phone amnesty (taking peoples phones away from them). Frances used Facebook and LinkedIn

Freya: HR Officer. Freya had retreated from social media altogether due to psychological experiences of grooming which affected her personal self-esteem. She perceived not using social media suited her wider long-term HR career plan.

Pala

Claire: HR Director, CIPD accredited, MSc in Leadership. Claire had a wide range of directorship experience leading large HR teams. Claire was highly focused on leadership development. Claire was involved in scoping, reviewing and developing social media policies. Social media use was high across the organisation due to the nature of the sector. Claire's personal use of social media was minimal and restricted. This seemed at odds with her strategic role requirement. Her role required her to create corporate communities of practice online and develop regular HR blogs. Claire was not comfortable using social media and was involved in addressing corporate cases social media misbehaviour. Claire used LinkedIn and Facebook.

Charles: Operational Manager, recently changed roles from operations to HR. Charles had stopped using social media due the new HR role. Charles was involved in addressing cases of social media misbehaviour, which informed his lack of use. Charles had experience of consulting with trade unions on social media regulation, HRM practices and disciplinary processes.

Charlotte: HR Consultant, CIPD. Charlotte had vast experience of handling social media misbehaviour and disciplinary cases. Charlotte used case outcomes to contribute to wider organisational learning on shaping appropriate use. Charlotte was not a regular user.

Clive: Sales Director, BSc, aspiring leader with a long service employment record. Responsibility for a large commercial team. Clive used LinkedIn and Facebook widely for client relationship building. Clive followed management guidance on social media use. Clive felt social media blurred the boundaries between work and privacy. He had involvement in addressing employee misuse and technology breaches.

Pharma

Georgia: HR Manager, CIPD accredited. Georgia had vast HR experience in differing sectors and employee relations environments. Georgia was keen on developing trade union partnerships. Georgia stated social media policy was developed by corporate marketing. Regulations focused on limiting personal use of Facebook. Georgia disliked LinkedIn but did have a presence. Georgia felt corporate learning to develop social media use strategically was limited. Georgia used Facebook for personal use.

Greg: Operations Manager, BSc, Greg had a strong managerial ambition and discussed using a control and command, highly disciplined management style. Greg used LinkedIn sparingly. Greg made constant comparison of social media rules with his previous employer. Greg perceived social media use should be highly restricted for all employees.

Gary: Assembly Worker, skilled labourer and Trade Union representative which gave him great pride in his work. Gary had a strong personal dislike for social media, preferring traditional face to face communication. Gary did not to use social media to engage with his constituent union membership. This was associated with his substantive role where corporate restrictions were placed on assembly workers from using mobile phones for health safety purposes on the factory floor. Gary was involved in collective bargaining, negotiation, case work and supported social media disciplinary cases. Significantly Gary had not been involved in social media policy development.

Senes

Erica: HR Director, CIPD accredited. Erica was an avid social media user. Using platforms to build HR and employer branding. Erica developed policy and learning and development for social media use. Erica had led disciplinary cases on social media misuse. Professionally Erica was a keynote speaker advocating social media use. Further, Erica sought to build leadership and social media skills to develop a prominent HR profile and identity. Uniquely

Erica experimented with multiple online identities such as an avatar critiquing HR practices.. This caused tensions with perceptions of professional identity in work.

Elizabeth; HR and corporate social responsibility (CSR) officer, Elizabeth used social media mainly for work purposes involving promoting the organisation for CSR purposes. Elizabeth sought to get employees to widely use social media to showcase CSR activity. Elizabeth had managed breaches in social media use.

Elana; IT Manager, BSc. Elana was an avid social media user and very passionate about interconnectivity and digitalisation, internally and externally. Elana used social media to develop her identity and for knowledge creation. She loved the fact that social media could be used for on the ground public journalism to challenge societal issues. Elana was responsible for social media development and training. Elana use a plethora of platforms including Facebook, Pinterest, Instagram and LinkedIn

Tiro

Beatty: HR Regional Officer, CIPD accredited. Beatty used LinkedIn to develop her professional identity. Beatty managed social media misbehaviour cases. Beatty incorporated some social media development training in her role. Her approach was a traditional personnel command and control management style. Beatty regularly used social media to pre-profile recruitment applicants and surveil current employees, This was not documented in corporate policy.

Beth: Director, BA. Beth led large recruitment sales teams across the UK. Beth managed differing cases of social media misbehaviour and nefarious digital activity. Beth uniquely had been a victim of social media abuse by employees in her team. Beth was not a regular user social media which she perceived was for younger generations. Beth had some development to encourage her to use social media to increase productivity, sales revenue and

business connections. Beth used employee observation and physical proximity to workers to control productivity and discourage distractedness.

Brittany: Sales Recruiter. Brittany was disciplined and reprimanded for social media misuse in a previous company. Brittany resigned prior to the disciplinary outcomes. Brittany used social media for personal interaction and friendships and relied mainly on Facebook.

Additionally, Brittany used Facebook interchangeably to attract and place agency employee applicants. Brittany used LinkedIn for similar recruitment purposes. Brittany had little understanding of the repercussions of her misuse. Brittany had little understanding of relevant digital policy, guidance and disciplinary processes. Brittany had little training on social media use and had little legal knowledge of recruitment practices, general data protection or the protected characteristics in the Equality act.

Vita-care

Greg; Director. Used social media to interconnect with the workforce for participatory and employee voice purposes. Greg was responsible for leading developments on social media policy, guidance and training.

These organisations and the characters who work within them are used in the remaining sections of the text to provide discussion and insights into the issues associated with integrating and using social media in differing corporate contexts. These demonstrate the intrigue and fascinating individual motifs for using, leading, managing and controlling social media in work.

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