

Online social networks have become an integral aspect of social lives of an increasing number of people. As a multi-faceted and complex phenomenon, it can be studied through diverse approaches with varying emphasis and focus. This thesis sets out to analyse social interactions on social networks through the lens of dramaturgical sociology, a theoretical framework first outlined by Erving Goffman in his book *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life (1959)*. On the example of Facebook, this thesis employs Goffman's theory in order to investigate how people conduct themselves in the environment of social networks, how they form their identity, and control the impressions they invoke in their audience, how they perform basic social interactions, and whether Facebook features Goffman's two principal performative regions – the frontstage and the backstage.

First section of the thesis introduces Goffman's theory and frames the phenomenon of social networks within its social and technological context.

Second section provides a qualitative content analysis of 50 Facebook „profiles” and 733 contributions posted during the period of one month which identifies several basic forms through which users create and present their identities, as well as the appropriate secondary roles performed by users who interact with them. These findings are corroborated by 8 semi-structured interviews with respondents, which enable a more in-depth exploration of the way they use Facebook, the social interactions they participate in, their motivation for posting or sharing contributions, and how they engage in impression management and resolve issues caused by multiple audiences.