Group 1

Emily and Rebecca are having a discussion about the information people give away about themselves online. Emily says that people only tell the good stuff so it doesn't really show a true reflection of who they are. Rebecca disagrees and thinks that you can tell a lot about a person from the information they give away online. Which person do you think is correct? In your discussion, ensure you make reference to the studies discussed so far in the seminar and any others you've come across in your reading. You may want to think about different platforms, and different groups of people (e.g. individual characteristics).

Bargh et al found that the participants resonated more with their true self after interacting with someone online compared to those who interacted with someone face to face. Those they were interacting with also picked up more elements of their true self, showing that it is a two way process.

McKenna et al (2002) - higher levels of social anxiety and loneliness predicts a truer presentation of the self online. Related to the anonymity and control that the online platform offers.

Underwood et al (2011): Broadcasters and communicators. Broadcasters are public communicators and involve a lot of impression management. More likely to provide an ideal self due to having a more outgoing personality and risk taking behaviour. They are also more likely to disclose personal information. Communicators are more uncomfortable with lying. (Ginger,2007; Hancock, 2007).

Green et al (2016) IAP, comparing communication on facebook walls and private messaging. For private messaging they found the same as the IAP model, with the public wall messages there was not the same level of self disclosure.

Eichstaedt et al (2018) - Language use on wall posts 6 months prior to a diagnosis of depression, suggesting that people are showing their true selves and emotions.

Fullwood et al (2016)- adolescents with a less stable sense of self were more likely to portray an ideal self online, have multiple versions of the self online and have an online self that was inconsistent with their offline self.

Evaluation: There are a range of different types of social media that are not explored in this research, more recently platforms such as Snapchat, TikTok etc and online dating apps like Tinder. For apps like Snapchat there is a temporary nature to it and you know when someone screenshots so individuals may feel more inclined to display their true selves. All of these platforms would require a different type of self presentation that would need to be studied.

Conclusion: The evidence that there is supports both points of view, depending on the platform that is being used and individual differences of the platform users. Therefore, both Emily and Rebecca are correct and further research of more recent social media platforms is required.

Group 2

Learning Objective 3

Lauren and Sophie have been to a party and later that evening, Sophie posts a selection of photos from the party on Facebook, tagging Lauren in them. It is clear from the photos that both Lauren and Sophie have had a bit to drink! Lauren is concerned about the impressions others might form of her from these photos and asks Sophie to remove them. Is Lauren justified in her concern? If so, why? You should support your points with reference to the empirical studies discussed so far in the seminar and in your reading. You might want to consider the effect of the valence of the information.

- Lauren is justified
- Warranting principle - judgements rely more heavily on other generated than self-generated information (Walther and Parks, 2002)
    - This could mean that the information which Sophie has posted is taken with more weight than information which Lauren posts herself
- Utz, S. (2010) - Popularity judgement doesn't come from other generated sources. These sources only affected perceived social attraction.
- Impression management - important that we show our best selves. Putting drunk photos on Facebook doesn't show your best self
- Information with negative connotations are seen as more truthful and therefore can be weighted more heavily (Hamilton and Zanna, 1972)
- Depends on the type of judgements that are being made (Walther et al., 2009)
    - Physical attractiveness ratings
    - Extraversion ratings
    - For some self-rated elements, it isn't seen as positive to present yourself favourably, eg. physical attractiveness - it isn't seen as positive to present yourself as physically attractive - **so Lauren may not be justified as 'physical unattractiveness' may actually be perceived as more attractive due to lack of vanity**
        - Could be more worried than she should be, but depends on what she is trying to portray and who her audience is
- Could depend on who is making the judgements

- Information can be seen by employers, screening social media (Black, S. L., & Johnson, A. F. 2012). Social media posts can lead to termination of employment (Ronson, J. 2015).
- Conclusion: Lauren is mostly justified, but it depends on her reasoning as to why she wants the photos taken down

This is a good summary for the first week. You have tried to make an argument using some of the evidence you've been presented with in the videos. It's also good to see you thinking about other citations that you've sourced yourself. However, make sure you understand the findings and report them accurately. You could add in some critical analysis here by pointing out that in reality, people see a wealth of information on people's social media accounts - not just one set of photos. In an essay, this would lead nicely to the study by Walther et al (2009) who looked at both self and other generated content. You did cite this study but not to make this point.

Group 3
Learning Objective 2

Bethany and Helena are discussing how the characteristics of the online world allow people to play around with their portrayal of the self online. Bethany thinks that all people are affected by these characteristics equally. Do you think Bethany is correct? In your discussions, you should refer to the studies already discussed so far in this seminar and in your reading.

- **Evidence to say that everyone is affected but also evidence to say not equally**

- McKenna (2002) - newsgroups participants: actual vs true self online
  - People who have high social anxiety and loneliness more likely to show true self in online settings
  - However, we don't really use newsgroups anymore - may not apply to today
  - Study is correlational so may be another cause i.e. something else causing social anxiety
  - Internet may be beneficial to these people

More recent paper…
- Green et al (2016) - Facebook: private vs public communication online
  - People in private who were high in social anxiety valued the reduced cues and controllability of the direct messaging
    - Made them feel disinhibited so they disclosed more and revealed their true self more
  - But for the public, people with high anxiety still valued the reduced cues and controllability
    - But did not lead to disinhibition - did not reveal more about their true selves
  - People who have high anxiety are more likely to disclose more on social media - but only in private environments
  - The study did not include a direct control group - the sample was composed of participants exclusive to York with a mean age of 20.5 - arguably a very anxious time (*insert study*)
  - https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S074756321530337X

- Eichstaedt et al (2018) - participants Facebook posts before they received the diagnosis of depression
  - The greatest predictor was language use
    - Specifically people who were referencing medical terms in their posts
  - Can predict depression based on Facebook posts
    - Shows that people are expressing signs of their true self

- Zhao (2008)
  - If more identifiable in the environment, more likely to present yourselves from what's expected of you

- Online Dating
  - Ellison et al (2006)
    - Participants use sidestepping tactics
    - Try to show an accurate self-presentation
  - However, only seem to focus on the sample of people who want a relationship (rather than people looking for one-night stand)
    - Difference of types of pictures posted - and their self-portrayal
  - Online representations of one's ideal self may be affected by the possibility of meeting in the future - so portray oneself as more accurate
    - Put ideal self out there - so about self-growth

→ all these more modern studies seem to focus on facebook (maybe because easier - lots is public), but there's many other forms of online communication
- And how long the information is available for (Snapchat) - what is the effect of this on social disclosure?
  - Do people present a different side of themselves?
  - Adolescents play around with who they are (Fullwood et al, 2016) - are they more affected than other age groups?
    - More likely to present idolised self
  - Maybe because it only lasts a small amount of time, more likely to express true self (e.g. double chins)
- Tiktok - very new in research. You are presented in full (audio, visually) - are they expressing their true self?
  - Do people express their best selves or can the opposite also be true, where positive videos are promoted through Tiktok's formula?

Concluding points:
  ➔ Bethany is not correct. - lots of individual differences
  ➔ Difference of public vs private
  ➔ Research is very useful - helping people with anxiety / loneliness → online platforms can help them to promote their true selves
  ➔ Important to research other platforms, other than Newsgroups and Facebook
    ◆ Potential to research Snapchat, Tiktok etc.

This is a really good start to your discussion summary. You have clearly thought about the relevant studies that could support the points you want to make. Pay attention to the comments I've made as this will help you to start to develop a critical approach to the literature and therefore should help with thinking about critical points you could raise in an essay on this topic. Nice to see you thinking about more recent platforms though.

Group 4

Ismail is carrying out an overhaul of his social media profiles just in case prospective employers can access some of the information. He is concerned about the impressions they may form of him from looking at the content. Rebecca tells him that he should also pay attention to his friends' content that shows on his profiles. Is she correct in giving Ismail this advice?
Use the evidence from the lecture content and your reading to support your points of discussion

Rebecca is correct - friend's content is an important consideration

Warranting principle - Walther et al., (2008)
- What other people say about you carries more weight
- Extraversion
- Physical attractiveness

The type of content might depend on the gender of the profile owner

The type of content that the owner needs to filter are comments left by his friends on his posts that may undermine his credibility as well as posts such as images of Ismail that may reflect poorly upon him.

Walther et al., (2008) doesn't take into consideration the profile owners info -
Additive element is also important to consider (Walther et al., 2009) as it suggests that the view that ismail's employer will have of him will be a result of the combination of his own posts and the posts of others which appear on his wall.

The more attractive your friends are the more attractive you appear to be, this may also be the case in the context of employability.

Goodmon et al., (2014) - even a small amount of negative content on a facebook page significantly impacted the judgment of personality, doesn't explore friends posts on page but still relevant.

Idea of conformity would suggest to employers that if your peers are posting negative content on your page that reflects negatively on themselves it may indicate that you yourself also act in a similar negative way. (Villota & Yoo, 2018)

Harriet et al., (2015) - positive information posted on Facebook (whether self- or other-generated) resulted in higher task attractiveness than both neutral and negative information. (task attractiveness - a measure how how easy or worthwhile working with the individual would be).

There is also the suggestion that swearing may be particularly salient in terms of professionalism perception (Westrop et al, 2018). Whilst this effect is yet to be examined in third-party other contributors to a profile, based on the above information, the use of swear words may be encouraged to be removed from a profile regardless of whether they are produced by the profile owner or their friends.

Massively impressed with the number of additional citations you've used here - very

well done :) - although I couldn't find the Harriet et al one? This is great for your first discussion summary. You also made some relevant points and summarised some relevant studies to support what you were discussing. There are places where in an essay, you could go further to delve into relevant critical points and/or by linking ideas or other citations together. You could also have added the information found by Walther et al (2009) that shows perceptions depend on the judgements being made and on the gender of both the profile owner and the person making the judgements. This is an important caveat and shows analytical thinking in that you can show that it's not as straightforward as some of the other studies might suggest.

Group 5

Sam and Emma are having a debate about how people express themselves online. Sam argues that people often lie about aspects of the self while Emma argues that on the whole people's online content generally reflects who they are offline. Who do you agree with and why? Do you think that different online situations and contexts might affect who you agree with? You should refer to the literature we've already discussed in the seminar and in your reading to support your points.

- Impression management
  - Walther's Hyperpersonal Model of Computer-Mediated Communication
- Actual self: version of yourself that you mould (Sam)
  - Padlet
  - Bargh et al study
  - Yee & Bailenson (2007)
    - Tested whether avatar characteristics has an effect on users' behaviours → against True self, version is dependent on characteristics of the avatar
- True self: version of yourself that is true including parts you may hold back on (Emma)
  - Bargh et al - Suggests the online would could be a great place to portray the true self rather than the actual self that we might do in face to face. This might be due to anonymity and other factors discussed in walthers hypothesis.
  - Eichstaedt et al - Mental health difficulties represent an aspect of the true self. This study examined people who were diagnosed with depression facebook statuses and found that the language they used on this medium reflected their true self.
- Critical analysis: Lots of the studies were conducted quite far in the past meaning they might not represent how people represent themselves on the internet nowadays because the mediums have changed significantly. A lot of the studies have utilised anonymous chat rooms to examine how we represent ourselves, however the most common mediums nowadays are social media platforms where people are more likely to display a version of themselves they have moulded (actual self) 9Fullwood et al 2016).
- Could also argue that individuals who seek out and use the more anonymous parts of the internet are looking for somewhere to express their true self, perhaps due to individual characteristics.
  - Schouten et al 2007 - In the internet attribution perceptual model, they hypothesized that if you're high in particular personality traits then you're more likely to value certain characteristics about the internet. If you value these characteristics you're more likely to feel disinhibited online and ∴ self disclose and show your true self.
- People do portray the true self when its online but it might be different for people depending on the individual characteristics such as age, social anxiety
  - Age → Adolescents = Fullwood et al (2016)

- - - ■ Experimenting with version of self - mechanism to test responses to these different versions
    - ○ Social anxiety → True self = McKenna et al 2002
      - ■ People who score high on SA more likely to show true self
    - ○ Loneliness → True self = McKenna et al 2002
      - ■ People who score high on L are more likely to show true self
- ● Sam and Emma have not touched on the effect of how we perceive others on their presentation of self
  - ○ Walther et al (2008)
    - ■ Your judgements can affect how you act
    - ■ The attractiveness of Facebook friends and comments made by those friends were found to be related to ratings of the profile owner's attractiveness, which may influence how we present our own profiles to others.
    - ■ How others present you impact/determine how you are perceived
- ● Conclusion: We agree with neither as different mediums lead to different presentation of the self e.g. Insta vs Finsta.
  - ○ Impression management is likely a better explanation.
  - ○ You are more likely to present your true self in a medium that is more personal and is shared amongst close friends e.g. a finsta

A good discussion summary. It seems you talked about some relevant points here and it's good to see you considering the impact of others' content towards the end of the summary. Try to make your points clear and add a very brief summary of how the literature supports these points. The beginning of the Discussion summary wasn't that useful for me to see if you understood what you had been discussing and how the citations would support what you were talking about. Nevertheless, the rest of the summary shows a firm understanding of the issues you discussed.