ON EDGE: A TECHNÉ OF MARGINALITY

by

Cecilia D. Shelton

July, 2019

Director of Dissertation: Wendy Sharer, Ph.D

Major Department: English

Technical and professional communication has traditionally been rooted in the white, Western, hetero-patriarchal rhetorical tradition and bound by rigid notions of objectivity and neutrality that exclude historically marginalized and structurally oppressed communities. Using a multi-method analysis of #BlackLivesMatter Twitter activism, this study disrupts that tradition in two ways: 1) it foregrounds Black lived experience as the knowledge base for specialized expertise in navigating oppressive social structures and 2) it highlights skilled, persuasive communication tactics designed to resist those structures. The study concludes by producing a new analytical framework, *A Techné of Marginality*, which embraces Black subjectivities, values a critical understanding of our marginality, and identifies social justice activism as a kind of technical communication. In a kairotic moment when Black Feminist thinking and activism explicitly inform a broad swath of social justice work, *A Techné of Marginality* positions technical and professional communication theorists and practitioners to recognize the ways in which Black communities, and particularly Black women, have always, already done the unpaid labor that builds the communication infrastructures for equity, inclusion, and freedom.

ON EDGE: A TECHNÉ OF MARGINALITY

A Dissertation Presented To the Faculty of the Department of English

East Carolina University

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy in Rhetoric, Writing, and Professional Communication

by

Cecilia D. Shelton

July, 2019

ON EDGE: A TECHNÉ OF MARGINALITY

by

Cecilia D. Shelton

APPROVED BY:

DIRECTOR OF
DISSERTATION:_____
Dr. Wendy Sharer, Ph.D.

COMMITTEE MEMBER:_____
Dr. Michelle Eble, Ph.D.

COMMITTEE MEMBER:_____
Dr. Erin Frost, Ph.D.

COMMITTEE MEMBER:_____
Dr. Ersula Ore, Ph.D.

CHAIR OF THE DEPARTMENT
OF ENGLISH:_____
Dr. Marianne Montgomery, Ph.D.

DEAN OF THE
GRADUATE SCHOOL:_____
Dr. Paul J. Gemperline, Ph.D.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am humbled with gratitude for the community of people that God aligned in my life to support me on this journey to earning a Ph.D. God is faithful and my team is unstoppable and without them this would not have been possible.

My dissertation committee is amazing. Dr. Wendy Sharer, thank you for being a patient, kind, and committed chairperson for this project. You led me through a challenging dissertation and helped me create work that I'm proud of without asking me to sacrifice my other obligations in life. Dr. Michelle Eble, thank you for always being a great listener—some of my biggest breakthroughs happened because I felt free to explore ideas with you. And thank you also for being such a fierce advocate for grad students—especially those of us on the margins. Dr. Erin Frost, thank you for embodying your feminism in ways big and small. Your willingness to take risks, set boundaries, care deeply, say what you mean, and be who you are is an amazing example that I'm proud to follow. Dr. Ersula Ore, thank you for standing with me in the gap between the academy and our community. Black people deserve to use our perspectives and experiences to shape knowledge and your mentorship enabled my contribution to that endeavor.

My family has sustained me when the the academy's violence would have otherwise taken me out, despite the best efforts of the supportive scholars I've named above. My mother's relentless love and tenacious support, my sister's genuine friendship, my in-laws' warm confidence in me, the inheritance of my grandmother's love of reading, and the willingness of so many friends to walk alongside me when it was hard—these are gifts I cherish and won't forget. That said, the deepest debt of gratitude is owed to my partner in life, Jason and my two little girls, Jasmin and Sydney, who saw my best and my very worst and never once left me without a soft place to land. Thank you all for the sacrifices you've made to love me. You have my love in

return forever.

Finally, I want to thank people who, unlike those I've already named, will never read this acknowledgement. First, thank you to all the Black people who show up authentically in the world and do what you can make it better. You are the community of folks to whom I want to be most available and accountable in my scholarship. I want to see us thrive! Next, I want to thank those whose labor usually goes unacknowledged. I have spent countless hours in libraries, restaurants, coffee shops, and bookstores to do the work to earn this degree. In that time, cashiers, servers, baristas, cleaning staff, and many, many other people have labored to support me. They asked me questions about my work; they were proud when I met milestones; they knew my order; they made sure I got my reward points; they "forgot" to ring up my drink, and they made sure I got a booth with an outlet. Thank you for doing the true work of community with me. I hope my work can serve you in return.

I know that this acknowledgement is incomplete because I am imperfect. Know that if I have not named you here, it is due only to my head, not my heart. That said, I am deeply grateful for the people, places, histories, ancestors, communities that met me on my path and carried me to where I stand today. Asé.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

On Whose Terms?: Black Feminist Epistemology in Technical and Professional Communication

Introduction

Professional status at almost any job or task connotes a range of socio-cultural and structural conditions—expert status, earned credentials, competitive compensation, and public respect, among others. The impact of these connotations on the theory and practice of technical and professional communication are underexplored but are having increasingly important social and political consequences. Efforts to determine what criteria constitute the professional status of our own work have agitated technical and professional communication scholars and practitioners for some time. In the introduction to the first of two volumes on professional status in the field, Kynell-Hunt and Savage take a clear position: "The technical communication field lacks the status, legitimacy, and power of mature professions" (2003a). What they take note of here is the absence of the connotations that mark work as professional. This volume and the next one (Kynell-Hunt & Savage, 2003b) set about the task of historicizing and grappling with this struggle to come to some conclusions about a way forward. Savage argues against strict boundaries for professionalism in technical and professional communication, preferring instead "the apparently weak role of the non-expert, unrecognized, incompletely professionalized, uncertified, hard to define sophist-technical communicator" (Savage, 2003).

Even as these volumes are positioned to refine the professional status of the field, Savage and other contributors resist confinement within traditional norms. While these questions continue to shape and push the discipline, they also frame how we understand the professional contexts and technical expertise with whom we intersect. Consequently, technical and professional communicators must be concerned not only with the values that permeate the work that we produce, but also with the values, definitions, and ideologies in the professional contexts

and fields of technical expertise with whom we collaborate. Kyndall-Hunt & Savage (2003a; 2003b) both contextualize and confront the complexity of grappling with professionalism and technical expertise, forecasting the need for "politically and socially engaged communicators who recognize the inevitability of their texts as socially transformative" (Savage, 2003). This dissertation project further complicates the norms of professionalism and technical expertise and makes an intervention that explicitly situates technical communication as socially transformative.

The exigencies for such an intervention in what and who counts as a technical expert or professional are being debated even in the information technology and artificial intelligence fields that have already achieved these status markers; their close proximity to technical and professional communication should keep us engaged in the same exigencies and debates, I argue. For example, some critiques of software automation, a field that epitomizes technical expertise and professional status in a contemporary context, directly challenge the impact of applying technical expertise to the lived experiences of historically marginalized communities. In *Automating Inequality,* Virginia Eubanks (2017) argues that algorithms designed to improve speed and foster objective decision-making for social services actually perpetuate and even reify bias and inequality. For example, one of her case studies examines the impact of an algorithm designed to predict which children in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, might be most susceptible to abuse and neglect in the future. She finds that repeated referral calls on the same family or child, which is an existing point of entry for racial bias, are used as a proxy for the algorithm's measurement of child harm. Because the existing system already draws on a cultural narrative that sees Black and Brown parents as less qualified thus provoking a greater likelihood of unwarranted calls, the automation of the processes that pull from that system only intensifies those existing biases.

Similarly, Safiya Noble's (2018) *Algorithms of Oppression* interrogates the negative

biases that are embedded in google search results, which often harm Black people and other

historically marginalized groups and mislead others. One example she uses is that of Dylann

Roof, a white supremacist who murdered nine Black congregants at the historic Mother

Emmanuel AME Church in Charleston, SC. Roof describes his own racial identity formation as

being based on google searches that led him to white supremacist websites. From these sources,

he gathered erroneous information as the basis for his conclusions that he needed to ignite a race

war. Nine innocent people died as a result of his "research."

Each of these studies has garnered both popular and academic attention recently. They

both challenge the authority invested in technical expertise and big data, which is perceived to be

objective. Ultimately, these studies reveal the ways in which some professions and some

technological tools actually come to discriminatory, and potentially deadly conclusions—even if

unwittingly. At the heart of both inquiries is also a reconceptualization of expertise—one that

disrupts the assumptions of class and professionalism. Both Eubanks and Noble value the

perspectives of the people most impacted by the systems they study—poor people and people of

color respectively. In a publicly available Personal Democracy Forum talk, Noble is explicit

about what motivates and shapes her research when she says, "I was a Black girl; I'm still a

Black girl; I'm a Black woman and I have Black daughters and nieces. I care very much about

what happens when Black girls go online and look for ourselves" (Personal Democracy Forum,

2016). Eubanks describes one of her priorities as focusing on "the folks who [she] think[s] are

the targets of the most invasive and least transparent systems" (CUNYTV75, 2018). For her, this

meant that she "really wanted the stories of poor and working families across the color line to be

represented in the book" (CUNYTV75, 2018). Eubanks and Noble consider the narratives of

these people as expert testimony to the efficacy of systems, tools and technologies; they also treat the social welfare of these target populations as the markers for success rather than measuring success by some abstract or economic finish line.

The implications of these studies disrupt myths of objectivity and neutrality in science and technology to reveal bias embedded in the values, objectives and processes of many professions and institutions. The disruption of these myths are not only important for people who work in science, technology, and other industries; if, as Britt (2006) argues, "technical communication is the means by which institutions define themselves and do their cultural work," then technical and professional communicators replicate those values, objectives, and processes in the documentation, instructions, and reports, that they produce and therefore, need to experience a similar disruption. On this basis, technical and professional communication must be especially concerned with what we mean when we say "technical" or "professional" in both a denotative and connotative sense.

The objectivity and neutrality myths go hand in hand with the notion that expertise comes with only professional status. Both have shaped tradition and lore in technical and professional communication. The need to critically examine relationships between identity, technology, expertise, and power is more urgent than ever before, precisely because of the kinds of intersections that currently exist between capitalism, social services, and technology. Communication of all kinds is at the heart of these entanglements. As our social and economic systems become dependent on digital platforms the potential to exacerbate inequality increases exponentially with the speed and artificial intelligence (which often exceeds human comprehension) of new technologies. As Eubanks notes, unless these technology systems are "specifically and explicitly built to dismantle … these longstanding structural inequalities we see

in our political system" then, they will perpetuate those inequalities (CUNYTV 75, 2018). I would extend that proposition to technical and professional communication too: Unless communicating specialized knowledge among experts and to lay audiences is specifically designed to dismantle structural inequality, then those structural inequalities will persist (and the theory and practice of technical and professional communication will have enabled it). Because the field is concerned with communicating the specialized information of technical and professional work, it must also be concerned with the values that are imbued in that communication and set out to redress inequality where it exists.

That said, technical and professional communication is not without its own burgeoning critical insight into its practice that is posing similar questions as those which confront software engineers and data analysts as in Eubanks' and Noble's work. How are technical communicators rooting out bias (both unconscious and explicit) in our work? More importantly in my opinion, how are technical communicators challenging our own disciplinary norms that determine what— or who—counts as professional in the first place? While notions of professionalism are not directly in play in the examples provided by Eubanks and Noble, the closely related concept of expertise is front and center and Eubanks' and Noble's examples of how to deal with it are instructive. Both authors allude to the fact that the impacted communities are not naïve and unsuspecting victims of the bias in these systems. Instead, they have a well-earned suspicion and a deeply concrete knowledge that the systems purported to help or serve them also have the potential to hurt them. Eubanks recalls one participant with whom she was discussing Electronic Benefits Transfer cards. She commented on the potential for a decrease in the stigma of using food assistance because of the introduction of EBT cards. The young woman's response surprised her; Eubanks recalls the woman saying, "Well, yeah; the EBT card is good. It's

convenient. I mean except for my case worker uses it to track all of my spending" (CUNYTV 75, 2018). Eubanks describes her reaction as "gobsmacked"—she hadn't considered the possibility, though it wasn't hard to imagine once pointed out. Eubanks recalls the young mother that provided this insight telling her, "You all [meaning professional, middle class people], you all should pay attention to what's happening to us, 'cause they're coming for you next" (CUNYTV 75, 2018). The parenthetical aside quoted from Eubanks' own recollection of the participant's warning suggests one important takeaway from her work: that historically marginalized communities are, in fact, experts in their own right (though not professionals by mainstream standards) because of their lived experiences in oppression and marginality. What's more, I argue that historically marginalized and structurally oppressed people have certainly developed communication and navigation strategies to do the work of maneuvering through the systems that perpetuate these biases. Why aren't these communication and navigation strategies ones that fit the label "professional"?

Some industries are automatically considered professional—law and medicine, for example. Many workers across other industries and jobs strive for this designation as a way to set themselves apart from—more specifically, *above*—those with whom they compete. For example, many people can style hair, from moms to college roommates, but *professional* stylists have cosmetology licenses, and portfolios, and business cards, perhaps. Even among people who do the same work, those who are professional are accorded more social, symbolic, and economic capital in exchange for their labor (Bourdieu, 1986) . The distinction that comes from a professional status is also a gate-keeping mechanism, separating those who are presumed to be deserving of these socio-cultural and structural benefits from those who are not. Society needs this gate-keeping to some extent because it references widely accepted standardization and

regulation of training, best practices, products, and outcomes for consumers. But how else does this gate-keeping function?

As it is meant to, gate-keeping also excludes some things and some people. In its ideal sense, this exclusion is meant to weed out those who don't meet the aforementioned widely accepted standards. But, professional is often also used as a vague descriptor that polices hairstyles, clothing, gender presentation, speech, writing, and other forms of expression associated with identity. It is not a coincidence that expressions that align with womanness, Blackness, queerness, and other historically marginalized identities are targeted and those people, qualified or not, are excluded. When combined with other structural oppressions such as unequal education funding, health disparities, wealth and pay gaps, and mass incarceration (among others), this exclusion results in the reproduction of western, white, hetero-patriarchal norms in most mainstream technical and professional industries.

I argue that it is important to pay attention to moments of subversion; Eubanks and Noble's work move in that direction by way of their commitment to centering the expertise of historically marginalized groups. Yaba Blay's (YEAR) work is more explicit and overt in its subversion of the denotations and connotations of "professional". Blay, a scholar of African-American Studies and Endowed Chair of Political Science at North Carolina Central University, coined the phrase "professional Black girl" and defines the project thusly:

Professional Black Girl is a multi-platform digital community that celebrates the everyday magic of Black women and girls! By announcing ourselves "Professional Black Girls," we assert an unapologetic identity in a world that too often tries to tell us how we "ought to" act. We know that "acting" like anything other than ourselves robs us of our freedom, so instead, we choose, embrace, and celebrate who we are. *We are professional code-switchers. We hold Ph.Ds*

and listen to trap music. We twerk and we work. We are Professional Black Girl ("Professional

Black Girl", 2019)

Here, Blay is playing with the juxtaposition of the respectable connotations of

"professional" and the stereotypes associated with Black girls that contradict those connotations.

By juxtaposing the two in this tagline, she is curating a digital community of Black women who

embody both traditionally professional titles, jobs, and roles and the culturally significant but

historically marginalized identity markers of Blackness. As a close follower of Blay's

community through my social media engagement, I can attest to the rhetorical complexity of

Blay's tagline. The images, videos, and stories shared on the *Professional Black Girl* Facebook

and YouTube platforms demonstrate what it means to be a professional Black girl—they feature

girls and women who have perfected the delicate balance of Black womanhood in our society.

These women and girls reflect the development of an expertise that is discernable to other Black

women. That expertise is not just symbolic in nature; it is also put to use in workplace,

community, social justice, interpersonal contexts. Take the following example illustrated in

Figures 1 & 2:

Figure 1. Nipsey Hussel Braids
Black girl with Nipsey Hussle image styled into her beads
(Blay, 2019).

Figure 2. Nipsey Hussle Image Comparison
Side by side comparison of Nipsey Hussle's likeness and a
Black girl's hairstyle depicting his image (Crumsey, 2019).

The image in Figure 1 depicts a young Black girl whose hair has been freshly braided

into cornrows. Her stylist has added beads to the ends of her braids, as this is a typical feature of

this common hairstyle. The cornrows are neatly braided and the beads on the ends of the braids

9

form an image of Nipsey Hussle, a rapper and community activist who was recently killed (Blay, 2019). The image in Figure 2 depicts a side-by-side comparison of the girl's styled hair and an image of the deceased rapper (Crumsey, 2019). The *Professional Black Girl* Facebook post featuring this image attributed credit to the Detroit-based stylist, Deanna Crumsey (Blay, 2019). Crumsey has become well-known for creating beaded styles that form an image. She says that she takes up these delicate, tedious, and time-intensive projects because she wants to build self-esteem and confidence in young girls with curly and kinky hair. Crumsey is quoted as saying her motto is "Make her believe in herself so she won't have to believe what others say she is" (Payne, 2019).

Crumsey's work might not be deemed professional by traditional standards. But she is certainly exhibiting a technical skill *and* an expertise in a cultural practice that has material outcomes. Her work is not only therapeutic for young girls, but this project in particular illustrates how Black women use their everyday, mundane technical skills to do important political and social work, such as memorialize community leaders who've fallen too soon.

The connotations of professionalism that I began with are representations of traditional, white, Western, hetero-patriarchal power. They reflect the accumulation of resources at the centers of society's social, economic, and political institutions. Eubanks', Noble's, and Blay's disruptions of the prevailing conceptions of professionalism and expertise position them to interrogate that power and identify/imagine other kinds of power that reflect alternative forms of expertise. Having laid out: 1) the high stakes of rapid advancement in technology and its relationship to institutions, 2) the limitations of traditional notions of expertise, and 3) the possibilities of inclusion, I propose a similar disruption to prevailing conceptions of power, professionalism, and expertise in technical and professional communication.

This dissertation project will trouble the concept of "professional" as an entry point for expertise, work, and efficiency in technical and professional communication. It will intentionally de-center white hetero-patriarchal norms in search of other representations of expertise, work, and efficiency in the lived experiences of people at the margins of powerful institutions. Through a systematic study of these lived experiences, I theorize a Black, decolonial approach to technical and professional communication and invite other scholars, workers, and activists to identify specialized communication outside the confines of institutional settings and within their own community and cultural traditions. In the remainder of this chapter, I broaden the frame of reference I'll use for power as it applies to communication by elevating intersectional feminist notions of power over traditional white, western rhetorical standards. Next, I situate this project specifically within a Black feminist epistemology in an effort to decolonize my approach to inquiry in technical and professional communication from the outset. This chapter will end by naming the analytical framework that I am building and forecasting an unconventional organization strategy which will support my decolonial approach.

Rhetorical Power at the Margins

The Western rhetorical tradition privileges "victory" over an "opponent" and antagonistic and confrontational debate of one's ideas as the most effective method of proving an argument's merit. This ideology and epistemology permeates contemporary rhetoric and writing education and practice. As a result, rhetorical power is generally understood as aggressive, dominant, exclusive, rigid, and sometimes, violent. In many ways, this conceptualization of rhetorical power mirrors the world's experience of Western civilization's colonial and imperial power. Rhetoricians and technical communicators trained under this paradigm often don't have access to alternative models and understandings of rhetorical power. As a rhetorician, a technical communicator, and a writing instructor, I have been particularly interested in disrupting this

paradigm, which not only privileges the exclusive use of the model described above, but also the white, male, heterosexual, cis-gendered bodies and experiences from which it is derived.

The need for this kind of disruption to our most familiar notions of the rhetoric and argumentation tradition (speeches, essays, debates, etc.) has been made apparent for some time now by scholars who have worked to recover the heterodoxy of the rhetorical traditions cultivated by people whose social positions would have excluded them from consideration alongside their contemporaries. However, the need persists for more inclusive understandings of rhetorical power in recently evolved sub and adjacent fields of rhetorical inquiry such as composition studies, writing center work, technical communication, and professional writing, whose histories are much more recent. Among these, technical communication has perhaps the broadest and most varied reach, but the least explored relationship with rhetoric; in fact, the connection has been, at times, somewhat contentious in the scholarship.

Because, particularly in the minds of the public, technical connotes "prestige and intelligence" and is commonly understood as neutral, objective, and apolitical, its persuasive elements are rarely examined (Frost & Eble, 2015). But the relative invisibility of those persuasive elements makes them all the more impactful. The invisible persuasive elements in some technical communication documents reflect the Western rhetorical tradition because they privilege values and pursue outcomes that are aligned with dominant groups and narratives in the institutional and organizational contexts in which they function. They also obscure contradictions through claims to expertise (Frost & Eble 2015). As Britt (2006) asserts, "technical communication is the means by which institutions define themselves and conduct their cultural work" (148). One way to describe the cultural work of institutions is that they reproduce the victories of white, male, heterosexual, cis-gendered bodies and experiences, through their

aggressive, dominant, exclusive, rigid, and sometimes violent (rhetorical) power.

To explore the connections between rhetoric and technical communication (and to underscore the hegemonic influence of the Western rhetorical tradition over it all), we must begin to examine the technical elements of explicitly subjective rhetorical appeals and the persuasive elements of technical documents. Frost and Eble note "a shift [that] continues to move the discipline towards a rhetorical understanding of our own work; but that shift is far from complete—and it is certainly more established in theory than practice" (1).

Work that bridges that gap between theory and practice at the intersection of technical communication and rhetoric can disrupt the hegemonic rhetorical tradition both broadly and within technical communication specifically. I posit that by repositioning listening, social justice, and narrative as alternative understandings of rhetorical power that are simultaneously marginal and powerful, these knowledge-making practices hold robust potential for new scholarship in technical and professional communication.

Perhaps the most important reason that I am drawn to these alternative models and understandings of rhetorical power is that they work in tandem with one another to characterize so much of the history and theory of rhetorical resistance. None of these conceptualizations of rhetorical power are in opposition or competition with one another. In fact, they often ebb and flow into and out of the others, allowing for power to be construed as cooperative not competitive even in how we describe and enact it. Moreover, the power of listening, social justice, and narrative has been demonstrated through their use in the rhetorical resistance of historically marginalized groups to hegemonic power. We would be foolish to observe that so many of the gains of the feminist movements, movements for racial justice, labor movements, environmental justice, and other social movements have been accomplished by these methods

that are derived from outside institutional, cultural, social, political, and economic norms, but then discard them as lacking rhetorical power. The subversive and resistant power of rhetoric enacted by activists cannot be underestimated by scholars because it deviates from academic norms; it should be further interrogated by rhetoric, writing studies, and technical communication scholarship to determine what social movement rhetorical practices and scholarship have to offer our field. This project looks to social movement rhetorics as a valuable, but overlooked site of inquiry for technical and professional communication. More specifically, the #BlackLivesMatter social movement creates a kairotic moment to explore how those who are structured into oppression and marginalization might be seen as rhetors and technical communicators and their labor made apparent as a kind of technical communication.

Decolonial Approach to Technical Communication through a Black Feminist Epistemology

Technical Communication scholarship so far does not have adequate theoretical and methodological resources to account for, describe, or learn from the important, specialized, and rhetorically effective activist work that has been done in the most recent iteration of the movement for racial justice in the United States of America. An effort to illuminate new sites of inquiry for technical communicators who engage in activist scholarship will enable us to theorize possibilities for greater disciplinary insights and interventions born of a decolonial excavation of technical communication in the cultural rhetorical practices of Black rhetors.

My focus on activism in the Movement for Black Lives, or as it is colloquially known, #BlackLivesMatter, functions in multiple ways here. It is a case study that supports the analytical framework for which I am building an argument; but before I employ it to that end, it will first act as a concrete, timely, and widely recognizable way to disrupt traditional perceptions of what counts as technical and professional communication. Making explicit connections between Black bodies, rhetorical traditions, and lived experiences is essential for my commitment to a

14

decolonial, Black feminist epistemology not only in the practice of technical communication, but also and especially in theorizing technical communication. The need for theoretical work that includes and foregrounds Blackness in its explanation of the world has been established both inside our field and in broader circles of critical theory (Williams & Pimentel 2014; Haas 2012; Dotson 2011; Dei 2018).

This project joins other critical theory in foregrounding approaches to meaning-making that reject the colonial influence of the Western rhetorical tradition—thus my choice to introduce this work by disrupting the metaphors of power that insist on approximating white hetero-patriarchy in exchange for access, influence, and as I argue, technical expertise and rhetorical persuasion. But I also want to be critical of my role in the research design of my project. More specifically, I am drawn to Spivak's (1988) critique of the historical role of the intellectual in disclosing the concrete experience of the oppressed through the concrete experience of the intellectual, thereby reproducing the colonizing force that they seek to resist. If, as Spivak asserts, Western intellectual production is complicit in Western economic interests, then truly decolonial approaches to scholarship must start with theoretical frames that decouple the terms and metaphors of intellectual inquiry from oppressive power dynamics. Further, these theories must grow from and be applicable to the lived experiences of historically marginalized or oppressed people. While Spivak's concepts are more complex than what I've represented here, I want to start with these framing ideas, tracing their threads into technical communication scholarship. In 2012, Angela M. Haas noted the ways that theorizing is inhibited by colonized rhetorical conceptualizations of race and technology, arguing that "for decolonial ideologies to emerge, new rhetorics must be spoken, written, or otherwise delivered into existence" (p. 287). Recently, Sara Ahmed echoed this sentiment on Twitter, critiquing the perpetuation of this trend.

She states (quite plainly): "This should not still happen: when practice is used as example (referencing Black and brown bodies) and theory is used as frame (referencing white minds). But it does still happen." (Ahmed, 2018).

Ahmed implies that we should reverse this pattern. Foregrounding the lived and embodied experiences of Black and Brown bodies in our explanations of systems, cultures, institutions and the world is quite an upheaval to the status quo. It requires a reconsideration of what constitutes knowledge and who can be considered as making and having knowledge and deemed credible to share and be listened to by their community. Haas calls for such a decolonial approach and Spivak warns scholars to proceed with caution.

Decolonial epistemologies center communication tactics and appeals with indigenous origins, ones that have persisted or been recovered despite violence and plunder by white people throughout history and time. The transatlantic slave trade, which brought African people to the Americas as enslaved labor, adds another dimension to decolonial politics for Black Americans, who don't fit easily into the binary categories of colonizer and indigenous. Dei (2018) argues to affirm "Black subjectivity and Indigeneity in a diasporic context" to retheorize Blackness for decolonial politics (p. 117). Blackness is an identity that reflects more than a racial category and extends beyond the United States. To identify as Black (in the West particularly) reflects an ancestral connection to the indigenous people of Africa and often implies a set of political interests related to being a descendant of indigenous Africans who were enslaved in the West. The historical, cultural, economic, and political implications of that reality are made explicit by recognizing Black people as one cultural group. Though we are not homogenous in any way, the shared, complex relationship to indigeneity and colonization between African-Americans and Black people in the Caribbean and South America requires a collective identifier, especially due

to the inability to reference a nation of origin for many and an unwillingness on the part of the majority culture to make distinctions between those who can trace themselves to a nation of origin. For these reasons, I take up a stance shared by other scholars to capitalize the Black (and not white) in this discussion (Crenshaw, 1991).

This project claims a decolonial approach to technical communication by taking up Dei's (2008) understanding of Blackness as a form of indigeneity by way of the African diaspora. Dei's interest in "Black subject(ive) agency and resistance" aligns well with my focus on social movement rhetorics (p. 118). In fact, the social condition of Black people is a central point in his argument. He says, "we cannot understand Blackness without getting at the subject of Black disposability, particularly, the apparent state's disregard for Black Peoples' welfare, aspirations, concerns about the ways how [sic] Black lives are wasted through incarceration, a dysfunctional educational system, and additional forms of state-sanctioned violence" (Dei, 2018, p. 120). Here Dei suggests that the impact of oppressive structures and institutions (both in the larger society and in the academy) is essential to understanding Blackness. In other words, Blackness (be clear, not Black or African people and their cultures—but Blackness), the subjugated condition and history of resistance that defines the experiences of African indigenous and diasporic people, is inextricably tied to oppression and resistance. But the complexity of this identity gets reduced in the hegemonic context of the white, Western world where Blackness is "fashionable", but also "repulsive" and "reprehensible" (Dei, 2018, p. 120).

This historicized, politicized, and otherwise contextualized understanding of Blackness as an identity is a distinguishing characteristic of Black decolonial scholarship in my estimation. While Dei questions whether or not colonized education can produce such an awareness, I argue that this awareness need not be articulated or articulatable through the methods we might expect

from a formal education. Black people express their understanding of the condition of Blackness in their adaptations to the oppression of white hetero-patriarchy. I agree with Dei's insistence that "a critical understanding of Blackness is a counter-response to anti-Blackness;" however, I argue that the evidence of this critical understanding requires a very serious and intentional epistemological shift to observe it in forms that are not valued by mainstream rhetorical or academic traditions. Therefore, I further situate this project in a Black feminist epistemological tradition in order to make apparent from the outset my intention to draw on, elevate, believe, and privilege knowledge based in the lived experience of Black people, specifically Black, queer women.

Seeking out a framework for knowledge production that explicitly rejects the primacy of Western philosophical and rhetorical traditions can feel like working in a void when mainstream education (both formal and informal) is built exclusively on these premises. But actually, I want to posit that this position can be a foothold for reorienting oneself to a decolonial standpoint when you've been steeped in the mainstream tradition and find it wanting. Patricia Hill Collins' ground-breaking articulation of a Black Feminist epistemology starts by articulating this void of theories that serve the interests of Black women. Her response is to lay out a Black Feminist Epistemology, which reflects "the interests and standpoint of its creators" and "reveals its affinity to the power of the group that created it" (Collins, 2000). Noting that traditionally, Black women have theorized in "music, literature, daily conversations, and everyday behavior" until they have greater access to the academy, Collins broadens the scope of what is acceptable for evidence and analysis (pgs. 251-252). This epistemological stance is critical to my project for the ways that Collins points out that epistemology is not apolitical, but instead "points to the ways power relations shape who is believed and why" (Collins, 1989; 200, p. 252). Moreover, she

outlines the "different standards that are consistent with Black women's criteria for substantiated knowledge and with our criteria for methodological adequacy" to include lived experience as a criterion of meaning, the use of dialogue in assessing knowledge claims, the ethics of caring, and the ethic of personal accountability. (Collins, 2000, p. 256).

Joined by other Black feminists thinkers and theorists in the mid 20th century, Black feminist thought and epistemology offers a foundation for the kind of meaning-making that this project proposes. Each of the criteria above not only offer an analytical frame of reference, they also help Black women in the academy identify and name the void that they are experiencing and navigate the cognitive dissonance that comes with academic work when they struggle to see themselves in the disciplinary inquiry in which they are engaged. Having mapped a genealogy of Black feminist epistemology, Kristie Dotson, a Black Feminist epistemologist herself, describes her inheritance from Collins' work as "epistemology for empowerment" which she concedes is "difficult" (Dotson, 2015, p. 2327). This project, in its ideal and long-term form, is concerned with contributing to the same goal.

Naming & Framing A Techné of Marginality

A Techné of Marginality applies the term techné to the critical and marginal standpoint from which historically marginalized cultural groups experience the world and then engage rhetorically. When marginalized people navigate systems not designed for their inclusion, they not only apply this critical marginality to the labor that is required to circumvent, subvert, renegotiate the systems for their own survival and success, but they also leave the specialized communication and navigation infrastructures (i.e. technical communication) in place to sustain the labor moving forward. Put another way, a critical understanding of one's own marginality is a way of seeing and knowing, and therefore is a techné—a flexible, dynamic, powerful, strategic, transferrable, transformative tool that can be used to do technical communication work.

The building blocks for *A Techné of Marginality* are reflected not only in the content of this dissertation project, but also its structure and organization. Because I am committed to making sure that the ideas (theories) that I apply to Black bodies come from Black experiences, the rhetorical artifacts that document these experiences—in this case #BlackLivesMatter tweets—are primary in the structure of my discussion. Therefore, after introducing Black feminist epistemology in this chapter, I will integrate Black bodies, rhetorical traditions, and lived experiences into my review of literature (often using #BlackLivesMatter references) in Chapter 2, before introducing #BlackLivesMatter as a case study in Chapter 3. The case study will be followed by my analysis using genre and multi-modal critical discourse analyses in Chapter 4. Finally, I will conclude the project with a more nuanced discussion of the three tenets of *A Techné of Marginality*.

While a more traditional approach to the dissertation genre might articulate the contribution of a new analytical framework as the methodology for the project by placing the tenets and details of the framework before the "data", I choose to take up Ahmed's call to theorize *from* Black and Brown bodies. For me, this means making my path into the theoretical framework that I'm building apparent by working *through* the rhetorical artifacts of Black lived experience to allow the tenets to emerge from the knowledge claims that they validate. I use traditional methods to analyze this data, not as a way to commit the framework to any particular methods, but to make the systemic analysis of my data apparent to the fields of scholarship that might take up *A Techné of Marginality*.

Contextualizing Black Bodies, Black Rhetorics, & Black Lives in Technical and Professional Communication and Social Movement Rhetorics

So far, I have articulated a conceptual definition of *A Techné of Marginality* and positioned it as a decolonial response to the exigencies of contemporary contestations over power via social movements like #BlackLivesMatter. In brief, I argue that *A Techné of Marginality* makes a necessary theoretical and methodological intervention in technical and professional communication that expands the field of vision for technical communicators solving 21st century problems, broadens notions of work and workplace, and embraces cultural rhetorical practices as valuable ways of knowing and doing technical communication work. This framework responds uniquely and effectively to the exigence of contemporary social and political contestations over power because it foregrounds the agency of historically marginalized people to access, (re)negotiate, or seize power on their own terms (both literally and figuratively). This conceptual definition will operate as a framing idea for the next several chapters as I move through an analysis of rhetorical artifacts of Black lived experiences to arrive at a more robust explanation of the tenets and rhetorical practices that comprise *A Techné of Marginality*.

A Techné of Marginality emerges conceptually from my own embodied sensibilities and understandings of how Black rhetors communicate to survive in the face of anti-Black violence in America. The specific rhetorical practices and tenets of the framework emerge through a systematic rhetorical analysis of artifacts that reflect this lived experience. Before I introduce these artifacts as data from a case study for analysis, it is important that I support readers' ability to connect Black bodies, rhetorical practices, and lived experiences to technical and professional communication. Looking ahead in this chapter, I want to ground this inquiry in an epistemological stance that regards lived experience as valuable knowledge work and positions

that lived experience as a kind of expertise that can be leveraged for technical communication. In the sections that follow, I establish *A Techné of Marginality* as a technical communication framework informed by Black Feminist theory, social movement rhetorics, and social justice technical communication. The build toward a more concrete definition and explication of *A Techné of Marginality* is both slow and deliberate on purpose. I want to acknowledge the formative theories that situate the framework within these disciplinary traditions and foreground the lived experiences of Black and Brown bodies in the data that produce the framework's generalizability.

Black Vernacular Rhetorics as Social Movement Work

The activist work of #BlackLivesMatter is the most recent iteration of a cultural rhetorical tradition of Black Americans marked by resistance. For better or worse, the #BlackLivesMatter hashtag is probably the most recognizable social movement slogan of the 21st century thus far. Its prominence along with today's 24-hour, multi-media news cycle makes it an interesting case study in contemporary social movement rhetorics. The death of Trayvon Martin and the acquittal of his murderer, George Zimmerman, were the genesis of the hashtag #BlackLivesMatter and with a growing pattern of police brutality documented on video, a long-standing, but renewed social unrest has ensued in the Black community. The role of mass communication networked by digital media (a characteristic which Castells (2015) argues is now essential to social movement rhetoric) facilitated the enthusiastic mobilization that brought millions of people into the streets to protest state violence against Black bodies (Castells, 2015). This work has been maintained through a network of movement organizations who have influenced everything from political platforms to popular culture (Stewart, Smith, & Denton 2012).

It is important to acknowledge that with or without social movement organizations,

22

appeals for justice and freedom are fundamental to Black cultural rhetorics. While the breadth

and depth of Black rhetorical history and practice is as varied as the Black experience in

America, Keith Gilyard (2004) concludes that "voluminous attention has been devoted to Black

discourses because such discourses have been the major means by which people of African

descent in the American colonies and subsequent republic have asserted their collective

humanity in the face of an enduring white supremacy and tried to persuade, cajole, and gain

acceptance for ideas relative to Black survival and Black liberation" (p. 1). This theme permeates

scholarship about Black rhetoric across contexts (Nunley 2004), political ideologies (Pough

2004; Johnson 2007), and time periods (Jackson & Richardson 2003).

Central to the rhetorical tradition of Black Americans is the formation and innovative use

of African American Vernacular English (AAVE). Evolved from a creole of English and African

languages, AAVE is part and parcel to the Black Rhetorical tradition. Because Black language

comes out of Black experience, it is a necessary component of Black resistance. Sociolinguists

agree that dialects, including AAVE, are rule-governed language systems that function just as

well as any "standard" to which we might aspire as a society. The stigma associated with AAVE

is social and marks the semantic, syntactic, and phonological features of the dialect as

uneducated, broken, and ineffective. Ironically, many of the same features are commodified and

celebrated in popular culture. The complexity of the Black experience and identity is reflected in

how Black language use is perceived—much of it marked by marginalization. As one might

expect, there is an explicit and important relationship between AAVE and #BlackLivesMatter;

Richardson and Ragland argue that "The Black Lives Matter movement centers Black humanity

and Black people's determination to represent their own realities, to value themselves on and in

their own terms. Thus, BLM expands upon Black language traditions and creates its own

semiotic system and literacy practices to signify pride, resilience, and affirmation of all Black humanity" (Richardson & Ragland, 2018, p. 29). Their argument asserts that the traditional AAVE rhetorical practices and the activism of #BlackLivesMatter are each shaping the other, producing a set of literacies specific to the activist movement. I am extending that argument to say that the #BlackLivesMatter activist movement would not even be possible without those literacies and languaging practices.

#BlackLivesMatter is not unique in its use of the vernacular to advance its social movement work. Trends moving away from leader-focused models of rhetorical studies of social movements have developed interest in "a rhetoric 'of the people' that centers on more informal, and perhaps 'fragmented' understandings of discourse" (Hauser & McClellan, 2009 p. 29). This interest "approaches discourse in ways designed to illumine issues of oppression, dissidence, and power differentials" (Hauser & McClellan, 2009 p. 29). Hauser and McClellan (2009) describe Hauser's theory of vernacular rhetorics: communities, particularly "counterpublic or subaltern spheres" "all speak a distinct language and perform [this] specific cultural inscription in their everyday interactions". Their justification for the need to theorize vernacular rhetorics is important to my analytical framework's attention to contestations for power. They argue,

Vis a vis social movements, the rationale for developing a theory of vernacular rhetoric lies in its dialectic with official discourses. There is an agonistic zone between official and mundane communication in which the established and the marginalized vie for power. Their struggle is enacted through contrasting rhetorical modalities seeking public allegiance and legitimation. (29).

It is in this agonistic zone where power is being contested that the specialized and persuasive work of marginalized rhetors is accomplished. Public allegiance and legitimation can

serve as a kind of evidence that what *was* mundane has become powerful and persuasive, therefore making the tacit mundanity of marginalization explicit and legible to the public.

Essentially, *A Techné of Marginality* posits that vernacular rhetorics are a kind of technical rhetoric too (Frost & Eble, 2015) and deserve attention in technical and professional communication studies for the work that they do in social movements. The #BlackLivesMatter hashtag and the ensuing movement fits Hauser and McClellan's definition of vernacular rhetorics. They outline four criteria: "(1) *polyvocality*, which makes it possible for vernacular discourse to (2) *appear under the surface—not always in full view of the "official discourse*, where it can (3) *perform an interrogation of "official" discourse in ways that challenge or resist it*, and thus (4) *perform power in mundane, often unnoticed, ways*. (Hauser & McClellan, 2009, emphasis original p. 30).

Reading Social Movement Work as Technical Communication

At this point, this discussion positions us to ask more of technical and professional communication as a field. It requires the field to become more inclusive of both different kinds of knowledge and different kinds of work. As the running example here, #BlackLivesMatter is an illustration of how a more inclusive definition of technical and professional communication can grow the field of inquiry and practice. By the broadest definitions of technical or professional communication (which I see as most appropriate for this project), one of which is an effort to "accomplish something" by "making tacit knowledge explicit" (Durack 1997), #BlackLivesMatter's rhetorical practices are readily understood as technical communication; their use of hashtags to organize and execute on-the-ground protests, or their antenarrative Herstory of the organization's origins to counteract public misinformation and appropriation, their advocacy for the use of mobile technology to document state violence, or their leveraging of existing networks of Black publics, celebrities, and journalists to impact public opinion and

drive mainstream media coverage—all of these practices have contributed to accomplishing a new political and social insight into state violence against Black people.

However, social movement rhetorics don't fit neatly into the disciplinary origin stories of technical communication to facilitate these kinds of connections in the scholarship. The field's orientation toward preparing engineering students and later other science, technology, and business students to write professionally codifies certain definitions of work, expert, and rhetoric and technology into the disciplinary lexicon. These definitions limit the kinds of practices that can be studied, understood, and carried out as technical communication because they only recognize work defined under the Western philosophical and rhetorical rubric of capitalist outcomes that value production and reproduction. Moreover, the rigid notions that perpetuate myths of the objectivity, neutrality, and apolitical nature of technical communication historically, actually center those who (are set up to) succeed in a Western, capitalist environment, to the exclusion of any voices and perspectives that are outside of these mainstream ideas about technical communication.

Technical communication scholars are pushing past these boundaries through the recent cultural and critical turns in the scholarship. As Britt (2006) summarizes, in the last half century, technical communication has shifted its focus from discourse in the form of texts, to discourse within the context of organizations, and most recently to discourse as a function of institutions. By reviewing social and cultural theories about institutions, Britt describes the nature of the field's focus on institutions concretely when she concludes, "Technical communication is the means by which institutions define themselves and conduct their cultural work" (Britt 2006). For the last two decades the critical turn in technical and professional communications scholarship has produced scholarship that as Britt notes, "attends to the workings of power and ideology,

especially as a way to investigate the role of discourse forms in the creation, maintenance, and transformation of social relations" (Britt 2006). The necessity for interrogations of power and interventions for justice within institutions cannot be understated.

However a focus on institutions constructs an unnecessarily narrow frame for our field's understanding of work and work place, ethos, and efficiency by emphasizing connections to capital and economy, professional credentials, speed of production/reproduction over more social and humanistic concerns. Certainly power and ideology impose themselves on discourse beyond institutions. How has the field considered power and ideology beyond institutional spaces? Kimball explores this question with his discussion of what he terms the "Golden Age" of Technical Communication. Following three previous eras, the "Brass," "Beige," and "Glass" ages, the Golden age of Technical Communication is one where technical communication work happens outside of institutional and organizational spaces (Kimball, 2017). While the Glass Age was marked by efforts to distinguish and sharpen the definition of technical communication as "symbolic-analytic" work, which can only be made available to an elite few, Kimball notes that "much of the rest of the world's population is actually engaging in the act of technical communication every day. They are just not necessarily getting paid for it" (p. 11). He cites the overwhelming volume of people who get help with products and technologies not from the corporations or industries that designed them, but from other users. Referring to everything from how-to videos and product reviews to unboxing videos and makeup tutorials, Kimball (2017) acknowledges that "they instruct, they demonstrate, they hack, they modify, they tweak—they engage in brilliant and mundane acts of sabotage and *bricolage*—and almost compulsively, they share with the entire world how to do what they did," concluding that "we are all technical communicators" (p. 12). *A Techné of Marginality* fits neatly into the Golden era of Technical

Communication that Kimball describes because it locates technical communication happening within and through cultural rhetorical practices, which are typically explicitly excluded from institutional spaces because of how they index the bodies and experiences that have been marginalized in institutional spaces.

Tracing Intersections: Cultural Rhetorics and Technical and Professional Communication

As scholars challenge outdated conceptualizations of technical communication, they are taking up the existing strands of scholarship that take seriously the influence of race, gender, class, and other historically marginalized identities in the theory and practice of technical communication. The result is a call for decolonial and socially just technical communication theories that can include historically marginalized difference as a viable standpoint from which to theorize and practice. These calls for decolonial work are often framed by redefinitions of the concepts that have done the work of exclusion. Haas (2012) reiterates the need for her decolonized definitions of race, rhetoric, and technology when she reminds the field that,

even in the most progressive spaces and places, the colonial rhetorical detritus of racism and ethnocentrism remains, and if these worldviews and rhetorics go unchallenged, they will continue to influence who and what we think of when we consider issues of race and technological literacy and expertise. Thus, I challenge myself, the discipline, my colleagues, and my students to consider how the language we use might serve to redress the long-standing legacies of colonialism and imperialism, particularly in the rhetoric that we choose to employ to represent our work and the work of others. (288)

Frost (2016) poses similar objections and reframing of the field's uncritical articulations of objectivity and efficiency with Apparent Feminism. This new ground in the field is fertilized by established and growing interests in the technical communicator as public intellectual (Haas, 2012; Frost & Eble, 2015), an interest in communities over individuals as a focus of study

(Grabill, 2007; Moore, 2018), and a commitment to social justice intervention and ethical outcomes (Frost, 2016; Jones, 2016; Jones, Moore, & Walton, 2016; Colton, Holmes, Walwema, 2017). These threads of scholarship, each in their own ways, provide an avenue into technical communication for the kinds of issues and rhetorical practices that social movement rhetorics highlight.

Black Feminism as a Decolonial Framework for Activist Technical and Professional Communication

Black feminist thinkers like Audre Lorde, bell hooks, and Patricia Hill Collins have consistently articulated a critical perspective of the marginal standpoint which Black women inhabit. bell hooks argues that "it is essential for continued feminist struggle that Black women recognize the special vantage point our marginality gives us and make use of this perspective to criticize the dominant racist, classist, sexist hegemony as well as to envision and create a counter-hegemony" (15). hooks' counsel provides a useful working definition of critical marginality that I take up in this project. hooks is not the only one to make this assertion specifically about Black women who argued for a more complex appeal for justice and freedom that acknowledged the ways that Black queer women were multiply oppressed (Lorde 1984; hooks 1981; hooks 1984), a concept that later came to be named intersectionality (Crenshaw 1991).

The emphasis on an intersectional and critical analysis of marginality shows up in social movement practice and scholarship as well. Social Movement scholars Stuart, Smith, and Denton (2012) echo and cite theorists such as Herbert Simons, who notes the "uninstitutionalized or *outsider* status of social movements," by affirming that "social movements and their members are always *out-groups* that society generally views as illegitimate" (p. 8). In describing their status as outsiders, Stuart, Smith and Denton suggest that "social movements have virtually no

powers of reward or punishment…no legislative, judicial, or enforcement powers or any assured means of financial support … and little control over and favorable reporting from the traditional mass media" (p. 8-9). In other words, over-policed and stereotyped Black communities have litte recourse via the typical channels for accountability that are available to groups with more cultural capital.

Black feminism has gifted intersectionality and marginality as a critical lens to social movements in both practice and theory as illustrated in the contemporary activism of #BlackLivesMatter. Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor documents this resurgence of focus on intersectionality and marginality in an edited collection of interviews with #BlackLivesMatter activists reflecting on the significance of the Combahee River Collective, described as a "trailblazing group of radical Black feminists". She states, "in the last several years, Black feminism has reemerged as the analytical framework for the activist response to the oppression of trans women of color, the fight for reproductive rights, and, of course, the movement against police abuse and violence. The most visible organizations and activists connected to the #BlackLivesMatter movement speak openly about how Black feminism shapes their politics and strategies today" (2017). This is confirmed in the herstory account of the movement's origins by Alicia Garza whose rendering of the story emphasizes intersectionality, uses storytelling, and centers lived experience—all hallmarks of Black feminist thinking (Garza, 2014). The intentional framing of contemporary Black activism with Black feminist thought and theory situates #BlackLivesMatter as an explicitly decolonial project that advances the Black rhetorical traditions of resistance toward more critical and inclusive definitions of freedom.

The rhetorical practices that have enabled #BlackLivesMatter movement-building align well with social movement theories. Precautionary recordings of everyday interactions with law

enforcement could be understood as mundane, daily rhetorical acts of resistance through vernacular rhetoric (Hauser & McClellan 2009); kneeling during the playing of the national anthem at sporting events at all levels constitutes the creation and use of image events (Johnson 2007); everyday citizens being compelled to travel to Ferguson, MO, reflects the rhetoric of place in protest (Endres & Senda-Cook 2011); and the virality of the hashtag #BlackLivesMatter itself illustrates the digitally mediated and networked nature of resistance (Castells 2015; Tufekci 2017). Although the rhetorical practices of #BlackLivesMatter align well with those of other contemporary social movements, not much of the literature examines the combination of technical evolution through new and digital media and the persuasive effect of cultural rhetorics within the same discussions of contemporary social movements. That Black rhetors make critical use of their marginal perspective in their rhetorical practices—particularly in service of a specialized purpose—makes them worthy of consideration as a kind of technical communication.

Resisting Objectivity in Technical and Professional Communication

With *A Techné of Marginality*, I want to be careful to argue that today's #BlackLivesMatter activists stand in a long tradition of Black rhetors as technical communicators—we just have yet to recognize their work, in part because of its explicitly subjective stance. When slaves sang negro spirituals that were coded with instructions that led runaway slaves toward freedom—that was technical communication. When a New York City mailman originated and published *The Negro Traveler's Green Book* to help Black travelers navigate open and often legally prescribed racism and discrimination safely—that was technical communication (Green, 1940). When the Black Panther Party used their ten-point plan and *The Black Panther* newspaper, comics, and other media to execute over 50 social programs—that was technical communication (Nelson & Grant, 2015). Each of these instances of Black rhetorical practices in service of freedom is an occasion when Black rhetors made critical use of

their marginalized perspective to make implicit knowledge strategically explicit in ways that advanced their liberatory work. Their efforts were on their own behalf and earned them important gains that, though outside the norms of Western, capitalist rhetorical practices, still accomplished important work. Yet, despite patterns of activist work clearly meeting the definition of technical communication both then and now, #BlackLivesMatter's struggle to attain ethos in a mainstream context extends into technical communication and excludes them from our scholarly conversations.

The disruption of the technical and professional communication's myth of neutrality and objectivity to embrace a form of subjectivity is not new. Erin Frost's theorization of apparent feminism calls on Technical and Professional Communication scholars to foreground their feminist positions and to ally with those who do feminist work even if they object to the label in order to "make more obvious the need for feminist interventions in everyday life as well as in academia" (Frost, 2016). As more and more field of inquiry admit to the limits of objectivity and embrace the value of positionality as an approach to research, technical and professional communication would do well to follow suit. This critical turn in the scholarship is an apt moment for such a change because it offers the field a replacement for the neutrality we believed we were gaining from objectivity; instead, we ought to pursue justice as an outcome of critical subjectivity (in this case—marginality). How much more could Black feminism and the Black activism that it enables, illuminate the need for feminist, racially just interventions if technical and professional communication scholars and practitioners explicitly foregrounded it? Moreover, how can it point to the ways that Black women are always, already making those interventions for themselves, using their own, cultural rhetorical practices?

Claiming Subjectivity and Asserting it as a Techné

Technical communication scholars have returned to techné as a rhetorical concept that is

more expansive and predates our contemporary connotations of technology. Haas, as part of her broader, more flexible definitions of race, rhetoric and technology, describes the latter two as technés and characterizes them according to criteria provided by Atwill (1998), which I will take up as well. They include the following:

- A techné is never a static, normative body of knowledge. It may be described as a dynamis (or power), transferable guides and strategies, a cunningly conceived plan—even a trick or trap. This knowledge is stable enough to be taught and transferred but flexible enough to be adapted to particular situations and purposes.

- A techné resists identification with a normative subject. The subjects identified with techné are often in a state of flux or transformation…

- Techné marks a domain of intervention and invention. (p.49)

Here, Atwill (and by extension, Haas in her uptake of the definition) describes an unwieldy, but influential capacity. Of particular use for the use of techné in my framework is the emphasis on the departure from norms, the fluidity of use and transmission, and the potential to be both generative (invention) and disruptive (intervention).

It is important to note that the question of the role and subjectivity of technical communicators is already being considered in the field of technical communication. While Jones (2016) asserts that technical communicators should be advocating for social justice in their work (making theorists and practitioners the subjects and activists the objects of study—a stance that could be perceived as neocolonial in its framing), this theory asks us to consider the possibility that activists who are already working for social justice are also, already technical communicators, which situates activists as experts and positions them as subjects, privileging their subjectivity and perspectives. With A Techné of Marginality, I join other scholars in

technical and professional communication who have described subjectivity and community

knowledge as valuable. More specifically, I assume this stance to advance the conversation in the

field about subjectivity as a techné. Grabill (2007) focuses on invention as an outcome of techné

and acknowledges that there are "epistemological issues at stake" in marginalized communities

who are writing and working collaboratively to create change. He describes the specialized

knowledge within a community as "knowledge work" because "knowledge matters so deeply to

how and why the less powerful can be persuasive" (p. 82). However, Grabill stops short of

making the argument that the community organizations he writes about are persuasive, citing the

complexity of the issue and noting that "it [the persuasiveness] is difficult to see as a researcher"

(p. 86).

We should take Grabill's observation seriously—it is evidence of the importance of a

Black Feminist epistemological stance for technical communicators. Inquiries that bump up

against the edges of mainstream understandings of knowledge may fall short of sufficient

explanations of the phenomenon they investigate. Though not in academic terms, decolonial and

Black feminist thinkers have offered both metaphorical and literal understandings of the

technically rich, unique, and critical perspective that a marginal subjectivity affords a technical

communicator. Haas reflects on her approach to the discipline by recalling,

[she] bring[s] to this story of the discipline—perhaps more aptly understood as a story

from the periphery of the discipline—a subjectivity that has steered me toward the borderlands of

inquiry in computers and composition and in technical communication, looking for where either

or both intersect with cultural studies so that I could recognize myself in what I read at times and

so that I might have a place to stand in the discipline as I did in the workplace. (Haas 2012)

Moreover, Black feminist thinkers, whose influence and activism inform and inspire

contemporary #BlackLivesMatter activists also understand their marginal standpoints in terms of its benefit to their technical communication skills. Audre Lorde contends that, "when a people share a common oppression, certain kinds of skills and defenses are developed. And if you survive you survive because those skills and defenses have worked…" (Lorde as qtd in Sandoval, 2000). Gloria Anzaldúa describes her marginal experiences using metaphors that include documents that are common for technical communication: "these…are survival strategies—maps, blueprints, guidebooks that we need to exchange in order to feel sane, in order to make sense of our lives" (Anzaldúa as qtd in Sandoval, 2000). These understandings of social movement theory vis a vis technical communication lay the groundwork for a theoretical framework that joins the two. A Techné of Marginality makes some attempt to trace correlations and connections that start to get at the persuasive effect that Grabill alludes to but does not pursue.

Anticipating Disciplinary Contributions from *A Techné of Marginality*

Without the ideas and language afforded to me by the intersections and interventions described above, the nuances and distinctions of my own framework would not have emerged. These disruption(s) enable my contributions.

Building *A Techné of Marginality* through systemic examination of Black activist work enables technical communication scholars to seize a particularly kairotic moment in our culture when activism and resistance abound and offer robust data for inquiry. It also steps into the social justice turn in technical communication scholarship with a meaningful reframing of ethos and subjectivity for technical communicators. I make a distinction between activism and advocacy, with activism being appeals for redress of power differentials from outside a system and advocacy being appeals for redress of power differentials from within (and using the resources and influence of) a system. I make this distinction to acknowledge the difference in

stakes and consequences and to situate my focus on activism—and thus, activists as subjects—doing the liberatory work of justice in and on their own terms.

To that end, *A Techné of Marginality* draws its explanatory power from the intersections of (Black) cultural rhetorics, the social justice turn in technical communication scholarship, and recent digital turns in social movement rhetorics. Reviewing these bodies of work alongside one another identifies the places where one field can respond to the questions exposed by another, and by complicating these intersections, I build an analytical framework that can open up new possibilities for liberatory, social justice work through technical communication.

I use the #BlackLivesMatter social movement as a motif in my construction of the framework both to honor the lived experiences of those who are already doing activist work that gives rise to the analytical framework and to illustrate its relationships to the fields of scholarship this project has the potential to join. By situating the activist work of #BlackLivesMatter in a long tradition of Black social movements and reframing their rhetorical practices as a kind of technical communication work, I argue that *A Techné of Marginality* resists cultural norms that disregard Black Americans capacity to critique broader cultural systems, recognizes their centuries long pursuit of justice as work, and assigns value to their perspectives as experts in resistance. The case study of #BlackLivesMatter is a model that is meant to facilitate the identification and emergence of other cultural rhetorical practices to be foregrounded in technical and professional communication through this framework. In other words, by thinking about #BlackLivesMatter's rhetorical practices as social movement work, and social movement work as technical communication, we can also expect that *A Techné of Marginality* will inform other more flexible, inclusive, and critical conceptualizations of traditional technical communication scholarship. My intention is to both situate my thinking in technical communication and

simultaneously disrupt the disciplinary conventions that have excluded contributions like mine for too long. The framework that I build in the process of negotiating these tensions will answer Haas' (2012) call for "building new [decolonial and critical race theories] that are usable and useful for the field of technical communication" (p. 292).

As it evolves, this analytical framework will be able to function as both a theory and a methodology. As a theory it will provide the terms and concepts that explain technical communication outside of traditional workspaces and cultural contexts. As a methodology it will legitimize inquiry, style, design, and practices that draw on marginal epistemologies. In either case, the framework will offer technical communication scholars new ways to see the production of critically marginal rhetorical tactics that do technical communication work.

#BlackLivesMatter Case Study: Black Bodies and Black Hashtags Making Specialized Meaning

The research design and methods explained in this chapter reflect *A Techné of Marginality*'s origin in the lived experience and praxis of Black people before it materializes as an analytical framework. Here, I introduce and contextualize the elements of the #BlackLivesMatter social movement that comprise my case study for analysis and introduce the methods that allow the framework *A Techné of Marginality* to emerge through the systematic examination of tweets as rhetorical artifacts of Black lived experience.

#BlackLivesMatter: Flashpoints and Context

On August 9, 2014, Michael Brown's dead body lay in the streets of Ferguson, Missouri for four hours. Darren Wilson, a Ferguson police officer, confronted Brown and his companion as they walked in the middle of the street. In the short struggle that ensued during the encounter between Brown and Wilson, Michael Brown was shot six times and he died as a result of his injuries. People in his community immediately began to emerge from their homes to witness the commotion. Their curiosity evolved into fear and concern for the unarmed young man who had been shot and eventually escalated to rage at the indignity of his exposed, deceased body. The broad range of accounts recollecting these hours include details that are both mundane and egregious in over-policed Black communities like Ferguson. Perceptions swirled that police held little regard for Brown's humanity, were disrespectful of his grieving parents, and lacked procedural precision, intensifying frustrations for onlookers. Soon, their frustration took the form of angry protests in the streets of Ferguson and as people voiced their frustrations on social media, the hashtag #BlackLivesMatter went viral. The #BlackLivesMatter Herstory describes the evolution from hashtag to movement from an inside perspective:

In 2014, Mike Brown was murdered by Ferguson police officer Darren Wilson. It was a guttural response to be with our people, our family—in support of the brave and courageous community of Ferguson and St. Louis as they were being brutalized by law enforcement, criticized by media, tear gassed, and pepper sprayed night after night. Darnell Moore and Patrisse Cullors organized a national ride during Labor Day weekend that year. We called it the Black Life Matters Ride. In 15 days, we developed a plan of action to head to the occupied territory to support our brothers and sisters. Over 600 people gathered. We made two commitments: to support the team on the ground in St. Louis, and to go back home and do the work there. We understood Ferguson was not an aberration, but in fact, a clear point of reference for what was happening to Black communities everywhere.

When it was time for us to leave, inspired by our friends in Ferguson, organizers from 18 different cities went back home and developed Black Lives Matter chapters in their communities and towns—broadening the political will and movement building reach catalyzed by the #BlackLivesMatter project and the work on the ground in Ferguson" (Black Lives Matter, n.d.).

In the nearly five years since the hashtag #BlackLivesMatter evolved from a Facebook post into a social movement organization, activists have maintained a consistent presence on Twitter. The use of the hashtag has been present throughout that time, peaking at particular "flashpoints" in the movement for Black lives. These flashpoints are moments when Black people experience state sanctioned violence, often without consequence to the perpetrators. Sometimes these flashpoints reflect a cluster of events and other times they are ignited by a

single event; in either case, they typically serve as the means by which a community's response to a local occurrence becomes national news.

Although we now understand the Ferguson protests as the initial "flashpoint" in the social movement that is widely recognized by the slogan #BlackLivesMatter, it is important to contextualize what happened in Ferguson and the activism that followed the incident. Mainstream discourse about race in 21st century America made a sharp turn with the election of Barak Obama, the first Black President of the United States. His election, enabled by the support of millions of white Americans, marked the dawning of what some called a "post-racial" America. TaNehisi Coates captures the critical response to post-racial discourse, "The Obama-era qualifier is also inherently flawed, because it assumes that the long struggle that commenced when the first enslaved African arrived on American soil centuries ago could somehow be resolved in an instant, by the mere presence of a man who is not a king" (Coates, 2015, para. 1). Declarations that this milestone was evidence that the race problem had been solved were met with skepticism at best in the Black community; the war on drugs and mass incarceration that gripped and destroyed Black communities in the 80s and 90s betrayed the hope of the civil rights movement just 20 years before. Black communities lived in a daily onslaught of systemic and intersecting oppressions which demonstrated clearly that America was anything but post-racial.

Ferguson embodies the contradiction between popular, white American and Black community perceptions of contemporary race relations. Ferguson is widely believed to have been a 'sundown town,' which historian and sociologist James Loewen describes as a community of white people where Black people are not welcome after sundown, particularly between the end of reconstruction in the 1890s and just before fair-housing legislation was passed in the late 1960s (Loewen 2005). The legacies of this unofficial, but nonetheless very real, designation

remain today in Ferguson. A United States Department of Justice Department investigation of the Ferguson Police Department reported that the demographics of local government and law enforcement do not reflect the current primarily Black population and that Ferguson law enforcement efforts are focused on generating revenue (United States Department of Justice Civil Rights Division, 2015). These findings are an indicator of how Ferguson citizens experienced this "post-racial" America—daily harassment, inequity, and violence by both state and individual actors was dismissed and reproduced, explained away by the presumption of equal protection under the law in spite of unequal outcomes. The conclusions in the report were already clear to the people who gathered around Michael Brown's body and other Black citizens like them in towns like Ferguson: the public and political infrastructure was conspired against the success of Black citizens; their lived experiences tell them these truths. The police department, the city government, and the local economy were all disproportionally punitive to Black citizens. The burden of being unfairly targeted and taken advantage of jeopardized the lives and livelihoods of Black people in Ferguson and validated the implicit notion that Black lives are disposable in America. They do not matter.

If the convergence of an apt hashtag and yet another unjust death was fresh tinder, then it was the state-sanctioned response to the protests that acted as an accelerant. Ferguson exploded in protest. These initial protests would continue for more than two weeks (and recur at both the non-indictment of Wilson and the anniversary of the incident), in Ferguson and in cities all around the country where protesters gathered in solidarity. Organizers on the ground set up protests, direction actions, and civil disobedience to channel anger into a resistance strategy was replicated in cities across the nation. Despite a constitutional right to assemble and petition for a redress of grievances (United States, 2012), protestors in Ferguson were met with a strict,

militarized response that included curfews and riot squads. The mainstream media drove a public narrative through coverage that, in many ways, *crafted* the violent mobs that would justify and legitimize the state response rather than investigating and reporting from the perspective of the marginalized people on the ground.

Marc Lamont Hill, a professor at Temple University who is also an activist, journalist, and political commentator, describes the tensions of the being on the ground the night after Brown was killed as he recounts one of the first experiences he had upon arriving to Ferguson in his capacity as a journalist for BET News. He came upon a gas station parking lot full of Black people, where the words "Thank you Black Twitter" had been written in pastel chalk. He notes this as a pivotal moment marking his recognition of the mainstream media's shift to pay attention to new (social) media because, "a new generation of folk decided they weren't gonna wait for mainstream media to get the Black guy to tell the story…they said we're going to tell the story the way we want to tell it and force the media to catch up…and it was also, I think, an opportunity to counter-narrate it" (Left of Black, 2016). Hill animates this claim with a story about his first-hand experience live tweeting his (and his fellow activists') resistance of the midnight curfew and then ultimately being tear-gassed in short order with no warning. As he was experiencing these events, people were tweeting back at him to dispute his claims because of what they were seeing on MSNBC and other mainstream cable news outlets. He notes "the mainstream media was painting the police as offering these gentle warnings to get protestors to leave and people were getting shot with rubber bullets, people got shot with a real bullet…" (Left of Black, 2016). Hill's recollections are uniquely positioned as he occupies and straddles critical and often opposing roles as scholar, activist, citizen, and journalist; but in this account, his credibility comes from his lived experience as a Black man protesting on the streets of Ferguson.

The conditions imposed on the free speech of Ferguson citizens by an overly militaristic response were meant to contain the unrest that had been building in Black communities since the death of Trayvon Martin but remained largely invisible in mainstream public discourse. Instead, as noted by Black politics and social movements scholar Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor:

> The explosion in Ferguson and the nationwide protests…deepened the political crisis, shattered the "postracial" proclamations, and inspired others to rise up against a worsening epidemic of police harassment, brutality, corruption, and murder that threatens to snatch the lives and personhood of untold numbers of African Americans in every city and suburb. But the sense of political crisis can be measured by the degree of attention it garners from elected officials scrambling to try and rescue the legitimacy of law-enforcement agencies and the rule of law itself. While many predicted the intervention of the Reverend Al Sharpton, Attorney General Eric Holder's appearance was unexpected. (2016 p. 13)

What Taylor notes here is important for how we understand the rhetorical significance of the Ferguson protests. Despite an existing and long-standing "political crisis" in Black communities who are harassed by police, the protests in Ferguson mark a shift in expected outcomes—people expect (and have caricatured) a response from civil rights icons such as Al Sharpton. The general public sentiment is that these responses are more for show than they are able to produce actual material results. On the other hand, an appearance from the sitting attorney general suggests that the government perceives a legitimate grievance worthy of investigation and use of public (and therefore, white) resources.

This shift in who is paying attention and responding is a cue that the persuasive and technical aspects of the rhetorical practices used in #BlackLivesMatter protests are compelling

objects of study. In the months that followed Ferguson, the #BlackLivesMatter network coordinated and supported protest in response to case after case of documented state violence against Black people. The origin of the movement as a social media hashtag also became its hallmark. Hashtags featuring the names of people killed by police and slogans resisting the means by which they died were often the first and most powerful responses in local communities. The use of hashtags honored the humanity and centered the bodies of Black people killed by police and they also served the practical purpose of communicating quickly and organizing at the grassroots level. In the flurry of faces and names that followed Trayvon Martin's and Michael Brown's under the rubric of #BlackLivesMatter, Sandra Bland's death is perhaps the second most compelling point of focus because of the way it complicated the narrative of the social movement.

In July of 2015, Sandra Bland was pulled over in a minor traffic stop for failing to signal a lane change. In her exchange with the arresting officer Brian Encinia, which was recorded on his police car's dash camera, she can be heard responding to the traffic stop with defiant annoyance. The video records her flippant response to the officer, who, rather than deescalating, exacerbates the conflict by antagonizing her. Her reluctant but compliant response to his request that she stop smoking and exit her car was laced with profanity and anger—a sentiment likely to be attributed to Bland's awareness to the social, historical, and political context of the interaction. Bland was ultimately arrested for kicking Encinia and charged with assaulting a public servant. She was held in jail for three days and placed in a cell alone because she was deemed a high risk to others. As she waited for her family or friends to secure the $500 that would meet the 10% requirement of her $5000 bail, Bland was distraught and frustrated. Three days after she was arrested she was found dead in her cell from an apparent suicide.

Bland's death was immediately marked by the use of her name as a hashtag, a practice that had become a typical response to Black death connected to police interaction. The hashtag #SandraBland grew steadily and was eventually accompanied by protests on the ground, at first in the city where she was arrested, and eventually around the country. Bland's death in July quickly became associated in popular discourse with not only #BlackLivesMatter, but also #SayHerName, a separate, but sister social movement dedicated to intersectional analyses of police violence against Black women. The movement was designed to intervene in public discourse both in mainstream media and in public policy, that rendered violence against Black women invisible and under-acknowledged.

The #SayHerName hashtag originally accompanied a May 2015 policy report by the African American Policy Forum to call attention to violence against Black women; after the hashtag's virality associated with Sandra Bland's death, the report was updated a re-released to honor Bland and other victims whose stories had been highlighted by the use of the hashtag. The report and its associated hashtag are explicit in their effort to "[build] on the work of scholars and activists who have, over the last two decades, called for increased attention to Black women's experiences of policing" (Crenshaw & Ritchie, 2015, p. 4). The report does this by using familiar narratives of racial profiling and state violence to "illuminate Black women's unique experiences of police violence in gender and sexuality specific contexts and forms" (Crenshaw & Ritchie, 2015, p. 7). These examples include the high percentage of sexual assault against women arrested for sex crimes, Black women as "drug mules" in the war on drugs, and Black women in mental health crises. Specific stories of women and femmes who have suffered keep the report centered on the lived experiences and stories of Black women.

While these are just two moments in a long and continued social movement, they

represent important shifts in public and popular perception of and discourse about violence against Black people. I am arguing that it is important to think of these shifts—though small, incomplete, and imperfect as they are—as a kind of work. The work is in some ways rhetorical (creating a counter-narrative to mainstream media coverage) and in other ways material (using easy access to recording technology to subvert surveillance culture into a counter-surveillance of the police). In either case, social change can count as work, particularly if we reject a neo-liberal, Western conceptualization of labor. Systematically exploring the nature of these shifts—both rhetorically and technically—can reveal powerful insights about how this work got done and who did it. As a result, I choose to use these two flashpoints as an organizational frame for a case study analysis of the #BlackLivesMatter social movement as a way to root *A Techné of Marginality* in lived experience and also make it legible to the value system of the academy.

Tweets and Hashtags as Rhetorical Artifacts of Lived Experience

I have identified these two #BlackLivesMatter flashpoints as the focus of this analysis and I use three hashtag markers--#handsupdontshoot, #iftheygunnedmedown, and #sayhername—as the organizational terms for gathering and reviewing tweets related to #BlackLivesMatter. These hashtags mark and organize the viral response to the flashpoints in my case-study. They emerged organically on Twitter first and then spread to usage on other social media platforms. My primary objects of study are the media (image/video) based content of these tweets and the hashtags that mark them. These choices reflect my interest in the multimodal rhetorical practices—textual, visual, and embodied—taken up by Black rhetors who aligned themselves with #BlackLivesMatter activism through the work of their own contributions, however small.

Both the nature of Twitter as a platform for public discourse and the evolution of social movements in the internet age makes my use of tweets and hashtags—and the distinction

between them—an important and (in many ways) new object of study to the technical communication discipline. Twitter, a digital news and social networking platform, allows people to communicate using short messages called tweets. It started in 2006 and today in 2019, 500 million tweets are sent each day. Twitter also distinguishes itself as a platform that appeals to millennial, urban, educated, and international users (Cooper, 2019). One of the most interesting features of Twitter, and perhaps one of the ways it has led development trends among social media platforms, is through its organic, user-driven addition of new features. Hashtags are? an important example of this:

> Twitter users organically introduced new, and now fundamental, communication patterns to the Twitter network. A seminal example is the hashtag, now nearly universally used across all social networks. Hashtags were introduced as a way to organize conversations and topics. On a network with hundreds of millions messages a day, tools to find Tweets of interest are key, and hashtags have become a fundamental method. Soon after the use of hashtags grew, they received official status and support from Twitter. As hashtags became a *'first-class' object*, this meant many things. It meant hashtags became clickable/searchable in the Twitter.com user interface. It also meant hashtags became a member of the Twitter *entities* family, along with @mentions, attached media, stock symbols, and shared links. These entities are conveniently encoded in a pre-parsed JSON array, making it easier for developers to process, scan, and store them. (Moffitt, 2017)

> Given that tweets are the major unit of content on the Twitter platform, it follows logically that the elements that comprise a tweet, whether that includes text, image, video, gif, or some combination thereof, can be understood as a meaningful record of a communicative act on the part of the user—a rhetorical artifact. In a way, one might expect hashtags to be among the

47

elements listed above. But, the emergence and evolution of hashtags by way of user invention and innovation, as described above, make it a distinct rhetorical artifact unto itself. In other words, a tweet can exist and have meaning without using a hashtag; but, the addition of a hashtag adds a new dimension of meaning, creating nuance and changing the rhetorical effect of the tweet. For example, if I tweet "Best friends for life" with a picture of myself and a friend, using the #tbt hashtag would have a much different effect than using the #rip hashtag. While both hashtags situate the picture as a reflection on a friendship, one has a nostalgic and celebratory tone while the other is clearly mournful. Therefore, hashtags too, though differently, are rhetorical artifacts and worthy of study.

Twitter's ability and willingness to follow user conventions in its programming strategy makes it important to consider how the varying rhetorical practices used on Twitter reflect the social, cultural, political, or persuasive goals of users. It is also imperative to observe carefully and think critically about how user variations on existing features are deviations or innovations on generic conventions within the platform. Not only are elements of Twitter important objects of study for inquiries centered on any contemporary topic of popular public deliberation, in my estimation, they are also important objects of study for understanding Twitter itself so that scholars and activists can predict and harness its potential for equity and justice.

Data Collection & Methods of Analysis

Data collection parameters.

The flashpoints described earlier in this chapter and my justifications for choosing them are listed in the table below. I have assigned short descriptors of the flashpoints that represent the nature of their impact on the #BlackLivesMatter social movement.

Table 1. Flashpoint Explanations			
Flashpoint Episode	Dates	Precipitating Events	Relevant Hashtags
"Enthusiastic Mobilization"	August 12, 2014 -- August 16, 2014 (several days into the protest)	Michael Brown is shot and killed August 9th. Initial Ferguson protests ensue and persist August 9th- August 31st.	#BlackLivesMatter #HandsUpDontShoot #iftheygunnedmedown
Justification: This point is widely recognized as the beginning of the Black Lives Matter Network. Michael Brown was at the center of a cluster of deaths of unarmed Black people and his death was the catalyst for the Ferguson protests that ultimately prompted Black Lives Matter founders to organize formally.			
Flashpoint Episode	**Dates**	**Precipitating Events**	**Relevant Hashtags**
"Intersectional Resistance"	July 13, 2015 -- July 17, 2015	Sandra Bland is arrested and found dead in her jail cell July 13th	#BlackLivesMatter #SandraBland #SayHerName
Justification: This point marks an important moment that complicates the overarching public narrative about resistance to state sanctioned violence against Black people. The introduction of gender as a further marginalizing factor in anti-Black racism and violence offers a valuable point of inquiry for a project interested in the critical potential of marginality, like mine is.			

Table 1. Flashpoint Explanations

Data analysis tool.

This analysis uses a text analytics tool to manage the sorting and coding of the

aforementioned Twitter data. DiscoverText is the most appropriate text analytics tool because it

"combines human and computational techniques that work together in a powerful loop"

(Shulman, 2017). Specifically for Twitter Data, it preserves the Twitter display for coding data,

which avoids a flattened textual experience and allows for a multi-modal analysis of the data.

Because of its utility for academic research that uses Twitter data, DiscoverText partnered (this

partnership has since been decommissioned) with a 3rd party vendor, Sifter, who licensed

historical Twitter data to researchers for analysis through DiscoverText (Discovertext, 2019). I

queried Sifter using GNIP[1] logic to refine and define the limits of my data set. The query logic

draws on Boolean operators as well as some specific queries to generate a set of conditions for

the results. In this case, I requested tweets that use any of the hashtags listed in the rule and

limited the data set to include only tweets that contained visual media (image, video, etc.). This

second condition of the query rule is written "has:media", as shown below. The queries, rules,

and resultant data sets are described below:

Table 2. Flashpoint Queries, Rules, & Data Sets
Flashpoint 1: "Enthusiastic Mobilization"
Rule Text: (#Blacklivesmatter OR #handsupdontshoot OR #iftheygunnedmedown) has:media Start Date: 08/12/2014 End Date: 08/16/2014 Estimated Activities: 58,000
Flashpoint 2: "Intersectional Resistance"
Rule Text: (#Blacklivesmatter OR #sayhername) has:media Start Date: 07/13/2015 End Date: 07/17/2015 Estimated Activities: 34,000

Table 2. Flashpoint Queries, Rules, & Data Sets

Reducing the data archive to a data set for analysis.

Taken together, my search parameters for these two flashpoints produced almost 100,000

tweets to consider for analysis. Discovertext, the data analytics tool that GNIP partnered with to

deliver the data to me, offers several features that helped me narrow the data I collected into a

manageable data set for analysis. Discovertext. For each of my flashpoints, Discovertext created

---

[1] (GNIP: social media aggregation company put a footnote here, I guess?)

a "project" which included an archive of the tweets in 50,000 increment sets. Discovertext allows researchers to sort this data into "buckets" and filter it into "datasets" which can be coded and analyzed. Discovertext also has features specifically designed for text data that can help to manage unwieldy data archives, like mine (Discovertext, 2019). First, I completed a process called deduplication, which is considered universal in text data as a way to "clean" raw data prior to analysis. "In this process, duplicate items are identified if their text content is identical" (Iris R., 2015). Deduplication reduced my data archive to just under 20,000 tweets. Discovertext also enables researchers to cluster data so that near duplicate items are grouped together. I sorted my data into clusters and pulled one item from each cluster into buckets to accurately represent the variety in the data archive. From these deduplicated and clustered buckets, I selected the option to have the software draw a random sample of tweets from these buckets to create my data set of 500 tweets for analysis.

Although reducing the volume of tweets was challenging to navigate, it was not the only barrier to collecting the data for this analysis. The cost of acquiring "historic" Twitter data is an important contextual factor that had a significant impact on my ability to collect this data set. While researchers can query Twitter's Application Programming Interface (API) directly to retrieve tweets from any time period since the platform launched, this method is an inefficient way to collect a set of data and makes it impossible to review for analysis. Third party vendors enable research like my project by collecting data according to more specific search parameters and presenting it in a format that is possible to navigate. However, these third party vendors charge for data that is considered "historic" or more than 10-14 days old. This makes studying phenomenon that happened in the (even very recent) past expensive and potentially cost prohibitive for researchers without research funding or the personal ability to invest in their data

set. This detail contributes to the gap in published research by and about historically

marginalized groups because they or the institutions that serve them often have less resources

with which to take up a project like this one. In my case, my data collection was bounded by my

need to strategically align the parameters of my search to gather a dataset that I could afford.

Were funding not an issue, I would have studied longer time periods as dictated by the organic

unfolding of the flashpoint themselves, rather than imposing relatively arbitrary boundaries

based on my budget.

Introducing data analysis methods.

My analysis of the data draws on two methods: genre analysis and multi-modal critical

discourse analysis (MCDS). Given that the hashtag emerges as a user generated genre, I am

interested in how user innovations to the generic conventions are coupled with rhetorical

practices in the body of the tweets themselves to do activist work. Genre analysis as a method

supports my ability to ascribe meaning to patterns of participation in these hashtags as responses

to a recurring social and rhetorical situation, where these patterns might otherwise be dismissed

as trendy. While an analysis of power is not the primary objective of inquiry in rhetorical genre

studies, genre analysis is also a part of critical discourse analysis and can offer insight on how

hegemonic power structures are reproduced through typified forms of communication

(Fairclough, 2003). More specifically for my study, I am interested in how rhetors deviate from

generic conventions in rhetorically innovative ways (Tardy 2015; Bawarshi 2016).

Critical discourse analysis comes out of sociolinguistics and is interested in the

relationship between language and power. It seeks to bring about social change by "exploring the

intersection between discourse and inequity" (Roderick 2018). As Roderick notes, critical

discourse analysis is "a transformative praxis directed towards exposing the ways in which

discourse is able to constitute social, political, economic, gendered, racial, and sexual inequalities as normal and unremarkable." In recent years, researchers using critical discourse analysis have chosen to include images and video in their analyses of meaning making practices and power, thus multi-modal critical discourse analysis seeks to use the tools of CDS to analyze a range of media texts. Because this project is interested in the use of embodied cultural rhetorical practices and focuses on data from a multi-modal, digital platform, MCDS offers a method for analyzing power as it might be rhetorically constructed through media other than text.

I am choosing to combine genre analysis with multimodal critical discourse analysis to interrogate not only hegemonic power but to trace also discourses of resistance in order to systemically examine how marginalized rhetors do the work of activism.

Data Summary by Code

I performed several rounds of coding to analyze the dataset of 500 tweets for this project. The first round of coding was preliminary and was designed to observe the data and allow patterns to emerge that would inform the creation of a set of codes for the project. The predominant observation was that Black bodies were prominently featured in media tweeted and marked by #BlackLivesMatter hashtags. Those bodies were being put to different kinds of rhetorical use and thus, five codes emerged from the preliminary round of analysis to describe the ways that bodies were portrayed in the data: Documented Bodies, Symbolic Bodies, Ambiguous Bodies, No Bodies, and Does Not Qualify. The second round of analysis applied one of these codes to all 500 tweets in the dataset. In the third round of analysis the data was sorted by hashtag to examine the relationship between the generic patterns built around the hashtags and specialized and persuasive use of media in the tweets.

Because both multimodal critical discourse analysis and genre analysis are interested in

the context of the language that is being analyzed, it is important to note that all the tweets were interpreted in the context of the #BlackLivesMatter social movement. Tweets did not have to exhibit positive sentiment toward the movement, however their contributions had to be legible as commentaries on the movement in general or the specific event that precipitated the flashpoints being analyzed in this project. Examples of tweets that were coded in each category and a description of the patterns that emerged within each code category are displayed below.

Documented bodies.

The "Documented Bodies" code refers to tweets with candid images of bodies in action or motion. These tweets used images that documented people's bodies in medias res. In some cases, the pictures documented people as they protested state violence or in some cases, experienced state violence. In other cases, the pictures served as documentation of a person's existence and humanity through a proliferation of photos in memorium after a person was killed. Examples of tweets that were coded "Documented Bodies" and illustrate these patterns appear in figures 3 and 4 below:

Figure 3. "Documented Bodies" Example 1
   Screenshot of tweet with woman kneeling
   in front of make-shift memorial.

Figure 4. "Documented Bodies" Example 2
Screenshot of tweet with an image of
Sandra Bland and a series of hashtags.

Symbolic bodies.

The "Symbolic Bodies" code refers to tweets with images of bodies posed or curated for rhetorical effect. These tweets included the composition of memes and the strategic pairing of multiple images in support of a claim or argument. The unifying pattern in tweets coded this way was the implicit reference to larger cultural and racial narratives. Based on some examples among tweets that used media are patterns that reference the use of uniform where I define uniform as military uniforms, sports uniforms, graduation regalia, dress clothes, or any dress affiliated with a specific socially sanctioned activity (i.e. boy scouts) as a marker for respectability and whiteness and the use of hand and facial gestures as indicators of objectionable behavior associated with thug or angry stereotypes of Blackness. Examples of tweets that were coded "Symbolic Bodies" and illustrate these patterns appear in figures 5 and 6 below:

Figure 5. "Symbolic Bodies" Example 1
    Screenshot of tweet featuring two
    contrasting images of the same person, one
    in a military uniform and the other giving a
    middle finger gesture and a scrunched
    facial expression.

Figure 6. "Symbolic Bodies" Example 2
    Screenshot of tweet featuring a meme with
    the text "it's because I'm Black" and
    images of Sandra Bland and Kindra
    Chapman.

Ambiguous bodies.

The "Ambiguous Bodies" code refers to images of bodies that can be interpreted in

56

multiple ways. The media used in these tweets includes images of bodies but these bodies are difficult to interpret in conjunction with the other elements of the tweet (the text and the hashtags, specifically). Sometimes, circumstantial evidence from the Twitter user's profile and other tweets gave clues as to how the media in the tweet was meant to be interpreted, but the ambiguity eliminates these tweets from other categories of analysis. With further insight into the Twitter user's intentions some of these tweets might be coded differently; however their ambiguity speaks to the importance of situational and cultural context to rhetorical and technical analysis of these tweets. While these tweets won't be the focus of my analysis, they do illustrate the mainstream attention garnered by the movement in that its hashtags and rhetorical practices are available for deviations like being coopted, misinterpreted, and appropriated. Examples of tweets that were coded "Ambiguous Bodies" and illustrate these patterns appear in figures 7 and 8 below:

Figure 7. "Ambiguous Bodies" Example 1
    A screenshot of tweet featuring two images, an
    apple and a person standing near stairs.

Figure 8. "Ambiguous Bodies" Example 2
    Screenshot of tweet featuring a baby in a pot
    wearing a chef's hat.

No bodies.

The "No Bodies" code refers to tweets with media that contains no visual representation

of bodies in the Tweet. These tweets often featured images that include words. In many cases

those words were either names of Black people who had been victims of police violence or

references to the body itself. The pattern of textual references to bodies (via people's names) or

bodies or embodied experiences is an interesting way of participating and further emphasizes the

significance of embodiment as rhetorically significant in Black activist rhetorics. These examples

are not numerous and therefore won't be the primary focus of my analysis, apart from their

ability to underscore the significance of bodies as a focal point. Examples of tweets that were

coded No Bodies and illustrate these patterns appear in figures 9 and 10 below:
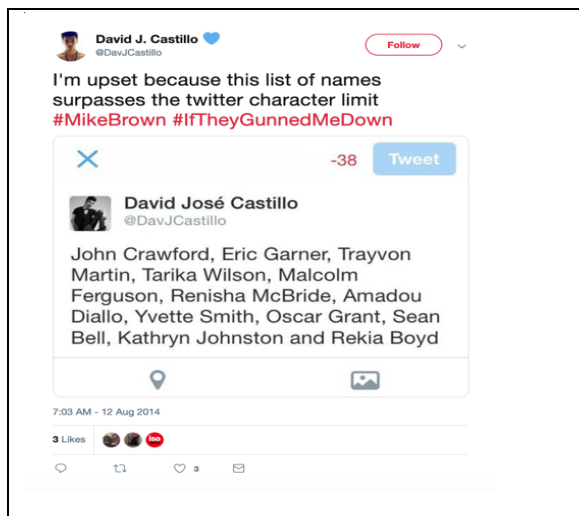
Figure 9. "No Bodies" Example 1

Screenshot of a tweet listing the names of people who have been killed by police.

Figure 10. "No Bodies" Example 2

Screenshot of a tweet with text that reads "Why aren't all cops required to have body cameras?? No more lies.".

Does not qualify.

The "Does Not Qualify" code refers to tweets that use media that may feature bodies but have an apparently ulterior motive in aligning themselves with the #BlackLivesMatter social movement or using the hashtags. Typically, these tweets were either trying to get followers or trying to sell something. This code also captured tweets that had been deleted or accounts that had been suspended since they were first sent out and therefore were no longer available for analysis. These tweets will also not be the main focus of my analysis because many of them are

unavailable and the others are not directly relevant. However, as with the ambiguous bodies

tweets, the tweets that appropriate the hashtags for other purposes point to the legitimation of the

social movement by mainstream standards and mark where the movement is in public discourse.

Examples of tweets that were coded "DNQ" and illustrate these patterns appear in the figures

below.

Figure 11. "Does Not Qualify" Example 1
     Screenshot of a tweet featuring a meme
     with an image of Ted Cruz and text that
     reads "my brain is this big".

Figure 12. "Does Not Qualify" Example 2
     Screenshot of tweet featuring images of t-

shirts with a anti-racism slogans.

Data Summary by Hashtags

The second round of analysis narrowed the focus of the project to two of the initial codes for significant analysis: "Documented Bodies" and "Symbolic Bodies". Interesting patterns and potential points of emphasis from the other three code categories are described in the summaries above; however, their contributions seem reaffirm the significance of embodiment and resistance features of #BlackLivesMatter rhetorical practices. Although bodies are not pictured in the "No Bodies" category for example, those tweets still use media that references bodies by using names or referencing an embodied experience or posture (like #icantbreathe or #handsupdontshoot). And even when the hashtag is taken up for ulterior purposes like selling t-shirts or drawing attention to sympathetic causes, the recognition that the hashtag's addition to the tweet will bring it to the attention of a wider audience lends credence to the notion that the viral hashtags were attracting mainstream attention from those outside the social movement, signaling greater legitimacy within public discourse (Stewart, Smith, & Denton 2012).

#IfTheyGunnedMeDown: 197 tweets.

Tweets marked by the #iftheygunnedmedown hashtag were heavily clustered in the "Symbolic Bodies" code. Most of these tweets follow a standard composition that became associate with the hashtag and was taken up almost universally by users. Typically two (sometimes more) pictures of the same person are juxtaposed—one presenting them in a stereotypically positive light and the other presenting them in a stereotypically negative light. The vast majority of tweets using this hashtag chose to participate in this pattern.

Figure 13. #IfTheyGunnedMeDown
Example 1
　　Screenshot of tweet featuring two images
　　of the same person, one smoking and the
　　other in a medical professional uniform.
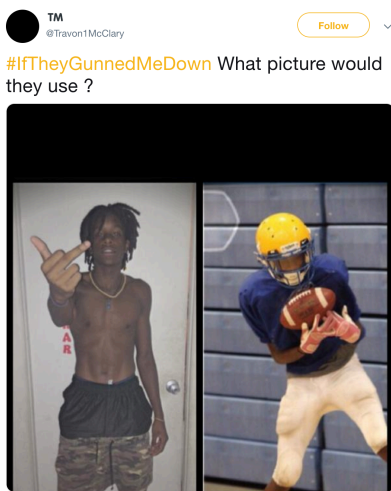
Figure 14. #IfTheyGunnedMeDown
Example 2
　　Screenshot of tweet featuring two images
　　of the same person, one giving a middle
　　finger gesture, the other in a football
　　uniform.

Table 3. Distribution of #IfTheyGunnedMeDown tweets across code categories.		
Code	Percentage	Number
No bodies	2%	4
Documented Bodies	6%	12

Symbolic Bodies	64%	126
Ambiguous Bodies	5%	9
DNQ	23%	46

Table 3. Distribution of #IfTheyGunnedMeDown tweets across code categories.

#HandsUpDontShoot: 92 tweets.

Tweets marked by the #handsupdontshoot hashtag were split fairly evenly between the "Documented Bodies" and "Symbolic Bodies" codes. These tweets were characterized by the common use of a particular bodily pose that reflects the origin of the hashtag. Users who used this hashtag included media that show people with their hands help up in a pose of surrender. Sometimes these pictures appear to be posed for the purpose of taking the picture. At other times, people are using the gesture as part of a protest or some other action and candid images were captured.

Figure 15. #HandsUpDontShoot Example 1
Screenshot of tweet featuring candid
image of people gathered in protest.

Figure 16. #HandsUpDontShoot Example 2
Screenshot of tweet featuring candid image of people in hands up protest position.

Table 4. Distribution of #HandsUpDontShoot tweets across code categories.		
Code	Percentage	Number
No bodies	11%	10
Documented Bodies	27%	25
Symbolic Bodies	34%	31
Ambiguous Bodies	4%	4
DNQ	24%	22

Table 4. Distribution of #HandsUpDontShoot tweets across code categories.

#SayHerName: 175 tweets.

Tweets marked by the #sayhername hashtag were more heavily concentrated in the "Documented Bodies" code category, but still show noteworthy numbers in the "Symbolic Bodies" category. These tweets tend also to be governed by the pattern initially associated with the hashtag—centering the image and name of a woman who was died in the context of state

violence. While some tweets simply document the image of the person who is being remembered, other tweets use the images and names of women in memes or other composed media to emphasize the absence of women from the mainstream and the social movement narrative about state violence against Black people.
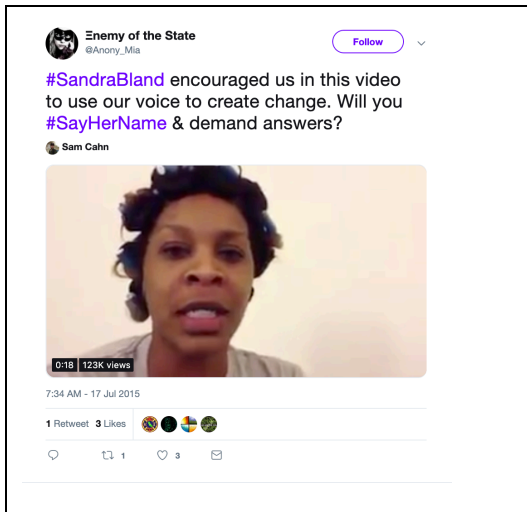

Figure 17. #SayHerName Example 1

Screenshot of tweet featuring a still video image of Sandra Bland.

Figure 18. #SayHerName Example 2

Screenshot of tweet featuring people gathered to remember Shantel Davis.

Table 5. Distribution of #SayHerName tweets across code categories.		
Code	Percentage	Number
No bodies	15%	26
Documented Bodies	54%	95
Symbolic Bodies	27%	47
Ambiguous Bodies	1%	1
DNQ	3%	6

Table 5. Distribution of #SayHerName tweets across code categories.

The results of the first two rounds of coding and analysis presented here create a foundation for further analysis through the lens of genre and multi-modal discourse analyses. The sorting and coding explained above reveal the patterns that exist in the data, which a genre analysis will further explicate. The sorting and coding also points to the power dynamics that exist between the (mostly) Black rhetors participating in the social movement and the mainstream discourse about state sanctioned violence against Black people (both on Twitter and in traditional news media). Even though documented and symbolic bodies have the most robust data for genre and multi-modal critical discourse analyses since the majority of the tweets fall in these categories, the emergence of the other three categories where people take up these hashtags for irrelevant or ulterior motives or when they deviate from the patterns suggests subtle but important power dynamics that can be further explored through multi-modal discourse analysis. Taken together all five codes and the baseline analysis of the data in each category support a systematic analysis of the Black lived experiences articulated through the Tweets.

Analyzing Patterns and Power in #BlackLivesMatter Rhetorical Practices

Thus far, the theoretical strands of Black feminism, social justice technical communication, and social movement rhetorics that I traced in Chapter 2 provide an epistemological frame for the systematic collection and examination of tweets that are presented as a dataset in Chapter 3. In other words, those theories informed how and why I looked at this data and what counts as meaningful in my analysis. Now, in this chapter, I perform a genre analysis that includes multi-modal critical discourse analysis of the data I have presented to parse the significance of patterns and power—the two most prominent issues that are implicated in the data set in Chapter 3.

In contrast to the previous chapter, where I summarize patterns and trends that emerge from coding the data, this chapter will excerpt a few, specific examples for in-depth analysis. My goal here is to give readers a concrete point of reference to understand my analysis, and ultimately to extend the analysis to the patterns and trends described in Chapter 3. To start, I will summarize the data set from chapter three to help readers recall the most salient points among those trends before I begin my in-depth analysis.

In summary: the viral hashtags associated with #BlackLivesMatter share some common characteristics including: making assertions, referencing bodies, and making covert critiques. These hashtags organize social media participation around multi-modal rhetorical patterns. When people engage with these patterns in their use of visual media (mostly pictures and some video) in tweets that participate in these hashtags, that media also includes references or representation of bodies. Images and videos of these bodies are leveraged rhetorically to make meaningful comments on the #BlackLivesMatter social movement.

Because the purpose of a methodology like *A Techné of Marginality* is to explain how the

social perspectives of Black people and other historically marginalized rhetors produce culturally responsive and productive technical communication tactics, it needs to be able to accommodate a range of methods that align with different kinds of data (data deriving from different rhetorical traditions of historically marginalized groups, for example). *A Techné of Marginality*'s emphasis on power and resistance requires methods that interrogate systems without flattening or excluding difference. The remainder of this chapter will be divided into two parts, wherein each method of analysis chosen for this project—rhetorical genre analysis and multi-modal critical discourse analysis—is justified by these standards and explained in relationship to the data before it is applied.

Rhetorical Genre Analysis as Method

The patterns of participation in the use of hashtags and visual media in support of #BlackLivesMatter suggests that the repetition of form, content, structure, and style is of some benefit to participants or to the cause for which they organize—in this case, resistance to state sanctioned violence against Black people.

In order to understand this phenomenon, I draw on genre studies from both rhetorical and critical discourse analysis perspectives. Academic inquiry related to genre is broad and complex spanning a range of disciplines and approaches. While most approaches agree on the idea that a basic description of a genre is a typified response to a recurring rhetorical situation, most every question beyond that has varying schools of thought. I choose here to take up ideas from two strands of thinking on genre: rhetorical genre studies because of its focus on genre as a social action and genre as a component of critical discourse analysis because of its exploration of genre as a tool of power. These takes on genre support my interest in the patterns that emerge in the data set and align most usefully with my concerns about work and power.

The broad genre of "social media post" and the specific genres of a "tweet" and a

"hashtag" might readily appear to fit the *cybergenre* definition, posited by Shepard and Waters (1998), which defines them as texts born as a result of "the combination of the computer and the internet" (para. 3). I want to acknowledge the significance of the computer and internet to the formation of these genres but also resist the urge to oversimplify an explanation of the proliferation of rhetorical and generic possibilities that are enabled by computers and the internet. Instead, I want to take up the notion of genre assemblages as described by Cagle (2019), who uses the concept to identify a new genre—strangershots, which she defines as "photographs of strangers taken without their knowledge or consent and then shared online, accruing derogatory comments as they circulate through online networks" (p. 67). Cagle applies actor-network theory to demonstrate how assemblages of humans and non-human technologies come together to produce the strangershots genre. This notion of genre assemblages recognizes the emergence of a typified pattern of use and practice out of inextricable and meaningful relationships between human rhetors and non-human actors. In the case of stranger shots, Cagle summarizes:

> strangershots are *not* just a product of an ill-intentioned individual, in possession of a camera and out to shame others. Rather, they are the product of an individual *with* a camera *with* the capacity to upload images to the internet *with* access to sites that will host these image *with* the capacity to share and interact with these images via hyperlinks, like buttons, comment sections and so on. Strangershots aren't produced by individual humans. They're produced by human actors working with and through a network of other actors, both human and non-human—a network that results in strangershots that millions of people now have access to across any number of other website and social media platforms. (p. 71)

It follows then that strangershots and other genre assemblages like them are reflections of a contemporary rhetorical situation that is highly complex, post-human in nature, and recognizable by rhetorical purposes as much or more as they are recognized by form. For example, Cagle acknowledges that taking pictures of strangers in public without their knowledge is not new, noting that it, "neither represents an entirely new practice, nor is it simply the result of a shift in the purpose of this pre-existing practice. Rather, it results from a shift in the fundamental material conditions of the practice," which again, are complex, post-human, and purpose driven (2019, p. 71).

As what we might consider the prototypical genre assemblage, strangershots, are a useful demonstration of how other genre assemblages might come together. As Cagle's reference to taking pictures demonstrates, genre assemblages may be comprised of actors that are not novel or unique in and of themselves. However meaningful, typified responses to a recurring social situation such as the #BlackLivesMatter social movement depend not only on a complex understanding of the human and non-human actors involved, but on the relationships between these actors in their social and political contexts. I argue that a greater understanding of not only #BlackLivesMatter, but also tactics for other kinds of social action and change can emerge from an analysis of genre assemblages that respond to #BlackLivesMatter.

Cagle's genre assemblage thesis usefully foregrounds genre as social action by drawing on Carolyn Miller's foundational framing of genre in rhetorical genre studies. Miller posits that genre must "involve situation and motive, because human action, whether symbolic or otherwise, is interpretable only against a context of situation and through the attributing of motives" (1984, p. 152). One way to think about context and motive is to consider change over time—evolution of genres. Rhetorical genre studies often describes both centripetal and centrifugal forces as

shaping the evolution of a genre—that is, both adherence to conventions and variations on those conventions have a defining influence on the genre. Activist and protest rhetorics prompt the evolution of genre by operating in a particularly liminal rhetorical space—needing, at once, to align themselves with traditionally accepted rhetorical practices in order to be heard, but also to break with tradition and take up alternate rhetorical strategies that signal dissent from dominant discourses. This delicate negotiation of social context is paired with a motive to impact a specific outcome—in this case, calling attention to state sanctioned violence against Black bodies—resulting in rhetors who adhere to *and* flout conventions, to be recognizable *and* markedly distinct, all at the same time. Analyzing activist rhetorics through the lens of genre emphasizes both its rhetorical and technical components.

Acknowledging the significance (and the limitation) of characterizing departures as innovations will be an important idea to return to in this discussion. Tardy's (2015) chapter on genre bending considers this flexibility by asking "to what extent…writers play, improvise or innovate with genre?" (p. 341-2). She describes genre innovation as "departures from genre convention that are perceived as effective and successful by the text's intended audience or community of practice" (p. 342). She qualifies her use of the term by noting that, "there may be some argument for understanding innovation even more broadly, encompassing both successful and unsuccessful norm-departures, but because of the typically positive connotation of innovation and because of my interest in understanding *perceptions* that a norm-departure is "innovative" (as opposed to deviant), I have opted for a somewhat contained use of the term" (p. 342 emphasis original).

The sociocultural aspects of creativity theory serve its pairing with genre theory by emphasizing that products or ideas aren't thought to be inherently creative, but instead are

judged as creative when experts agree that it is. Tardy situates her definition within a three

pronged theoretical framework, which pulls together creativity theory, systems theory, and

Bourdieu's (1991) social theory of symbolic capital. She refers to the most common

understanding of creativity, which "characterizes it by *originality or novelty and usefulness,*

appropriateness, or value," acknowledging that "creative products often work within the

boundaries of genre, bending some conventions but not all," suggesting that applying this

concept to genre theory leads us to expect "that creative or innovative uses of genre are novel in

some ways, but still conventional in other ways" (342-3).

Tardy layers psychologist Csikszentmihalyi (1999) discussion of systems theory onto this

discussion as a way to understand the sociocultural nature of creativity. According to

Csikszentmihalyi, systems theory offers three levels at which the process and evaluation of

creativity happen: "the *individual* who serves as the source of the innovation; the *field*, defined

specifically as the social networks or gatekeepers who initially evaluate the product's novelty

and appropriateness; and the *domain*, made up of the larger system for conventions and common

practices from which individuals draw. Tardy acknowledges that this system is a useful heuristic

for determining innovation or deviance but makes the case that genre should be added as a fourth

component to the system. She asserts that taking the nature of a genre—specifically how

receptive or resistant it is to norm departures—into account is essential to understanding how

flouting genres works in some contexts and not in others (343).

Tardy pauses here to acknowledge one criticism of a systems-based approach: its failure

to foreground power in the system—power which manifests in judgements of norm deviations as

innovative or deviant. She turns to Bourdieu's concept of symbolic capital, which posits that an

utterance must satisfy three "ritual conditions" in order to be granted social power: It must be

produced *by* a legitimate authority, *within* a legitimate situation, and *in* legitimate forms" (344).

This theory begs the question: what people, situations, and forms get legitimacy? For the

academic contexts in which Tardy is exploring genre bending, standards for legitimacy are clear;

however, in a different context, particularly in the liminal rhetorical space that activist rhetorics

occupy, the question of legitimacy is more complex and deserves more attention than Tardy's

theoretical framework offers.

Bawarshi's (2016) discussion of genre flexibility can intervene here in a way that adds

more dimension to our understanding of how power intersects with genre. Bawarshi locates

himself within a tradition of scholarship that "has identified genres as socially derived,

intersubjective, rhetorical typifications that help us recognize and act within recurrent situations"

(243). Specifically, Bawarshi asserts that rhetorical genre studies should consider what's to gain

from treating genre difference (which would include Tardy's innovation and deviation)

differently—considering difference not as a deviation, but as a part of the norm of all genre

performances (245). He refers to dominant pedagogical approaches to genre that continue to

frame them as "static objects to be taught and acquired" as evidence of our preoccupation with

fixation and genre, despite plenty of scholarship about improvisation and the dynamic nature of

genres (244). Bawarshi explains that agency and difference are always at play in language use,

rather than being a function of language. It is with this backdrop that Bawarshi argues "we need

to extend genre agency to include knowledge of strategic genre performances in space and time,

within asymmetrical relations of power" (246). Bawarshi identifies this concept as uptake and

traces it through Freadman's extension of J.L. Austin's speech act theory. His characterization of

uptakes is the crux of Bawarshi's contribution to Tardy's theoretical framework for

understanding norm-departure in genre performances:

For me, the most interesting thing about uptakes is that they compel us to pay attention to the historical-material conditions and dynamics of agency and power that function between, hold together, and shape genre performances. While genres are typified kinds of action (socially recognizable, nameable phenomena that have defined social functions), uptakes are the interplays between genres, the lines of movement and *trans-actions*. (246)

Some powerful new, more complex questions emerge at the intersection of Tardy's theoretical framework for thinking about genre innovation and Bawarshi's attention to how power and agency influence variations in the uptake of a genre: Which "experts" judge creativity outside the academy and how are they influenced by power? How do asymmetrical power dynamics influence how variation gets perceived as innovative or deviant? Can individual uptakes of a genre that are perceived as deviant reflect the same kind of agency and power that we attribute to innovation?

I want to take up these considerations in an analysis of #BlackLivesMatter genre assemblages that hypothesizes that Black activists in protest movements make meaningful norm departures in their uptake of social media genres (specifically, the hashtag) and that those uptakes are shaped by the historical-material conditions and dynamics of agency and power inherent in American culture. The Black Feminist epistemological perspective from which I approach this project facilitates this meaning, which has been minimized as a fad in some cases, because it positions me, as the researcher, to value the representation of lived experiences around which social media users create dialogues to make ethical interventions out of personal accountability for responding to state violence. All four of Collins' criteria for Black Feminist knowledge claims are met here, where they would fail to register in a white, Western rhetorical tradition and epistemology.

#BlackLivesMatter hashtags as catalysts for genre assemblage, flexibility, & agency.

The three hashtags that are the focal points of my analysis cover two "flashpoints" in the

#BlackLivesMatter social movement. Those hashtags are recognizable as markers of this social

movement because they share some common characteristics. Among them is the initiation and

maintenance of a specific, and recurring pattern of participation. The resulting tweets become

typified responses that adhere to the set of conventions that come to be associated with the

hashtag. Cagle's definition of a genre assemblage requires that a genre be formed by the

convergence of both human and non-human actors. In the generic patterns that emerge in this

project, a person with mobile technology and all of the material conditions it enables—the ability

to capture and store images easily and in massive quantities, the ability to record happenings in

real time in photo or video form, access to social media platforms on mobile devices which

enables sharing of visual media, access to other information and the social networks of others to

curate information and images related to people and events outside one's own personal

network—are critical. Cagle notes the same importance for the genre assemblage of

strangershots; she says, "The ubiquity of smartphones means that the number of cameras and the

number of opportunities for using them has multiplied exponentially in the 21st century.

Moreover, because of their incorporation into devices connected to countless digital networks,

those cameras exist in a web of relations" (Cagle, 2019, p. 71)

The mobile phone, the digital image and video files, the ubiquitous availability of cellular

data and Wi-Fi access, and the programming and algorithms that sort and display information in

particular ways on social media platforms are all non-human actors. The generic patterns that

build around each hashtag draw in similar, but unique ways on this component. For example, the

generic pattern that forms around the hashtag #IfTheyGunnedMeDown is illustrated in the tweet

in Figure 19 below:

Figure 19. #IfTheyGunnedMeDown Genre Assemblage
Figure 19 is marked by the hashtag #IfTheyGunnedMeDown. The pattern of participation in this hashtag matches what is illustrated in the figure—typically one person is depicted in two, juxtaposed pictures which portray them in a "good" and a "bad" light. In this tweet, a young Black man is depicted on the left in a boy scout uniform holding his chin with his left hand. He is facing straight ahead and has a neutral expression. In the image on the left, the same young man is holding a gun and pointing it toward the camera using his left hand. His head is angled down and his glance look up toward a camera straight ahead. His expression is still neutral but the angle of his eye contact with the camera creates a more intense affective response.

Composing these tweets requires a Twitter user to have, readily accessible, two pictures of themselves which can be read through the previously described racialized cultural narratives. It is fair to assume that most often, these pictures are among a Twitter user's photo album on their mobile device, which makes them easy to post to social media platforms that are primarily used on mobile devices, such as Twitter. But the tweet does not emerge without other human, non-human, and contextual actors as a condition of its existence. One might consider what would prompt Twitter users to ponder such a question in the first place? What motive might they have for asking and answering this rhetorical question in solidarity with other Twitter users?

Composing tweets marked by the #IfTheyGunnedMeDown hashtag also require a motivating

material reality that makes posing this question a meaningful contribution to public discourse. In

this case, this hashtag begins to go viral after a series of Black people have been killed by use of

guns and later dehumanized in mainstream media by use of unflattering pictures (such as pictures

of Mike Brown dressed in urban clothing), incomplete narratives (such as Eric Garner's sale of

loose cigarettes), or irrelevant or exaggerated facts unrelated to the case at hand (such as reports

that Trayvon Martin was suspended from school for possession of a small quantity of marijuana).

This pattern was contrasted against another material reality that none of the people responsible

for shooting these people to death were held accountable for their actions.

Other kinds of non-human actors weigh into #BlackLivesMatter hashtags. Figure

20 shows a typical tweet marked by the #HandsUpDontShoot hashtag.

Figure 20. #HandsUpDontShoot Genre Assemblage
   Figure 20 is marked by the hashtag #HandUpDontShoot.
   The pattern of participation in this hashtag is the depiction
   of people using a universal gesture of surrender by raising
   both hands with palms facing away from their bodies. In
   Figure 20 a group of mostly Black people is standing

outside in what appears to be an open, public space. Some
are holding signs. Most others are depicted with their
hands up. There are people who appear to be journalists or
members of the media also in the frame, who are holding a
camera and a microphone. The text of the tweet gives
additional information about the protest that is happening.
It is being held in Miami, Florida and led by an activist
group called the Dream Defenders. The protest is
described as a response to "violence and racial profiling
by the police".

A number of human, non-human, and material/social conditions come together to enable
these tweets as well. In addition to the mobile technology and ready access to a camera to
document protest in real time and post images to social media platforms, users participating in
this hashtag must also have insight into the situational irony that the posture symbolizes—that is,
the difference between what one might expect to happen when a person surrenders to police and
what actually happens to Black people despite the gesture of surrender. The material and social
conditions that produce that irony are non-human actors in the composition of these tweets. I
would also argue that the critical insight to perceive the irony and feel compelled to respond to it
is the premise of the tweet and is inextricably tied to the human actors that contribute to this
genre assemblage. Certainly, some rhetors understand the irony and disagree with the substance
of it or have chosen to invest in a different value system such as white supremacy but they are
limited by these perspectives rather than empowered to gain traction within the context of the
hashtag's virality.

Critically aware rhetors informed by the lived experience of marginalization
combined with white supremacist hetero-patriarchal social and political conditions are consistent
elements of #BlackLivesMatter genre assemblages. Even in later "flashpoints" these conditions
persist. For example, Figure 21 depicts a typical #SayHerName tweet:

Figure 21. #SayHerName Genre
Assemblage

Figure 21 is marked by the hashtag
#SayHerName. The pattern of participation
in this hashtag reflects the main features of
the figure depicted above which shows
twelve headshots of women who have been
killed by state violence. The text of the
tweet lists some of their names and ends
with the hashtag #SayHerName. Generally,
tweets marked with this hashtag include
headshots, pictures, and memes that center
women who have been victims of state
sponsored violence. There are many
variations of this pattern—sometimes there
are different pictures are of the same
woman, other times there are a series of
pictures depicting different women,
sometimes a single video is featured, and
other times the image is composed into a
meme. Most often the text that
accompanies the visual images centers the
name(s) of the person(s) memorialized in
the tweet. As with the images, multiple
names can be included. Sometimes these
names are hashtagged too, co-occuring
with the primary hashtag #SayHerName.

These tweets emerge through the proliferation of people with access to social media who
can collect and curate images of these women—most of whom they don't know—from public
reporting and publicly available social media accounts that include their pictures and videos.
Alongside these human and technological factors, these tweets emerge in a social and political

context that places greater emphasis on the deaths of Black men than it does on the deaths of Black non-men of various gender identities and expressions. This has been especially important to calling attention to the murders of Black trans women, a population experiencing oppression that is intersectional and extremely urgent.

Perhaps most pointedly, all of these generic patterns also rely on a set of material social and political realities and require the human actors involved to have insight into those realties to substantiate their successful participation. The historic legacy of anti-Black racism, slavery, segregation, and discrimination all culminate in the contemporary dynamics of the relationship between Black communities and the state—especially law enforcement. Heavier policing, racial profiling, sentencing disparities, and other political facts bear out in the sub-texts of these hashtags. Users who seek to participate must have insight into these realities in order to engage at the pace and collective rhetorical commitment that virality requires. For example, the logic of the #IfTheyGunnedMeDown hashtag is primarily accessible for human actors who, through the lived experience, consider on a daily basis, what might happen if, in fact, they were gunned down. What's more, even for human actors who don't share this lived experience but do understand the logic, their ability to leverage their own bodies in service of the rhetorical point being made by juxtaposing two images of themselves is limited.

The function of the hashtags, a relatively new and still evolving genre, is critical to explore because it seems to act as the grounding and organizing element of the generic assemblage described above. While the adherence to patterns is what produces the repetition of a style or theme in the body of the tweets, the hashtags are the source of innovation and agency in #BlackLivesMatter genre building. Our contemporary understanding of the hashtag is well summarized by its definition in the *Oxford Dictionary of Social Media*, which states that a

hashtag is: "A verbal label prefixed with a **hash sign** (#) used on microblogging and social networking sites such as Facebook, Google+, Instagram, and Twitter in order to associate messages with a common discussion topic" (Hashtag, 2016). While we now understand this metadata tag as a way to add nuanced meaning in addition to its information tracking functions, its origins less than 15 years ago were much simpler when Chris Messina suggested the pound sign "as a way to have a better eavesdropping experience on Twitter" (as qtd in Panko, 2017, para. 2). At that time, hashtags were short, simple, and descriptive markers of content.

The social tool that the hashtag has grown into has echoes of Messina's initial conceptualization of speaking, listening, and negotiating access to information and power over how it is distributed. Since his initial suggestion to use the symbol as a way to track group conversations, hashtags have grown in popularity and complexity. Initially characterized by short, descriptive and informative noun phrases useful primarily for their functional capacity to track themes between users and across conversations and time, they have evolved to become longer and more rhetorically significant. Contemporary hashtags can be characterized as assertive, evaluative, and declarative assertions related to the content they tag. One of the primary uses and drivers of the evolution of hashtags has been social movements, which have taken them up consistently beginning with the uprisings in response to the 2009 presidential elections in Iran through to critical movements like the Tea Party and the Movement for Black Lives (Panko, 2017).

These standards are important benchmarks against which to measure the hashtags associated with #BlackLivesMatter and determine how well they align with the conventions of the hashtag genre. The #BlackLivesMatter hashtags used in this study suggest both adherence to and deviation from the genre conventions described above. There are certainly short markers of

content that function to track widespread conversations about particular content across users, conversations, and time. But there are many noticeable norm-departures specifically related to the originally neutral, non-evaluative, non-declarative nature of the hashtag. The hashtags #IfTheyGunnedMeDown, #HandsUpDontShoot, and #SayHerName above are meant to be read as assertions and questions. What is the significance of these variances? Are they innovations or deviations? Are these users simply unfamiliar with the genre and its conventions, as Tardy suggests is the assumption for norm-departures in an academic context? My argument maintains that an analysis of the historical-material conditions and dynamics of agency and power inherent in American culture are necessary to understanding this norm-departure in the hashtag genre as a reflection of the negotiation of agency and power by Black activists.

Whether these variations are perceived as innovative or deviant depends on how we understand the audience and social network for these hashtags. Tardy says the mark of effective and successful innovation is whether or not the "intended audience or community of practice" perceive them as such. As with many contemporary, digital texts, audience is complicated for activist tweets and hashtags. The hashtag's originate in response to community trauma and collective grief and anger. In that way, the Black community is the audience for this public acknowledgement and processing of violence. The hashtags also have activist motives as they offer a counternarrative to the mainstream media narrative while these cases unfold in both legal courts and the court of public opinion. This public audience may include allies and sympathizers, but most certainly includes those who are ignorant to these issues and need to be persuaded, not to mention firm detractors. This secondary audience may notice the ways that tweets and hashtags associated with the social movement challenge the norms of composition and conventional motives for tweets and hashtags. In this way, this audience may perceive

#BlackLivesMatter hashtags to be deviant—a perspective which has likely partially produced the criticism of "hashtag activism" as ineffective, and critical and mocking appropriations of these hashtags such as #PantsUpDontLoot and #BlueLivesMatter. It is important to note that both of these interpretations of #BlackLivesMatter Twitter activism are real; that tweets and hashtags associated with the social movement are seen as both innovative and deviant by different audiences with different motives and in different social contexts. While the "experts" of the audience who takes issue with the #BlackLivesMatter social movement might not judge these differences as successful and therefore innovative, I argue that the significance of the difference exists in the uptake. Appropriators being compelled to not only respond to these hashtags, but to do so in ways that mimic the originals, indicates that the social movement work being done by the #BlackLivesMatter community is understood as effective and therefore a legitimate threat, even if it is objectionable by the #BlueLivesMatter community.

The criteria from Tardy's (2015) framework for innovative genre flexibility fit the work that #BlackLivesMatter tweets and hashtags have accomplished. The generic patterns that emerge from #BlackLivesMatter's social media activism are examples of the socio-cultural creativity that Tardy theorizes; they "bend some conventions but not all" and operate at all three levels she describes—the individual (the Twitter user who is the source of innovation), the field (other Black Twitter users as the social network and gatekeepers evaluating novelty and appropriateness), and the domain (Twitter itself, which is the larger system of conventions and practices that provides affordances and constraints). Bawarshi's understanding of genre flexibility as a reflection of genre agency and differential power relations—dynamics which are always at play in genre performances—adds dimension to my analysis of the social implications of these genre performances. The participation of Black Twitter users in #BlackLivesMatter

activist hashtags, might be attributed to their relative lack of social and political power offline. Without access to mainstream media platforms, local political influence, and widespread economic power, participation in Twitter activism may represent a path to seizing one's agency through the relatively more accessible social media platforms to balance power differentials. Every day Black citizens seized the possibilities available through Twitter to empathize and sympathize with the impact of state violence in their communities and enact resistance through counter-narrative storytelling and the documentation of counter evidence in (digital) public space. The genres that emerge and are organized around the hashtags are only possible because of the combination of the material social and political conditions that create the power differentials, the ubiquity of smart phones even throughout class stratifications, and the rapid organizing, tracking, and sharing enabled by Twitters algorithms and design. The result is a set of genre assemblages that are not possible without the human, non-human and material conditions that converge to produce them.

Multi-modal Critical Discourse Analysis as Method

To complement my rhetorical genre analysis of the data, I draw on multimodal critical discourse analysis to foreground the influence of power, the impact of inequality, and the presence of new media as actors in #BlackLivesMatter genre assemblages in activist discourse. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) works with real language data to interrogate power in discourse, which matches my explicit aim to understand how marginality (a limitation in power) shows up as a tool in activist rhetorics. CDA can include the consideration of genre with particular emphasis on genre as "a specifically discoursal way of acting and interacting in the course of social events" (Fairclough, 2003, p. 65). Fairclough argues that "genres are realized in actional meanings and forms of a text" (p. 67). Of course CDA is interested in particular kinds of action, given its political and ethical orientations. It has been described as "part of a

transformative praxis directed towards exposing the ways in which discourse is able to constitute

social, political, economic, gendered, racial, and sexual inequalities as normal and

unremarkable" (Roderick, 2018, p. 154). CDA's understanding of genre as social action

(including those social actions which perpetuate inequality) dovetails with rhetorical genre

studies' emphasis on social context and motive and complements the simple and inclusive

feminist definition that that I take up for this argument that technical communication

"accomplishes something" (Durack, 1997). This framework is a critical piece of understanding

Black activist rhetorics as a form of that action, which "accomplishes something."

Contemporary CDS scholars recognize the significance of new technologies and digital

media to the maturation of the analytical power of the framework. As Ledin and Machin (2018)

note, "Multi-modality is becoming more common in CDA as scholars begin to introduce visual,

sound, and material design alongside their analyses of texts" (p. 60). While other scholarly

traditions have established lines of inquiry into the visual, the sonic, and the material as

individual fields of research, Multi-modal CDA (henceforth MCDA) departs "from a

fundamentally social question: What semiotic resources are drawn upon in communication, or

discourse, in order to carry out ideological work?" (Ledin & Machin, 2018). In fact, the social

emphasis and the interest in late-capitalism have necessarily brought questions of social change

and citizenship to light for MCDA scholars. Moschini (2014) argues that:

> many and multidisciplinary are the skills that people are nowadays required to have if
>
> they wish to fully express their citizenship: at first, they need to be able to "crack codes,"
>
> that is to recognize the different modal affordances used in multi-semiotic texts. Then—
>
> in order to use those artifacts functionally—they need to understand their compositional
>
> meaning (that is obviously influence by the particular socio-cultural contexts out of

which they originate), as well as the different cultural and social functions performed by

the same texts in environments that tend to converge more and more. (p. 197)

Multi-modal Critical Discourse Analysis has broad utility for this study in that it

accommodates the discussion of genre and integrates the analysis of visual media, so that power,

inequality, and resistance can be explored from different perspectives.

Covert critiques of power in word and image.

The strategic use of agency and the negotiation of power dynamics is an essential

component of the activist genre assemblages being discussed. These dynamics further

characterize the human actors whose perspectives and lived experiences are critical.

#BlackLivesMatter tweets and hashtags draw on Black rhetorical practices to negotiate agency

and power. This makes sense, given the legacy of the Black rhetorical tradition and its consistent

orientation toward resistance and gaining freedom from oppression. Black rhetorical practices

often show up in activist rhetorics in the form of African-American Vernacular English, which

has been well documented in #BlackLivesMatter rhetorics by Richardson and Ragland (2018). In

the particular examples analyzed above, Black rhetors are participating in the rhetorical tradition

of "hush harbors" described by Black scholars such as Smitherman (1977), Nunley (2004), and

Banks (2011). More recently, scholars have traced hush harbors into contemporary activist

contexts (Brock, 2012) and even into technical communication conversations (Walls, 2017).

Hush harbors are spaces where Black people can speak frankly to communicate within the

community and rejuvenate from the experience of suppressing their culturally situated ways of

knowing and being in order to engage in mainstream discourses and ideologies. This balance

between expression and suppression is uniquely familiar to historically marginalized

communities and is especially characteristic of Black rhetorical experiences. From the beginning

of the presence of Black enslaved people in the Americas, communicating resistance and critiques of power covertly has been essential to the ability to commiserate, plot, resist, and escape oppression. Black people are socialized into being able to talk amongst ourselves, sometimes even in the presence of white people and communicate on multiple levels of significance and meaning, often including levels that are not legible or comprehensible to oppressive power structures, be they individual people or systems and institutions.

The #BlackLivesMatter hashtags function as these hush harbors by making covert critiques in the examples being analyzed in this study. In fact, I argue that this covert critique is one of the distinguishing characteristics of the #BlackLivesMatter genre assemblages. Each hashtag challenges a dominant system or discourse indirectly but expertly. #IfTheyGunnedMeDown's critique challenges both the institutions of law enforcement and the press. The hashtag rests on the premise that: 1) the police can and will gun people down and 2) if they do, the choice that the press makes about how to depict people matters and 3) those choices are often racist. The tweets and the hashtag should be understood together to constitute a rhetorical question which begins in the text of the hashtag and is sometimes finished in the text of the tweet such as it is in Figure 19. At other times it is left out to be implied or inferred. The tweets are asking "if they gunned me down" (which picture would they use)? Audience members are supposed to know the correct answer intuitively by applying the racialized cultural narratives to these specific images. The question posed by the hashtag directly confronts the mainstream cultural narratives that make these tweets possible. Masked within an interrogative sentence, a form not often used to be explicit, or make critiques or demands, the critique also uses pronouns that have no clear antecedent. The user must recognize the nouns to which these pronouns refer without explanation. Who is "they" (both the first they stated explicitly in the hashtag and the

second "they" implied in the completion of the question)? Why are they gunning "me" down? What is happening to create this circumstance? The Twitter user must be able to make accurate inferences as to what these references are and make sense of the point that is being made. Similarly, #HandsUpDontShoot critiques state violence enacted by law enforcement by juxtaposing expectation against reality. The phrase "Hands Up Don't Shoot" was quickly turned into an activist slogan and used in the Ferguson protests following Brown's death. This context adds meaning to the use of the phrase as a hashtag as it is both descriptive of the posture depicted in the visual media of the tweets and also assertive as a digital rallying cry to echo the literal one taking place on the streets. Citizens expect that a body posture of surrender will demonstrate the absence of a threat to law enforcement. However, Black citizens experience the pattern of unarmed Black people being killed without accountability. The contrast is ironic.

Finally, #SayHerName critiques the exclusion of women from activist movements against state violence. The hashtag is written as an imperative and insists on an action, which presupposes that the action would not occur otherwise. The visual and textual components of the tweet seem to work as a response to the hashtag's direction. The demand that these names be spoken implies that without the request they would not be named. As with the use of pronouns in the first example, the unclear reference to a female person is meaningful because it stands in for many different names, which is apparent only through familiarity with the social problem that the tweet references. All three hashtags make these critiques without stating them directly or explicitly. The use of pronouns without clear antecedents ("they," "me," "she") is possible because the primary audiences for these tweets and hashtags understand the referents that are implied.

The prominence of the Black body in the visual media associated with these hashtags is

another rhetorical tool being used to assert agency and power. Black bodies are marked by stigma and stereotype in the larger cultural narratives of this country. The persuasive and technical force of the Black body is most clearly demonstrated in the #IfTheyGunnedMeDown hashtag. The two pictures in Figure 19 (pictured above), like most others marked by this hashtag and including visual media, are accompanied by limited textual explanation of how they are to be interpreted. In this case, the sentence confirms that the uniform he is wearing in the image on the left (which is only partially visible) is a boy scout uniform because he asks whether he would be remembered as he is depicted in the uniform or as he is depicted with the gun. The coded dataset in Chapter 3 reflects the consistency of the criterion for presenting the Black body symbolically with this hashtag in that most of the tweets feature curated images of Black bodies for rhetorical effect. This tweet relies on the audience's perception and interpretation of the images through cultural narratives that are widely understood even if they are adhered to unwittingly by some. These American racialized cultural narratives dictate what kind of person is good, respectable, and therefore worthy of being mourned or even just respected in death as opposed to what kind of person is bad, disposable, and therefore able to be demonized or dehumanized in death. Boy Scouts are good, American, wholesome, honest, respectable. Black men with guns are dangerous, thuggish, criminal, and irresponsible. As the patterns in the data set in Chapter 3 demonstrate, the good images are often marked by the use of uniform (which I am defining as traditional work or military uniforms as well as sports uniforms, graduation regalia, organizationally affiliated uniforms, and general "dress clothes"). The bad images are marked by the inclusion of pictures with scrunched or grimacing facial expressions, the use of hand/finger gestures (some widely recognizable like the middle finger, others seemingly random or with less/without symbolism), and participation in morally stigmatized activities—particularly if the

89

person appears to be young (smoking, drinking, brandishing weapons, etc.). These patterns hold consistently across racial and gender lines of people depicted in the tweets but I argue that different bodies don't have equal rhetorical effect in the virality of the hashtag. I will return to contrasting examples momentarily.

Keeping with the significance of the Black body for representations of power, the #HandsUpDontShoot hashtag (as in Figure 20 above) mobilizes not only textual references to the body (hands) but visual depictions of the Black body in a vulnerable state. The power of the images used in these tweets is derived from the volume of bodies that take up the symbolic gesture. This surrender posture is present in most of the tweets featuring visual media and using this hashtag in the data set. There are two primary versions of this pattern. The first version uses images that depict people in media res during protest, as Figure 20 illustrates. These people appear to have been photographed spontaneously. The other version depicts groups of people who are posed for the picture while using the gesture. These tweets show people facing the camera, prepared for and expecting a photograph. The other version of the pattern shows people who are not attending to the presence of the camera and are more dynamic (moving their bodies, speaking, etc.). These variations on the pattern of participation reflect the patterns that emerged in coding how bodies were represented in Chapter 3. There was a more even distribution of Black bodies being documented in action and Black bodies being interpreted symbolically. At the same time that these images all reference a long-standing gesture associated with surrender, the gesture also references the specific death of Michael Brown who was said by witnesses to have taken this posture before he was shot and killed. The significance of the repetition of the gesture by multiple people both within the image used in an individual tweet like Figure 20 and across multiple tweets as the hashtag goes viral is in the representation of the quantity of people

to whom this situation could apply. The volume of people protesting both actually (as in this tweet) and symbolically (as in the posed images) adds strength to the hashtag's power.

The Black body functions more literally in the #SayHerName genre assemblage, which is illustrated in Figure 21 above. The visual and textual components of the tweet seem to work as a response to the hashtag's direction. The audiences for the tweets seems to understand them beyond memorializing these women who have been killed. Typically, social media users who memorialize a regular person (one who is not famous or publicly recognizable) are limited to the people who actually know the deceased. In this case, these tweets extend beyond the personal social networks of the women who have been killed. The pattern of repetition here is significant; we see it not just in the repeated memorializing by strangers but also in the repetition of the faces and names of the persons who were killed (even within the same tweet). It suggests that public visibility and volume of support is valuable to the goals of the tweeters.

Twitter users who mobilize these visual meanings for rhetorical effect in tweets marked by hashtags that make covert critiques of power are engaging in complex rhetorical performances that are distinctively Black. More pointedly, these hashtags and their critiques are only legible—particularly before they go viral—through the lens of lived experience of Black marginality. Accessing and using them is an assertion of agency through genre and a reclamation of power.

Contrast as Evidence

oldmanreynolds

lissypriss #iftheygunnedmedown which picture would the media use? Enjoying a summer night at a baseball game? Or on the pathway to becoming a devoted, loving wife and partner? When you don't add fuel to fire, you're far less likely to have to wonder what negative photo they'll dig up. Take down your club pics. Delete your weed-smoking albums. Get up, do something, be productive, so if you get gunned down, you know you will go out with class and dignity.

Figure 22. White woman tries to play us
   Figure 22 is a screenshot of a tweet featuring an image of a white woman with a man alongside another image of the same white woman in a wedding dress. Images accompanied by text that critiques the hashtag #IfTheyGunnedMeDown.

Figure 23. White boy tries to support us
Figure 23 is a screenshot of tweet featuring an image of a
group of white boys in boy scout uniforms alongside
another image of one the white boys making a hand
gesture.

It is important to note that not only Black users and Black bodies were participating in

#BlackLivesMatter tweets and hashtags. Because of the significance of the Black body to the

genre assemblages that emerge in this study, it is important to consider what happens when white

bodies (and by extension, white Twitter users most probably) are participating in the tweets and

hashtags being analyzed. Certainly, white allies may sympathize with the cause of

#BlackLivesMatter activists and even consider themselves allies. In addition, white critics might

also understand the rhetorical construction of the tweets and hashtags even if they don't agree

with them. But, how does variation from Black embodiment and a Black marginalized

perspective affect the genre assemblage and the generic innovation described above?

Contrasting the tweets and hashtags that use Black bodies vs those that use white bodies

is a useful way to explore the contours of the human actors that are required for the genre

assemblages of #BlackLivesMatter social media. Both Black and white participants use

racialized cultural frames to choose which pictures they will juxtapose to participate in the hashtag. From both cultural perspectives we see the troubling reflection of this country's racist cultural narratives about its Black citizens. Both Black and white participants in the hashtag demonstrate a recognition of racially coded behavior and visual cues. For example, edgy, frowned expressions and hand gestures with particular emphasis on finger positioning reflect the "thug" stereotype which is often attributed to Black men and which has another variation on the bodies of Black women that reads as "angry". By contrast, uniforms often suggest participation in an organized, socially sanctioned activity and are therefore read as "respectable" or "professional"—descriptors which often code as white. However, the ability for white participants to have either the individual or the collective rhetorical effect that Black participants have is significantly limited. Why? Even if, or when, the critique becomes apparent outside its community of origin, the rhetorical force of the two juxtaposed images is only achieved *through* the racist cultural narratives—not in spite of them. White participants' contributions—though sometimes well intentioned—often fall flat because we have a wide and complex range of options to interpret white bodies.

The two examples in Figure 22 and Figure 23 illustrate the limitations imposed by the use of white bodies in #BlackLivesMatter tweets. The user in Figure 22 might initially seem to have misunderstood the purpose of the hashtag. Her extended caption, which is uncharacteristic for the generic pattern for #IfTheyGunnedMeDown, explains that her contribution is intentional. She takes up the hashtag to mark her rejection of the premise of the hashtag, despite seeming to understand its goals on a surface level. Her critique falls flat not because she is white and not even because she is critical of the issue at hand. Her white body does not compel audiences to read her through a racially stigmatized filter. Twitter users on both sides of the issue have a

myriad of cultural narratives through which to interpret the positive pictures she posts in the visual media of the tweet *and* the "negative" pictures she alludes to in the caption text. Her critique fails to acknowledge that she is the same person even if her "negative" pictures are unavailable to the public. Similarly, Black users of the #IfTheyGunnedMeDown hashtag are able to reiterate the discrimination in mainstream media depiction of Black victims of state violence precisely because both the "good" and "bad" pictures are of the same person, but can easily be sorted into racially stereotyped cultural narratives.

By contrast, the user in Figure 23 is making a contribution in support of the #IfTheyGunnedMeDown hashtag. Yet in order to participate, he has to draw on racial stereotypes to approximate cultural cues for Blackness in order to distinguish his "good" picture from his "bad" picture. It is only by attempting to appropriate discrimination that his contribution might "count". Even when it is included, it loses rhetorical force, because of the wide array of cultural interpretations that are available for a young white boy with a sullen expression.

Further still, neither of these attempts at participation does any work toward the social movement that is affiliated with the hashtags and therefore does not fit the technical communication criteria for accomplishing something.

In other words, it is the critical understanding of one's own marginal position that gives both persuasive and technical force to the hashtag, its virality, and ultimately its impact in the public sphere. Black participants' contributions are persuasive precisely because of the dissonance caused by the juxtaposition of two contrasting, racist cultural narratives. The ability to access both of these cultural narratives, recognize the covert critique in the hashtag, and contribute through the polyvocal and mundane medium of Twitter to create a collective call for accountability requires the skilled use of specialized communication practices—it requires

technical communication.

Toward a Theory of Black Technical Communication

What my data reveals is a pattern of rhetorical practices that I've used to theorize *A Techné of Marginality*. So now, I want to introduce you to the working definition and the tenets of the framework.

A Techne of Marginality applies the term techné to the critical and marginal standpoint from which historically marginalized cultural groups experience the world and then engage rhetorically. When marginalized people navigate systems not designed for their inclusion, they not only apply this critical marginality to the labor that is required to circumvent, subvert, renegotiate the systems for their own survival and success, but they also leave the specialized communication and navigation infrastructures (i.e. technical communication) in place to sustain the labor moving forward. Put another way, a critical understanding of one's own marginality, is a way of seeing and knowing, and therefore is a techné—a flexible, dynamic, powerful, strategic, transferrable, transformative tool that can be used to do technical communication work.

My analysis explicates how genre assemblages form in support of #BlackLivesMatter as a foundation for my argument that the human contribution to these assemblages is both rhetorical (persuasive) and technical (specialized) in nature, and is directly attributable to an expertise in marginalized lived experience. In short, the genre and multi-modal critical discourse analysis outlined above produces the following conclusions:

1. #BlackLivesMatter genre assemblages are innovative (but can also be read as deviant).

2. They assert and negotiate power in covert ways that reflect experience/expertise in marginalization.

3. They achieve specialized outcomes for equity and justice.

4. Thus, they are a kind of technical communication—communication to accomplish something, to make tacit knowledge explicit.

In the final chapter of my dissertation project, I will marshal the analysis offered here to theorize the specific tenets of a decolonial theory of technical communication and discuss the implications and heuristic possibilities for its future use.

.

Constructing A Techné of Marginality

The goal of this project is to theorize a decolonial, Black Feminist analytical framework for Technical and Professional Communication. To do this, I have identified social, political, and disciplinary exigencies that call for an intervention in contemporary understandings of expertise and work, particularly through the terms 'technical' and 'professional'. I have established a Black Feminist epistemology as the point of departure and frame of reference for how I understand knowledge—what counts as knowledge, who can know, and who is credible to be believed. Next, I use #BlackLivesMatter as a motif to connect the knowledge that emerges through Black bodies, Black rhetorics, and Black lived experiences to the strands of scholarship this project joins in technical communication and social movement rhetorics. Using #BlackLivesMatter as a case study and #BlackLivesMatter tweets as rhetorical practices, I systematically traced patterns of participation in the hashtags that marked flashpoints in the social movement, foregrounding the lived experience of Black bodies. This laid the groundwork for me to analyze themes of pattern and power using genre and multimodal critical discourse analysis to assign meaning to these knowledge claims in ways that both adhere to disciplinary expectations (because the methods are legible to technical communication scholars) and disrupt disciplinary norms (because the data relies on a different understanding of legitimate knowledge). This unconventional, but generative exploration has led me to build an analytical framework: *A Techné of Marginality*, which provides the language and concepts to explain how Black (and other historically marginalized rhetors) produce specialized communication tactics that work toward social justice ends.

As a reminder, the conceptual definition of *A Techne of Marginality* applies the term techné to the critical and marginal standpoint from which historically marginalized cultural

groups experience the world and then engage rhetorically. When marginalized people navigate

systems not designed for their inclusion, they not only apply this critical marginality to the labor

that is required to circumvent, subvert, renegotiate the systems for their own survival and

success, but they also leave the specialized communication and navigation infrastructures (i.e.

technical communication) in place to sustain the labor moving forward. Put another way, a

critical understanding of one's own marginality is a way of seeing and knowing, and therefore is

a techné—a flexible, dynamic, powerful, strategic, transferrable, transformative tool that can be

used to do technical communication work.

The remainder of this chapter outlines the tenets and rhetorical practices that are derived

from Black lived experiences to explain how activist rhetors do technical communication work.

Tenets and Rhetorical Practices of *A Techne of Marginality*

Tenet 1.

ATM involves the strategic deployment of cultural rhetorical practices by marginalized

rhetors as a way to do public work. Recognizing these rhetorical practices and the marginalized

rhetors prevents said work from being co-opted.

The first tenet is focused on the work that is accomplished by rhetors at the margins.

While the basis for this tenet is the unpaid labor of social justice through social movements,

conceivably there are other kinds of work, other ways to "accomplish something" (Durack,

1997) that this analytical framework might make apparent. For the purposes of explaining the

tenet, I will focus on the work of social justice through social movements such as

#BlackLivesMatter. I have established that this work is not traditional in nature, in that it is not

defined primarily by the production and reproduction of goods or services in exchange for capital

(which is how we traditionally think of work in this late-capitalist, neo-liberal context).

A Techné of Marginality focuses more broadly on the kinds of labor that go unpaid and

often unrecognized as work despite the time, effort, and knowledge that are required to produce said labor. Social movements are an ideal example of this kind of labor because we can easily point to outcomes of the labor, despite not immediately conceptualizing it as work. As argued in earlier chapters, social movements move public sentiment on social issues and work to translate that sentiment into legislation, public policy, and institutional norms. While the outcomes I've listed can be thought of as technical communication without much strain, the invisible, unpaid labor of the people who move an issue through the stages of development that lead up to those technical communication outcomes deserve attention too. Their labor is important because it is often motivated by the urgency of oppression or a strongly held personal conviction rather than an exchange of labor for capital. The difference in the purpose, audience, motivation, and rhetorical strategies used when work happens in exchange for capital and when work happens based on other motivations cannot be overlooked precisely because of the material benefits for people other than those who are perceived to directly benefit from these improvements.

Using this refreshed and more inclusive conceptualization of work, I want to turn towards the labor of the #BlackLivesMatter social movement to discuss what it does and how it is accomplished. The most readily identified outcome that is accomplished by all three hashtags: #IfTheyGunnedMeDown, #HandsUpDontShoot, and #SayHerName, is an increase in public and media attention about state sanctioned violence against Black bodies. This can be measured by saturation of coverage in the news media following bursts of outrage online (rather than following the news event, which is the actual killing itself). While this might be the only cause and effect relationship that can be attributed to the hashtag activism, certainly other outcomes correlate logically and have been directly attributed to the social unrest following major flashpoints which took place on social media. For example, the #IfTheyGunnedMeDown hashtag

prompted media critique and reflection on the portrayal of Black victims and comparison to the ways that white criminals are depicted in the media (Wing, 2014; 2017). Another example is the increase in use of body cameras for police officers as a way to increase public trust (and supported by grant funding from the Obama administration) (Kindy, 2019; Lockhart, 2019). Still another example is the record keeping related to police involved shootings in general, police-involved shootings of Black unarmed people (and Black trans women more specifically) by a number of investigative and independent journalism teams (The Counted, 2019; Rankin 2016; Fatal Force, 2019; Tate et al.; Killed by Police, 2019). These changes in public discourse, investigative journalism, and policy would be hard to imagine without the existence and virality of these hashtags and the patterned, assemblages that Black rhetors composed to give them meaning. In fact, many of these sources directly attribute their work to the exigence created by not only the events themselves, but the digital social movement that followed them, as the Washington Post does here, "*The Post* is documenting only those shootings in which a police officer, in the line of duty, shoots and kills a civilian—the circumstances that most closely parallel the 2014 killing of Michael Brown in Ferguson, MO., *which began the protest movement culminating in BlackLivesMatter* and an increased focus on police accountability nationwide" (Tate et al., 2016, emphasis added).

Another way to think of the work of these hashtags and tweets is to consider how they extend the social movement for racial justice in the United States into its newest iteration of #BlackLivesMatter. The work of social movements is multi-faceted and #BlackLivesMatter is a useful illustration of how the rhetorical practices of a social movement accomplish specific gains in service of highlighting the issue for which they are advocating. Social movements move through five stages: genesis, social unrest, enthusiastic mobilization, maintenance, and

termination (Stewart, Smith, & Denton, 2012). Although the stages are not discrete and can be hard to distinguish clearly, the virality of the #BlackLivesMatter hashtag certainly meets the criteria that Stewart, Smith, & Denton set forth for that stage "when frustration leads to disaffection with institutions and their willingness to resolve problems, the social movement enter the stage of enthusiastic mobilization during which true believers populate the social movement" (p. 97). The primary outcome of moving a social movement into another stage is the increased public attention it garners and the potential to gain allies and sympathizers.

The effects of the viral hashtags analyzed in this project also specifically work to transcend the opposition to the social movement. Because arguments from transcendence are "inherently comparative" the use of the Black body was leveraged to make different cases in favor of #BlackLivesMatter. The use of literal images of people's bodies as the primary motif in the media of tweets organized by these hashtags has a particular persuasive effect by providing points of comparison (either literal or metaphorical) that are meant to transcend the implicit counter-arguments of the opposition. For example, images of large groups of people in protest and posing for the #HandsUpDontShoot hashtag made arguments from quantity, signaling that a larger quantity of people are in favor of the social movement than the quantity that are against it. Picture of large groups of people posing in protest suggest alignment with the movement; this is amplified when people retweet and share these pictures to signal their own agreement and alignment. While an analysis of the metadata (including retweets) was not a part of this study, it is important to mention because it is a part of the genre assemblage that is only made possible by the material encoded functions of the Twitter platform. Our anecdotal knowledge that some of these pictures went viral (the Howard photo for example) is an example of how the rhetorical velocity of retweets and shares can boost arguments from quantity. We might also say that

arguments from quality are made when people participate in the #IfTheyGunnedMeDown

hashtag. Arguments from quality:

> deal in the realm of what is good versus bad and moral versus immoral. Activists contend
> that one goal, proposal, or strategy, for instance is good while a competing goal,
> proposal, or strategy is bad or evil. Truth is contrasted with falsehood, justice with
> injustice, freedom with slavery, equality with inequality, nonviolence with violence and
> prejudice with tolerance. (Stewart, Smith, & Denton, 2012, p. 259)

The pattern of usage in the genre assemblages formed in response to this hashtag feature

direct comparisons of photos of the same person. These comparisons are meant to evoke exactly

the kinds of contrasts described above. The immorality of the mainstream media is made

apparent in the comparison. With the effort of everyday people like those who tweeted with

#BlackLivesMatter hashtags, the patterns of participation in these hashtags made things possible

in the movement that have marked a new, more contemporary era that has engaged a new

generation of allies and sympathizers who might have believed that the post-racial myth

otherwise.

Finally, this tenet also requires a careful parsing and separation of the labor of historically

marginalized or structurally oppressed groups from the work of "allies" or "advocates" and from

the work of those (individuals or institutions) who align with social justice goals for capitalistic

or other ulterior motives. It would be easy to give credit for the changes in public discourse,

policy, and record keeping to those working in institutions like journalism and law enforcement.

In fact, in many cases, these institutions take credit for the "progress" the social movements push

them to. But as Douglass recognized, "power concedes nothing without a demand." That demand

is created by historically marginalized and structurally oppressed activists who work to push

institutions toward more socially just actions and hold them accountable when they fail.

Tenet 2.

ATM requires the embrace of culturally situated communication practices that resist codeswitching and conforming to mainstream norms and make covert critiques of power.

The second tenet asserts that rhetors at the margins make covert critiques of power by drawing on their own cultural rhetorical practices rather adhering to the norms of the white, Western rhetorical tradition. The rhetorical practices of Black rhetors reflect the dexterity and nuance with which they navigate not only systems and institutions, but also the communicative norms associated with them. These systems and institutions have real consequences for rhetors who disregard the expectations that privilege white, hetero-normative, patriarchal ways of knowing and speaking about the world. As a result, Black rhetors who have taken up a critical stance learn to express their critiques of power with intention and care. The strategies to achieve this can vary. The activist tradition includes very overt rhetorical resistance strategies that are often featured in direct action protest contexts. Protest songs, chants, slogans, and the use of profanity are all direct and explicit confrontations of power. The data set in this study focuses instead on less explicit critiques of power, though they can be just as impactful.

The hashtags that have come to characterize the #BlackLivesMatter movement are a prototypical example of this kind of covert critique of power. #IfTheyGunnedMeDown does not make an explicit critique of the criminal justice system or the mainstream media. Typically, we would expect critiques to take the form of exclamatory or at least declarative sentences. The tone of this hashtag is more interrogative, implying a question: what would happen if they gunned me down. The use of pronouns reflects an indirectness of the critique because the pronouns have no antecedent. 'They' could be anybody, arguably. Similarly, #HandsUpDontShoot references a

highly contextual circumstance. Without the proper context, an audience for the hashtag might wonder what is going on, whose hands are up, who is shooting, and why. None of these things are stated explicitly which is a clear deviation from the hashtag's original purpose of clearly marking the content of an online conversation so that it is easily indexed and followed. These hashtags fall in the Black rhetorical tradition of the hush harbor by giving Black rhetors who need a protected space to communicate with one another and escape the watchful eye of oppressors even as they remain present. The critiques implied in these hashtags are apparent to people who have the context by way of their lived experience and are able to share that context and the ability to communicate within it, without making it explicit (much like the "lower frequencies" that Ellison references in *Invisible Man*) (Ellison, 1952). The capacity of Twitter and hashtags to function in this way is absolutely essential as a method for making these covert critiques. As Feminista Jones writes,

> For…people of color, Twitter has become one of the most important tools of modern sociopolitical activism, a powerful force in the Zimmerman trial aftermath and beyond. African Americans have historically relied on "alternative" communication styles and underground means to connect and build networks. Centuries ago, newly captured African slaves were separated from those who spoke their native languages to discourage organized attempts at escape. For them, finding universal means of communication, like "spirituals' or "work songs' became essential to their survival and that of future generations. (Jones, 2013)

Jones recognizes the significance of Twitter's ability provide a universal means of communication so that Black rhetors can communicate covertly and survive.

Inviting technical communicators to pay more attention to the covert critques of power

that come from marginal rhetors directs attention to less well studied or widely understood activist strategies. Social movement rhetorics have identified these subtler strategies for resistance too. But examining these resistance strategies from a technical communication perspective requires the field to draw on a wider range of topics and context to study how specialized work gets done. This is an important contribution to the social justice technical communication literature. Not only should technical communicators be using the trade on behalf of historically marginalized and oppressed communities. They should also be learning from the ways these communities already do their own liberation and justice work. The push beyond the idea of work as inextricably tied to capital, production, and reproduction is important. Though social movement work does not exist outside of capitalism (this is evidenced by the many corporations who take up social justice rhetoric in response to changes in public sentiment), it is not constrained by the same dynamics and includes a much wider range of "acceptable" rhetors.

The ability to critique power in ways that are effective, but also covert allows Black rhetors to organize, commiserate, reflect, respond, and fight back. While the viral nature of tweets and hashtags means that these critiques won't be covert forever, the shared context born of lived experience and the references that are internal to the culture maintain a feeling of in-group access, even as these tweets and hashtags do public work. The tweets and hashtags reflects the rhetorical skill of speaking to other marginalized folks without exposing oneself to the risk that comes with resistance of power and norms. By the time these critiques are apparent through virality, there is a collective agreement in the response that can bolster the effectiveness and legibility of the argument, which benefits the outcomes that the social movement is trying to achieve.

Tenet 3.

ATM affirms subjectivity in technical communication, requiring a critical awareness and embrace of a marginal standpoint and the perception of the margins as rich & powerful site of communicative practice.

The final tenet reflects the fact that in order for rhetors to do public work that draws on their cultural rhetorical practices to make covert critiques, they must first embrace and value their marginal standpoints, without which the work is impossible. Rhetors at the margins of social, economic and political institutions are experts in navigating and expressing the lived experience of oppression. This expertise in navigating the world from a marginalized subject position is not one that registers on the radar of traditional understandings of "technical" or "professional." Still, it reflects an advanced skill and dexterity earned through experience. Malcolm Gladwell argues that it takes 10,000 hours (or the equivalent of 10 years) of practice to achieve expert status (Gladwell, 2011). Black people, and others who are historically marginalized or structured into oppressed social positions, are socialized to understand how their cultural values are positioned from very early ages, thus cultivating this expertise early on. Studies have shown children as young as toddlers are already able to discriminate based on race, which includes young Black children being aware that the mainstream culture does not deem their features desirable. Even though responses to this marginalized subject position can vary, I argue that the requirement to respond in ways that allow marginalized people to survive is universal.

I argue that a critical understanding of one's own marginal condition independent of the ability or desire to articulate it, is a valuable perspective for technical communication. I think that this criticality can be embodied and the responses to it intuitive. Not all people who are

critical of their marginal condition are prepared to describe that critical stance in terms that are legible to the academy. But when we accept lived experience and mundane behavior as an acceptable form of knowledge, we can examine how people are communicating their understanding of and commentary on their subject position. In the case of #BlackLivesMatter activists, I think the virality of distinctive and complex patterns of participation in hashtags that express critiques of these conditions is evidence of this criticality.

It would be difficult to make the argument that each individual Twitter user is compelled to compose a tweet adhering to the genre assemblage features of a #BlackLivesMatter hashtag because they have the explicit motivation to resist oppression and possess a deep understanding of the historical, social, and political ills that need redressing. What we know about how little public education includes of the histories of marginalized people (Loewen, 1995) suggests that most people *don't* have the information they need to make an informed critique based on facts. What we know about Twitter suggests that people are using it quickly, on mobile phones, as an everyday, mundane part of their lives. But this is exactly the point. The lived experience of marginalization and oppression is everyday for some people. It is mundane. It is not informed by facts and figures but by experiences and intuition. Therefore, the presentation of this knowledge won't be governed by the dominant standards that govern evidence and credibility.

I argue that the rhetorical use of the Black body is an alternative form of evidence that provides a counter narrative to the dominant cultural discourses that exist in society. When the words of marginalized rhetors are not seen as credible, other kinds of rhetorical appeals may be called upon to articulate a persuasive argument. The use of the body appeals to the visual modes afforded by digital and new media, but it also appeals to a common denominator that values human life. The body asserts that humanity in its most basic, embodied form, resisting the post-

human ideology (Hayles, 1999) that dominates the digital age and forces audiences to grapple with the complexity and dissonance of contrasting, racist cultural narratives.

Because it is explicitly not neutral, objective, or apolitical, technical communication like the images and hashtags in the tweets in my case study position the communicator to tailor specialized communication specifically to the values, objectives, and strategies that help the person navigate hostile systems and institutions. Abandoning objectivity for a more targeted, perspective based approach is its own kind of efficiency because it abandons the idea that every strategy or tool works the same way for every body. This can be concretely demonstrated when technical communication considers how differently people act on their own behalf than others advocate for them.

Heuristics and Possibilities

Given the strong emphasis on subjective insight and cultural competence in this framework and its relationship to my own lived experience, it is worth the time to pause to talk specifically about how researchers and practitioners might take up its use in relationship to their lived experiences. Of course, as a theoretical and methodological framework, its utility comes from as broad an appeal as possible. Although A Techné of Marginality foregrounds marginalized subjectivities specifically, that subjectivity does not have to belong to the researcher(s) themselves. The framework is built to encourage researchers to use institutional resources—perhaps the time, attention, funding, and networks that come with academic research—to amplify those marginalized subjectivities and benefit their negotiations for power. For example, a technical writer who works with native women who have experienced domestic violence, but does not share their marginalized perspective might use A Techné of Marginality as a methodological framework to amplify their concerns and their proposed solutions in the form of a grant that communicates a fiscal response to a potential funding resource.

Of course, it is also my explicit aim that this framework might offer a point of entry for scholars and practitioners from historically marginalized groups to contribute to technical and professional communication more readily because they will find for themselves a way of legitimizing the value of their tacit knowledge made more explicit for some purpose or circumstance. Having one's own social positionality in mind is an important stance to take before navigating both the theory and the data that combine to form this framework because it encourages the kind of honest reckoning with the potential to reproduce colonizing forces even—perhaps *especially*—as we seek to develop decolonial theories and practices.

Limitations

Alongside these affordances are limitations that, in some cases, might inhibit the framework's utility. A focus on marginality as a generative and rich experience risks the simultaneous suggestion that it is a desirable condition. Contemporary critical discourse which benefits from widely accessible platforms from which to spread its agendas also suffers from the commodification and fetishization of oppression and trauma. The idea that these experiences produce an ironic kind of leverage that can be used at will is a common claim among critics of social justice politics. This falsehood can be confusing and further harm historically marginalized communities. I want to assert clearly that historically marginalized and oppressive lived experiences in no way grant advantage to those who live through them. Instead, I want this framework to amplify the ways in which marginalized rhetors redefine and resist oppressive structures, creating a counter-force to power where there would otherwise be none without their collaborative, collective, and resilient effort. Whereas traditional notions of Western power indulge and cater to those who hold it, the power born of resistance often has profound costs for those who earn it. *A Techné of Marginality* is not here and should not ever be used to glorify or romanticize oppression.

Implications

The implications for this framework's use suggest that it can function as a theory, methodology, and a pedagogy. As a theory it will provide the terms and concepts that explain technical communication outside of traditional workspaces and cultural contexts. As a methodology it will legitimize inquiry, style, design, and practices that draw on marginal epistemologies. And as a pedagogy, it will insist that an awareness of the human actors and political stakes of communicating specialized knowledge to general audiences is essential to the expertise of technical communicators.

In each of these arenas the potential for *A Techné of Marginality* to impact research, teaching, and activism is profound. This framework requires a renegotiation of the concepts of ethos and expertise, challenging scholars and practitioners to consider who is credible in a particular rhetorical situation and why? What does it mean to be an expert? And what kind of knowledge is valuable for the task at hand? The expansion of notions of work and workplace can open the field to new sites of inquiry where communication for specialized purposes is accomplishing important outcomes. The potential for work that pursues equity and justice to become visible under this new paradigm is encouraging because of the ways that labels like 'work', 'professional', 'technical', 'skilled', and 'expert' can be leveraged for resources and support in ways that produce material benefits. It will also be important for us to rethink the ways we mark success in these new ideas about work. Work towards equity and justice is often imperfect and incomplete. Sometimes, that work is about survival from one day to the next and produces outcomes such as joy, love, hope, and community.

Even mainstream technical and professional communication stands to benefit from A Techné of Marginality. As the field moves away from a genre-based approach and towards

111

content management, this analytical framework will be an important tool in making sure that information remains contextualized and that technical communicators are accountable to how information might be specialized in raced, gendered, classed and other ways. Without the language and concepts to train future technical communicators to apply to work scenarios, this accountability is unlikely to happen. When subjectivity is an essential part of technical and professional communication, instructions, codes, forms, reports, documentation, letters, policies, and other technical communication documents can be a last line of defense in stopping institutionalized oppression from being reproduced.

In all these ways, *A Techné of Marginality* will offer technical communication scholars new ways to recognize and understand the production of critically marginal rhetorical tactics that do technical communication work. Moreover, it illustrates the potential for social justice theories of technical and professional communication to decenter whiteness and and embody equity and justice in practice.

References

[CUNYTV75]. (2018, January 1). *The open mind: Automating inequality* [Video File]. Retrieved from

    https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Avxm7JYjk8M

[Personal Democracy Forum]. (2016, June 15). *Challenging the algorithms of oppression* [Video File].

    Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iRVZozEEWlE

Ahmed, S. [@SaraNAhmed]. (2018, April, 26). This should not still happen: when practices is used as

    example (referencing Black and brown bodies) and theory is used as frame (referencing white minds).

    But it does still happen. [Tweet]. Retrieved from

    https://Twitter.com/SaraNAhmed/status/989464774529478657

Atwill, J. M. (1998). Rhetoric reclaimed: Aristotle and the liberal arts tradition.

    Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Banks, A. (2011). *Digital griots: African American rhetoric in a multimedia age.* Carbondale, IL: Southern

    Illinois University Press.

Bawarshi, A. (2016). Beyond the Genre Fixation: A Translingual Perspective on Genre. *College English.*

    78(3). 243-249

Black Lives Matter. (n.d.) Herstory. Retreived from https://Blacklivesmatter.com/about/herstory/

Blay, Y. [Professional Black Girl]. (2019, April 5). YOOOOOO!!!! Y'all please find whoever created this

    style! They deserve this 🏆![Facebook post]. Retrieved from

    https://www.facebook.com/professionalBlackgirl/photos/a.399086720621454/502701266926665/?ty

    pe=3&theater

Bourdieu, P. (1986) The forms of capital. In J. Richardson (Ed.) Handbook of Theory and Research for the

    Sociology of Education (New York, Greenwood), 241-258.

Britt, E. (2006). The rhetorical work of institutions. In Scott, J. B., Longo, F. & Willis, K. V. (Eds.) *Critical*

    Power Tools (133-150). Albany: State University of New York Press.

Brock, A. (2012). From the Blackhand side: Twitter as a cultural conversation. *Journal of Broadcasting &*

    Electronic Media, 56(4), 529-549. doi:10.1080/08838151.2012.732147

Cagle, L. E. (2019). Surveilling strangers: The disciplinary biopower of digital genre assemblages. *Computers and Composition, 52*, 67-78. doi:10.1016/j.compcom.2019.01.006

Castells, M. (2015). *Networks of outrage and hope: Social movements in the internet age*. Malden, MA: Polity Press.

Center for Media and Social Impact. (2016). Beyond the hashtags: #Ferguson, #BlackLivesMatter, and the online struggle for offline justice. Retrieved from http://cmsimpact.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/beyond_the_hashtags_2016.pdf

Coates, T. (2015). There is no post racial america. *The Atlantic*. Retrieved from http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2015/07/post-racial-society-distant-dream/395255/.

Collins, P. H., 1948. (2000;2002;). *Black feminist thought: Knowledge, consciousness, and the politics of empowerment* (Rev. 10th anniversary ed.). New York: Routledge. doi:10.4324/9780203900055

Colton, J. S., Holmes, S., & Walwema, J. (2017). From NoobGuides to #OpKKK: Ethics of anonymous' tactical technical communication. *Technical Communication Quarterly, 26*(1), 59-75. doi:10.1080/10572252.2016.1257743

Cooper, P. (2019, January 16). 28 Twitter statistics all marketers need to know in 2019. [Blog post]. Retrieved from https://blog.hootsuite.com/Twitter-statistics/

Crenshaw, K. (1991). Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color. *Stanford Law Review, 43*(6), 1241-1299. doi:10.2307/1229039

Crenshaw, K. & Ritchie, A. (2015). *Say her name: Resisting police brutality against Black women*. African American Policy Forum. Retrieved from http://static1.squarespace.com/static/53f20d90e4b0b80451158d8c/t/560c068ee4b0af26f72741df/1443628686535/AAPF_SMN_Brief_Full_singles-min.pdf

Crumsey, D. [@d_model_material]. (2019, April 5). Showing love to Nipsey Hussle #restinpeace💙 your legacy lives forevr !!!! [Instagram post]. Retrieved from https://www.instagram.com/p/Bv5IHnJFuNp/

Dei, G. J. S. (2018). "Black like me": Reframing Blackness for decolonial politics. *Educational*

    Studies, 54(2), 117-142. doi:10.1080/00131946.2018.1427586

Discovertext. (2019). Retreieved from https://discovertext.com/

Dotson, K. (2011). Tracking epistemic violence, tracking practices of silence. *Hypatia (26)*2, 236-257.

Dotson, K. (2015). *Inheriting Patricia Hill Collins's Black Feminist epistemology*. Ethnic and Racial Studies,

    38:13, 2322-2328, DOI: 10.1080/01419870.2015.1058496

Durack, K. T. (1997). Gender, technology, and the history of technical communication.*Technical*

    Communication Quarterly, 6(3), 249-260. doi:10.1207/s15427625tcq0603_2

Ellison, R. (1952). *Invisible Man*. New York: Random House.

Endres, D. & Senda-Cook, S. (2011). Location matters: The rhetoric of place in protest. *Quarterly Journal of*

    Speech, 97(3), 257-282. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00335630.2011.585167

Eubanks, V., 1972. (2018). *Automating inequality: How high-tech tools profile, police, and punish the*

    poor (First ed.). New York, NY: St. Martin's Press.

Fairclough, N. (2003). *Analysing discourse: Textual analysis for social research*. New York: Routledge.

Fatal Force. (2019). 425 people have been shot and killed by police in 2019. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved

    from https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2019/national/police-shootings-

    2019/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.9c797d86fd7a

Frost, E. A. & Eble, M. (2015). Technical rhetorics: Making specialized persuasion apparent to public

    audiences. *Present Tense, 4*(2). Retrieved from http://www.presenttensejournal.org/wp-

    content/uploads/2015/04/FrostandEble.pdf

Frost, E. A. (2016). Apparent feminism as a methodology for technical communication and rhetoric. *Journal*

    of Business and Technical Communication, 30(1), 3-28. doi:10.1177/1050651915602295

Garza, A. (2014). A herstory of the #BlackLivesMatter movement by Alicia Garza. *The feminist wire.*

    Retreived from https://thefeministwire.com/2014/10/Blacklivesmatter-2/

Gilyard, K. (2004). Introduction: Aspects of African-American rhetoric as a field. In E. B. Richardson & R.L.

    Jackson (Eds.), *African American rhetoric(s): Interdisciplinary perspectives* (1-18). Carbondale:

Southern Illinois University Press.

Gladwell, M. (2011). *Outliers: The story of success*. New York: Little, Brown, & Company.

Grabill, J.T. (2007). Writing community change: Designing technologies for citizen action. Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.

Green, V.H. (1940). The negro motorist green-book. New York: Self-Published.

Haas, A. (2012). Race, rhetoric, and technology: A case study of decolonial technical communication theory, methodology, and pedagogy. *Journal of Business and Technical Communication, 26*(3), 277-310. doi:10.1177/1050651912439539

Hashtag. (2016). In Oxford Dictionary of Social Media. (1st ed.) Online: Oxford University Press.

Hauser, G. & Mclellan, E. (2009). Vernacular rhetoric and social movements: Performances of resistance in the rhetoric of the everyday. In Stevens, S. & Malesh, P. M. (Eds.) *Active voices: Composing a rhetoric for social movements* (23-46). Albany: State University New York Press.

Hayles, K. (1999;2010;). *How we became posthuman: Virtual bodies in cybernetics, literature, and informatics* (74th ed.). Chicago, Ill: University of Chicago Press.

hooks, b. (1981). *Ain't I a woman: Black women and feminism*. Boston, MA: South End Press.

hooks, b. (1984). *Feminist theory from margin to center*. Boston, Mass: South End Press.

Iris R. (2015, September, 11). The importance of deduplicating. [Blog post]. Retreived from https://texifter.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/articles/202520774-The-importance-of-deduplicating

Jackson II, R. L., & Richardson, E. B. (2003). *Understanding african american rhetoric: Classical origins to contemporary innovations*. London: Routledge Ltd.

Johnson, D. (2007). Martin Luther King Jr.'s 1963 Birmingham campaign as image event. *Rhetoric & Public Affairs, 10*(1), 1-26.

Jones, F. (2013). Is Twitter the underground railroad of activism?. *Salon*. Retrieved from http://www.salon.com/2013/07/17/how_Twitter_fuels_Black_activism/

Jones, N. (2016). The technical communicator as advocate: Integrating a social justice approach in technical

communication. *Journal of Technical Writing and Communication, 46*(3), 342-361.

doi:10.1177/0047281616639472

Jones, N., Moore, K. R., & Walton, R. (2016). Disrupting the past to disrupt the future: An antenarrative of

technical communication. *Technical Communication Quarterly, 25*(4), 211-229.

doi:10.1080/10572252.2016.1224655

Killed by Police. (2019). Police shootings database. Retrieved from https://killedbypolice.net/

Kimball, M. A. (2017). The golden age of technical communication. *Journal of Technical Writing and*

Communication, 47(3), 330-358. doi:10.1177/0047281616641927

Kindy, K. (2019, January 21). Some U.S. police departments dump body-camera programs amid high costs.

The Washington Post. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/some-us-police-

departments-dump-body-camera-programs-amid-high-costs/2019/01/21/991f0e66-03ad-11e9-b6a9-

0aa5c2fcc9e4_story.html?utm_term=.e5dd2fa8ca02

Kynell-Hunt, T., & Savage, G. J. (2003). *Power and legitimacy in technical communication, volume I : The*

historical and contemporary struggle for professional status. Amityville: Baywood Publishing

Company, Incorporated.

Kynell-Hunt, T., & Savage, G. J. (2003). *Power and legitimacy in technical communication, volume II :*

Strategies for professional status. Amityville: Baywood Publishing Company, Incorporated.

Ledin, P. & Machin, D. (2018). Multimodal critical discourse analysis. In J. Flowerdew & J.E. Richardson

(Eds.), *The routledge handbook of critical discourse studies* (pp. 60-76). New York: Routledge

Left of Black. [John Hope Franklin Center at Duke University]. (2016, October 17). *Left of Black with Marc*

Lamont Hill [video file]. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HZCNZNhIock

Lockhart, P.R. (2019, March 27). Body cameras were supposed to help improve policing. They aren't living

up to the hype. *Vox*. Retrieved from https://www.vox.com/2019/3/27/18282737/body-camera-police-

effectiveness-study-george-mason

Loewen, J. W. (1995). *Lies my teacher told me: Everything your american history textbook got wrong*. New York: New Press.

Loewen, J. W. (2005). *Sundown towns: A hidden dimension of american racism*. New York: New Press.

Lorde, A. (1984; 2007). *Sister outsider: Essays and speeches*. Trumansburg, NY: Crossing Press.

Moffitt, J. (2017, May 25). Tweet metadata timeline. [Blog post]. Retrieved from http://support.gnip.com/articles/tweet-timeline.html#keyConcepts

Moore, K. (2018). Black feminist epistemology as a framework for community based teaching. In A. M. Haas & M. F. Eble (Eds.) *Key theoretical frameworks: Teaching technical communication in the twenty-first century*. (p. 185-211). Louisville, Colorado: University Press of Colorado

Moschini, I. (2014). Critical multimodal analysis of digital discourse preliminary remarks. *LEA ; Lingue e Letterature d'Oriente e d'Occidente, 3*(3), 197.

Nelson, S. & Grant, L. (Producers) & Nelson, S. (Director). (2015). *The Black panthers: Vanguard of the revolution.* [Documentary]. United States: Public Broadcasting Service.

Noble, S. U. (2018). *Algorithms of oppression: How search engines reinforce racism*. New York: New York University Press.

Nunley, V. (2004). From the harbor to da academic hood: Hush harbors and an african american rhetorical tradition. In Jackson, R. & Richardson, E. (Eds.), *African american rhetoric(s): Interdisciplinary perspectives* (221-241), Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press

Panko, Ben (2017). A decade ago the hashtag reshaped the internet. Retrieved from https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/decade-ago-hashtag-reshaped-internet-180964605/

Pew Research Center. (2016). *Social media conversations about race*. Retrieved from http://assets.pewresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/14/2016/08/PI_2016.08.15_Race-and-Social-Media_FINAL.pdf

Pough, G. (2004). Rhetoric that should have moved the people: Rethinking the Black Panther Party. In Jackson, R. & Richardson, E. (Eds.), *African american rhetoric(s): Interdisciplinary perspectives* (59-

72), Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press.

Rankin, K. (2016). New database tracks deaths of transgender homicide victims. *Colorlines*. Retrieved from

https://www.colorlines.com/articles/new-database-tracks-deaths-transgender-homicide-victims

Richardson, E. & Ragland, A. (2018). Stay woke: The language and literacies of the #BlackLivesMatter

movement. *Community Literacy Journal 12*(2), 27-56.

Roderick, I. (2018). Multimodal critical discourse analysis as ethical praxis. *Critical Discourse Studies, 15*(2),

154-168. doi:10.1080/17405904.2017.1418401

Sandoval, C., 1956. (2000). *Methodology of the oppressed*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Savage, G. (2003). Tricksters, fools and sophists: Technical communication as postmodern rhetoric. In T.

Kynell-Hunt & G.J. Savage (Eds.), *Power and legitimacy in technical communication, Volume II:

Strategies for professional status* (pp. 167-194). Amityville: Baywood Publishing Company,

Incorporated.

Shepherd, M., & Watters, C. (1998). The evolution of cybergenres. Paper presented at the *, 2*97-109 vol.2.

doi:10.1109/HICSS.1998.651688

Shulman, S. (2017, February, 2). DiscoverText Explained. [Youtube video]. Retrieved from

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1n_-LoUJs0Q

Smitherman, G. (1977). *Talkin and testifyin: The language of Black america*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Spivak, G. C. (1988). Can the subaltern speak? In Nelson, C. & Grossberg, L. (Eds.), *Marxism and the

interpretation of culture* (271-316). United States: The Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois.

Stewart, C. J., Smith, C. A., & Denton, r. E. (2012). *Persuasion and social movements* (6th ed.). Long Grove,

Ill: Waveland Press.

Tardy, C. (2015). Bending genres, or when is a deviation an innovation?. In N. Artemeva, & A. Freedman

(Eds.), *Genre studies around the globe: Beyond the three traditions* (pp. 339-363). Bloomington, IN:

Trafford Publishing.

Tate, J., Jenkins, J., Rich, S., Muyskens, J., Elliot, K., Mellnik, T., & Williams, A. (2016 July, 7). How The

Washington Post is examining police shootings in the United States. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/how-the-washington-post-is-examining-police-shootings-in-the-united-states/2016/07/07/d9c52238-43ad-11e6-8856-f26de2537a9d_story.html?utm_term=.3b7ff781cd11

Taylor, K. (2016). *From #BlackLivesMatter to Black liberation*. Chicago, Illinois: Haymarket Books.

The Counted. (2019). People killed by police in the US. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/ng-interactive/2015/jun/01/about-the-counted

Tufekci, Z. (2017). *Twitter and tear gas: The power and fragility of networked protest.* New Haven: Yale University Press. Cagle, L. E. (2019). Surveilling strangers: The disciplinary biopower of digital genre assemblages. Computers and Composition, 52, 67-78. doi:10.1016/j.compcom.2019.01.006

United States. Congress. Joint Committee on Printing, & United States. (2012). *The constitution of the united states: With index and the declaration of independence* (25th ed.). Washington, DC: U.S. G.P.O.

United States. Department of Justice. Civil Rights Division. (2015). *Investigation of the ferguson police department*. Washington, D.C.: Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division.

Walls, D. M. (2017). The professional work of "Unprofessional" tweets: Microblogging career situations in african american hush harbors. *Journal of Business and Technical Communication, 31*(4), 391-416. doi:10.1177/1050651917713195

Williams, M. & Pimentel, O. (2014). *Communicating race, ethnicity, and identity in technical communication.* Amityville, New York: Baywood Publishing Company.

Wing, N. (2014; 2017). When the media treats white suspects and killers better than Black victims. *Huffpost Black voices*. Retrieved from https://www.huffpost.com/entry/media-Black-victims_n_5673291?guccounter=1&guce_referrer=aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuaHVmZnBvc3QuY29tL2VudHJ5L3doZW4tdGhlLW1lZGlhLXRyZWF0cy13aGl0ZS1zdXNwZWN0cy1hbmQta2lsbGVycy1iZXR0ZXItdGhhbi1ibGFjay12aWN5iZXR0ZXItdGhhbi1ibGFjay12aWN0aW1zX25fNTljMTRhZGJlNGIwZjIyYzRhOGNmMjEy&guce_referrer_sig=AQAAADx2Pumc5bdfgESTvFXBNCEZJw_0fwS9TIp8Nk0oZdbM56eL_4JLqp8NxPfpGAzP_QrR8OdKkGW2JCnZ7UXklLZzW9-qSY5_RGiwFiMK9rSrzVKMaFVTuvd-

ogCUNhxVCr3Uh9wJwuMT-QvaRXtUfwruQtL1a1R0K7jG2tEfuD6R