Digital Activism Artifacts and Reflection
Assignment for Writing for Social Media or First Year Writing

Framing Digital Activism
Our readings have focused quite a bit on digital activism and the different methods of digital activism that take place. There are, of course, layers to definitions of digital activism. For example, in Alexander and Hahner's "The Intimate Screen," they address how digital activism uses technologies' affordances to create connection and familiarity for social justice purposes, or specifically for reshaping narratives around people with Down syndrome. This type of digital activism is posting images, sharing stories, and celebrating children with Ds. Christy's Instagram account is specifically focused on digital activism & creating an intimate screen. In "#MyNYPD: Transforming Twitter into a Public Place for Protest" by Tracey Hayes, Hayes explores how Twitter can be an actual *site* of protest, not just a place to disseminate information and form connections. Unlike Christy's Instagram account, Hayes looks at a collection of Tweets from various users who hijacked the #MyNYPD hashtag to protest police brutality. By disrupting this hashtag, digital protestors rejected the NYPD's attempt at making a connection with the community.

We also see fan labor merge with digital activism in "Black Panther fandom and transformative social practices" by Tracy Deonn Walker. Fan labor, or fan composing practices, are the different creative and analytical approaches fans take to engage with each other and celebrate the texts they love; in Walker's article, her subjects are fan--particularly Black fans--of *The Black Panther*. While Walker does not straight up refer to these fan labor practices as digital activism, specifically, she looks at narrative extraction, which "is the process and labor that audience members undertake when engaging with narratives that don't represent them as protagonists or fully realized characters." We have also seen digital activism in Moya Bailey's, Les Hutchins, Liza Potts, and so many other articles.

About this Assignment

For this assignment, you will be participating in digital activism! To participate in digital activism means you must *produce* something and post it somewhere. These will be your **artifacts**. Once you have posted your artifacts, you will write a short reflection paper**.** In this reflection paper, you will talk about the types of artifacts you produced, your cause, your purpose of these artifacts, and the methods you used.

If you want to remain anonymous and not post through personal social media accounts, I recommend looking to Reddit as an answer. There are a lot of different subreddits you can follow, such as r/BlackLivesMatter, r/GirlGames, r/ClimateActionPlan, and so many others. Pretty much any cause you care about, there is a subreddit! If you do not want to post at all, you can draft up artifacts (example: draft a IG story and take a screenshot, or write a Facebook post in a Word Document file) and just use those in your reflection. A large part of digital activism is sharing, but I also understand this may come with a lot of stress.

Digital Activism Artifacts
For your digital activism, you will obviously want to choose a **cause**. Because of the current Black Lives Matter movement, I *highly* recommend this cause. There are also sub-causes in

BLM, such as #BlackInTheIvory and defunding police. The more specific, the better! You will also want to choose a particular **reason** to post. Are you trying to **educate**, **create an intimate screen**, **disrupt someone/an organization**, or another purpose?

Finally, you will choose your **method** of digital activism. This will be the actual way you reach your purpose to perform digital activism of your cause. Here are some suggestions (you can choose multiple of these, of course):

- Create a Twitter bot to disrupt harmful/racist hashtags, such as #WhiteLivesMatter
- Find an online fan community and engage in conversations around race, gender, and forms of discrimination or misrepresentation in the particular community or larger cultural material
- Post a story on Instagram or Facebook about this cause (if you have multiple pages for one story, each page counts as one artifact)
- Create or remix memes
- Engage with a particular digital activism hashtag on Twitter or Instagram
- A post on Facebook about your cause
- Collect Tweets from a particular hashtag to archive them. **Please email me if you want to do this because we will need to discuss ethics and logistics**
- Create a video for YouTube or TikTok on a particular topic
- Create infographics or posts sharing information using Canva or a similar user-friendly design platform
- Here are other ways for "storytelling" on social media that you can also use for digital activism: https://buffer.com/resources/social-media-storytelling

Assignment Requirements

- **BE RESPECTFUL**. Digital activism comes with an awareness of the social and political issues, as well as how your activism may impact others. If you are engaging in digital activism, you are likely participating in a difficult conversation. Be cautious with how you take up this activism, and maybe look up some bigger activists in the cause to see how they engage?
- **Digital activism artifacts**: You must compose and show at least three digital activism artifacts that *you* created about one cause. You will put these artifacts in your reflection piece.
    Please email me if you decide to do a Twitter bot
- **Reflection piece**: Write a reflection (between 800-1500 words) about your digital activism. In this reflection, you should:
    o **Artifacts:** Link to or screenshot your different artifacts. Describe each artifact, including your purpose, some of the choices you made in composing these artifacts, your reasoning for posting it where you posted it (if you posted it), who your intended audience was, and how others' reacted (again, if you posted it).
    o **Engage with at least 2 scholars**: Engage with at least 2 scholars from our readings this semester. This may be to define digital activism, discuss purposes, or explain your own process.
    o **Reflect**: Reflect on the process of creating these artifacts and what you learned about the composing process, digital activism, the cause you chose, and your

methods. The reflection genre is a strange one, so I will describe some of the typical aspects of a reflection genre here:

- Describe a particular **experience** during your composing process
- Discuss or share your particular **emotions** about your composing process
- Describe your personal **beliefs** and perspectives as well as how these influenced your choices while composing
- Show an awareness of **difficulties** by describing any challenges you faced
- Demonstrate an awareness of **other perspectives**, like thinking through theory or historical/political/social contexts
- Describe **lessons learned** and/or how you might apply what you learned from this digital activism in other situations