PUTTING IDENTITY TO THE TEST: ABOUT ANONYMITY AND PSEUDO-ANONYMITY ON THE WEB-FORUM

SUMMARY

The author deals in this paper with the theme of self-designation – in selection of a user name – in forum exchange, basing her research on monitoring several domestic web-forums intended for members of sexual and gender minorities, from the aspect of the theme of identity games and ostensible Internet anonymity. Despite well-founded criticism of identity games to which she devotes certain attention, as well as to the thought itself of the identity game, the author indicates the worth of one of the variants of identity experimentation in a particular Internet environment, the one dedicated to sexual minorities. This is an instance of putting identity to the test and/or its individual aspects that are hidden or modified in the so-called real world. She also introduces the notion of symbolic coming out on the net as well as considering various levels of anonymity in forum exchange.

Key words: web-forum, anonymity, pseudo-anonymity, self-designation, nickname, games with identities, trying out identity, coming out

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