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#donttagyourhate: Reading Collecting and Curating as Genres of Participation in LGBT Youth Activism on Tumblr

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#donttagyourhate: READING COLLECTING AND CURATING AS GENRES OF PARTICIPATION IN LGBT YOUTH ACTIVISM ON TUMBLR

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Abstract: *Interested in the semiotic stretches youth employ to navigate (in)equality online, this paper interrogates the seemingly mundane practices of youth writing with new media to read how "collecting" and "curating" were mobilized as facets of youth activism. By focusing on curating and collecting as two forms of remediated communicative practice, this paper interrogates the taking on of what youth in a larger "connective ethnography" (Hine, 2015; 2000; Leander, 2008) called a #socialjusticewarrior stance. Zeroing in and tracing the connective lives Zeke, Camille, and Jack (all names are pseudonyms) led across their networked connections of writing, this paper illuminates how issues of race, gender expression, and queer identities converged to collect a social justice orientation into the larger Kilgore and San Miguels communities. Comparatively, I provide a counter-story from one young person (Ben) whose curated work of self-presentation fostered a more cosmopolitan version of self. I detail how Ben, in comparison to Jack, Zeke, and Camille curated through the acts of digital literacies to far extend his reach of what cultural justice looked like. Reading the ethos of online activism as a folksonomy, this paper works to stretch the imagination in considering what a tap, swipe, and click may do for architecting and building equity for youth and youth communities.*

Key Words: Digital writing, identity, LGBT youth, social justice, Tumblr, youth activism

Introduction and overview

Interested in the semiotic stretches lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) youth employ to navigate (in)equality online, this article draws on data from a longitudinal connective ethnography to explore the seemingly mundane practices of youth writing on Tumblr. More specifically, it focuses on curating and collecting as two forms of remediated communicative practice and "genres of participation" (Jenkins, Ito, boyd, 2015) to interrogate the taking on of what youth called a "#socialjusticewarrior stance" on Tumblr. Zeroing in and tracing the connective lives Camille, Jack, and Zeke (all names are pseudonyms), led across their networked connections of writing, I illuminate how issues of racialized identity and gender expression converged to collect a social justice orientation. Comparatively, I provide the counter-story of Ben, a young person whose curated work of "social justice-ing" (his words, not my own) was argued to foster a more cosmopolitan action. Nonetheless, for Ben, Jack, Camille, and Zeke, the network of Tumblr and "folksonomy" (Noruzi, 2006; Vander Wal, 2005) of the #socialjusticewarrior community provided a self-identified agency for action. Acting as a space to build community and create coalition, pervasive computing offered itself as a practice to write the activist self. Reading collecting and curating as the ethos of online LGBT youth activism, this paper stretches the imagination to consider how a tap, swipe, and click may foster and build equity for historically marginalized youth and youth communities online.

Being a #socialjusticewarrior and Coming to Queer on Tumblr

Created in 2007, Tumblr's status as a social media platform is best known for "fostering spaces for socially marginalized users, including youth, people of color, queer people, and the disabled" (McCracken, Stein, & Cho, forthcoming). Allowing authors to create content, categorize or tag it, and then share it with other users. Tumblr users compose through seven forms of creation (text, photo, quote, link, chat, audio, and video). Similar to Facebook and Twitter, Tumblr users have the ability to like and/or share other user's posts. In contrast to other microblogging sites and social networking platforms, however, Tumblr requires almost no personal information. As such, every user's primary tumblelog is public. With its relative ease to "find yourself a suitable digital community" (Marquart, 2010, p. 74), Tumblr is a perfect platform to investigate youth writing, community building, and the ethos of online activism.

As I became interested in interrogating the rhetorical affordances of Tumblr, an indexical identity surfaced as a primary trope that youth users leveraged to gain voice. Jack, a then 18-year old trans-masculine student indexed himself as a social justice warrior in our first interview. As Jack contended, "you can't just *BE* a #socialjusticewarrior, you *DO* #socialjusticewarrior." #socialjusticewarrior was a hashtag used by many to draw attention to issues of inequity that surfaced on Tumblr. Enacting a #socialjusticewarrior stance fell under a user paradigm of #donttagyourhate, a hashtag used in partner with #socialjusticewarrior to discourage users from posting dehumanizing or disparaging text. Being a #socialjusticewarrior, however, was also a category that many Tumblr users employed as a pejorative to illuminate young people who reified a shallow multiculturalism across the site.

The longer I spent working with Ben, Camille, Jack, and Zeke, the more aware I became of the distinct logics of collecting and curating, two of the social practices and genres of participation that sutured definitions of what it meant to be a #socialjusticewarrior. As I engaged youth to help me slow down and listen to the screen, two primary research questions guided our collaborative inquiry and line this article: a) *How do LGBT youth enact and construct their identities as #socialjusticewarriors across Tumblr? and b) How do LGBT youth navigate (in)equality and garner a #socialjusticewarrior visibility through the practices of collecting and curating?*

Collecting Social Justice and Curating Cosmopolitanism: Stretched Practices for Connective Composing

Theoretically, collecting and curating operated as both material practices in memorializing people and events as well as digital genres of participation into youth activist communities online. As I put my ear to the screen, listening for the resonances of digital writing that stretched across the social environs of Tumblr, collecting and curating crystalized as two of the social processes that Zeke, Camille, Jack, and Ben used as part of the larger folksonomy of mobilizing cultural justice as a #socialjusticewarrior. Curating and collecting allowed youth to index an activist voice in the cacophony of digital echoes. Below, I operationalize what I mean by collecting and curating and speak across how these practices manifested a sense of collective community and generated at times a more cosmopolitan dialogue across the publics of Tumblr.

Collecting is a process of distinct social practices that materially situate humans in particular cultures (Rohan, 2010). These cultures, as I document in the intricacies and findings below, invariably intertwine public and more private, and I would argue online as well as offline, lives. Collecting is a project that traces how lives intersect temporally

with particular movements and ideas. According to Rohan (2010), collecting is a "lifetime, identity-forming process that leads to collections through annotation" (p. 54). As she argues, it is a practice that resonates across more standard publics of school, home, and the professional workplace. For the youth I worked alongside of, collecting was a process of internalization. Marked by the Tumblr practices of reblogging, tagging, and favorite-ing, youth used the broader practice of collecting to reflect how they saw themselves. Collecting was an introspective and personal act. It made deeper pathologies and more affective based moments of social justice work manifest.

In contrast to collecting, curating was a more productive rather than consumptive enterprise. Quite popular in contemporary literacy studies, curation, according to recent scholarship, heightens the composing process for young people (Potter, 2012; Potter & Gilje, 2015). For the #socialjusticewarrior, however, the social practices of curating digital artifacts focused on arranging items so that the activist self was forefront. If collecting is a nexus that begs to be read in multiple ways, curating is a social practice and genre into participation that demands precision of language, relationships, and affiliations. Curating is an aesthetic reverie for that which may not necessarily be. In comparison to collecting, it rests upon a single and fixed story. For Milhailidis and Cohen (2013), curation is a story-ed "act of problem solving" (p. 4). It creates a sense of responsibility for the curator. As Chocano (2012), perhaps satirically demonstrates, the trouble with the practice [curation] is the trouble of the "feeling." She argues, "…products are no longer the point…And now we can create that feeling, then pass it around like a photo album of the life we think we were meant to have but don't, the people we think we should be but aren't" (Chocano, n.p. 2012). Curating, as I highlight in the findings section, was used to "save-face." It allowed participants to simultaneously both acknowledge their own privilege while provisionally disavow from more local movements they felt excluded from.

Collecting and curating, taken together, functioned as part of a larger #socialjusticewarrior folksonomy. As Vander Wal (2005), argues, a folksonomy is a "bottom up social classification" (n.p). Collecting, as part of this larger #socialjusticewarrior classification scheme, I argue is used to mobilize social justice. It allowed users to collect followers and garner visibility towards a shared commitment to issues of inequality. Curating for the #socialjusticewarrior functioned less as a shared commitment towards working against injustice but rather as a "way of viewing the world that…is concerned with the transgression of boundaries and markers" (Stevenson, 2003, p. 332). Users used the practice of curating to enact a cosmopolitan stance. Conceptually tracing how participants collected social justice and curated cosmopolitanism allowed me a way into addressing the hybrid possibilities for communicating across transnational global spaces, hyper-mediated texts, and diverse social practices. Curating cosmopolitanism, in contrast to collecting social justice, embodies a conceptual orientation into "belonging" in our current "cosmopolitan moment" (Beck & Sznaider, 2006). Rather than solely considering collecting and curating as forms of "navigation across contexts" (Abu El-Haj, 2009; Luke & Carrington, 2002), I consider these practices as rhetorical acts, tactics that reposition our understanding of belonging and difference through observable online practice. While not directly cited by participants as rationale for why and how they were collecting and curating, tenets of social justice and cosmopolitanism were theoretically and epistemologically embedded within their practices of writing the #socialjusticewarrior self. Collecting and curated served as the bridge between content and circulation. Through the creative labor of collecting and curating, enacting a #socialjusticewarrior stance, I argue, is sometimes less about personal investment and more about the framing that effects outside reception and orientation.

Method: Building a Folksonomy for the #socialjusticewarrior on Tumblr

Data for this article originates from a larger longitudinal connective ethnographic (Hine, 2015; Leander, 2008) study exploring the networked literacy lives of a diverse group of LGBT youth across contexts. The primary goal of the larger study was to understand how LGBT youth engage in varying levels of mediation as they negotiate community/ies, construct (queer) visibility, and orchestrate convergent identities with the use of new media and digital technologies. For the particulars of this article, I focus on four of these youth: Camille, a multiracial lesbian female; Jack, a white trans-male; Ben, a white gay male; and Zeke an African American gay male. Camille and Zeke attended Center Ridge High, an arts-magnet school located in an urban city near a sizable Midwestern university town while Jack and Ben attended City Town, a high school 15 miles adjacent to Center Ridge located in a more affluent suburb. Although attending different schools, Jack, Camille, Ben, and Zeke were chosen as focal participants for this article given their self-identifications as being part of the LGBT community, networked status as "followers" (of one another) on the Tumblr platform, and their willingness to share their selves and their writing. Most importantly, when detailing their experience as a #socialjusticewarrior, each documented the practices of collecting and curating as those which guided their composing on the site.

As a queer researcher and English educator, I gained access to Center Ridge and City Town high school in ways an outsider would not have received. While my peripheral status on Tumblr, and limited proficiency on social networking spaces, offered me the opportunity to ask questions related to the meta-processes of youth composing, my insider position as queer person also offered me valuable insight. Residing in this liminal space, and considering my relationship to the site, I was aware of the competing subjectivities and their potential impact on how I approached and analyzed the data. In an effort to keep biases at bay and increase reliability, I employed member-checking strategies by allowing youth to review transcripts, preliminary findings, and all multimodal artifacts documented here (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Participant observation, saturated by virtual ethnographic methods (Boelstorff et al., 2012; Kozinets, 2010), across sites was the primary mode of data collection. I conducted and audiotaped semi-structured active interviews (Holstein & Gubrium, 2002), collected multimodal work, wrote field notes, and textually analyzed student's "literacy artifacts" (Pahl & Rowsell, 2003). Divided into topical categories, interviews (ranging from 45 to 90 minutes) elicited responses related to the larger research questions as well as the features of their collecting and curating across contexts. Apart from informal exchanges (e.g., text message, personal email, etc.) and semi-structured interviews, I met with participants 1:1 to document how each user was using Tumblr as a #socialjusticewarrior. I transcribed and coded all interview and think-aloud sessions and Tumblr blog posts (n = 434 posts). Using QuickTime screencast, I recorded analytic memos to capture audio/video posts. Visual reblogs, text-based conversations and/or alphabetic print were captured using the screenshot feature on my computer.

I analyzed data with a particular focus on understanding how LGBT youth engaged with collecting and curating across the Tumblr context. I began with open coding (Miles & Huberman, 1994) after a close reading of the first set of interviews. After multiple iterative re-readings of interview transcripts, I analyzed how Ben, Camille, Jack, and Zeke shifted their ways of navigating (in)equality as a #socialjusticewarrior as it pertained to particular social issues. Using "sensitizing" concepts (Charmaz, 2003), I open coded the types of inequality, identities, and types of particular Tumblr actions (e.g., reblog,

favorite, remix) embedded in the larger #socialjusticewarrior movement. After, I moved to axial coding, collapsing how particular practices were enacted across the larger #socialjusticewarrior folksonomy.

Focusing on the conceived space of Tumblr and the mediated imaginaries of the #socialjusticewarrior, I began analyzing how collecting was mobilized as social justice and how curating was considered a form of cosmopolitanism. The numbers of posts were so great in magnitude that I refined my focus prior to examining specific events of collecting and curating. I re-read the interview transcripts and asked more detailed questions to Jack, Camille, Ben, and Zeke about the meta-processes they were using when writing the #socialjusticewarrior self. As a researcher, I was curious to see users think-aloud when posting and when mining their Tumblr archive for examples of the types of practices they cited earlier. This procedure, what participants and I called "tech-tual listening," adopted features from protocol analysis (Haas & Flower, 1988) to nuance understanding of the ideological processes undergirding collecting and curating. In developing the tech-tual listening session, I met with each participant one-on-one and inquired about the general practices I saw youth employ when tumbling. This more focused selective coding procedure (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) produced distinctions within each category and allowed me to frame findings thematically (see Figure 1).

Social Practice	Networked Function / Tactic	Purpose	Example
COLLECTING	Text-based Post	Alphabetic print used to describe and highlight a "diary-like" moment for the author. Aims to be "spreadable" to affinity group	"The way white people used to treat black people is such a hard concept to grasp. How can you fail to see a person's value based off color ☹" (Camille, January 10, 2014)
	AV/Photo Post	Utilizes mode outside of text to visually interject and *collect*. AV/Photo posts are traditionally used for heightened or sensitive topics/issues within the community/counter-public	
	Mention/Citation	Engages with user (specific to their community/follower group) to dialogue and/or reject identity/ ideology of writing/post	@wargojon…(followed by text that either asks a question and/or engages me in topic. Continued response is necessary)
	Like/Favorite	Illuminates affinity and allegiance to or towards the user or topic of post	Users "heart" posts and often reblog across Tumblr
	#tag	Indexes the post to show affiliation and/or position the reader in dialogue with the writer. #tag functions as a rally for or critique against	A haiku about the American flag / American flag / Is red with blood, blue with tears / And white with privilege / MISSLES LAUNCHES #fuckprivilege #knowAmericanhistory (Zeke reblogged from dewchan7865 and added the above #tags)
	Reblog/Retweet	Used to echo larger dialogue and voice of the movement/group. Reblogging as a form of collecting circulates repeated discourse to strengthen presence across dashboard.	"tumblr has educated me on so many things and I can't go on for a whole 5 minutes in real life without wanting to start a fight with someone about social justice" (Camille reblogging from caramelfringe)

Social Practice	Networked Function / Tactic	Purpose	Example
CURATING	Text-based Post	Alphabetic print used to describe and highlight a "diary-like" moment for the author as it pertains directly to one of shared groups or personal learning networks. Across data corpora, translanguaging was used by several users to show affiliation with non-U.S. groups/themes	"i have my first therapy appointment on Wednesday. Maybe ill be ok soon. I just want my baby to come hold me, to tell me everything is gonna be ok, but shes 892 miles away from me and my GSA family is now no longer downstairs. :'c & I just UGH…I'm gonna go try to forget everything and shove my face into a book now…I feel it too @CamilleXXXX @GabeXXXXXXX @MegXXXX. Bye babes" <3 #selfcare #dontharm #sometimesImakemistakes (Andi, February 2014)
	AV/Photo Post	Snapping selfies and/or other acts of digital photography of local environs exhibit affiliation and shared camaraderie and commitments to something (e.g., social justice, a larger social movement, etc.)	
	Mention/Citation	Engages with user (specific to their community/follower group) to show affiliation and empathize with	"@wargojon, thought of you…" (used to interject and/or curate across the other's dashboard – usually no response is necessary or given)
	Like/Favorite	Indexes shared affinity for a theme or topic (often is joined by the parallel practice of reblogging)	Users "heart" these posts and often reblog across Tumblr
	#tag	Indexes the post to show affiliation and/or identify and position the reader with (not in dialogue with) the writer	Curated tagging often suggests that users demand a singular read of a post/theme (often used in conjunction with the #socialjusticewarrior tag)
	Reblog/Retweet	Creates an archive of homophily. Reblogging as a form of curating presents a repeated discourse to strengthen affinity of topic/theme.	

Figure 1: Taxonomy of #socialjusticewarrior

In my presentation of findings, I provide exemplars from the data that illustrate the multiple ways youth collect social justice and curate cosmopolitanism through their participation in the microblogging community of Tumblr as well as the enactment and construction of a #socialjusticewarrior self.

Findings

As practices, collecting and curating were the particulars of a much larger folksonomy of branding identities so as to be read as a #socialjusticewarrior online. For Ben, Jack, Camille, and Zeke, collecting and curating designed spaces that allowed LGBT youth to control, select, and publish distributed selves. It complicated competing discourses about what it meant to be both queer *and* an activist. In the remainder of this paper, I unplug from the theory of collecting and curating to present analyses of the types of social tactics youth employed on Tumblr to enact a #socialjusticewarrior identity. I present their importance as I lay out the subsections of findings: *#donttagyourhate: Being a #SocialJusticeWarrior, Feeling Race, and Collecting Community* and *Curating Cosmopolitanism.* For Zeke, Camille, Ben, and Jack, purposeful digital media production gave youth membership into communities they could not find elsewhere, acceptance to worlds where the resources and practices employed were working to design more just social worlds for some (e.g., the #socialjusticewarrior) while maintaining a periphery for the "other."

#donttagyourhate: Being a #socialjusticewarrior, Feeling Race, and Collecting Community
Swiping, tapping, and clicking, youth were constantly participating in the haptic project of collecting and curating. Behind cashier stations or sitting cross-legged on lab tables in

school, youth asserted their identities as #socialjusticewarriors through particular actions on Tumblr. Participants deemed one of these actions, reblogging, a novice Tumblr competency. It, however, was centered in the larger enterprise of collecting. Reblogging is an *a priori* discourse, one where participants are not contributing to, but rather recirculating, images and texts. Reblogging was not an act of writing the #socialjusticewarrior self, but ultimately a way of collecting the #socialjusticewarrior self. Reblogging and the reciprocal remixing that encompassed the action of collecting, reflected and recycled multiple voices, voices realized to and through different modalities. My time with Jack, Ben, Camille, and Zeke, however, suggested that reblogging might also be an act and practice that users, especially those who are historically marginalized, use as a means to gain visibility in a world where their youth minority status only further pushed them to the periphery. It allowed youth participants to read, re-circulate, and write social justice on one's own terms. Collecting was mobilized as an act of resistance.

Being read as a member of the LGBT youth community was an identity of primacy for the #socialjusticewarriors I encountered. They used reblogging to critique and combat homophobia. Zeke, for instance, reblogging a rainbow sign that read "Hate is not a family value" from the blog gaymarriageusa, indicated that this type of practice not only contributed to the visibility he gained as a queer youth member on Tumblr, but also depicted the type of #socialjusticewarrior self he was trying to render intelligible. Reblogging, according to Zeke, served as a "type of educating" and "activism," actions that his closeted status at home silenced in the public sphere. Camille, Zeke's closest confidant, also saw this type of reblogging as a way to increase her queer visibility on Tumblr. Reblogging an image of two white male youth holding the letter 's' to remix the New Hope Church's message of "God says homosexuality is sin" to "God says homosexuality is in," Camille collected online to combat homophobia she felt at school. As an out participant, she often felt that "…school was the space that was most homophobic, on Tumblr I can write back." She argued that the digital platform of Tumblr and the act of collecting acted as mediators, allowing her to speak back to classmates and peers. Tumblr, for Camille, was a space where her #socialjusticewarrior self felt "most like me."

Apart from reblogging to combat homophobia, participants also used Tumblr to compose the gendered and sexual self. In our 1:1 meetings to look at participant writing, Zeke, Jack, and Camille shared many sexually explicit images that lined their tumblelog. As we surveyed their archive, a perspective allowing users to see posts categorized by month, I asked participants about the type of visibility these collected images, in particular, elicited from followers. Zeke and Jack argued that the plethora of half-clothed male models and celebrities featured on their blogs were their "type," highlighting that the #socialjusticewarrior had desire. Camille was more assertive, asking me if I was uncomfortable seeing scenes of intimacy. When I asked her why there were so many reblogged images that could be considered sexual, Camille was quick to name that she too, "…had a sexuality" and that she should not censor it.

The "sexual literacy" (Alexander, 2008) work fostered through the action and practice of collecting is not new. At a more abstract level, writing in digital environments as a practice to collect and elicit community membership in affinity spaces is a well-documented phenomena for digital literacy scholars interested in affinity networks and communities of practice (Black, 2009; Curwood, Magnifico, & Lammers, 2013; Lam, 2009; Lammers, 2016; Lewis & Fabos, 2005). Reblogging brought to light a myriad of stylistic choices that rendered youth-driven creation and collecting not only as a product of identities, but also a social critique and call to action. One's personal differences (e.g., race, gender identity, etc.) colored their collecting experiences quite differently. In the

next sections, I read across Jack and Camille's collecting to decode the varying hues of being and becoming a #socialjusticewarrior. By doing so I hope to present how the seemingly mundane new media practices of tagging and remixing warrant greater attention into the distinct logics and rhetorical affordances embedded in collecting as a social tactic.

Apart from reblogging, participants also remixed as a way to educate those who follow them on Tumblr. As I discussed the practices of reblogging with participants, many would comment how they would add-on to someone else's post. This additive feature was central to how remixing was figured as an action of collecting. Remixing, "…involves taking cultural artifacts and combining and manipulating them into new kinds of creative blends and products" (Lankshear & Knobel, 2011, p. 95). Argued to be an act of "educating" their peers and followers, remixing for participants was not always what it seemed. Jack, for instance, was someone whose own reblogging and remixing was braided into trans-activism. He critiqued those both in and outside of the LGBT community. In a post he tagged #urwelcome and #socialjusticewarrior, Jack reblogged from yourmatespirit the following (*see Figure 2*).
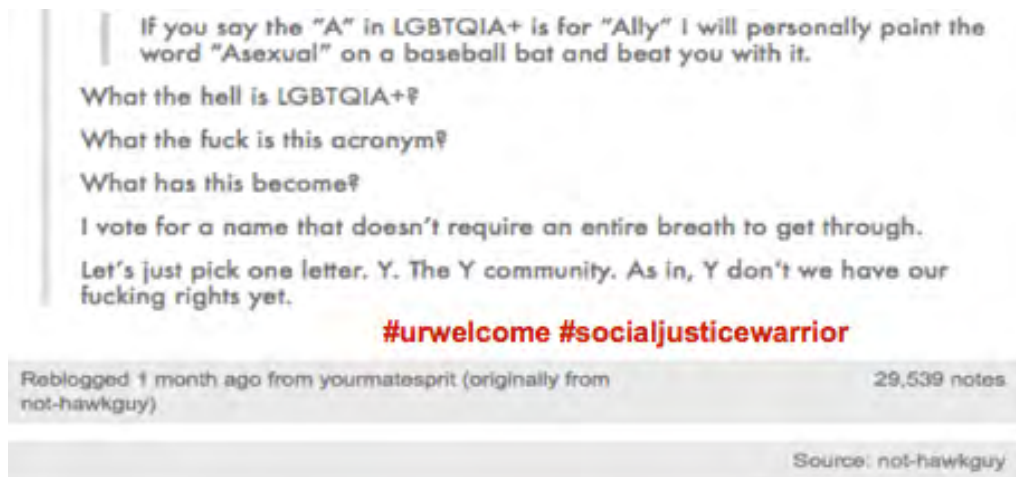

If you say the "A" in LGBTQIA+ is for "Ally" I will personally paint the word "Asexual" on a baseball bat and beat you with it.

What the hell is LGBTQIA+?

What the fuck is this acronym?

What has this become?

I vote for a name that doesn't require an entire breath to get through.

Let's just pick one letter. Y. The Y community. As in, Y don't we have our fucking rights yet.

#urwelcome #socialjusticewarrior

Reblogged 1 month ago from yourmatesprit (originally from not-hawkguy)   29,539 notes

Source: not-hawkguy

Figure 2. Jack's reblog

When I asked Jack why the tags were added to index the reblog of yourmatespirit's post, Jack consistently went back to argue that "educating" was central to collecting social justice. A trans-man, Jack recounted several stories of how his school and the conception of the LGBT community it proliferated dismissed the T in the LGBT acronym of identity politics. Jack felt as if he was speaking back to those allies who quickly "friend-ed" the gay and lesbian teens at school but who secluded him and other transgender peers. For others, however, collecting as a form of remixing and reblogging imagery was *felt* differently.

Unlike Jack, Camille's collecting across the larger study created an archive of racial justice work. Camille was aware of the power of utilizing other people's words to describe, with a certain intensity, her own #socialjusticewarrior convictions of self and community. On Tumblr, in particular, her collecting was not only spliced by reciprocal remixed satire but through reblogged images and hyperlinked stories documenting the hostility towards Black bodies. In a post she reblogged from Zeke, originating from the user softcore-fuckery, Camille detailed a timestamp of hate from July 17th (the execution of Eric Garner) to an unarmed black teen being shot ten times by Ferguson police (August 9th, 2014). She reblogged the post, foregrounded by an image of Eric Garner, and remixed the text to read: "Things you should know: this happened in the past 23

days." For Camille, Tumblr was a space she traversed while "feeling black" (her words, not my own), a geography whose own siloed identity practices of drop-down menus asking for race, ethnicity, and checked genders fostered a commitment to community that was felt in being and collecting a #socialjusticewarrior self.

The register of "feeling" black for Camille was illustrative as repeated discourses of #blacklivesmatter circulated on her dashboard. Her collected posts acted as small interjections on my own Tumblr, an otherwise institutional space used to document the project. One morning in early September, as I scrolled through my dashboard, Camille's reblogged image of a public lynching caught me off guard. Reblogged from buttsqueezin-season, the image was a collage of two photos, a public lynching photograph taken from an open-access archive and a digital photo of a "license" in which owners would have the right to "hunt" African Americans. Camille's image, reblogged by more than 2000 users, included descriptor text that read, "Don't ever tell me to get over it. This is the shit they don't teach you about in school. Fucking Christ." I listened to Camille's text describing the "shit they don't teach you in school" to consider how she *felt* at Center Ridge and the larger community. As I argue elsewhere, these "techtual counter-economies" of writing allowed youth of color to "purchase" voice through media and monetized accounting systems of digital literacy practice (Wargo, 2016). For Camille, Zeke, and other African American youth I learned from, digital disidentification, or the "disavowal of the recognition of race in local contexts in favor of comfortably distant global ones" (Nakamura, 2002, p. 22), was a position impressed upon them in the #socialjusticewarrior community. Even through the process of collecting, race was an affective register that was *felt* across users.

As a practice and orienting device that is often entwined with, and set apart from, reblogging and remixing, Camille, Ben, Zeke, and Jack evoked hashtags as a #socialjusticewarrior in a number of utilitarian ways. The hashtag functioned in the space between the contextual and the chronological. A node of continued context across media, conversations, and locales, the hashtag #socialjusticewarrior emerged temporally. It pointed to itself as it pointed to other texts it marked within its ambit. #socialjusticewarrior, as a locating device for collecting, functioned as pragmatic and metapragmatic speech. As an orienting device, the #socialjusticewarrior hashtag was a meta-communicative tactic that highlighted difference across the Tumblr community. The hashtag functioned both as a means to collect followers and garner visibility while simultaneously delineating and creating siloed categories of identity-making.

Participants talked about Tumblr's search function as being the primary mechanism to collect and categorize followers who had similar interests in queer issues and activism. Zeke, someone whose primary focus was finding LGBT followers on Tumblr, argued, "…if you type in #marriageequality in the search bar you'll find posts that show people who are in support of it. Those are the people I would follow. You collect them." Through these participatory networks, where tags acted as a source of discourse and identity, youth created #socialjusticewarrior counterpublics. As an outsider whose own limited knowledge blurred my vision of the function participants deployed to tag and garner attention, I became fascinated in how youth who were not out at school and at home were quite visible on the platform. In a post Zeke mined for me in a one-on-one meeting at school, he showed me how his own identities on Tumblr were in tension (*see Figure 3*). Zeke tagged the post with #NationalComingOutDay #ComingOut #LGBT #Gay. #GayMale #Closeted #Ashamed. Zeke's post had multiple likes and was reblogged across several follower's blogs. The "closeted self" Zeke invoked in the post is at first debilitating. The post portrayed Zeke as helpless in his quest for self-acceptance. The uptake and status of his post, however, provided Zeke with an emergent visibility. His blog, and this post in particular with tags that are widely used across the Tumblr

platform (#LGBT, #Gay, #Ashamed), provided a currency for Zeke and his gay visibility. On a space where the constellation of visibility is the blueprint to one's own individual experience, youth used the practice of tagging to architect identities that are at times multiple, shape shifting interests to match an identity they did not always collect, but was sometimes written for them.
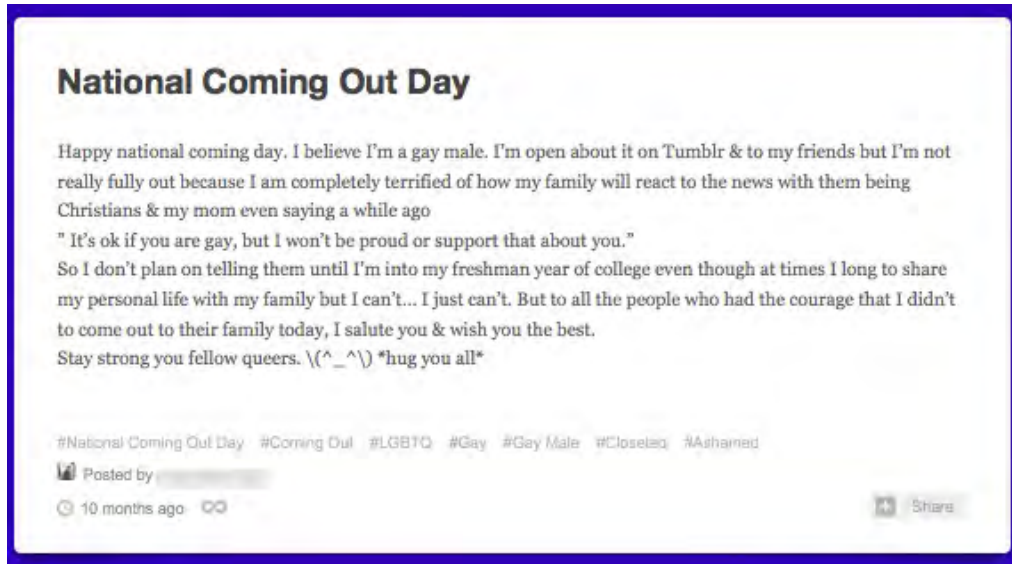

Figure 3. Zeke's post "National Coming Out Day"

Participants also used tagging, like reblogging, as a means to "educate" people. The hashtags became events themselves. Invoking the tag as a type of tool for indexing knowledge followers and other users should know, participants used the practice of tagging as an apparatus to promote equality and combat homophobia. The function of this type of activism had a distinct name and genealogy across Tumblr participants. This function, #donttagyourhate, according to Jack, Camille, and Zeke was a "golden rule for Tumblr use." First introduced to me by Jack, a participant who often times tagged posts with #lifewiththejack and #tproblems ("t" standing for transgender), #donttagyourhate was a cautionary message for users to not tag their dislike or bias for or against something/someone.

Although all participants noted how #donttagyourhate promoted a certain type of activism for followers, Jack used it primarily as a means of writing to a particular subgroup of the LGBT community, the trans-community. In "Testosterone TMI," Jack wrote (*see Figure 4*):

Figure 4. Jack's post "Testosterone TMI"

The post, tagged with #pubertythesecondtimearound and #lifewiththejack was a piece of personal writing, written to document an experience. It, however, also had a secondary purpose. According to Jack, he was using the hashtag to educate individuals about his own transition experience. Tagging the post with #pubertythesecondtimearound before the tag #lifewiththejack gave operative power to the bodily transformation he was undertaking and the déjà vu of puberty. Jack was making the "T" discourse a primary one, where his own posts operated to promote a dialogue often times silenced in LGBT youth discourses.

Tagging, reblogging, and remixing, understood here as actions and practices enfolded within the larger social process of collecting, are useful in examining how youth are writing the #socialjusticewarrior self and creating private and public spaces online. They nuance how equality was not only an ideological stance these young people took on by indexing themselves as a collectors of social justice, but nuance the intricacies of collecting as a genre of participating in online activism. On a short timescale, events and studies such as the examination of the #socialjusticewarrior illuminate how the hashtag worked as a uniting thread of discourse, allowing those who use it to feed into and collect an ongoing and evolving conversation.

Curating Cosmopolitanism
Despite the rhetoric surrounding the ease in which one "collected" on Tumblr, and the relatively shallow definition of multiculturalism that being a #socialjusticewarrior may purport, its counter-part, curating, was far more fragile. "So," I declared, shifting in my seat preparing for an interview with Ben, "we're going to end the same way we started." Ben took out a large yellow scarf. Intricate stitching marked it as a pashmina. "My parents bought me this when they were in Europe last week. Can we take a picture? We have known each other for so long. I want to remember this." At the start of my work with LGBT youth, I engaged them with a process known as artifactual interviewing. Artifactual interviewing allowed participants to story through an object. It allowed me, as a researcher, to see how youth used material texts to narrate particular versions and iterations of past, present, and future selves. "It's worldly." Ben added, "I want this to represent how I see my future. I want to be all over the place. I want to travel." As I lifted up my iPhone, arching my best long-arm to take the selfie, Ben demanded, "Filter it!" "What?" I asked. In less than a second, Ben took the phone, swiped to the left twice and filtered the photo. "The lighting in here is bad for me." Ben, visibly marked by his bleach blonde hair, and over-sized cardigan finished his thought, "Make sure we look good, right?"

Looking good for Ben, however, was far more than the materialist obsession I hinted at above. Here, I want to zoom in on the concept of filtering and illuminate how it illustrates the practice and social tactic of curating. In comparison to Zeke, Camille, and Jack, Ben curated his participation across networked literacies to present a certain version of activist and #socialjusticewarrior self. He used the functions of curating to at once stretch across local and global communities and demand that others bridge their more local senses of activism for more global concerns of pluralism while simultaneously disavowing more local concerns for community and agency. For Ben, curating was a form of "imagined cosmopolitanism" (Zuckerman, 2013), a genre of action that others outside of his small friend network were seemingly incapable of achieving.

As with any ethnography, the stories told were spliced by current events and tragedies. In the latter stages of fieldwork, larger social movements born out of the untimely death of Trayvon Martin, Eric Garner, and Sandra Bland backdropped much of the youth activism collected by youth, and African American participants in particular. As I glossed

earlier, these movements and moments of resistance elicited a sense of "feeling black" that was new for Zeke and Camille. For Jack, blog posts from the #blacklivesmatter movement were signposts for him to understand that being an ally to cultural justice was work, not a name you take on, but rather actions and a disposition that you embody by acknowledging your own privilege and commitment to justice. While Ben did not outwardly disagree with the actions and practices of the larger group, he was wary of some whose allegiance was newly fostered by the revolution.

Ben: Everyone these days is a sheeple. Well, person, I guess. You know sheeple right? Those who just follow, who just go along with it because it's trending. They want to follow trends. I don't care as much. I think its funny otherwise. Sometimes I sheeple just to save face. It's just another mode of communication. You have to curate yourself.

Much like the picture that Ben quickly transformed through the practice of filtering, so too was he aware of the precision needed to save-face, to curate a #socialjusticewarrior self that allowed him to traverse the particulars of the local and more global.

Despite his tactical response in showing affinity for the #blacklivesmatter movement, Ben's larger interests were, as he argued, "more worldly." When I sat down with Ben at City Town, articulating my own commitments to stopping police brutality and my apprehension in being read a particular way by sharing or re-posting recent news articles on Facebook by my more conservative Indiana family, Ben shook his head.

Ben: It's probably really different here at City Town than it is at Center Ridge…we have a very large Islamic community. You see that as soon as anything happens. We all go on defense mode. It's like the #JeSuisCharlie thing. Those people who were just retweeting or reblogging the #JeSuisCharlie movement were idiots… They [*Center Ridge youth*] aren't surrounded by worldly people. I interact with diverse communities. My friends talk about this. We talk about stupid people…the limits of only considering U.S. racism.

Wargo: What do you mean by stupid?

Ben: I am the only white kid in the group. I'm also the only boy in the group. We share in that. We're different. We saw what was first a movement of free-speech and we said, "That's not free speech, that's hate."

I quickly inquired about the #JeSuisCharlie movement that transpired online, as it was picked up by Snapchat, another mobile media application, and streamed through all participant's feeds. In fact, Zeke and Camille, in another interview inquired why U.S. based current events never made the Snap dashboard while others, such as the #JeSuisCharlie movement did. I didn't ask this larger question, but instead interrogated his own knowledge and relative apprehension with the movement.

Ben: It is disrespectful to draw the profit. It is very disrespectful. One of my friends made her icon on Tumblr the #JeSuisCharlie template and I just was like "Ah, god, no!" I blocked her. I can't have that connected to me. That's not being a #socialjusticewarrior.

I am cautious to detail these particulars here as in some ways they may demonize a young person for not acknowledging his own privilege. They detail what Jenkins (2006) would call a "pop cosmopolitan," a user "whose embrace of global popular media represents an escape route of the parochialism of her local community" (p. 152). This is not my intention. To gain a larger perspective on why Ben's focus is so "global" if you will, we need to work backwards and suture his curating practices online to his more everyday activist work.

The closer I "listened" to Ben, the more I started noticing these bright spots of worldly interests. From highlighting the aesthetic of K*POP with Korean characters curated to his reblogs, to a post entitled "7 lies the US Needs to Stop Telling About

Women Who Wear Hijabs," his curated archive transpired into what he coined as "soft activism."

Ben: With the Internet we have a more expansive view of worldly news. We're doing what people once did in the streets. We [residents of City Town] aren't in the cities. There's nowhere that it's happening to join in. The Internet helps spread the word. We utilize resources that didn't exist when you were in high school. It's like soft. It's soft activism. Same principles of holding a sign and yelling, less dangerous. I prefer it.

This "soft activism" for Ben, however, was curated. Streamed through a reblog, retweet, favorite, like, or original post of his own, Ben gave face, sometimes quite literally as he frequently took selfies with descriptor text captioning the photo with "social justice-ing" to bookend the work he did on Tumblr (*see Figure 5*).
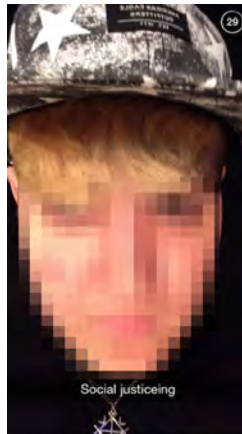

Figure 5. Ben's social justice selfie

When I asked him directly about the curating I was seeing he was quick to help build my working definition.

Ben: You look for the best content. You choose how to present it. It's about communicating using what you have, thinking about how you use your resources…You get a voice through others. It works through reblogging. You have to think about organizing other people's content. You can't do it haphazard like.
Wargo: So what is important for this type of practice?
Ben: The comments, always read the comments.
Wargo: You read the comment before you reblog?
Ben: Always. You need to make sure THOSE are in agreement with you.

Although taking on a quite different function than collecting, curating was just as rigorous as a composing practice for exploring the range of identities presented as a #socialjusticewarrior. The syntactical structure of the hashtag #socialjusticewarrior partnered with #donttagyourhate was less important for Ben as curation was marked by discursive protest and activism united by user's comments. Unfortunately, for Ben, and for many of us whose own echo chambers of microblogging produce a homophily of in-group advantage, we are sometimes blind-sided by the other, thinking we are working to enact a #socialjusticewarrior stance without ever acknowledging that disagreement, disruption, and conflict are the tropes that we must mediate through in order to better understand and acknowledge one another. Without this acknowledgment, we uphold the common neologism of "cyber-utopianism" (Rushkoff, 2002), the liberatory idea of technology being the particular logic that surpasses difference. Sometimes, however, as Camille and Jack helped illustrate, recognizing that difference is what makes us human.

In the same manner that I cautioned us from thinking less of curating as a social practice for enacting a #socialjusticewarrior stance, so too do I want to caution us from thinking less of Ben as an agent of queer activism and cultural justice. For many of the young people I encountered, curating, despite their more focal action of collecting, was a form of citational practice that harkened back to other youth communities they traversed online. Curating became a form of community activism, a practice that led users to foster connections of the unfamiliar through what Vasudevan (2014) would call a multimodal cosmopolitanism. These curated forms of community continued as I explored how queer intersected with the ideational position of being a #socialjusticewarrior. As I shared parts of data analysis with youth in early stages of writing, I kept coming back to the question, "Ok, so how does being queer or being LGBT impact being a #socialjusticewarrior?" Camille quickly responded with, "Sure it's there, but it isn't just that. I'm not *just* gay. I'm black. I'm vegetarian, a reader of books, a lover of nursing, a wannabe writer. I am all of those things, so my #socialjusticewarrior identity is all of those things." Refracted identities, in all their forms, were liked, supported, celebrated, and maintained through the larger enterprise and folksonomy of collecting and curating on Tumblr.

Making Sense of the Cracks: Collecting and Curating as Mobilizing Social Justice

Scrolling through Camille's Tumblr dashboard at the conclusion of fieldwork, I stumbled upon a photo-post that captured the question, "Why do we just accept things?" I took a screenshot on my iPhone and archived it to later ask where she was when she captured the tagged wall and to inquire why she posted it (*see Figure 6*). "You know that is in Kilgore, right?"

Figure 6. Kilgore community bridge tagging

"Can you show me where?" I inquired. Quickly she scooted out of the cafeteria booth where we sat and led the way. When we got to the wall it was repainted, resurfaced to get rid of the red text and adjacent imagery that was once etched onto it with graffiti.

Standing inches away from where the text had once surfaced, Camille touched the wall. "You can see cracks in it where the paint chipped." With her fingernails she began to loosen some of the dead paint off the cement. As I touched the cracks, joining Camille in the exploration of the wall, I couldn't help but think of the explicit connection to Tumblr that the wall provided. Like the #socialjusticewarrior, individuals tagged it to push back against institutional tensions and collect reactions to local governance. They reblogged and recycled remixed discourses with stenciled pop-culture references. They scribed their names to curate and timestamp when and where they were on a specific date and time. In closing, I want to meditate on the wall and interrogate how collecting and curating operated as LGBT youth social tactics, cracks to combat macro-level inequality.

The modes and social tactics Zeke, Jack, Ben, and Camille employed tells us much about how the LGBT youth subject, and the #socialjusticewarrior in particular, is constructed on Tumblr. To understand how Jack, Camille, Ben, and Zeke used collecting and curating as a folksonomy of practice to navigate (in)equality, we must return to the distinction made by considering these so-called communicative acts not as solely practices, but as social tactics. Understanding collecting and curating as social tactics operationalizes the various modes Zeke, Camille, Ben, and Jack transformed in circumventing issues of difference and conflict. Collecting and curating allowed youth to create community, maintain queer-kin relations, and create social norms for interaction. However, as I illustrate above, Tumblr as a locus and site was neither wholly liberatory nor wholly oppressive. Although there were moments where youth critically engaged in analyzing and critiquing public issues of concern, social tactics also functioned to isolate and deprive individuals' voice, namely those whose identities did not align with acceptable forms of difference. Youth collected and curated to stretch across broader social and cultural contexts of discomfort. Participants did not only use these practices to create isolated geographies of self-expression but to also speak back to the (in)equality they encountered in school and home.

Reading Camille, Ben, Jack, and Zeke's collecting and curating as an invitation, educational researchers have the opportunity to explore and examine the digital dexterity youth are practicing as a means to compose more just social futures. Participating in critical conversations about power and engaging with public discourses surrounding equity and injustice, young people are acting as intermediaries of cultural and global justice work. The rhetorical affordances of collecting and curating, amidst today's hypermedia landscape, tells us much about how youth use digital media production to navigate identities in difference. At one level these genres of participation for mobilizing social justice are indicative of the emerging and hybrid forms of writing in the age of "electracy" (Arroyo, 2013; Ulmer, 2003), a paradigm shift born out of the advent of the Internet that gives experience, rather than description or mere production, a higher register of meaning. At a secondary level, Tumblr for participants acted as a digital environment wherein cosmopolitanism and social justice work conceptually sat. As participants illuminated, the multi-voiced experience of writing on Tumblr was not only deictic, but also performative in its composition. Users ritualistically composed varying vignettes of *felt* subjectivity. In centered spaces of racism, xenophobia, heterosexism, and homophobia, youth were writing from the virtual world to combat and disavow embodied conflict. Thus, rather than focusing solely on how these youths indexed their activist experience through the paradigm of the #socialjusticewarrior, I want to highlight the critical literacy work Camille, Zeke, Ben, and Jack engaged in. They may have not tagged their hate, but as youth writers they surveyed difference, interrogated dominant discourses of privilege, and reflected on their own multiple identities as youth minors. Therefore, this paper's provocations lie not in the refusal of tagging hate, but rather navigating, combatting, collecting, curating, and writing against it.

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