Future Areas of Research

The digital divide now more than ever needs to be addressed. In a space where there are no set rules, there are still decisions made on who can participate before getting online and after getting online. With discussions on net neutrality and the possible resulting consequences, the digital divide may only continue to grow. Based off the work of Cynthia Self and Mckenzie Work, there is a difference into how individuals are organized into a hierarchy. Selfe notes that the digital divide is "heavily skewed toward middle and upper-class homes" in 1999, a statement which still holds some truth today.

Additional research needs to explore how the digital divide is continuing to evolve for the better or for the worse, especially in the face of an ever-changing digital landscape. Ideally these trends and changes can be adapted into ways to connect digital literacies with more traditional literacies in composition courses to decrease the digital divide. I hope to explore these areas while also bringing in the voices of individuals who are directly affected by aspects of the digital divide.

About Malaka

Malaka graduated in 2014 with a BA from UNM in English with a double minor in psychology and interdisciplinary studies. She has also worked previously at Big Brothers Big Sisters through their mentor2.0 college and career readiness program for Albuquerque high school students. Malaka currently is a graduate teaching assistant at UNM and teaches online and face-to-face first year composition courses.

Research Interests

Malaka's research interests are in new media studies, digital literacy, multimodality, rhetoric and composition, and creating transfer skills in face-to-face and online first year composition courses.

For additional information please see https://malakafriedman.wixsite.com/2018/
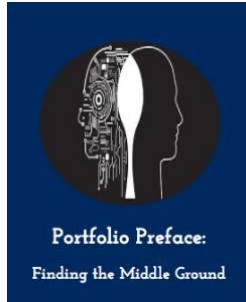
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Finding the Middle Ground: Analyzing the Before and After of the Digital Divide Through the Lens of a Social Media Movement in Argument for Digital Literacy

MA Rhetoric & Writing Portfolio

Malaka's portfolio focuses on the digital divide when it came to accessing the 2017 Women's March as a purely social media movement. Her portfolio is organized into the "before" of the digital divide of issues with regard to accessing the digital tools needed to find information and resources about the Women's March. The focus does switch in the second document towards focusing on the "after" of getting online through analyzing conversations that existed in social media spaces used by the Women March's participants.

Portfolio Preface:

Finding the Middle Ground

Before Getting Online

Part 1:
Technology as a Barrier for Collective Identity

After Getting Online

Part 2:
Does the Pussy Grab Back?

Digital Literacy History

I grew up teaching my parents how to use digital literacy. My father had some digital literacy skills growing up in New Jersey, while my mother did not. When my mother immigrated to the United States in the 1980s, there was more of a preference given to learning English as a Second Language (ESL) classes rather than any digital technology classes. As a result, she has struggled with her digital literacy throughout her life. My parents were on different sides of the digital divide, something that became apparent when I tried to teach them.

Teaching Experience

Teaching through mentor2.0, a high school college and career readiness program, and first-year college composition courses I found that students were not equipped with the digital literacies skills needed for college. There existed a digital divide in how students were able to access the tools they needed to be successful in their college courses. I decided to explore this problem in my portfolio through analyzing the "before" and "after" of a social media movement to determine how the digital divide functioned in spaces familiar to my students.

Overview

This paper explores issues that occur before individuals are able to get online to access resources from a social media movement. Through my research I have found there is a question on who can and cannot participate as a result. Research into the digital divide has shown that less affluent communities are left out of online discussions.

New Mexico as a Sample Size

New Mexico had six marches overall in Albuquerque, Deming, Fort Sumner, Las Cruces, Santa Fe, and Truth & Consequences. All of these locations, with the exception of Fort Sumner, have cable internet access with Fort Sumner having DSL access at the very least in addition to options for additional broadband internet services.

Overview

This paper explores how communication occurs in digital spaces once individuals are able to get online. While there are no set rules for who communicates online, there are still restrictions on who can participate within a social media space and in what ways. For the focus of the paper I explore how individuals attempt to reclaim the term "pussy" in digital spaces.

Gender Avoidance Techniques

I explored how gender operated within a digital space to see who was considered to be part of the collective identity of this technofeminist movement and who was left out. Through my analysis I found that Facebook and Twitter users used the following silencing strategies in response to two posts by Nick Offerman and Julia Louis-Dreyfus:

- Humor as a Silencing Tool
- Avoidance
- Conditional Gender Support for Participation and Support