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Social Media as Everyday Practice:
Reflections on Multiplicitous~Becoming~Activist

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Highlighting my own daily social media practices as an example, I will unpack the various tensions and possibilities associated with being a scholar and social media activist as everyday practice. In what I refer to as multiplicitous~ becoming~activist, I harness ideas from Luis Urrieta, Jr. to challenge notions of social justice and activism identities as static, but rather as active processes that can and should be enacted within distributed social media spaces.

Keywords: Social Media | Activism | Professional Identity

We live in an era of digital connectivity, and thus many of our everyday practices increasingly occur across distributed social media and technologically mediated landscapes. The academy, including faculty, staff, and college student affairs educators, increasingly view the utilization of digital tools and practices as important for enhancing student learning, building professional networks, and engaging with communities beyond the walls of geographically bounded campuses (Cabellon & Ahlquist, 2016; Daniels & Thistlethwaite, 2016; Veletsianos, 2016; Weller, 2011). Initial reticence to use digital technologies, particularly social media platforms, has largely subsided as educators work to experiment and understand how social media and other digital tools might be harnessed to advance educational objectives, including those centered on social justice and inclusion (Gerber, Abrams, Curwood, & Magnifico, 2016; Junco, 2014; Mohamed, Gerber, & Aboulkacem, 2016).

In this article, I highlight how academic scholars and college student educators might think of everyday activism (Urrieta, 2009) as necessarily encapsulated in our digital identities and practices across distributed digital spaces. To situate the argument, I feature literature theorizing the importance of building a digital identity (Ahlquist, 2016; Qualman, 2011), along with associated practices in which such processes might occur. This discussion will be coupled with the increasing focus on social justice and inclusion as core practice within the profession of college student education (ACPA & NASPA, 2015). Highlighting my own daily social media practices as an example, I will unpack the various tensions and possibilities associated with being a scholar and social media activist as everyday practice. In what I refer to as multiplicitous~becoming~activist, I harness ideas from Urrieta (2009) to challenge notions of social justice and activism identities as static, but rather as active processes that can and should be enacted within distributed social media spaces.

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Digital Identity

There is increasing scholarship focused on digital identity. Ahlquist (2016) defined digital identity as "the self-presentation method one displays online" (p. 29). Utilizing slightly different language, Erik Qualman (2011) described digital footprints as "the information we post about ourselves online" (Chapter 1, para. 2). Both Ahlquist and Qualman suggested that in an era of digital social media and technological ubiquity, educational leaders should be engaged in developing a digital presence that enhances our professional practice and ability to create sustaining, lasting change. Qualman explicitly argued that utilizing digital tools to enhance our everyday leadership practices should center on creating impactful change: "We need to collectively ask ourselves as individuals and leaders: are we leaving the world better off than we found it?" (Qualman, 2011, Chapter 1, para. 17).

There is some contentious debate amongst practitioners and scholars regarding the notion of digital identity, particularly in the context of educational environments that increasingly utilize neoliberal language of marketization and branding (Giroux, 2014) in relation to humans. For example, Jaron Lanier (2011) criticized the role of social media platforms in creating and curating fictitious selves, resulting in a lack of authenticity or sincerity. He referred to these processes as "missionary reductionism" (Lanier, 2011, p. 48), and his concerns paralleled those by scholars such as Turkle (2011). We see this language regarding neoliberal branding of self creeping in to our own discourse in higher education and student affairs. Ahlquist (2016), citing Barr, McClellan, and Sandeen (2014), noted that part of developing a digital identity is about "professional digital branding reputation" (p. 32).

Thus, a question of authenticity arises when discussing digital identity and social media presence. How does one develop a digital identity that is genuine and authentic, rather than overly cautious, packaged, or controlled? What types of information does one share across various social media spaces? These questions of "authentic" digital identities, and even human identity itself, are also widely debated in the social science literature. For example, Sherry Turkle (1997, 2011) has researched the impacts of digital technologies on aspects of identity performance. Her work exhibited concerns about questions of human authenticity in digital spaces, and although she recognizes some possibilities of digital technologies, her work falls closer to technological dystopia, if one were utilizing a continuum. Turkle's work might be contrasted with that of danah boyd (2015), who has focused specifically on adolescent and youth. boyd appears more technologically utopian in her assessment of human authenticity in digital space, perhaps because adolescence is still viewed as a time of identity formation. In other words, as adolescents grow, change, and shift, so too does their identity. In our collective imagination, authenticity is less an issue for adolescents than adults.

These questions become particularly significant when discussing issues of relevant concern to the advancement of social justice and inclusion. For example, when considering one's digital contributions in social media spaces, one must question the types of information to share. If one posts news stories, what perspectives and sources is one sharing? From what epistemological and ontological perspectives do these postings come from? Does one become involved in hashtag activism, showing solidarity with marginalized communities or those fighting for issues of justice and equity? What types of content does one curate, create, and disseminate, and in what forms? Visual images, blogs,

podcasting, the presentation of information in shared knowledge spaces, infographics, and videos all become part of one's digital identity.

Most scholars and educational researchers now argue that digital identity efforts must work toward some end of making an impact (Ahlquist, 2016; Daniels & Thistlethwaite, 2016; Qualman, 2011). Ahlquist's (2016) digital decision-making model proposed that one of the critical questions educators should ask is "how digital activity can be strategic, personal, and meaningful" (p. 37). This relates directly to issues of social justice and inclusion. Scholars and educators can use social media toward ends of generating a more socially just and inclusive environment, including challenging oppressive power structures that permeate these environments. As spaces where one can openly share many forms of information, create new knowledge, and reach broad audiences, the space of social media becomes one where daily acts can be viewed as a form of activism. To further unpack this idea, I turn to the work of Luis Urrieta, Jr. (2009), who described the role of everyday activism in the lives of Chicana and Chicano educators. I harness his theoretical framework to explore similar processes within the realm of digital spaces.

Everyday Activism

Urrieta (2009) explores the conflicted concept of activism within the multiplicitous identities of Chicana and Chicano activists attempting to work within educational systems seen as both colonizing and oppressive. Whereas he initially hypothesized that change, social justice, or inclusion might be impossible within what he refers to as whitestream and malestream schools, Urrieta's study harnessed several concepts – such as figured worlds, microworlds and notions of identity as verb (as *becoming*) – to unpack a more complex and nuanced examination of everyday practices of social justice, inclusion, and activism by an array of educators across a wide spectrum of educational environments.

One of the key concepts harnessed by Urrieta (2009) is that of figured worlds, which is drawn from the work of cultural and identity theorists Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, and Cain (1998). Figured worlds centers on those spaces and places in which people operate on a daily basis. The theoretical conceptualization of figured worlds perceives everyday space and place as possibilitarian. In our figured worlds we can envision and enact change, transformation, and in the process influence our own becoming outside the normative and oppressive structures that often influence our daily lives. Urrieta's contention is that activism occurs within figured worlds through daily subversive acts. Therefore, rather than privileging activism and activist identities as rooted in activities such as protesting or boycotting, one develops an activist identity and agency in an ongoing negotiation of daily practices that tend to occur "in specific micro-localities" (Urrieta, 2009, p. 25).

Social Media as Figured Worlds

While Urrieta used this framework to describe physical spaces, in the digital age micro-localities and figured worlds include digital spaces, such as social media platforms, websites, blogs, and podcasts. Envisioning digital spaces as important localities of daily practice is no longer far-fetched or unimportant. According to the Pew Research Center (2015), 65% of adults in the United States are active users of social media platforms. While

there is disparity in use based on age groups, 90% of 18-29 year olds and 77% of 30-49 year olds actively engage in social media use (Pew Research Center, 2015).

People's relationships and daily actions in figured worlds are part of an ongoing process of identity creation – viewing identity not as static, but rather as an active process of *becoming*. I have argued previously (Eaton, 2016a) that college students actively use distributed social media spaces as part of such ongoing processes of *becoming*. Urrieta's (2009) use of figured worlds is particularly important in discussing the processes of engaging what I call *becoming~mulitplicitous~activist*. Participants in Urrieta's study sought to challenge oppression in daily acts, opening classrooms and other educational spaces as more democratic spaces. These daily acts were seen as ongoing processes of both self-authorship, development of critical consciousness, and means of "challenging oppression" (Urrieta, 2009, p. 24).

We might envision such processes actively occurring in digital social media spaces as well. Seemingly small, daily acts can actually challenge oppression and fill social media spaces with potential for disrupting dominant narratives and opening democratic dialogues. These acts can occur in a variety of ways, particularly since the affordances (Morrison, 2014) of social media spaces structure the types of content that can be presented. As described by Morrison, affordances are technological structures that release and constrain particular actions within various social media platforms. For example, Twitter's 140-character limit forces users to express themselves in particular ways, often shortening words, creating new language, or using coded language. Instagram's largely visual nature means people utilize the space for expressive activity through photographs, art, or the creation of memes and pic-stitches. Spaces like Facebook allow users to share information, news links, and write lengthier posts. Blogs – be they written or video – afford space for lengthier discussions, commentary, and the sharing of thoughts or dialogue. Across the social media landscape these affordances are constantly shifting. Platforms take up the affordances of other platforms, not only to stay competitive in terms of user engagement, but also to open spaces for people to imagine different figured worlds.

Thus, when thinking of social media spaces as figured worlds and micro-localities, we must also account for how people might actively engage with multiple platforms, or what I often refer to as distributed social media ecologies (Eaton, 2016a). The micro-figured worlds of individual platforms are important, but so are the actions across a more complex digital ecological and social media landscape. Actions within various spaces will differ, depending on a variety of factors – from who participates in the network to how the network was designed for specific forms of utilization (Eaton, 2016b).

Professional Practice and Personal Commitment

Increasing Importance of Social Justice and Inclusion

The importance of challenging oppressive structures, unpacking one's own privilege, and actively working to create more equitable and inclusive environments is increasingly seen as part of ethical and responsible professional practice. For example, ACPA – College Student Educators International and NASPA – Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education (2015) include social justice and inclusion as one of ten important professional competencies for college student educators. Social justice "is defined as both a process and

a goal that includes the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to create learning environments that foster equitable participation of all groups and seeks to address issues of oppression, privilege, and power" (ACPA & NASPA, 2015, p. 30). Central to the robust understanding of social justice and inclusion advocated for professional practice is a sense of personal agency; the necessity to understand and explore one's own role in systems of privilege and oppression; and the importance of "raising social consciousness" (ACPA & NASPA, 2015, p. 30).

Technological Literacy

Additionally, effective utilization of technological tools has become important for college student educators. Technological literacy "focuses on the use of digital tools, resources, and technologies for the advancement of student learning, development, and success, as well as the improved performance of student affairs professionals" (ACPA & NASPA, 2015, p. 33). Ahlquist's (2016) discussion of digital identity also focused on which digital tools professionals utilize to advance relationship building, personal learning networks, digital citizenship, and personal commitments. Within her examination of how professionals utilize technological tools, Ahlquist recognized that demonstrating personal authenticity and commitments is critical.

Personal Commitment

Personal commitment to creating a more socially just, inclusive, and equitable world is perhaps the most important aspect of our work as critical educators. At the juncture of professional practice and ethical expectations, technological spaces, and personal commitments lay the spaces for critical examinations of daily activist engagements – everyday commitments to social justice. It is to reflective practice on my own daily engagements that I now turn.

Digital Social Media as Space for Becoming~Multiplicitous~Activist

Developing one's digital identity and one's activist identity should be viewed as ongoing, emergent processes – a process of *becoming*, rather than a static procedure. Urrieta (2009) and Braidotti (2012) utilized the language of *becoming* to demonstrate "how identities are informed by who people are in practice and how that practice is lived in daily life" (Urrieta, 2009, p. 12). Here, I wish to engage in an act of self-reflection on my own daily practices across distributed social media landscapes to capture the processes of harnessing social media spaces to challenge oppression, increase epistemic access to knowledge, and continuously engage in a multiplictious process of becoming-activist. Utilizing the language of *becoming* embraces my own understanding of identity not as static or essential, but as an ongoing, emergent process (Eaton, 2015a). Coupling the language of becoming with languages of activism~activist harnesses personal commitment to unpacking my own privilege(s) while embracing Urrieta's (2009) understanding of activism as an everyday practice within micro-worlds; in this case, the micro-worlds of digital social media and technologically mediated space(s). Finally, utilizing digital social media spaces as the micro-worlds of examination recognizes that in my own

multiplicitious~becoming~activist, digital social media spaces and distributed social media ecologies have become increasingly important sites of my own daily activism.

Instagram and Tweegram: Visual Activism

Instagram is a social media platform allowing one to share visual images and videos. Marketed as "a fun and quirky way to share your life with friends through a series of pictures" (Instagram.com), the phone application allows users not only to share visual images, but also apply filters to photos to change their hue, color, and general presentation. I joined Instagram in 2012, although my active engagement with the platform did not begin until 2014. Around the time of my actively engaging Instagram I also discovered an application called Tweegram. Tweegram allows you to turn thoughts and text into visual images, which can then be shared across a variety of social media platforms. I quickly learned that I might utilize Tweegram as a means of capturing

Figure 1: Tweegram quote from Goodman
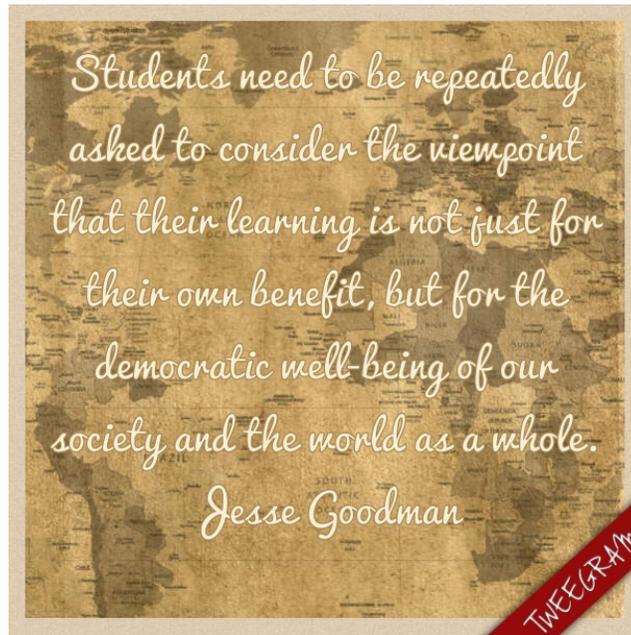
important reading and thoughts I was encountering, and then share these thoughts in social media spaces such as Instagram.

As a scholar, reading, thinking, and critically engaging issues is one of my key responsibilities (Morris, 2016). Reading has also been a lifelong passion. As a critically engaged reader, I am exposed to a variety of texts, epistemological framings, and diversity of critical scholarship that informs my understanding of the world, challenges my own assumptions, and informs my own research and pedagogical practices. I very quickly began utilizing Tweegram as a means of curating important quotes, thoughts, and moments from my textual entanglements, and then sharing these across a variety of social media platforms, particularly Instagram and Facebook.

My utilization of Tweegram as a form of capturing these moments has evolved. Whereas initially my posts were designed to share knowledge with others in my personal learning networks, I now view these posts as a form of digital activism. Not only are these various posts designed to stimulate thought within my own Instagram network, but often I post provocative quotes meant to disrupt and challenge the status quo, invoke dialogue, or expose others to critical scholarship across a spectrum of academic disciplines.

I want to expose and explicate a few of these images, exploring and reflecting on how their entre into my micro-world of Instagram (and in many cases Facebook) serves as a form of activism, or my attempt to begin a conversation in the space that disrupted notions of Instagram as solely a place for sharing one's life. My first Tweegram image (Figure 1) was posted on September 23, 2014. At the time, I was a doctoral candidate, working on completing my dissertation and engaged in co-teaching a doctoral seminar in curriculum theory. The quote from Jesse Goodman reflects an ongoing commitment in my own thinking about issues regarding the aims of education. Our current neoliberal educational environment (Giroux, 2014; Morris, 2016) centers thinking about education as utilitarian, at best, but mostly as bent toward vocational and capitalist ends. There is also a highly individualistic tendency in these perspectives, one that centers education as a personal achievement rather than a collective entanglement or public good.

This quote from Goodman challenges neoliberal, capitalist perspectives and viewpoints on education. It was pulled from a larger discussion about the function of education as discussed in Michael Apple's (2013) *Can Education Change Society*? My own perspective on education is centered not on individual "return on investment," but rather on radical transformations in thinking, critical dialogues across epistemic differences, and engagements with difference that work to strengthen human connection, as well as the political processes known as democracy (Ayers, Kumashiro, Meiners, Quinn, & Stovall, 2016; Hendry, 2011). Resonating with these themes, I shared this quote in visual form within Instagram to challenge the space, and others in my personal network, about the functions and purposes of education. How can we view education as part of an ongoing dialogue regarding democracy? What is the function of education as process of connecting students with geographical localities beyond their own city, state, or nation? These are critical questions that should be examined and unpacked by educators and the quote by Goodman stresses that reductionist tendencies in educational thought – those encapsulated by neoliberal capitalist desires – are not without challenge in the larger discourses of educational and curriculum theorizing.

The image in Figure 2, pulled from Ruben A. Gaztambide-Fernandez (2010), also centers on a growing commitment that developed during my graduate school education to abandon certainty. Much like my critique of neoliberal capitalist educational discourses articulated above, current educational practices trend toward a desire for certainty. There is a belief that we can 'know,' demonstrate that 'knowing,' and predict or control the world. While this is a comforting perspective on the world, often advanced in schooling, the discomfort associated with abandoning certainty is one that we should each be reminded of, particularly as we engage in research or discussions of issues such as social justice and inclusion.

The visual display of this particular image was purposeful. The red chair is reminiscent of so many educational environments in which many of us work. One benefit of Tweegram is that the visual background can assist you in portraying certain emotions or feelings that

Figure 2: Tweegram quote from Gaztambide-Fernandez
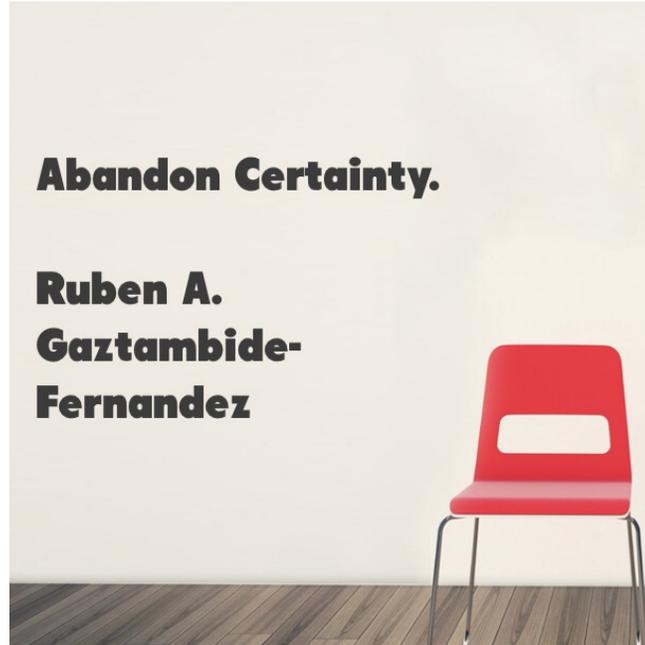
might be associated with your textual representation. For me, the red chair is reminiscent of those used in various educational environments, where we are lulled into believing certainty exists, rather than challenging the status quo or any comfort that might be associated with certainty.

One of my personal commitments as an educator and scholar is to push my own epistemic boundaries. Part of this is rooted in my commitment to post-qualitative and philosophical approaches to inquiry (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012; St. Pierre, 2011). Thus, my scholarship, theorizing, and inquiries often utilize scholars not traditionally invoked in my own specialized field of higher education and college student education. I was introduced to the work of Rosi Braidotti (2011, 2012) during my search for new language(s) to discuss what we traditionally refer to as identity~subjectivity in higher education (Eaton, 2015a). Braidotti, as a feminist cultural and philosophical writer, provokes thought within wide ranging discourses. I have utilized and embraced her notion of *becoming* to counteract and explore posthumanist and materialist conceptualizations of identity~subjectivity in the digital age (Eaton, 2016b).

In the quote represented in Figure 3, which comes from *The Posthuman*, Braidotti (2011) is actively discussing the violence inflicted upon the world by humans. This comes in the form of environmental destruction, horror and violence against animals and other sentient beings, as well as self-inflicted violence and violence against other humans. For Braidotti, answering and responding to this violence requires, first, a process of imagining creative alternatives to violent response; or, thinking of more peaceful and entangled relations. Horror and violence are not simply parts of human nature, but rather a crisis of imagination, creativity, and loss of relational connection. In her posthumanist philosophy, Braidotti is advocating, at least partially, for imagining that destruction, horror, and violence toward sentient and non-sentient beings, largely wrought by humans, is also
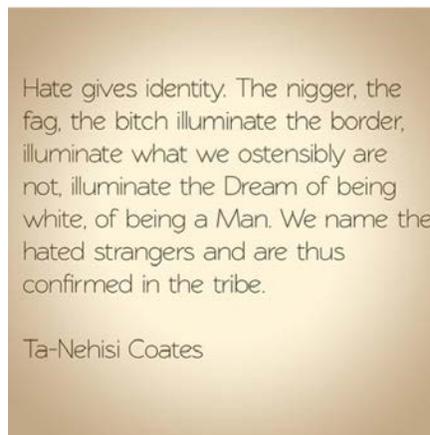
Figure 3: Tweegram quote from Braidotti

We need to actively work towards a refusal of horror and violence – the inhuman aspects of our present – and to turn it into the construction of affirmative alternatives.

Rosi Braidotti

responsible for our ongoing violent actions against each other in all its forms. This includes violence associated with advanced capitalist societies, such as economic, racist, sexist, homophobic, xenophobic, ableist, ageist, environmental, and religious zealotry. The inclusion of many quotes by Braidotti within the space of my Instagram speaks not only to the power her language and thinking has over my own scholarship, but also seeks to expand and potentially incite interest from others within my personal learning network to explore and unpack some of the complex philosophy and practice Braidotti discusses throughout her works.

Figure 4: Tweegram quote from Coates

Hate gives identity. The nigger, the fag, the bitch illuminate the border, illuminate what we ostensibly are not, illuminate the Dream of being white, of being a Man. We name the hated strangers and are thus confirmed in the tribe.

Ta-Nehisi Coates

Finally, I am pulling this quote from Ta-Nehisi Coates' (2015) book *Between the World and Me* (see Figure 4). In this section of the text, Coates reflected on the almost universal process of forming one's identity by creating boundaries, labels, and processes of dehumanization. In the space of social media, the text might be jarring for some. The

language – use of the word "nigger," "fag," and "bitch," is purposely utilized by Coates to incite reaction in readers. In the space of social media, I sought similar reactions. I have no evidence of how this quote incited particular reactions from those in my networks beyond the common metric of "liking." However, for me this is not the point. Placing this provocation in the space likely invokes some level of thought in others – both those who agree and disagree with Coates' assertion. The questions that can and should arise for those who view this image are: in what ways does language shape or position who we are? How do I utilize such language to dehumanize, categorize, or label others? What does it mean to so desire inclusion that we might reject or exclude others; or turn to hate? Coates himself grapples with these questions within his text, and this image brought this conversation into the space of my personal social media networks.

Figure 5: Tweegram posts promoting Louisiana march

Beyond highlighting my own critical engagements with reading, and seeking to expose my personal learning networks to critical engagements with specific moments of text, I also have utilized Instagram as a space for sharing images curated from other users, groups, or sites across distributed social media spaces, or to promote activist causes. For example, in Figure 5, I was promoting a march on the state capital of Louisiana to protest ongoing budget cuts to higher education. Marching and protesting is an essential part of activism, and in the days following this post of promoting the march I also shared my own photos of engaging in the protest at the state capital. The image on the right is one actively speaking out against various "isms" (Adams et al., 2013) in society. This image is particularly powerful in highlighting some oft-ignored "isms" that perpetuate and proliferate, including body image and size oppression (fatphobia) and exclusionary behaviors against transgender and gender queer individuals (transphobia).

At the risk of invoking a cliché, a picture truly is worth a thousand words. The use of visual images within my distributed social media spaces is one means by which I actively engage in everyday activism. In some cases, these images are designed utilizing technological tools such as Tweegram to visually represent my engagement with various texts. These images become a means of not only sharing my engagements, but also challenging my personal learning networks to think about a variety of issues with which I am personally engaged. Moreover, these images also serve as a visual catalog of my unfolding multiplicitous~becoming~activist. As a digital record, these images provide the

space for me to occasionally return back and reflect on important issues with which I have grappled, recognize patterns, and look for new means of connecting various streams of thought.

Facebook

One of the unique affordances of Facebook is the ability to share information curated from across various digital sites, particularly websites and news sources. While I still utilize Facebook for the purposes of posting and sharing photos (including those discussed above), my wall on Facebook has, over the years, morphed into a space where I share and post various articles, videos, and other perspectives that challenge dominant discourses or offer new perspectives. For example, mainstream news sources such as CNN, MSNBC, or Fox News have become, for me, increasingly problematic, lacking critical journalistic engagement necessary for unpacking the dynamic and difficult issues facing the United States and the global community writ large. As a result, I have turned to alternative news sources for more investigative, nuanced, and complicated analyses.

I often utilize Facebook as a space to post these alternative perspectives on the news. Some sources are common or more mainstream sources of news – such as Huffington Post, *The Nation*, or *The Guardian*. However, other sources that I have discovered are not as mainstream. *Democracy Now!*, for instance, is a daily podcast and news hour that critically investigates, reports on, and examines issues often unreported in mainstream news environments. Their daily "War and Peace Report" examines stories such as immigrant and indigenous rights, the carceral state, violent crime against transgender communities, and international conflicts; all stories that often go unreported or are skirted over in mainstream United States news services. Sharing these stories with others through the space of Facebook is, for me, a form of daily activism in the space of social media.

Similarly, my engagement with a variety of podcasts has increased over the years. Several of these podcasts deal with issues surrounding social justice, inclusion, and equity. For example, Krista Tippett's *On Being* podcast is a weekly show examining the intersections between "spiritual inquiry, science, the arts, and social good; nurturing inner change and its effect on public life; and catalyzing new conversation and relationship across the differences of our age" (onbeing.org). Tippett has interviewed world-renowned social change agents. Some are well known – such as Michelle Alexander, Thich Nhat Hanh, and Elie Weisel. Others are not as familiar, such as Mirabai Bush, Mahzarin Banaji, and Robin Wall Kimerer. The act of listening to this podcast is a form of weekly personal activism, allowing myself the space and time to slow down and reflect on the important questions and issues Tippett raises. However, sharing the podcast within a space such as Facebook also potentially exposes people within my network to the ideas and conversations with which Tippett and activists from around the world are engaging. While I have highlighted *On Being*, I also share other critically engaged podcasts in this space, including *About Race*, the *Ted Radio Hour*, and *Start Making Sense*.

Facebook also has the unique affordance of connecting people within groups and organizations. Connecting to groups and 'liking' different causes and pages not only assists in building relationships and a personal learning network, but also provides opportunities to demonstrate one's personal commitment to causes that allow one to be in solidarity with others. Some groups are part of professional practice – such as ACPA Coalition for

Figure 6: Profile picture examples

Multicultural Affairs or Critical Issues in Curriculum and Cultural Studies. Others are larger national and international networks that provide resources and information for the daily work of activism – such as the Equal Justice Initiative, Moral Courage, or the Southern Poverty Law Center.

Finally, it is worth noting that while Profile Pictures are common within most social media platforms, they hold particular weight within the space of Facebook; the platform was initially designed as a space to create a personal profile and connect with a network of friends, acquaintances, and professional contacts. Profile pictures have become a form of daily activism for many Facebook and social media users. Applications have been developed that provide space for individuals to change their profile pictures, or apply a filter to their profile pictures, related to activist causes. Examples of this include applying a colored filter to a profile picture in support of countries following terrorist attacks or natural disasters; in support of social causes such as marriage equality or breast cancer awareness; and in support of political candidates. While I have personally engaged in many of these filters, I also have utilized my profile picture to highlight important causes and activities. For example (see Figure 6), raising awareness about voter registration, tackling gun violence, or standing in solidarity with social movements such as #blacklivesmatter. Such actions are daily activist stances within the social media space.

Blogging

Increasingly, blogging is viewed as a method for scholars to engage larger personal communities and professional communities of practice with short written pieces highlighting ongoing research, innovative teaching and pedagogical strategies, and to engage with questions requiring engaged dialogues (Veletsianos, 2016). Some scholars and scholar-practitioners are also utilizing the space of blogs to engage with the work of social justice, equity, and inclusion. Like many news organizations and websites, blogging platforms often have capabilities for sharing information across multiple social media platforms, such as Facebook, LinkedIn, or Twitter. Thus, blogs serve an increasingly important function within larger networked communities of practice, providing space for personal reflection, professional dialogue, or the development of emerging research thoughts.

Many professional associations are utilizing blogs towards these ends. For example, ACPA – College Student Educators International's Commission for Social Justice

Education maintains an active blog where scholar practitioners in the field of higher education and student affairs reflect on the intersections between equity and social justice work, personal and professional identities, and contemporary societal issues. The blog provides a space where professionals in the field can interrogate the multiple ways personal privilege, experienced oppression, and institutional power dynamics impact or hinder the realization of equity and social justice within postsecondary education.

In my own practice, I actively follow blogs written both by individual scholars in the field, as well as larger organizational blogs that discuss issues of importance within social justice and education research. For example, *Racism Review* (www.racismreview.com) features blogs by scholars from across the United States addressing issues of racial justice. *The Peaceful Professor* is a site dedicated to scholars reflecting on their practices for practicing slow ontology, particularly given the ongoing assault on the body and mind thanks to advanced neoliberal capitalist practices (Berg & Seeber, 2016).

I also utilize my blog to reflect on issues I find important as a scholar, faculty member, and educational activist. Some blogging provides a space for me to actively reflect on issues impacting my professional practice, and thus serve as a space of catharsis and personal contemplation; while the blog is public, and dialogue with other professional practitioners is welcome, these more personal blog posts serve as a space for me to consider questions through writing (Morris, 2016; Richardson & St. Pierre, 2004). For example, in a post "How Can we Educate in this Culture of Violence?" (Eaton, 2016c), I reflect on the summer of 2016, which saw acts of mass violence against the queer community in Orlando, Florida; police officers in Dallas, Texas and Baton Rouge, Louisiana; the ongoing global violence against refugees; in war-torn nations such as Syria and Iraq; and with the seemingly constant threat and enactment of violence enacted upon humans around the world, particularly in places such as France, Turkey, Rio de Janeiro, and Palestine. Questions of peace pedagogy (Wang, 2014; Quinn, 2014) and nonviolence, and the role of education in offering counterstories to violence was a key reflection of this post. However, it was also a space to reflect on how we bring such episodes into our classroom spaces, our advising of students, and our colleagues. How do these events impact our psyches, our approaches to critical dialogues, and our ongoing commitment to working toward or for equitable justice?

In other posts I reflect on readings, presentations, and ongoing personal efforts toward educating myself. In a 2015 post "Narratives of Arab American Muslim Youth" (Eaton, 2015b), I reflect on Bayoumi's (2009) text *How Does it Feel to be a Problem: Being Young and Arab in America*. Rising tides of Islamaphobia, within the United States and globally, drew me to engage in personal educational efforts toward examining the ways Arab American youth experience life in the United States. In this post, I spent considerable time reflecting not only on the narratives unpacking acts of intolerance and oppression, but also the critical role that schools had in ongoing oppression of Arab and Muslim youth. Personal education, or taking responsibility for one's own understanding of issues impacting the lived experiences of various communities, necessitates also that one thinks about how we provide counterspaces within our classrooms and universities for such stories to be heard. We must ask: are we complicit in upholding oppressive or discriminatory structures within our own profession, and if so, what are we doing to actively dismantle these structures, personal biases, or prejudices?

In still other posts I reflect on professional issues directly tied to activism, advocacy, and equity. For example, following the 2015 Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE) conference, I wrote a reflection (Eaton, 2015c) critical of then President Dr. Laura Perna's insinuation that higher education scholars and researchers avoid being advocate-researchers. My critique focused particular attention on why advocacy work is both important and necessary in advancing issues of equity and justice in postsecondary education. Refuting advocacy in research assumes "objectivity" as the mantle of 'quality' or 'rigorous' research. However, research methods and perspectives, including those centered in many qualitative, post-qualitative, and action-oriented approaches (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012; St. Pierre, 2011) recognize that all research is laden with power dynamics, politics, and advocacy for certain epistemological and ontological worldviews. Thus, this post was designed to stake my own positionality as a researcher, but more importantly to engage in a critical conversation with other scholars in postsecondary education regarding the role of advocacy in research questions, methods, and approaches.

Finally, I have utilized my blog to reflect and engage in dialogue on pedagogical strategies I seek to employ to create more equitable and just learning environments; or to highlight particular questions that students with whom I work are engaging. In my course "Leadership in Higher Education," which is taught fully online as part of our master's program in higher education administration, I engage a pedagogical strategy called rhizomatic learning (Eaton, 2015c). This approach to teaching honors the perspectives of students engaged in a learning community by opening possibilities for students to harness various technological tools (such as blogs, podcasts, infographics, and video commentary) in the completion of assignments; to curate and provide access to learning materials and modules that enhance the learning of their peers; and to complicate our conversations about various topics in leadership and their intersection with higher education, student affairs, and postsecondary educational practices. Opening spaces for students to view learning actively, to see themselves as speakers (Biesta, 2010), and to engage in the education of a dispersed learning community, is an important pedagogical concept in alignment with Freirean and critical pedagogical perspectives. Further, such opportunities become available in the space of online learning platforms, where affordances of technology can be used to engage students in different ways than traditional face-to-face educational practices. Thus, this post also helped to open a dialogue about the possibilities of online learning for enhancing social justice, equity, and inclusion in higher education.

Conclusion

We can begin envisioning how the space(s) of social media can be viewed as everyday practice toward processes of multiplicitous~becoming~activist. I embrace the word multiplicitous to highlight multiple ontological and epistemological processes that unfold across digital social media and technologically mediated spaces. Recognizing identity as an ongoing process of becoming (Urrieta, 2009; Braidotti, 2011) means also that our digital identity is not static, but an emergent, unfolding engagement within shifting technospaces. While we must continually strive to enhance our own personal understanding of privilege and potential complicity in institutional systems of both privilege and oppression, we might also view social media spaces as sites of learning, reflecting, engaging in dialogue, expanding epistemic knowledge, and self-authoring our multiplicitious activism.

Author Notes

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