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SEPARATING WORK AND PLAY: PRIVACY, ANONYMITY AND THE POLITICS OF INTERACTIVE PEDAGOGY IN DEPLOYING FACEBOOK IN LEARNING AND TEACHING

Rob Cover

Abstract

This paper addresses some questions which have arisen around the separation between study and social life in the author's use of Facebook as a first-year teaching and learning tool. A frequent comment made by students who participated in the use of Facebook as a course learning tool is that contributions they made to study forums which appear on their own page's wall can be "embarrassing" or "awkward" when read by friends who are not also students in the same course. The comment raises questions as to how the semi-public site of Facebook operating in teaching and learning modes has implications for privacy and anonymity. Students' questions about such comments expressed a desire for their work to remain "private" (unseen by those other than the examiner or moderator), although were choosing a career in media production, publication, journalism or other writing. What is it about Facebook in particular that evokes questions of privacy? As a teaching and learning tool, Facebook provides an environment in which anonymity and the separation of different elements of one's learning, study and social or personal lives are made more complex. What does the breakdown of context and distinction do for processes of learning? Theorising the relationship between privacy and the use of Facebook and other social networking sites as teaching and learning tools, this article presents a summary of its use in media and communications teaching, the mechanisms by which privacy questions are invoked in this context, the ways in which its use opens new and unexpected ways of thinking about pedagogy in relation to the everyday, and the factors that invoke questions as to how online social networking identity is managed by students using Facebook as a prescribed learning tool.

Keywords: Social networking, privacy, pedagogy, interactivity, identity

Introduction

Social Networking sites have been investigated and discussed by researchers, journalists and public commentators, although a gap can be located in the fact that much of the time the breadth of uses, tools, functions or gratifications of social networking is levelled down to appear as a singular, unified activity or sole 'purpose' of the sites. This includes seeing social networking as a site for the sharing of personal experiences among friends, whether known or strangers (Ellison et al., 2007, p. 1143); as a site for the articulation of one's identity-based interests through the construction of taste statements which act as identifications with objects and with others (Liu, 2008, p. 253); as a site for relationship maintenance (Hoadley et al., 2010, p. 52) and connecting unfamiliar people with one another (Hoadley et al., 2010, p. 53); as a networked space for the expression or representation of pre-existing and salient aspects of users' identities for others to view, interpret and engage with (boyd, 2008); as a space for youth

to engage with other younger persons outside of the physical world's constraints and parental surveillance (boyd, 2008, p. 18); as a site for the expression and/or self-regulation of narcissistic personalities (Buffardi & Campbell, 2008); being friended and linking to friends whether close friends, acquaintances or strangers as "one of the (if not *the*) main activities of Facebook" (Tong et al., 2008, p. 531). These are all ostensible reasons for the use of social networking—conscious, self-aware purposes articulated by different users in varied contexts.

However, understanding the awkward place at which Facebook and other social networking sites sit both *in* and *as* education, particularly as the tertiary level, is something which requires further exploration, particularly in terms of (a) whether a social site that, arguably, is a location of social activity that is 'private' from educational pursuits is appropriately drawn into education; (b) the interface between use of social networking as a tool for pedagogy and as a cultural formation that is pedagogical in itself; and (c) the way in which questions of privacy and questions of pedagogy coalesce as a means of opening up the question as to contemporary selfhood, subjectivity and identity as expressed in and through the performativity of social networking.

This paper addresses a number of critical questions that emerged in the author's use of Facebook as a first-year teaching and learning tool in a Media and Communications course in 2010, particularly focusing on student concerns over the way in which a course Facebook page blurred the distinction between study and social life. Although the 2010 interface of Facebook pre-dates the more recent addition of further privacy controls that allow a greater separation of spheres of audience, the experience is instructive in providing ideas on how students view their assessed and non-assessed work in terms of contexts of audiencehood. A frequent comment made by students participating in the use of Facebook as a course learning tool was that contributions they made to study forums which appear on their own page's wall can be "embarrassing" or "awkward" when read by friends who are not also students in the same course. The comments raise questions as to how the semi-public site of Facebook operating in teaching and learning modes has implications for privacy and anonymity, and thereby subsequently also for pedagogy and identity. Significant here is that students questions about such comments expressed a desire for their work to remain "private" (unseen by those other than the examiner or moderator), although many were choosing a career in media production, publication, journalism or other writing.

What is it about Facebook in particular that evokes questions of privacy? How does Facebook operate as an environment in which anonymity and the separation of different elements of one's learning, study and social or personal lives are made more complex or in which the barriers and distinctions break down altogether? Theorising the relationship between privacy, pedagogy and identity as a means of understanding the use of Facebook and other social networking sites as teaching and learning tools, this paper discusses its use in media and communications teaching, the mechanisms by which privacy questions are invoked in this context, the ways in which its use opens new and unexpected ways of thinking about pedagogy in relation to interactive communicative engagement and co-creativity, and the factors that invoke questions as to how online social networking identity is managed by students using Facebook as a prescribed learning tool.

Facebook in First-Year Teaching—2010

I began evaluating the use of Facebook as a supplementary teaching tool in a core/compulsory first-year introductory course in the Bachelor of Media at The University of Adelaide in 2010. The one-semester course, *Introduction to Media: Digital*

Revolutions, required students to engage with a range of contemporary issues for media industries, textuality, creative production and everyday audiencehood that emerge in the context of shifts between Web 1.0 and Web 2.0 digital media environments. While the *Blackboard* digital learning management platform was used for the dissemination of course material (lecture notes, course readings, assignment details, guidelines for assessment and tutorial exercises), and face-to-face activities included standard two hours of weekly lectures and a compulsory one-hour tutorial conducted in a computer suite, the course-specific *Digital Revolutions 2010 Facebook page* served as a supplement to learning that made deliberate use of its Web 2.0 interactive and hyperlinked environment. This was the Facebook 'group' platform and interface of 2010, which was prior to the current timeline format and before the availability of fan pages for which participants request access with a 'like' click; it was also prior to the more complex privacy settings that were developed during 2011 and 2012 on Facebook personal pages. The use of Facebook in this course had the following benefits: Firstly, the Facebook Wall served as a means for 'push information' whereby students were required to see updates, reminders, requests and notices *regularly* across the course, being that these would appear on students' own Facebook news feeds. This is in contrast to "pull information" whereby a target group are required to be active in seeking information (for example, by logging in to student email or a learning management platform for announcements, notices and materials). Given the increased 'busy-ness' of student lives and the multiple (often casual) work undertaken alongside study, it was clearly becoming more difficult to rely on student self-motivation to maintain communicative engagement and to keep up-to-date with course announcements and requirements. "Push information" however, presented itself as an effective solution. As one 2010 student survey respondent put it, the use of Facebook interactivity supported learning by *"… forcing student engagement with the topic of digital interactivity and so forth."*

Secondly, the Facebook Discussion Board was used as a site for short assignments (collaborative wiki -style responses to topical/controversial questions related to the course, for example, on internet censorship policy; three x 350-400 word pieces across the semester). These encouraged students to write assessed work for a more public environment and to engage in an ongoing discussion in a manner that produces a collaborative overall response (although assessed individually). In general, this was positively reviewed by students; for example: *"I thought the wiki assessments on Facebook were really good because it was easy submission and gave you a chance to reflect on the course at different stages"*.

Thirdly, the Facebook Wall page was actively used by teaching staff and students as a space to post ideas, questions, links to sites which may be of interest to others. While students were invited to make use of this facility, there was no compulsion or assessment. During the course, the wall received more than 160 unsolicited posts relating to topics under discussion (from more than one-third of the cohort of 190 students). One of the intended benefits of this use was that the posts would appear on students' own Facebook news feeds, integrating study and conceptual analysis into everyday life. The capacity to hyperlink between wall posts, other sites and other parts of the Facebook page was arguably of benefit in demonstrating knowledge synthesis and maintaining engagement. Students' responses included the comment: *"I enjoy the fact that this is up to date learning, using contemporary things like facebook and . . . open discussions"*. Finally, the course Facebook group photo album was utilised, where both staff and students were encouraged to post images of technologies relevant to the course, including older technologies. The photo albums were also used as a site for students to demonstrate an assessed digital creative piece, further enhancing the peer-to-peer engagement and

building confidence in the production of assessed work for a broad audience. Survey comments included: *"Facebook kept all the students 'in touch' due to discussion boards etc."*
While the use of Facebook was viewed positively by students in general, there were a number (approximately ten percent) of students who expressed dissatisfaction with the *requirement* to engage with Facebook in learning. Three students expressed concerns about the requirement to sign up to Facebook itself, as they had actively resisted having a Facebook account. In those cases and for the purpose of accessing the educational environment, the three students were permitted to use false/abbreviated names in order that their Facebook page not be "tracked to" by friends, family and acquaintances. However, the concern that emerged from the broader student cohort related to the fact that they were unable to keep their posts to the group (cohort-viewable assessments, responses, updates) invisible to their Facebook friends; likewise any friend looking at their profile would be able to see the announcements, updates, advice and posts coming from teaching staff to all group members. While many were good-humoured about this fact, several noted their concerns in the end-of-semester survey with comments which included: "*Facebook meant I could not keep my study private," "I was uncomfortable blurring course and friendship," "the Facebook group meant uni intruded into my private life,"* and *"some of my non-uni friends made fun of my assignments, which need to be kept private*."

With other priorities for that course in the following year, prior to a shift of institutions and subsequently not teaching a first-year cohort, the Facebook experiment in first-year Media and Communications teaching has not yet been repeated. From a pedagogical perspective, however, it opened a number of questions that are, indeed, paralleled by other concerns that have emerged in the proliferation of Web 2.0 communicative environments that are built upon co-creative engagement, user-generated content, and the inter-mingling of technologies with everyday forms of sociality and the production of performative subjectivity (Cover, 2012). These include the complexification of privacy in the contemporary networked environment, the (partial) shifting of pedagogy from the formal and the institutional to the everyday and the social, and the utilisation of communicative tools for a multiplicity of purposes included sociality, relationality and identity performativity. A number of writers have investigated the role of social networking in the context of its impact on formal and institutional learning environments, its role in student peer-group sociality and socialisation (Madge et al., 2009) and peer-group *post-hoc* engagement with learning experiences or student self-promotion of oneself as academically incompetent (Selwyn, 2009). However, the intersection of questions of privacy, pedagogy and co-creative interactivity are yet to be deployed as a means of critiquing the role of Facebook and social networking as a formalised tool for university-level learning.

Facebook and the Private/Public Distinction

Students' desire to keep their educational contributions 'private' from their public persona and their public friends (even on a profile set to non-public) points to the way in which a simplified public/private dichotomy emerges as one of the few means available for understanding a social networking application that, in theoretical terms, transcends it. Facebook and other social networking sites have regularly been subject to concerns around privacy, its complexification in digital, networked environments and these include the occasional moral panics around privacy for young people that emerge often in the popular press and in educational policy (Hodkinson & Lincoln 2008). Students who invoked notions of privacy and 'the private' argued that their educational contribution to the course and the requirement not only to have a Facebook page but to join and participate in the course site was something they wanted to be kept 'private'

from their friends. In this context, the study and scholarly activities here were positioned as private while their friendship network was, in some cases, positioned as 'public'. This can perhaps be understood as a reversal of what might ordinarily be expected in which traditional face-to-face education is that which is conducted in public settings (the lecture theatre, the seminar room) at a public university with public monies funding part of the student's education. The re-application of a distinctive public/private binary emerges as one of the normative available discourses by which to make sense of the experience of using Facebook in an educational setting as being in addition to social networking's more common use in the everyday socialities of students. An awareness of the complex multiplicity of audiences, then, requires a frame by which students can interpret the demand for 'information management'—managing who sees what elements of one's life, whether that be studious life or the labour of social networking. What some of these comments can be read as doing is demonstrating the persistence of the public/private dichotomy but, simultaneously, pointing to its instability as a framework for understanding information flow.

Indeed, public/private has always been an awkward dichotomy which, on analysis, regularly fails in any pursuit of mutual exclusivity. According to Susan Gal (2002), the public/private distinction is not only correlative, thus never providing stable "spheres of activity, or even types of interaction" (p. 80), but can perhaps better be understood as a "fractal distinction", by which she means the public/private is a pattern which occurs repeatedly within each of the two terms, and multiply within those divisions also (p. 81). As Gal puts it:

> Whatever the local, historically specific content of the dichotomy, the distinction between public and private can be reproduced repeatedly by projecting it onto narrower contexts or broader ones. Or, it can be projected onto different social 'objects'—activities, identities, institutions, spaces and interactions—that can be further categorized into private and public parts. Then, through recursity (and recalibration), each of these parts can be recategorized again, by the same public/private distinction. It is crucial that such calibrations are always relative positions and not properties liminated on the persons, objects, or spaces concerned" (p. 81).

At a more practical and empirical level, Marwick and boyd's (2011) analysis of Twitter uses revealed some of the difficulties of the conceptual possibilities of complex audiences on the one hand and, on the other, the desire of users to maintain multiple yet separate spheres or contexts of audiences. For Marwick and boyd, the contemporary networked audience operates between the narrowcast form of readership and the broadcast audience (p. 129) in ways which make difficult an individuals' intentions to "present themselves appropriately" by imagining one or more specific 'types' of audience (p. 115):

> The large audiences for sites like Facebook or MySpace may create a lowest-common denominator effect, as individuals only post things they believe their broadest group of acquaintances will find non-offensive. Similarly, Twitter users negotiate multiple, overlapping audiences by strategically concealing information, targeting tweets to different audiences and attempting to portray both an authentic self and an interesting personality (p. 122).

For students using their own Facebook accounts as part of an educational experience in which their friends and acquaintances see contributions made to an audience of

examiners and/or classmates, a breach of privacy is code for the (un-desired) breakdown of different spheres or contexts of audience. Such (required) educational material might not meet a student's lowest-common denominator of non-offensive, personality-representative and identity performative posts.

These significant analyses of the blurred distinction between public and private and the desire for audience spheres of context suggest that rather than attempting to use the public/private distinction in order to come to an understanding of the ethics of involving a student's Facebook in their education, or rather than accepting the distinction as blurred and thus requiring case-by-case analysis that depends on individual students' privacy settings, composition of friendships and attitudes towards the social role of their own education, we are subject to two new, productive possibilities.

The first is that an increased ethical complexity can be applied to the attempts to locate the 'educational' contributions in terms of the public/private distinction. Rather than looking at the ways in which an educational component such as a written piece submitted on a Facebook page liked by the student becomes a piece of public writing, or looking to how education and friendship form two separate spheres of 'public' which one arguably wishes to keep 'private' from each other, the productive possibility here is grounded in the continuing disagreement over the location of the educational contribution as either public or private. The disagreements can be viewed as disagreements around the location or positioning of the information as public or private within multiple, geometrically complex, fractal distinctions. This opens questions over the ethics of *requiring* students to participate in ways which break down the distinctions between different contexts of audience in their roles as different groups or types of spectators of a student's performance of identity.

The second productive element here is that it opens up the questions of the ethical, particularly in terms of what it means for an educational institution to make a student's educational submissions public in non-educational spheres and whether or not this counts as an 'invasion' of one's privacy. For Candace Gauthier (2002), the ethics of privacy can be understood productively not through a Kantian approach (in that to invade the privacy of an individual is to treat that person as a non-subject) or our contemporary dominant liberal perspective (in that invading the privacy of a subject needs to be weighed up for social benefits and harms in order to determine whether or not it can be ethical). Rather, Gauthier identifies what she calls the Power Transfer model, in which privacy can be understood as a form of 'control' over who has access to information about an individual, whereby privacy affords a personal power against dominant institutions (on the other side of the coin, the release of private information of dominant political officials can thereby be justified by virtue of its role in transferring power to the public from a figure who has institutional capital to keep actions private (pp. 26-27, 32). Although on the one hand there is some productive value in encouraging students to think about and understand different spheres of privacy through the power transfer model and thereby to experience it, what is notable here is the opening of the question of ethics—it is considered perfectly ethical to require a student to present his or her work to a class, to participate in a group assignment, to be subject to peer-marking processes and to upload work to a learning management site in which an entire cohort can see his or her contribution. It is important to ask, however, if it remains ethical to transfer the 'privacy' of educational contributions to a sphere or context inhabited by one's non-educational social world. The action of requiring students to allow their work to be seen by non-students, family members, school-friends and acquaintances, en masse, cannot be determined within an ethics that treats the private/public binary as a simple dichotomy but has to be opened up to a persistent

process of questioning that may not necessarily result in a final position on the ethical value of Facebook in education.

These two points of productive thinking about the role of Facebook in education in the context of privacy can be discerned in student comments about the 2010 experiment. Students were markedly aware of the multiplicity of audiences: friends from university in other courses and degrees, family members, non-university friends from school, acquaintances from other fields of work and everyday life. Indeed, while the figure of audience is often presented as singular, substantial recent theorisation of communicative environments presents the need to consider the public sphere broadly as a set of interlocking and multiple network spaces (Couldry & Dreher, 2007, p. 80). We might extend that to include any audience sphere or site as being always, endemically multiple and networked. There is, however, some anxiety around the complexity with which such networking of different sites, spheres and audiences emerges and its implications for communicative processes in education. While students were very much prepared to write and upload assessments, creative work and commentary for the 'public audience' of the student cohort, tutors and lecturers, having these items seen by non-students was, in a small number of cases, understood as an act of making public that which they considered private. However, in the context of thinking *beyond* a public/private distinction, what these comments and concerns demonstrate is the complexity of understanding audiencehood in a digital, networked age in which that which is written for an intended audience is much less guaranteed to be limited to that audience than in a pre-digital communicative environment. While there has never been a time that one's message is guaranteed to signify in a way that can ever be thought of as 'intended' (Bennett, 1983; Derrida, 1987; Hall, 1993), in a social networking environment the ease of access of one's (permitted) friends to different portions of the site indicates the intensive labour of managing information for multiple audiences in which one portion of the audience may not necessarily have access to the framework in which to understand or make intelligible a textual fragment that is uploaded, thereby making one's subjectivity—as writer, as social networker—less-coherent than otherwise (Cover, 2012). It points to the labour that, today, is required for managing information, including the provision or 'explanation' of interpretative frames as a sort of meta-data—that is, providing the context of the uploaded message for those who may not be aware of the course content. Requiring students to manage this additional labour can be ethically problematic in that it is, indeed, work. At the same time it has a pedagogical element in providing and highlighting an experience that is arguably the contemporary everyday and (for communications and media graduates) professional reality of communication after the 'digital revolution'.

Giroux, Pedagogy and Everyday Technologies

If there are, indeed, ethical questions on the role of Facebook in education, those can be critiqued through a framework that takes into account the relationship between the multiplicity of audiences for a student using social networking in education, pedagogy and interactivity. For Henry Giroux (1999), a cultural approach to pedagogy begins with the foundational point that culture is constitutive rather than reflexive in that it shapes the larger forces of pedagogy and identity (p. 2). Thus, social networking becomes not only a tool of learning but a site of pedagogy itself as part of the "whole range of new cultural forms within media culture that have become the primary educational forces in advanced industrial societies" (p. 4). In that context, making use of interactive social networking has value in encouraging "young people and adults to engage popular, media, and mass culture seriously as objects of social analysis and to

learn how to read them critically through specific strategies of understanding, engagement and transformation" (pp. 4-5). Like audiences, literacy for Giroux is multiple and plural rather than fixed in singularity, and thereby requires that students become not only literate but literate in the forms through which such multiplicities of engagement are produced. Within this framework of pedagogy, then, social networking has multiple roles—it acts as (1) a tool of pedagogy in a learning environment; (2) the site of pedagogy in which students engage not only with other students and other subjects but with the multiplicity of audiences, interpretative frames and manifold utterances that present a range of discursive approaches to understanding the everyday and the professional forms of communicative engagement; (3) as a form of pedagogy itself that is located within a number of different co-creative interactivities, including those that put into question Enlightenment models of authorship, audiencehood, textuality and dissemination.

Understanding the use of social networking as a tool that crosses between the field of everyday sociality and the field of study through the interface between issues of privacy and issues of pedagogy requires bearing in mind the role of co-creative interactivity as the formation by which contemporary communication is undertaken (Cover, 2004; Cover, 2006). That is, to ask how Facebook's use in education is pedagogical and justifies the blurring of different communicative spheres and concomitant audiences in a context in which pedagogy is so ostensibly co-creative. This opens questions as to the role of the student as an author of his or her own text, comment, utterance. The very idea of the author as the central authority of a work is, as Foucault (1977) pointed out, one which is regulated within culture, and one which is more recently put in question (p. 123). The operations of the name and role of the author as a rule for the quality and power of a work is an historical one, and one which continues both to change as well as be defended—questions over, for example, intellectual property illustrate the two poles of authorship in which, on the one hand, a work can be disputed as having needed the protections that accord its 'ownership' to a student as author, and on the other as defending a set of rights asserted by an author not to have that work altered, distributed or read outside of his or her control (which extends, more properly, from the discursive framework in which a set of constructed 'rights' of industrial 'owners' of texts operates and the copyright regimes in which authors of all kinds, regularly sign over both legal and practical rights to control who can and will read a text, statement or utterance).

This point, of course, highlights the constructedness of the very concept of authorship, one which dominates even the field of student writing, typically within concerns of plagiarism, by conveniently 'forgetting' the intertextual nature of all textuality, but one which is also increasingly in question by the very networking logic through which textuality is produced, distributed, accessed and consumed, and the ways in which meanings are activated around those texts through different available interpretative frames. Foucault (1977) adeptly demonstrated the ways in which the author is not only historical, but the conception of it as one which is threatened in various time and in various forms:

> The 'author-function' is tied to the legal and institutional systems that circumscribe, determine, and articulate the realm of discourses; it does not operate in a uniform manner in all discourses, at all times, and in any given culture; it is not defined by the spontaneous attribution of a text to its creator, but through a series of precise and complex procedures; it does not refer, purely and simply, to an actual individual insofar as it simultaneously gives rise to a variety of egos and to a series of subjective positions that individuals of any class may come to occupy (pp. 130-131).

The argument here, then, would be that the use of social networking in learning environments presents useful interactive frameworks for engaging and sharing, but frameworks which are still 'suspicious' by the very way in which they destabilise the solidity of the author function as a contemporary frame of reference for understanding the responsive production of work by students, and the model by which that work is written by a student positioned as author who traditionally and routinely directs that text towards an academic examiner.
To put this another way, the *pleasure* of engagement with a text is distributed under the signifier of interactivity as a co-creative formation is that which puts into question the functionality of authorship and opens the possibility for a variety of mediums no longer predicated on the name of the author: "We can easily imagine a culture where discourses would circulate without any need for an author. Discourses, whatever their status, form, or value, and regardless of our manner of handling them, would unfold in a pervasive anonymity" (Foucault, 1977, p. 138). The internet in general could be considered the setting in which the author's name disappears as a plethora of anonymous sites, commentaries, knowledges and textualities emerge amidst an environment predicated on its interactivity and exchangeability. In the occasional push towards a recorporatisation of the internet as it functions as a public sphere, the role of the author and the emphasis on author verification are restored in the tide towards the conceptual recentralisation of the medium (Ess, 1994; Dahlberg, 2001; Papacharissi, 2002) and the reinstatement of identity-identifiers to those who use, create and co-create for digital communication and social networking sites (Cover, 2012). The continuation of the mythos of the author into the digital age is one which is now to be located in what Manuel Castells (1997, p. 303) refers to as a pluralisation of sources of authority. These include the audience exercising consumer choice, in the weakest form of interactive feedback, and in the strongest a full interactive engagement with the text beyond the requirements installed by an author or form-creator. This is, nevertheless, a system which witnesses a continuing backlash as other persons, sources, and institutions attempt to centralise the authorial voice as the only source of speaking-writing-saying power.

What occurs once interactivity is deemed to make available an aspect of participation within text-creation or the ability to alter, transform or re-distribute a text has been considered on the one hand the *empowerment* of audience (McMillan, 2002, pp. 279, 285), and on the other the dissolution of the traditional concept of audiencehood (Webster, 1998, p. 190). Student engagement with each other through the deployment of the personal social networking site as a teaching tool for broad distribution and availability of authored utterances and text points, in several ways, towards the possibility of overcoming the two sides of this argument. It thereby opens pedagogical possibilities of moving beyond lecturer-examiner as sole expert, voice and arbiter of learning (Giroux, 2004a, p. 798)—that is, examiner as sole audience for a work that is intertextually created and, in the case of social networking distribution, that is now available to be written for a multiplicity of audience positions. We might here view the interactive audience—where such interactivity involves participation in the transformation or co-creation of the text—as a new category to describe both an ancient form and its re-emergence alongside digital media technologies. In his *Communication as Culture* (1988), James Carey identifies two views of communication practices from a culturalist perspective taking into account the role of the audience—the transmission view and the ritual view. The transmission view is the standard, pedestrian account of communication as it occurs in line with a simplified sender-message-receiver understanding of all communicative processes whereby authorship, communication and

audiencehood are understood through key definitional terms of 'imparting,' 'sending,' 'transmitting' and 'giving information to others.' Messages are transmitted and distributed across space for the control of distance and of people (p. 14). In a learning environment, this is the standard formation for understanding the responsive production of student work—authored by a student as if without intertextuality, sent via a hardcopy submission or a private upload for imparting to the examiner.

Carey's ritual view, on the other hand, likens communication to acts of 'sharing,' 'association,' 'fellowship,' 'possession of a common faith.' He suggests it is more ancient than the concept of transmission, and is not directed towards the extension of messages in space, but towards the maintenance of society across time (p. 18). In this context, a ritual production of communal small-group grouping is also part of the traditional tertiary pedagogical learning environment in which members of a cohort are encouraged and facilitated to identify as members, whether in the face-to-face site of the lecture theatre (positioned as an audience) or the seminar (positioned as contributors) or submitters of assessment (positioned in full knowledge as being among a group who are undertaking simultaneous exercises); likewise in online environments in which students are encouraged towards the communal as participants, say, in a forum available through an online learning management system or an online tutorial. Much as media publications assume a consensus among readers and audiences and thereby invest audience members with an impression of consensus (Philo, 1993. p. 255), student membership of a cohort actively encourages identification both *as* and *with* the cohort as a community. Discussing the praxis of community, Etienne Wenger (1998) notes that two readers of the same text share a "mutual link to a common readership [that] creates a kind of community to which they see themselves as belonging" (p. 182). This sort of community, for Wenger, does not necessarily involve mutual relations between the readers, but an imagined conception of a viewing or reading membership (p. 181). Likewise, students may not necessarily engage communicatively with each other but in the context of being positioned as students commonly undertaking a course are encouraged to see themselves, and therefore their experience of the learning environment, through community. The use of social networking which, likewise, has a networked community formation, encourages such participatory thinking.

Although neither the transmission nor the ritual perspectives on the role of the communicative user or student (as sender-receiver; as communication fellowship) entirely precludes interactivity, it remains that the transmission model is lodged in a sense of the *primacy* of one-way communication, and the ritual understanding one which sees communication as participatory, but ultimately for the organisation and management of the group (rather than the text or the creative output). I argue, however, that the co-creative audience produced through ostensible, active or passive interactivity constitutes a *third position* (Cover, 2004; Cover, 2006), one which is not regularly invoked in either transmissional or participatory notions of pedagogy but which is made apparent in the use of Facebook in education in spite of the ethical concerns and/or productivity of the multiplicity of audiences for student work and utterances. It is this third position or view that works to blur the distinction between author, text and audience by suggesting that such a distinction is a false one which, by cultural signification or by technological availability, has attempted to shore up the idea of the author or student as one of controller and authority over their own production and utterances and has simultaneously attempted to assert the unity, coherence and completion of the text. Although something of a buzz word of the late 1990s, the concept of co-creative interactivity invokes notions of both empowerment and threat, of new oppositions to media and communications industries and of new means by which authors, audiences and co-creators can access, control and manipulate a text

(Downes & McMillan, 2000). It thus allows not only a multiplicity of voices but new ways in which an author-audience member can utilise and articulate voice. Important here is where, how and in what context that voice—the voice of the student—is made and is made *intelligible*. By having voice (doing assignments, uploading work, uttering comments on texts and learning materials) that voice is 'heard' by non-student peers and operates as a form of cultural pedagogy through an interactivity that could not occur without Facebook, thereby positioning the student more fully with a sense of student identity.

Conclusion: Facebook as a Site of Endemic Multiplicity and Identity

Pedagogy, for Giroux (2004b, p. 66), is always best understood as contextual, and yet context is never to be understood as a form of containment (Giroux, 2003, p. 10). Rather, what digital interactivity in the form of multiple co-creativities as foundational to the principles of social networking offers is the capacity for a learning experience that, on the one hand, places the context of institutional education into juxtaposition with the everyday experience of sociality (and vice versa) and, on the other, puts permanently into question the modern figures of communication—authorship, textuality, dissemination, audiencehood—that call upon subjects to position themselves performatively with identities that are located at specific points on a simple communication process chain. By looking to the co-creative interactivity that underlies social networking and that operates to undo notions of unitary spheres of reception and dichotomous public/private distinctions, the use of Facebook as a course-based learning tool not only brings the everyday into study in useful pedagogical ways but calls upon students to critique their identity as students.

In advancing our understanding of the relationship between social networking (and other pedagogical activities both in formal educational settings and in everyday cultural relationalities) and the performance of identity within contemporary cultural norms, structures and frameworks, it is important to bear in mind that social networking uses, activities, changes, updates and management of textual distribution are not only conscious representations and choices made for access, but simultaneously activities or performances which construct identity and selfhood. The key task of a pedagogy that tacitly invokes questions of identity is to shift identity from that of 'student' to 'scholar' whereby, in Giroux's cultural pedagogies framework, a scholarly identity is one which sees the boundary between institutionalised education, vocational and professional outcomes and everyday sociality as permanently blurred.

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Biographical Statement

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