

Chapter 10

Art of the Constructive Academic Social Brag to Improve Competition and Performance for Social–Shared Teaching and Learning

ABSTRACT

If social media is about the social brag and the pose, academic social media has dedicated platforms that enable such shares: learning content sharing platforms (educational channels on social video sharing sites and social image sharing sites, learning object referatories, digital libraries, slideshow sharing sites), research sharing sites, publications and review metrics platforms, social learning sites (MOOCs, LMSes), and others. The academic social brag does not have to be negative or offending; it can be designed and harnessed to improve competition and performance among peer academics (in their social sharing), given the reliance on learner/user numbers to justify the original creation and sharing. This work explores academic social bragging across various academic social sharing platforms, dimensions for how these are judged (positively or negatively), and ways to turn academic social brags into something constructive for social-shared teaching and learning.

INTRODUCTION

- A lecturer shares a refined slideshow from a recent conference on a slideshow sharing site. The thinking is that the work attains secondary usage from the primary event by being posted and shared socially. Is this bragging?
- An instructor publishes an academic article and then announces this on a social research sharing site and follows up with several Tweets. Is this bragging?

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- A researcher publishes a chapter in a book by a commercial press and calls out colleagues whose works do not meet particular standards that the researcher believes in. The researcher by contrast lauds the approach used in his / her / their work. Is this bragging?
- A research assistant engages in research and shares the dataset on a data sharing site (after attaining the proper permissions and sign-offs). Is this bragging?
- An academic professional publishes several books. Then, this person sets up a detailed personal profile (supported by a publicity firm) along with a professional headshot. Further, this professional has a visual logo created to support the individual branding. Part of the publicity package involves the buying of robot “follower” accounts on social media to embellish the sense of social popularity. There are also #followback invites to actual social media users. Is this bragging?
- A graduate teaching assistant (GTA) writes a snarky and anonymous piece about work life and the state of students today and publishes it on a blog. In this piece, there are enough dropped hints to reidentify the professor but not the class nor the GTA. Is this bragging?
- A doctoral student successfully defends the dissertation and the supporting research. From the dissertation, the student writes three separate articles and publishes all three successfully in different publications. Then, this individual creates multiple social videos about aspects of the work and shares these on a social video-sharing site. The student “gooses” views by publicizing through microblogging messages on a microblogging site, imagery on a social image sharing site, and a slideshow through a slideshow sharing site. Is this bragging?
- A field researcher captures photos from various site locales. This researcher puts together a collection of images, annotates them, and puts them up on a social image sharing site as user-generated contents. The individual is in a number of selfies. Also there are images taken by colleagues of the field researcher, who is depicted as a central member of the team. The resource is mentioned in some digital learning object referatories and social sharing sites for digital learning objects. Is this bragging?
- An academic librarian writes a number of reviews of published materials for professional organizations. This librarian, in alignment with the copyright standards of the publications, republishes the works in the school repository. The librarian creates a profile for himself/herself/themselves on the repository platform lauding the number of publications. Is this bragging?
- A professor with an enduring rivalry with a colleague posts derogatory information about the colleague on a number of social media platforms, along with evidence. Is this bragging?
- A late faculty member’s family approaches a university with boxes of notes, photos, letters, and other paraphernalia from a lifetime in academia. The family is interested in promoting the faculty member’s legacy and to preserve the intellectual value of the work. The family pays the archivist at the university in the low five figures to accept the materials and to create an archive and digital resources from the contents. Is this (indirect) bragging?
- An academic collates a number of prior published works and publishes the work as the “editor” or “author” of this curated text. This is common practice in academia, and it is enabled by academic content publishers. While the academic does not receive any royalties, their names go on the book as if they had actually edited it. Is this bragging?
- A researcher has published an academic paper, and it is a little dry (per the typical characteristic of academic work). The researcher is interviewed about this work and decides to “zhoosh” the work (make it more attractive and lively) by playing up some of the research details. The researcher shares some anecdotes about the work’s evolution and some stories from the field. [Is it fair to

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