



23E80101 Qualitative Business Research Methods

Naturally occurring data and digital spaces

Ilona Mikkonen, DSc.

1

Today's agenda

- Naturally occurring data
- What is netnography?
- How to collect data? A few tips



2



3

Naturally occurring data

“Put simply, naturally occurring data are **those data that would have occurred regardless of the role of the researcher**. In other words, these are data that would have occurred even if the researcher had not been born, or if the researcher was not able to go along and record it (Potter, 1996).” (Lester et al 2017)

<https://methods.sagepub.com/video/what-is-naturally-occurring-data>

4

What kind of data is naturally occurring?

- (Non-participant observation)
- Advertisements and other marketing materials
- Newspaper and magazine articles
- Blogs
- Discussion forums
- Video materials (television, streaming services, Youtube, TikTok etc.)
- Social media (Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Reddit etc. etc.)

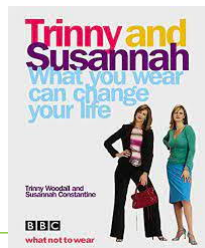
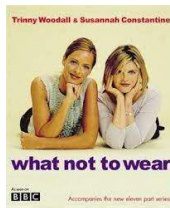
5



6

Table 1. Data set.

Title	Date of publication	Number of pages	Publisher
<i>WNTW – The Rules</i>	1 June 2004 (Paperback)	176	Weidenfeld & Nicolson
<i>Ready 2 Dress – How to Have Style Without Following Fashion</i>	February 2002	224	Orion
<i>What Your Clothes Say about You – How to Look Different, Act Different and Feel Different</i>	8 June 2006	280	Weidenfeld & Nicolson
<i>The Body Shape Bible</i>	18 September 2007	288	Weidenfeld & Nicolson



7

Benefits of naturally occurring data?

- (Can be) easier and quicker to collect
- Diminishes researcher bias

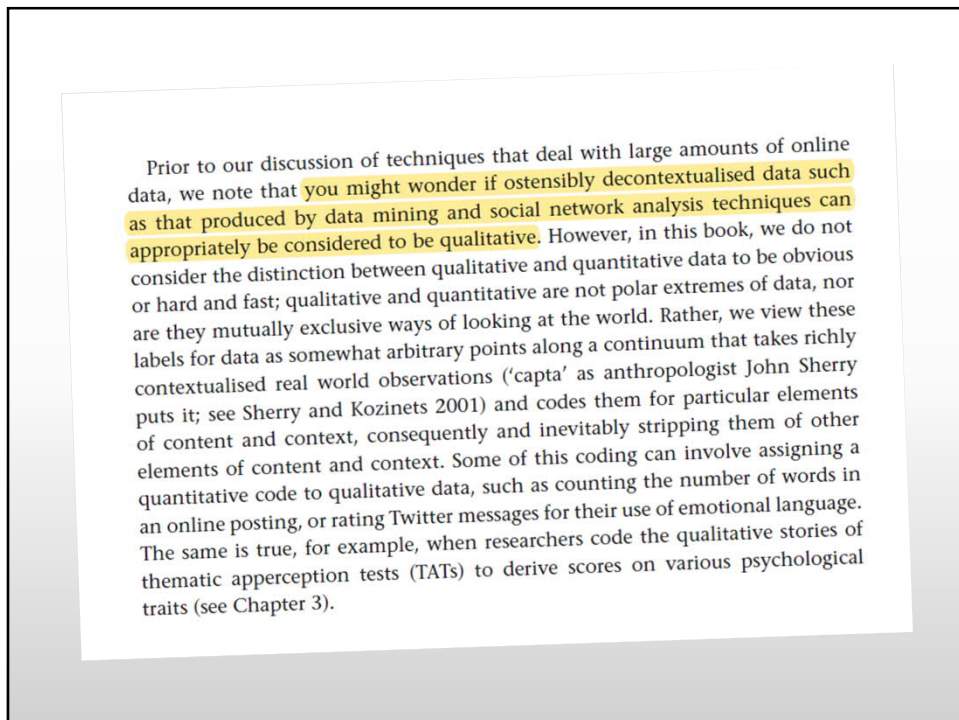
8

Not all naturally occurring data is digital
 —
but nearly all digital data is
naturally occurring

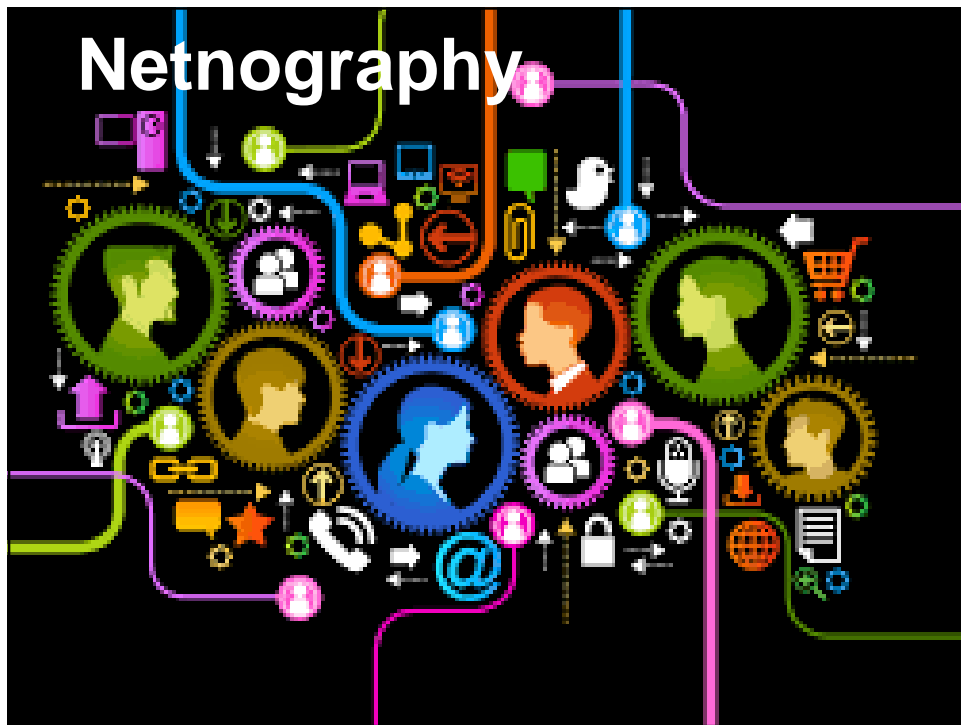
The internet is a social space. Like an ocean teeming with life, the online environment offers researchers an incredibly varied and vibrant pool of rich 'data' consisting of conversations, messages, photographs, music clips, drawings, avatars, comments, discussions, and much more. The internet is composed of billions of interconnected files of various sorts authored by hundreds of millions of people worldwide. It has forever altered how we communicate, entertain ourselves, find partners, get directions, gain a sense of community, and answer questions about a massive variety of different topics. Many of these questions, it turns out, are marketing and consumption related. For example, many consumers use the internet to make purchases, to bid in auctions, to view advertising, to gamble, to download coupons, to watch and share content, and to download illegally – licensed material, to write reviews, to offer recommendations, and much more. The variety and intensity of consumer and marketing experiences possible and present through online media increase every year.



11



12



13

Netnography is an adaptation of the qualitative methods utilized in consumer research (e.g., Belk, Sherry and Wallendorf 1988), cultural anthropology (e.g., Geertz 1973, Altheide and Johnson 1994, Marcus 1994), and cultural studies (e.g., Jenkins 1995), with the express aim of enabling a contextually-situated study of the consumer behavior of virtual communities and cyberculture. These methods require an immersive combination of cultural participation and observation, resulting in the researcher becoming "for a time and in an unpredictable way, an active part of the faceface relationships in that community" (Van Maanen 1988, p.9). Thus netnography, like ethnography in cultural anthropology and cultural studies, strongly emphasizes full participation in the culture being studied, as a recognized cultural member. This participation constitutes an important element of the field work.

Kozinets, Robert V. "On netnography: Initial reflections on consumer research investigations of cyberculture." *ACR North American Advances* (1998).

14

Journal of Marketing Research

- 1) *the cultural entrée (find in online spaces a forum or a group)*
- 2) *gathering and analyzing data*
- 3) *ensuring trustworthy interpretation (negative case analysis)*
- 4) *ethical research (disclose yourself)*
- 5) *inviting member feedback.*

15

You can (still) use (traditional) netnography if you find the right community and can find enough data; but netnography can also be a starting point and later combined with semi-structured interviews.



16



Consumption Markets & Culture
Vol. 14, No. 1, March 2011, 99–116

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

Buy Nothing Christmas
RISE ABOVE IT

A! Aalto University
School of Business

Cynical identity projects as consumer resistance – the Scrooge as a social critic?
Ilona Mäkkönen^{a*}, Johanna Moisander^b and A. Fust Fira^c

^aDepartment of Marketing, Aalto University School of Economics, Helsinki, Finland;
^bDepartment of Communication, Aalto University School of Economics, Helsinki, Finland;
^cDepartment of Marketing, University of Texas – Pan American, El Paso, TX, USA

The paper focuses on consumer cynicism in online environments, using the anti-Christmas sites of the Internet as an empirical case. Drawing on the discursive power model of consumer resistance, critical management studies on organizational cynicism, and Foucauldian ideas of political struggle as “politics of self,” it is argued that consumer cynicism, in online environments, may represent a form of resistance against markets and the marketing institution, which is brought about through the problematization and partial rejection of the normalized forms of consumer subjectivity that are offered in the marketplace. The paper illustrates how consumers employ a cynical rhetoric and discursive strategy, creatively drawing from the story of Ebenezer Scrooge, to problematize the received, highly commercialized ways of celebrating Christmas and to work on a cynical identity project, *the Scrooge*, which represents an alternative form of consumer subjectivity, disillusioned and critical toward the market and the marketing institution.

Keywords: consumer culture; consumer cynicism; consumer resistance; consumer

17

Materials and methods

The data for this paper were collected from several web-based discussion forums, opinion sites, and blogs that were dedicated to criticizing and opposing Christmas. In

104 I. Mäkkönen et al.

this specific study, computer-mediated environments constitute a particularly fitting research site for two reasons. First, in the global networks of the Internet, consumers are able to congregate with like-minded people to “express unexplored aspects of the self” (Turkle 1999). Second, as essentially discursive spaces, computer-mediated environments are particularly well suited for research that focuses on discursive strategies of consumer resistance (Kozinets 1998, 1999), such as the rhetoric of cynical identity construction that we study here. In a virtual space with few physical constituents, textual forms of verbal representation tend to be the most important means of communication through which consumers render their identities intelligible and tangible not only for others but also for themselves.

18

Julie walks down a busy Chicago street wearing her iPod, playing a random shuffle of her music collection which contains about 4,500 songs. She enters a Starbucks, orders a latte, and sits down. The Starbucks plays digital radio over the sound system—a mix of adult modern rock (called The Starbucks Café) featuring John Mayer, Ray Charles, Norah Jones, and the like. In the corner, a flat screen television (sound turned off) projects CNN Headline News with a constant loop of images of violence in the Middle East, election coverage, highlights from yesterday's college football games, and images of celebrities in turmoil (this week, it is Lindsay Lohan). Continuing to listen to her iPod, Julie pulls her notebook computer out of her bag and immediately connects into the Wi-Fi network. She checks her email (mostly work messages), updates her Facebook page, and scans the website of the *Chicago Tribune*. Her cell phone rings (with a ringtone of her favorite song, "Superstition," by Stevie Wonder) and, when she answers, she hears the voice of her friend, Jack, from Denver.

From a cultural perspective, where is Julie? What is/are her culture/s? Is it the Starbucks? Is it the virtual community of the Internet? Is it the televisual and auditory popular culture of music, television, etc.? Is it the organizational culture of her job? Is it the relational culture developed with her friend Jack? In general, ethnographers have tended to isolate these cultures studying the virtual community as separate from the coffeehouse culture and examining the popular culture of commercial media as separate from her organizational culture. Yet, considering this increasingly representative example, it is apparent that these diverse, fragmented cultural practices and processes are seamlessly integrated into Julie's everyday life—Julie simultaneously experiences these divergent "cultures" as banal, routinized, and ritualistic. For Julie, these are not distinct cultures; rather, these fragments and pieces of everyday life represent a kind of postmodern culture. Further, millions of people experience a similar integration of communication technology and physical environments as they commute to work in their automobiles, relax at home after a stressful day, or enter the hyper-mediated environments of public spaces like airports, franchise restaurants, and shopping malls.

The Postmodern Ethnographic Flaneur and the Study of Hyper-Mediated Everyday Life
Charles Seoung*

19

ROBERT V. KOZINETZ*

The author develops "netnography" as an online marketing research technique for providing consumer insight. Netnography is ethnography adapted to the study of online communities. As a method, netnography is basic, simple, and less expensive than traditional ethnography and more representative and constructive than focus groups or interviews. It provides information on the symbolism, meanings, and consumption patterns of online consumer groups. The author provides guidelines for conducting netnography, respect the inherent flexibility and openness of ethnography, and provide tips on practicality in the conduct of netnography research. As an illustrative example, the author provides a netnography of an online coffee hangout and discusses its implications for marketing applications.

The Field Behind the Screen: Using Netnography for Marketing Research in Online Communities

Consumers making product and brand choices are increasingly turning to computer-mediated communication for information on which to base their decisions. "Brand presence" is becoming an integral part of the consumer's world. Using language, chat rooms, email lists, surveys, personal Web sites, Web pages, and other online formats to share ideas, ideas, comments, and contact follow consumers who are on an increasingly digital information network. Although this is primarily called "virtual communities" (Kozminski, 1995), the term "virtual" might misleadingly imply that these communities are less "real" than physical communities are. (1995) Yet as Kozminski (1995, p. 100) points out, these virtual groups have a "real" presence in their participants' lives and their behavior. Netnography is a method to study these virtual communities, including consumer behavior. (See also Kozminski, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022)

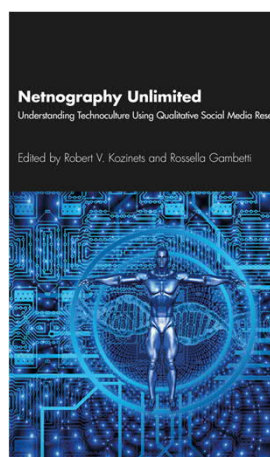
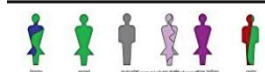
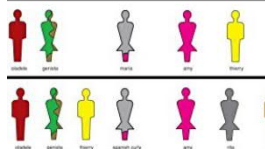
and O'Guinn (2001). To maximize the useful distinction computer-mediated social gathering, I use the term "virtual communities" to refer to these Internet-based forums. Most people, sports, music, automobiles, but it is not consumer electronics, computers and peripherals, I now enjoy, their coffee and their other products and so on. As discussed in online communities where impact is being increasingly recognized by companies and researchers (e.g., Armstrong and Hagel 1996; Davis 1999; Kozminski 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022). Such as Cyberspace, eWorld, NetCafe, and Geot and various services such as eGroups, eGroups, eGroups, and eGroups.com have been found to have advantages of opportunities posed by computer-mediated communication.

The main behind this marketing interest is that first, marketing managers are becoming increasingly aware of consumers who are active in online communities. Although not Kozminski (1995, p. 100) but the major focus of netnography is to study online communities in which consumers often gather to discuss their goals, interests, and attitudes. For example, their product and brand choices. It is important for marketing research to identify and understand these, thereby, identify, identify, identify, and identify marketing influences of particular consumers and consumer groups. As the authors of netnography, we are

Netnography

Doing Ethnographic Research Online

Robert V. Kozminski



20

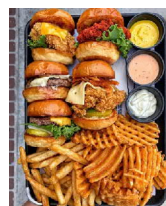


Networks of Desire: How Technology Increases Our Passion to Consume

ROBERT KOZINETZ
ANTHONY PATTENSON
RACHEL ASHMAN

How is consumer desire transformed by contemporary technology? What roles do social media and digital networks play in the creation of desire? In this chapter, we explore how technology, especially the internet, has transformed the way we consume. We discuss how digital networks have created a new space for consumer desire, one that is often characterized by a sense of urgency and a desire for instant gratification. We also explore how technology has created a new space for consumer desire, one that is often characterized by a sense of urgency and a desire for instant gratification.

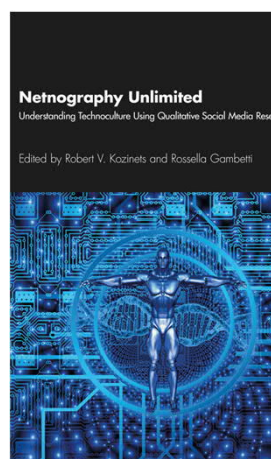
Keywords: capitalism, desire, food, technology, networks, technology



Technocultures:

“the various identities, practices, values, rituals, hierarchies, and other sources and structures of meaning that are influenced, created by, or expressed through technology consumption” (Kozinets 2019, 621)

In Kozinets (2015, 115–116), I suggested that the **axiology**, the guiding motivational heart and soul of netnography should be “to shake our fists at dystopian threats and speak the truth to power,” to consider the trade-offs and abuses of power in social media and technoculture, and to develop a research informed praxis designed to help change social conditions and create a better society.



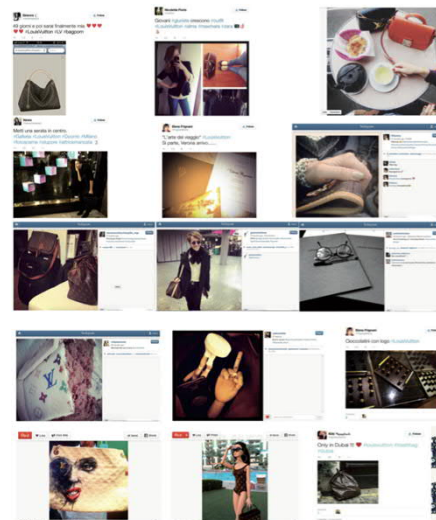
24

"....while social media publics may develop shared meanings, these need not result from communicative action among participants but **can instead emerge from their pseudo-sharing of private affects.**"

25

TABLE 4
BRAND COMMUNITY AND BRAND PUBLIC

	Brand community	Brand public
Social form	Structured set of relations sustained by interaction	Common discursive focus sustained by mediation
Mode of participation	Participation structured by interaction among members	Participation structured by private or collective affect
Form of identity	A common understanding of the brand promotes collective identity and a sense of belonging	An aggregation of diverse perspectives on the brand where heterogeneity remains unresolved
Form of value	The brand is a source of identity and linking value	The brand is a medium for publicity



Vast majority of the tweets were not communally oriented but rather public oriented → public performance of consumption rather than trying to form a community

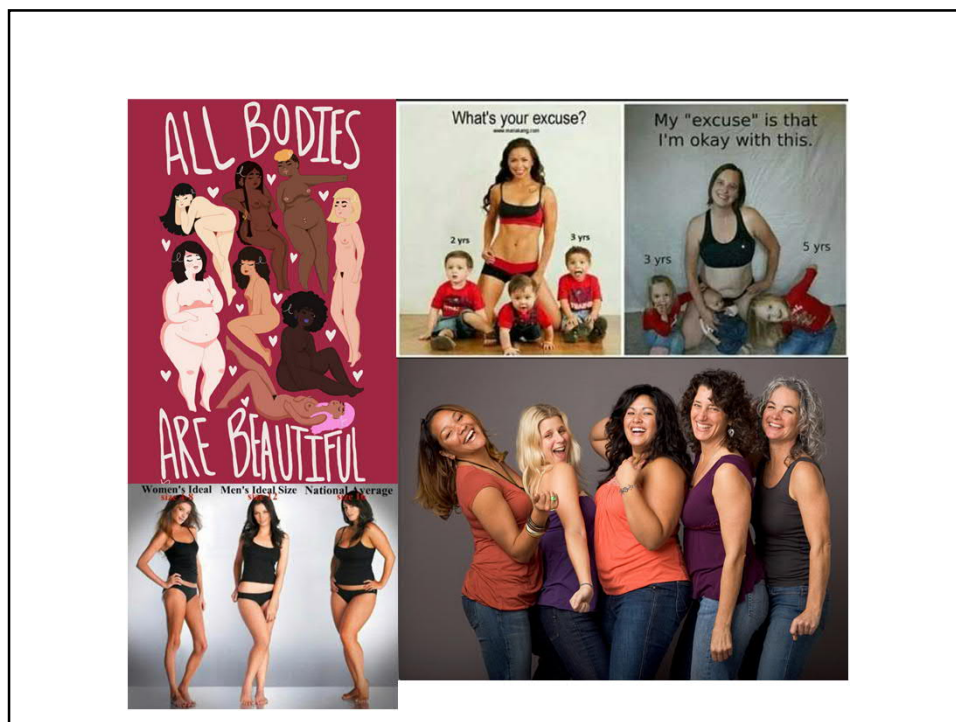
26



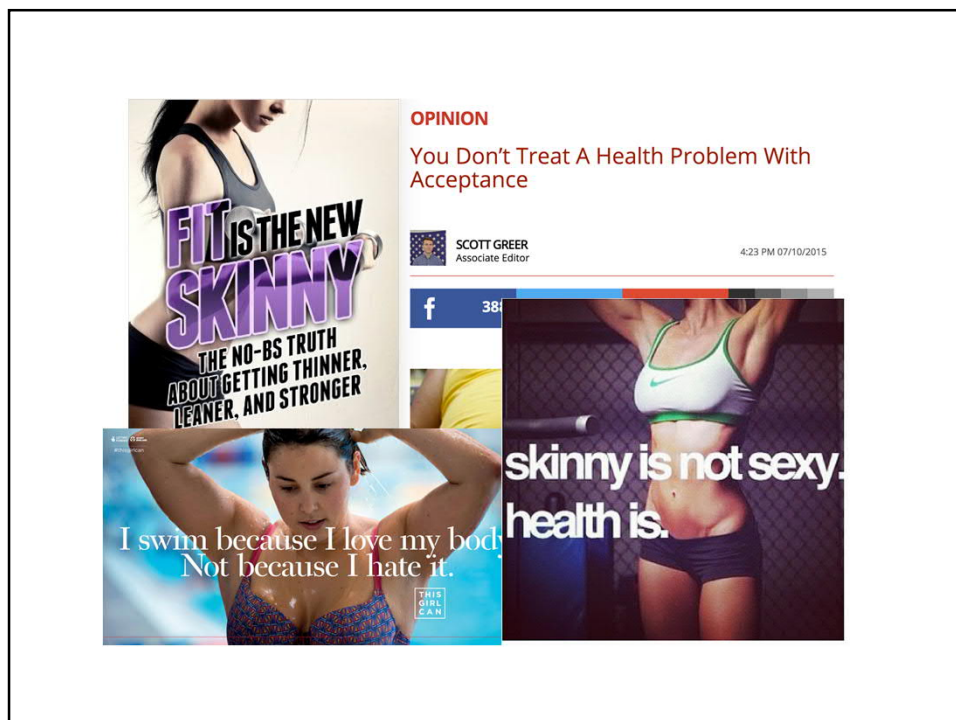
27



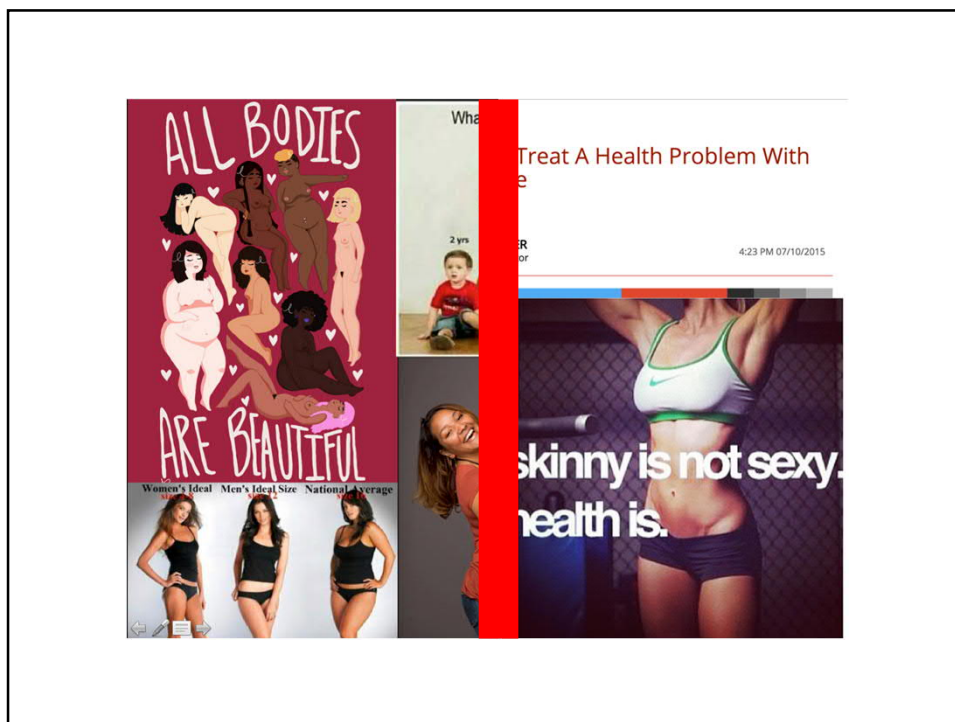
28



29



30



31



32



33



34



35



Flora_TortoiseShell
@FloraEdward

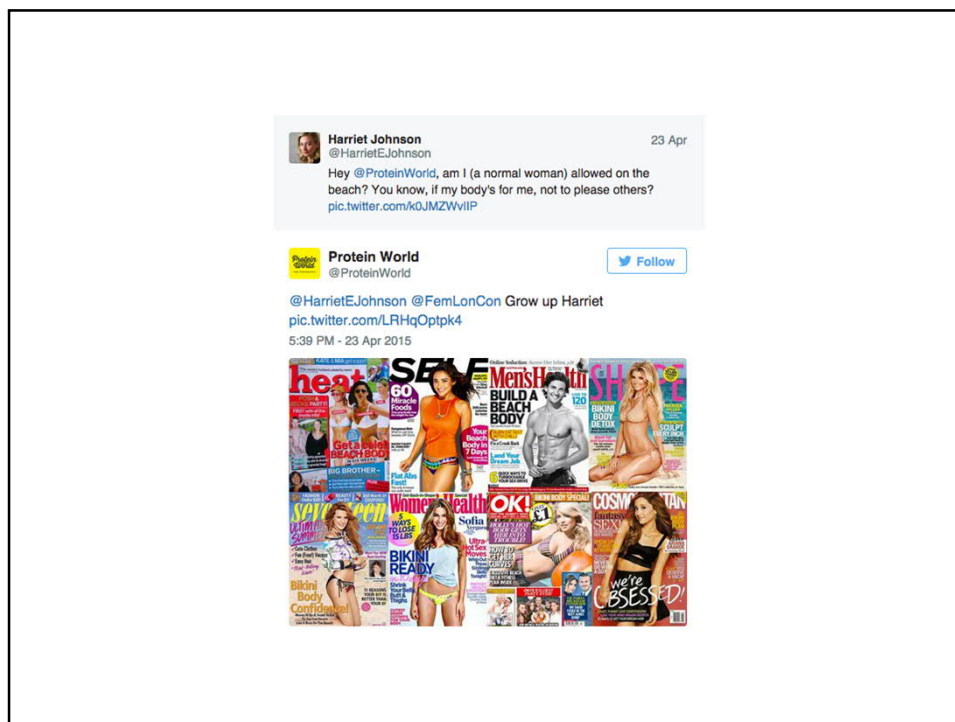


Follow

F you @ProteinWorld.
I was born #BeachBodyReady.
I have a body, and I will take it to the beach
#everydaysexism 🙄



36



37



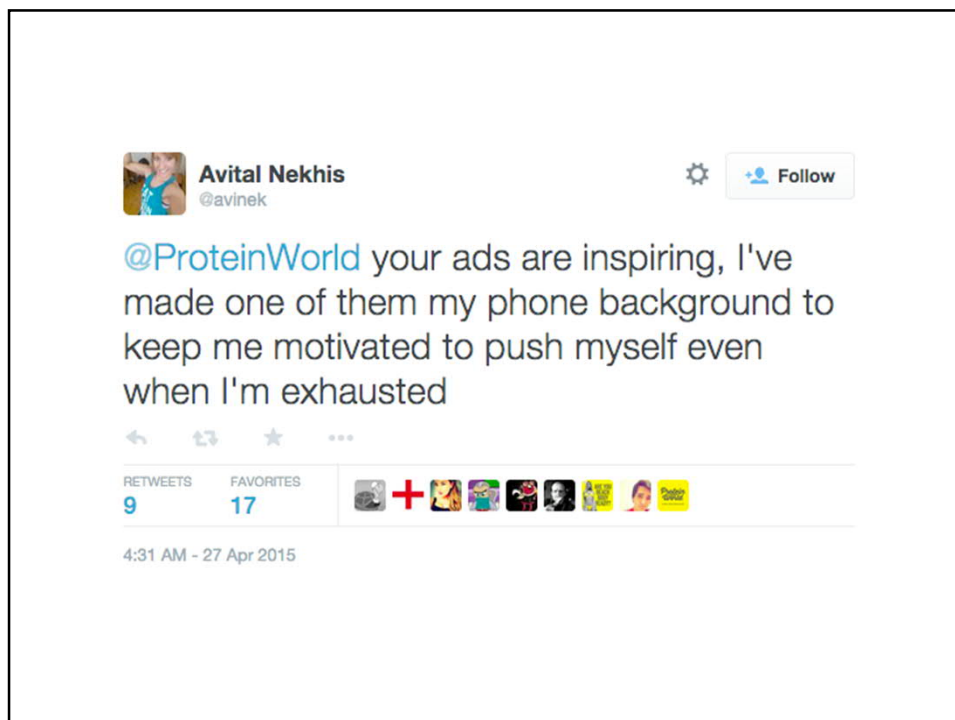
38



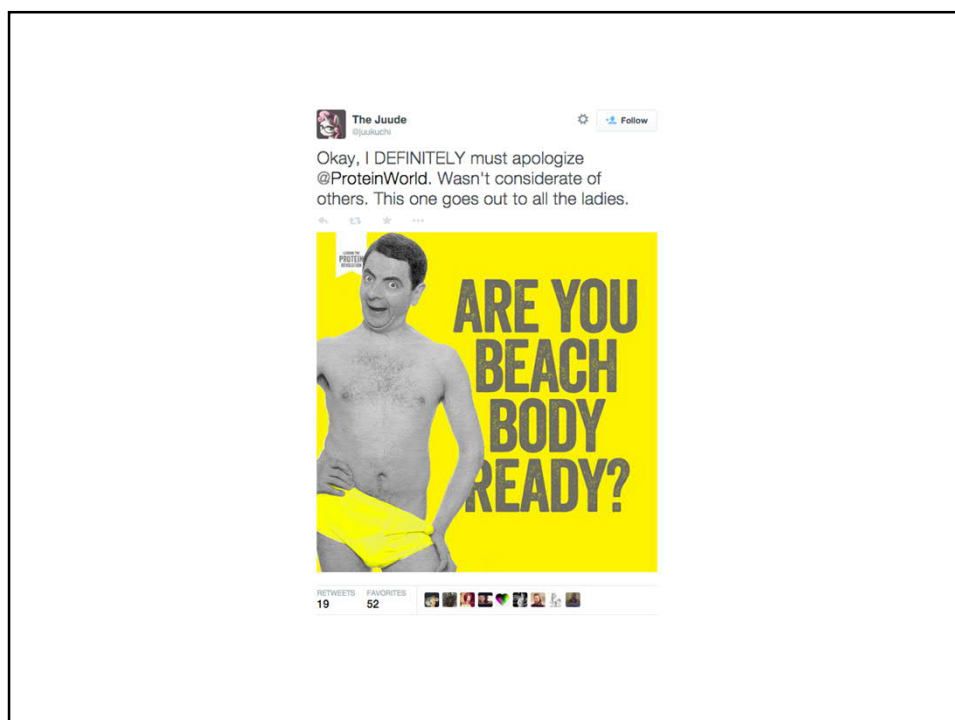
39



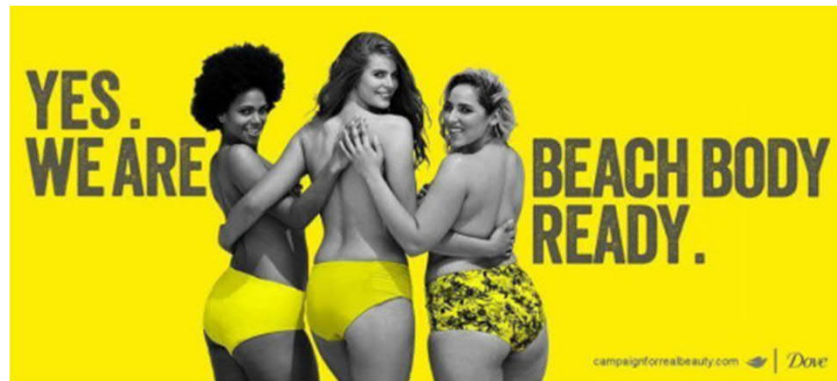
40



41

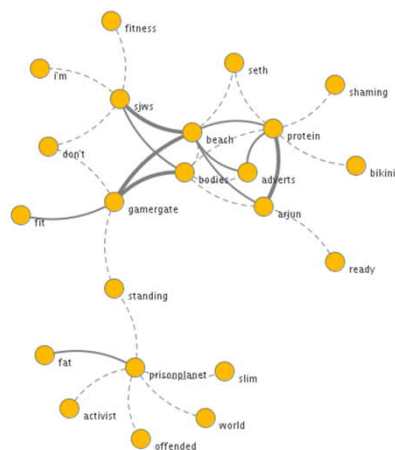


42



43

BuzzGraph: @ProteinWorld OR #proteinworld

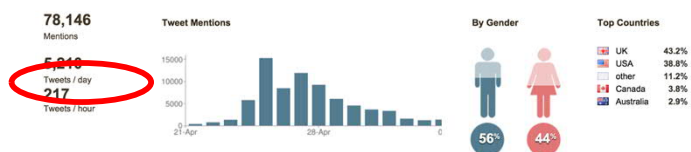


44

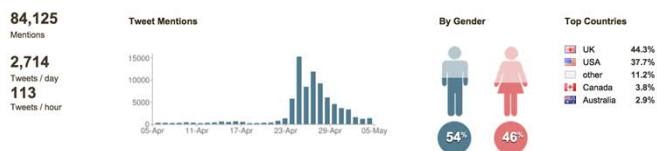
@proteinworld tweets 18/02 – 15/04/2015



@proteinworld tweets 20/04 – 05/05/2015



45



46

#hashtag co-occurrence with @proteinworld, total = 78.312 tweets

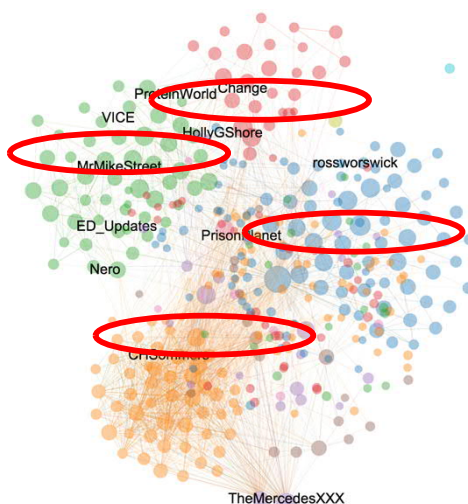
Anti ProteinWorld

Hashtag	Mentions	Percentage %
#eachbodysready	1252	1.6
#everybodysready	1081	1.38
#bodyshaming	288	0.37
#doublestandards	288	0.37
#slenderblend	234	0.3
#campaignforrealbeauty	216	0.28
#beerbodyready	207	0.26
#everybodyready	198	0.25
#spjethicsweek	198	0.25
#stopshaming	180	0.23
#notbuyingit	162	0.21
#doesthelpanyone	144	0.18
#mentalhealth	144	0.18
#blockedbyproteinworld	135	0.17
#bodypositive	117	0.15
#fatshaming	90	0.12
#everydaysexism	90	0.12
	5024	6%

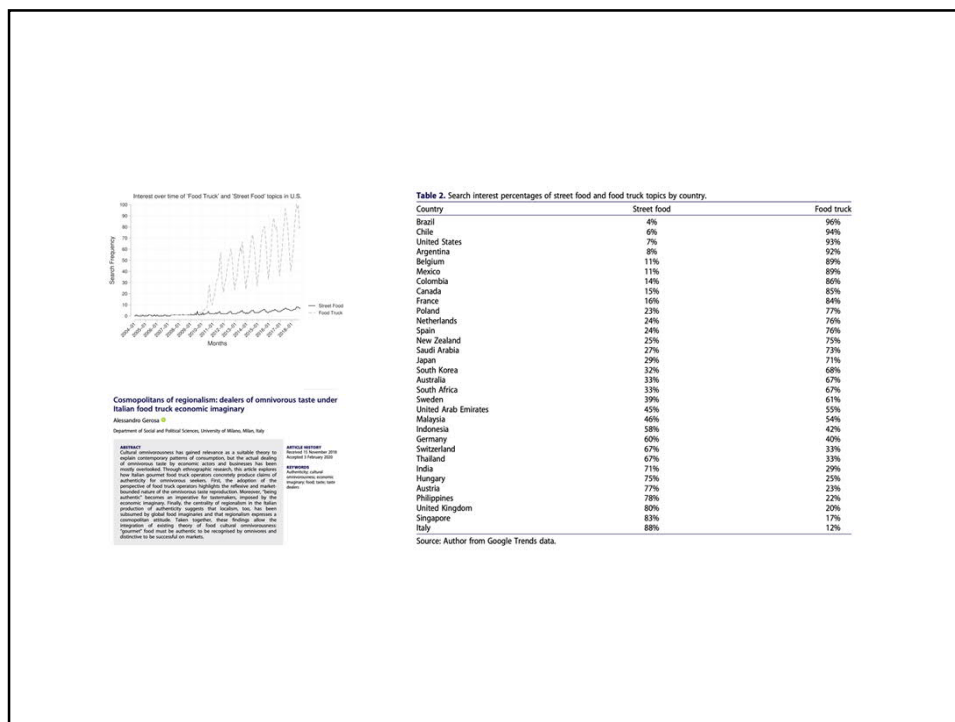
Pro ProteinWorld

Hashtag	Mentions	Percentage %
#gamergate	2685	3.44
#growupharriet	973	1.25
#winning	820	1.05
#fitshaming	405	0.52
#beachbody	396	0.51
#getagrip	387	0.5
#teamproteinworld	342	0.44
#sjw	189	0.24
#luckyou	189	0.24
#howtospotafeminist	180	0.23
#fitfam	144	0.18
#beachbodyalready	144	0.18
#family	81	0.1
#summerbody	81	0.1
#getyourfactsright	81	0.1
#feministsareugly	81	0.1
#sjwlogic	72	0.09
	7178	9%

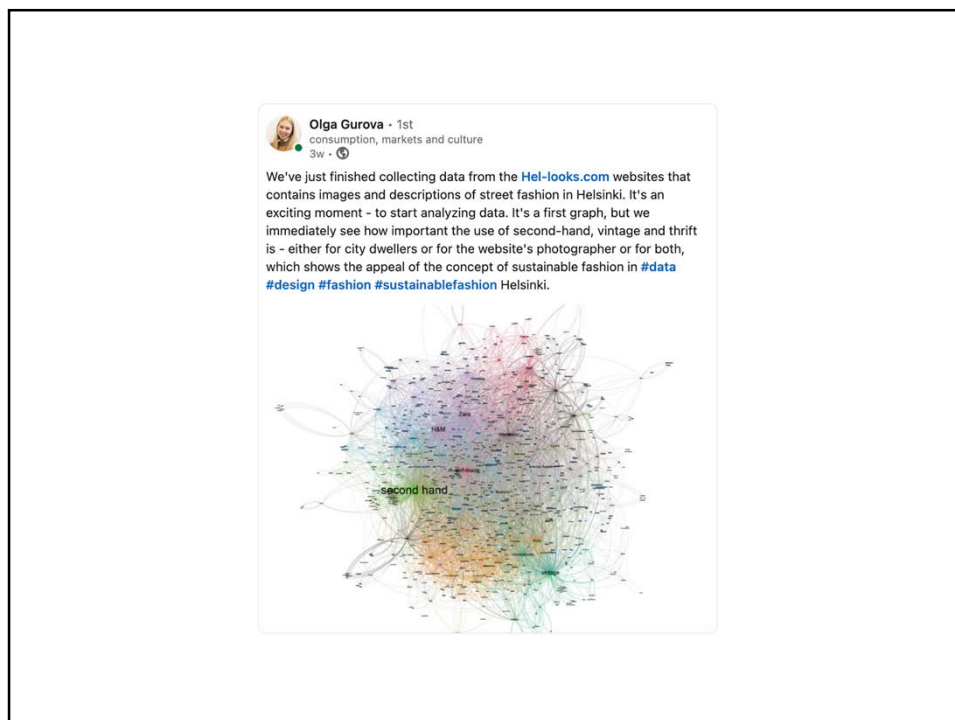
47



48



49



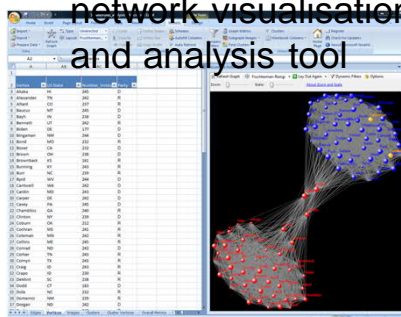
50

How to collect data – some few examples

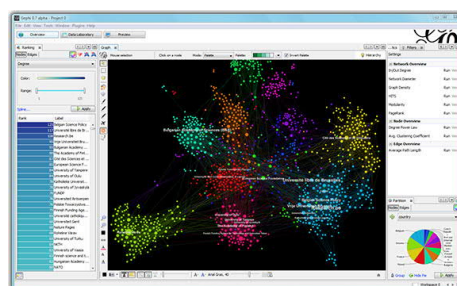
51

NETWORK MAPPING

– NodeXL - interactive network visualisation and analysis tool



• Gephi - visualization and exploration software



52



53

THESIS TIP:

Mastering new digital methods has a steep learning curve; however, free software, tutorials, and resources are available!

Consider this at least as a supplementary data set, as it can be quick and easy 😊



54