



Digital Mothering: Sharenting and affective practices online

Dr. Lisa Lazard, Open University

Madonna says giving her children mobile phones 'ended their relationship'

The singer says her children's lives became dominated by the technology





Why Mothers?



- Mothers post about their children, particularly family photos, with greater frequency than fathers on their SNSs (Ammari, Kumar, Lampe and Schoenebeck, 2015).
- Studies show that women reportedly engaging more frequently with both SNS (Duggen and Brenner, 2012) and photo sharing practices (e.g. Dhir et al., 2016) than men.

Family Photography

- Similarities between on and off line family photography
- Pregnancy and post child-birth are often periods of intense family photography, particularly so with first time parents (Kumar and Schoenebeck, 2015).
- Family photography as banal and repetitive (Rose, 2010)



Opinion

I'm giving up the 'sharenting' – for the sake of my children

Charlotte Philby

It started off modestly, but soon I was posting dozens of photos of my kids on social media. Now I'm quitting to reclaim real life, and their privacy

Charlotte Philby is the former editor of the website Motherland



The dangers of 'sharenting': From posting pictures of your baby online to uploading snaps of your family with location settings on ... are YOU putting your kids at risk by oversharing on social media?

By Sarah Carty for Daily Mail Australia
23:59, 20 Apr 2015, updated 04:53, 21 Apr 2015



The Telegraph

I don't put pictures of my children on Facebook - and you shouldn't either



By the time the average child is five, its parents have posted 1,500 images of him or her on social media



Sharenting

“the habitual use of social media to share news, images, etc of one’s children”

(Collins Online Dictionary, 2016)

Digital Narcissism?

The humblebrag:

“An ostensibly modest or self-deprecating statement whose actual purpose is to draw attention to something of which one is proud”.

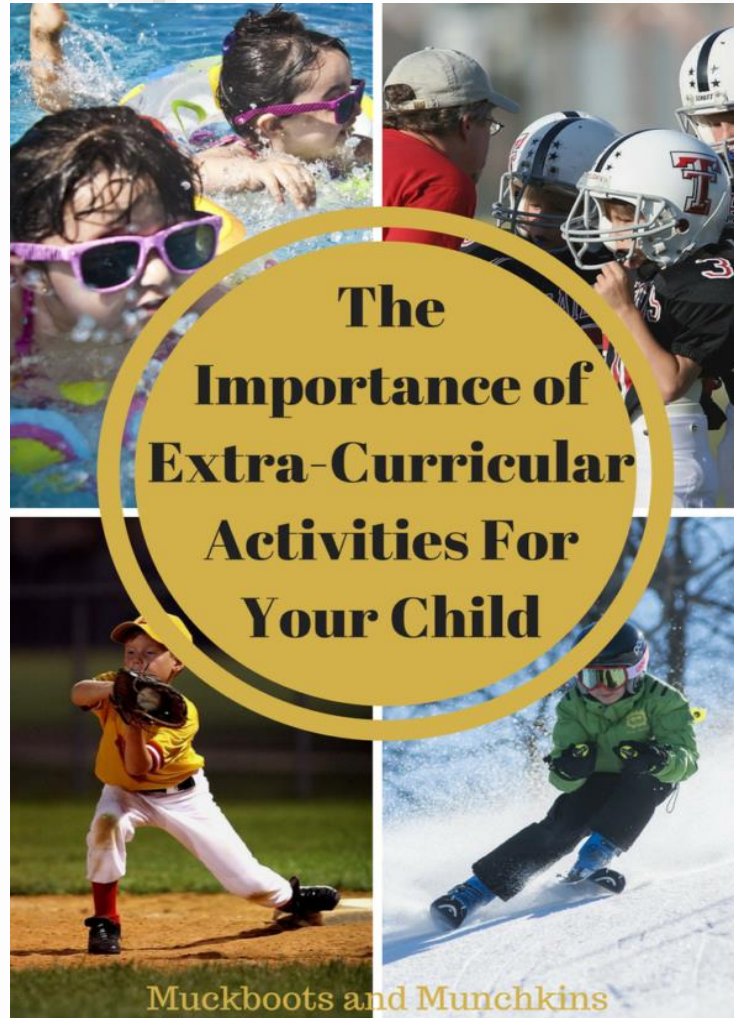
Example:

‘social media status updates are basically selfies, humblebrags, and rants’

(OED, ND)



Intensive Parenting/Mothering



- Parental humblebragging and neoliberalism
- Individual responsibility for maternal subjects
- Responsibilisation and intensive mothering imperatives

The Study

- 15 mothers in pilot, recently extended to 30.
- how mothers make sense of their own parent-related posting
- both text-based and photographic - to generic SNSs

All Together Now

T: it's a nice together one

S: Yeah, I like it because it does symbolise that that day was really good fun and I suppose we look like we're enjoying ourselves.....The fact that we're all together in one area. I like the fact that there's no division; it's the kids enjoying themselves, it's a happy memory. It was a good day and I like it because it sort of symbolises togetherness

S: This is a definite message to say 'this is my family'

All Together Now

- S: I wish I had make-up on. No, not really because you can see the kids' personalities....Really, I like the photo how it is.

All Together Now

- *E: “It’s morning time, mum, look, get up, it’s daytime. I want a cup of tea,” something along them lines. And I said, “Oh, just give me five minutes. Let me come round”. I can’t jump straight out of bed. I’m not a morning person at all, so I said, “Come and get in bed with me,” and she come and got in bed with me and gave me a big cuddle. And I just thought that’s the perfect photo opportunity of me and Grace....I just love it. We’re so... we’re just close... I haven’t got no makeup on. It’s got no filters on it. My hair’s up on top of my head. I’d just opened my eyes. Yeah, I look beautiful.*
- *I: So, you know, would you change it?*
- *E: No.*
- *I: No, even though, you know, you weren’t happy with those things, you wouldn’t change that at all?*
- *E: No, because it’s a perfect photo, me and Grace.*

All Together Now

- E: I'd like to think we were very close, me and Grace, definitely, because Grace will always say things like, "Take a picture, mum," or, "Can we have a selfie". Yeah, she does. She does... Yeah, I would like to say we were close. We've got a good relationship.

Happy Families?

s: Everything about parenting. [Laughs] That I'm not tidying up, I'm not cooking, I'm not cleaning, I'm not enforcing.

B: "I am not showing off, I am just trying to have a connection.

Pride & Achievement

S: This is a nice happy family photo so, here, have a look at it because you're proud of it as well

T:... I was very proud really because he passed first time

Pride & Achievement

E: because I felt proud of her and I've created this beautiful little creature and she just made me so proud. She's just blossomed into a gorgeous, intelligent little girl who, yeah, and that feeling at that moment, I had to share it. I was so proud of her. I mean I don't share everything, I just share things that I tend to be proud of.

I: So what is it exactly you like about that post? What is it you like about that photo?

E: Well look at her. She's four years old and she's got her face full of makeup. She just looks so much grown up than what she is, and she just made me so proud that it was her first dancing competition and she was excited and she just looks like a little doll. She just looks beautiful. And I was so proud. She makes me so proud....I think I was just overwhelmed that day. I was just so proud of what she's becoming and where she's going and things. I was just proud of her that day. She made me so proud.

Pride & Achievement

E: Oh, yeah, she was being a right madam. I was trying to get her hair. She was screaming and she was kicking off. Oh, yeah, we had all the drama and tantrums before that photo was taken.

I: Oh, right.

E: That's why the leotard's a bit wet because of the tears

Pride & Achievement

C: She [Charlotte's daughter Lauren] was quite chunky and chubby at 12 years old and she'd just done PE at school and she had a school photograph. Her face was bright red, really enormous, fat faced looking, face was bright red, she actually – my husband Ian put it on social media. She hit the roof!

I: Oh dear.

C: Beautiful photograph, in his eyes it was a beautiful photograph. Now this is a question -

I: Not in hers though obviously.

C: Not in hers, because all her friends were going to see that in her eyes, she looked fat, bright red faced, disgusting and she wasn't. But, this is an argument that they had. She reported him to Facebook.

I: Oh did she?

C: Reported him to Facebook, demanded that Facebook take it off. She demanded that Facebook take it off, so they contacted Ian and said, "What do you feel about this photograph?" He just stated, "I think it's a beautiful photograph of my daughter and I'm very proud of it" and they reported back to Lauren stating that, "Your father thinks it's a wonderful photograph and it isn't offensive; we're keeping it on" and they kept it on.

Discussion

- Affective practices online
- Managing relational concerns
- 'Happy family' ideals, pride and individualism