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Plenary Speaker – Mark Carrigan

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### What Does It Mean To Have An Academic Identity in an Age of Social Media?

While social media was once seen as a fringe pursuit within the academy, it has now become a standard feature of doctoral education. Advice on using social media professionally often sits alongside more familiar instruction on writing, research and publication. But what does it mean to use social media 'professionally'? In this talk, I argue that a narrow framing of social media has taken hold within higher education, dominated by notions of 'networking' and 'branding'. An aggressive notion of professionalism has emerged at precisely the point where the professional autonomy of academics is under attack. This is in turn driving suspicion of social media by those who (rightly) see it as a tool of managerialism.

My proposal is that we need to recast social media, rejecting the notion of its 'professional use' and instead seeing it in terms of individual and collective *academic identity*. Only then can we resist its deployment in bureaucratic regulation and reclaim the *collegial potential* inherent within it.

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