

Creating and Nurturing Your Digital Identity

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people, personal learning network, twitter, hashtags, space, social media, talking, post, find, superpower, tweet, important, write, share, interested, feel, curate, blog, identity, question

SPEAKERS

Christine Fruin, Matthew Thiesen, Maha Bali, Ana Cackley

- M** Maha Bali 00:00
I'm going to give you the link to the slides in case it's easier for you to follow there, I'm going to be sharing the screen, but some people like to follow on their own, get the links from there and see like alt text for a lot of the images, if that helps anyone at all. So welcome everyone. My name is Maha Bali, my Twitter handle is Bali underscore Maha, if any of you are on Twitter, and feel free to tweet out things or post on social media parts of the slides or share out the slides, do whatever you want with the slides as long as you do with attribution and you don't sell them. And so other than my role as a faculty developer at the Center for Learning and Teaching at the American University in Cairo, I also the co founder of two open organizations called virtually connecting an equity unbound if there's space on my talk about them. And so I'll just start by saying that I'm an icon, which works really well anytime a day. So and tell me how are you feeling today and feel free to introduce yourself in the chat, we're talking about identity. And I'll hopefully get to know all of you a little bit more as we go along. But let me know how are you feeling today and tell me something else about yourself? I'm just gonna mute and tweet.
- C** Christine Fruin 01:18
All start, I'm not shy. Hi, I'm Christine Fruin. And I am the Scholarly Communication and Digital Projects Manager at Atla. And how I am feeling today I am feeling you know, I have

said since the pandemic that how I answered that question has greatly changed because the bar has been lowered for fine. So when I say that I'm fine, is very different than highly defined a year ago. So my definition of fine is definitely changed. So I'm fine. Which a year ago, I would have said, or a few months ago, I would have been saying, Oh, I'm terrible. Yeah,

M

Maha Bali 01:57

I'm saying Samantha is in Chicago, and she's sleepy. Jane got her second vaccine. so relieved, which is great. I'm happy for you. And melody, feeling good. Good weather in Pittsburgh. And more than one night sleep in a row is an achievement these days, as well. And Hi, Jordan in Kentucky student convocation. So it's like a graduation. It's good. Or is it the beginning convocation is the beginning or the graduation? Someone helped me out here. And award ceremony, okay, so it's neither of those things. Okay. That's good to be able to celebrate. And students can be able to celebrate anything these days. Really. I'm glad the weather seems to be good these days. Whenever I talk to people, even in Canada, weather seems to be good. I'm excited for better weather. So is it not better weather in North Carolina, I've only ever been to the airports North Carolina never actually been to the actual city, any city in the state. Thank you. Okay. And so just I've shared the slides. And I don't think anyone new has come in since then. But just to let you know that these are Google Slides, and they're open for commenting. So if you want to talk to me about something else later, you can always post a comment there. And I see it and I can respond to my agenda for today is to these four things. But if you guys seem to be interested in focusing on one thing or another item mind, we can we can be flexible with that. So the first thing I wanted to do was discuss why you want to have an online identity, explore where to set up your online identity and share how to set it up and discuss living your online identity. I think that last part is the most important part. So I hope we have a lot of time. So now Normally, I would do a lot of stuff in the chat, but there are only 10 of us. So I may ask people to speak up sometimes if you're comfortable. Okay, so it's up to you, which you're more comfortable with. So well, this one about I came to this workshop to learn about, I'm going to stop sharing my screen. And so I'm going to type the question here again, to this workshop to learn about and you can either share in the chat or just unmute and tell me, why did you come to this workshop?

C

Christine Fruin 04:22

Just Just to learn more about the topic in general.

M

Maha Bali 04:26

Okay,

C

Christine Fruin 04:26

I think I have some preconceived notions about what this topic is that I have a feeling I probably have it all wrong. Or maybe it'll challenge the way I think about this. So just to learn,

M

Maha Bali 04:37

would you mind would you mind telling you like one of these preconceived notions that you're not sure as?

C

Christine Fruin 04:42

Well, I think we I think we very much tie up our you know, our identity in our online identity identity is very much driven by social media, which I think is often gives a warped sense of because I think we try to put out A persona AI there's a lot, there's a lot of things out there about the persona that we put on social media, all the good stuff, and the kind of negative feelings that that brings out. And others who observe us who thinks think we had this, you know, really great life. And so lately, especially with the political climate that we've been enduring here in the States and other things, um, for me, it's like very social media right now is very, very negative. I'm trying, I've been like withdrawing from it. But yeah, I'm finding that I'm missing. So I just, I'm hoping made sense will be maybe things will be challenged a little bit for me today.

M

Maha Bali 05:36

Those are really, really important points. I think the first point is really important, especially for young people. I think one of the things that we're discovering as so many young people are now learning online is that because they've curated their online identity in very particular ways, and branded in particular ways, having to be present as themselves is difficult for them, like, like to turn on their camera and classes difficult, but they'll take selfies and post them anytime, right. So it's a very different thing for them. Then the other thing about the negativity, this is again, goes to I think we'll talk about this a little bit more. And it also goes to what Jane is talking about here in the chat, which is untangling the numerable options for social media. And I think part of it is like figuring out how to curate that within the amount of attention that you have that you want to spend on social media so that you get the most out of the spaces that you decide to be in. Yeah,



Christine Fruin 06:26

well, I think the other I don't want to dominate the conversation. I think the other kind the other part of that is one thing I have struggled with, is, as a professional and like the scholarly side of my life and the professional side, my life, finding ways to engage better in these social online spaces has been because it was presented first when I first got involved as a personal thing. And so I have struggled with carving out uses for that are strictly professional, and and scholarly as well.



Maha Bali 07:03

So melody is actually saying I want to get a better understanding how to manage how I'm represented online. And I think I have a slide where I asked you all to Google yourselves and see what you find. And I do this a little bit earlier than getting into anything else. Because what you find when you Google online is your identity that other people find whether or not you intended for that to be the first thing they see. So that's important. Samantha's saying the library's beginning to put more time and energy into developing their social media and what the World Health Foundation philosophy workforce and how we post. So I think it's very different. When I was talking about creating and nurturing your online online identity, in terms of preparing for this workshop, I was thinking about you as an individual. I think for a brand or for a department or something, it might be different. But hopefully some of this helps to just, you know, you just have to answer the questions with respect to a library, I think and then start to think that's not necessarily you personally, doing that. And then if sometimes gets confusing if you're managing the social media account for your office, but you also have your personal one, and then sometimes you send something from the wrong account, or happens a lot. you're most excited about healthy living your identity. I like that. And then they let me Thanks, learn how to start with my personal brand and work out there and how to do without seeming braggy Okay, so one of the things that I would say sometimes has to happen early on and it's a little bit uncomfortable is that sometimes you have to do some putting yourself out there and shameless self promotion and making yourself vulnerable, to whatever extent is not risky for you, of course. So that the braggy thing I totally get and it can you can feel like you're being obnoxious if you're like always pushing your stuff out there. And I'll talk about how to do it differently. Maybe so that you don't feel that way. It feels like a more natural fit. Okay, what's your superpower? Tell me in the chat. What's your superpower? What's that Jane? What's a snark? Oh really? Okay, that's a nice one. That one works really well on social media, but they'll make you really popular. Okay. Any other superpowers in the group? my superpower is connecting people. And my other silly superpower is making Barbie clothes out of junk material. I never buy new Barbie clothes for my daughter. We just make them out of like old socks or tinfoil or organization. Christine. That's an important superpower. That's a useful desire for greater context is your superpower messy.

I don't understand what I mean by that.



Matthew Thiesen 09:58

Maybe more of Oh Pushing and asking for for context.



Maha Bali 10:03

Oh, okay situation. You I'm guessing you also have a lot of patients for doing that. Because people yes, probably. Okay. content development is your superpower. lamea Okay. All right. What about others? And Ana, I'd love it if you participated as well. You don't need to do a lot of managing anything. So I'd love to hear from you too. Charlotte attention to detail that was really useful and Jordan thinking outside the box. Okay, those are great superpowers. And you know, I'm asking you about your superpowers because I've seen a lot of people on social media sometimes add little thing making sangria Okay. Is it people on social media will have very professional accounts, and you'll find them saying some of these things besides what they already have. I used to have learn a Holic, for example, online and write a Holic. Alright, now we need to talk a little bit about social media. It's not the only space of course to be online. But it's one of the one of the options, right, so what's your favorite social media space? Where you're comfortable that you check regularly or that you just enjoy when you get there? Pinterest and Twitter and LinkedIn, Twitter and Twitter. Okay. Twitter is my favorite, too. We'll talk a little bit more about why and why you think otherwise, LinkedIn? I'm interested, let me know maybe Is it because you learn there as well. Other than just connecting with people? Okay, I believe it seems more professional compared to Facebook, for example. Yeah, so Twitter here in Egypt, it's not very popular as a social media platform. So my go to platform would be LinkedIn. Okay. for professional stuff, and Pinterest. So more like visual and making those boards and collecting things. I know, people who really like Pinterest really do like it. I suppose nobody said anything else like Instagram. But I'm also not very heavily. Alright, and what I'm struggling with in terms of my digital identity is what are you struggling with? In terms of? I mean, obviously, if you don't have any struggles, that's fine expectations. Okay, whose expectations Christine?



Christine Fruin 12:31

Um, I think family members, because as I said, I have really withdrawn from interacting much on like Facebook stuff, just because it's just, it's just become such a ugly place to be. And so I get griped at by family, like, Oh, it's something wrong, you're never on your own, or you never post and so that x, you know, the expectation that if you want to know about my life, you have to look for a Facebook post, instead of picking up the phone and calling

me and seeing how I'm doing.




Maha Bali 13:04

Yeah, that's really good one because I think the choices to step away are, are sometimes restricted by these reactions, depending how, how horrible they react to you not being there. And at the same time, sometimes, context collapse happens, where you forget who your audience are in the space. So sometimes I forget that my mom's on Facebook, for example. And I've learned a long time ago not to forget any more about that. So I'm really careful that I don't post anything there that's going to, like sometimes I post something in joke or part of a game, she takes it seriously. And then you have to sort of explain this was a game, it wasn't real, you know. So that's important to other like things like, for example, my kids school, they communicate via social media in very particular way that if you're not there, you're not going to get the communication. They won't send you everything through emails example. Ana talks about being vulnerable. And that's important. And Jane song about what to keep private, especially this semester, we have a stalker situation. That sounds worrying. Yeah, I mean, that's that's to be exactly a situation not to be on social media. I want to prove it more about that sounds scary. Matthew's talking about consistent posting of your own content, because you're more of an observer. I think that I'm going to talk about that role. And I think a lot of people start out in that role, and some people stay there and others move on creating a boundary between personal professionals. That is that feels comfortable to me. That's a good, that's very good question. And melody is also more of an observer. Okay. Let's see what comes next. What's one thing you hope to achieve with your digital identity? When I first got on to Twitter, it was making connections. Same as Jordan, for me that was just finding other people. So I'm someone who I did my PhD in the US. Okay, but I lived here in Egypt and I lived in the US and I lived in England, but a different place, I'm in the middle of a session. No. And I wasn't surrounded by other PhD students doing the same thing. So I wanted to make connections with other PhD students. And then eventually, when I finished my PhD, just with other academics who were researching the same things, were interested in the same things. James seems the only way to make your presence known amongst demographics. The point I maintaining connection, so so is making new ones, but also maintaining connections. I think, for example, going to conferences these days, instead of people exchanging business cards, they exchange Twitter handle or LinkedIn, or things like that, learning more about social justice. So that's something you would want to do online with. That's interesting. I've learned a lot about social justice in my Twitter interactions, how build and maintain connections, I'm finding my voice that's really nice when I grade are not listening. All right? Well, they're all really cool. I think we will talk about all of them. So my first piece of advice in general, is to approach digital spaces in a relational manner rather than a transactional manner. And I see most of you want to connect with people.


And so if that's, that is your goal, that's great. And I'm thinking about it as not as a space where you go, and you count how many connections you make and an exchange and so on, but just think about it as a long call type of relationship building. So that you can both enjoy it. And then it doesn't become like a goal outside of the actual what you're enjoying, make it an intrinsic thing that you're motivated by what you want it, but you're what you're enjoying about rather than doing something that's not. But thinking about just Bonnie Stewart, from Canada did a lot of research about digital identities. And we need to just remember that we're algorithmically manipulated. I think Facebook is one of the worst for that. So Christine, like what it decides to show you and what it decides to show all of you to other people. It's outside all of our controls. And it's an algorithm that just works in some mysterious way that we don't know. And we're surveilled. And sometimes social media sort of makes us wanna share more than we listen. But I think what I'm seeing from the chat is that some of you are already not in that space, where you speak a lot you rather listen. It makes you focus on what's visible. And sometimes, just to be seen, you have to just do things that maybe in a normal situation you wouldn't have done. But yeah, for us, it to make social media a healthy space for us healthy social space. For us, it takes a lot of effort, because it's not going to happen naturally on its own, the spaces don't really help with that. One of the things that I thought and I hope it's not offensive to anyone, but it's just that someone like Mark Zuckerberg is probably not the most extroverted, well adjusted social person. So his idea of what sociality is probably not the best one that we all want to follow. But when I talk about why we want to form digital identities, there's the listen and learn which some of you have mentioned, there's targeting and finding particular people for particular purposes. And there's the broadcasting and sharing that was like finding your voice and posting stuff so that other people can hear or read or see what you're working on. And there's the element of interaction and building community or what we call personal learning networks. If you've never heard that term before. It's about you like in our work, we have certain affiliations or affinities that they're just the way they are. But in a personal learning network, you're curating who you want to listen to regularly. So for example, Ana's talking about you want to learn about social justice, you'll discover who in the world is talking about social justice, in the context that you're looking for. And they may or may not know each other. But those are the people you follow regularly, you interact with regularly. And that to me is the prize is when you're doing that aspect. Because once you have a personal learning that you know where to look for what you want, when you want to target something and find it and people know you so they can help you. And the listening and learning becomes more effective and efficient, because you already know where to go to find the stuff. And I mean, I'll give an example of something, it's kind of like, if you find I don't know if any of you listen to podcasts, but if you find the podcast that really gets what you like, then you will keep coincidentally, if you listen to it regularly finding stuff that you're interested in without searching for it. For example, it would be something like that same with like Twitter


accounts or Instagram accounts or whatever. And then the last one is the broadcasting and sharing. If you have a personal learning network, you'll have an audience waiting for what you say. So that's why I know, the interaction and building that community is the thing that helps with all the others. So but how do we find audience, and the most important thing is to start by being audience, right, by reading others and responding to others, by listening before we speak. So this is also something that I think after you were, I think, just like when we acquire a new language, a lot of times you're more absorbing and observing before you can start producing yourself, I think it makes sense for digital identity to also observe other people. See what's out there, see what we like, what we don't like to observe other people's behavior and decide, oh, this is something I want to be when I'm online, this is not how I want to be. And why they just want not in person. And I would want to hear from you as well, like, why is it important to develop it digitally? For me, part of it is finding like minded people outside my local spaces, you'll never find enough people in your local spaces or like minded. But online, you'll find that there'll be other people doing the same thing. And another organization, for example, diverse views not accessible, locally, ongoing, sustained, that kind of learning can be transformative, because in your face to face context, there's always other stuff going on. It's up to handle. But if you're only going to do a particular hashtag, that hashtag is always going to be space where you can do all that. Yeah, because the pandemic, definitely. For sure, because there's no anywhere, right. And this is also the other aspects, which I think is important that maybe some people recognize and some people don't is that you connect with leaders in your areas of interest. So not just peers, but sometimes people who are high profile, sometimes when they're on social media, they'll talk with you if they want, you don't just need to follow them and see what they're doing. They may actually have conversations with you. So that's always a very interesting thing. And the question is where, and here's the thing, where are you comfortable? Where do you feel safe? Where are your people? Where your idols are community? So whatever your area of specialty, whatever your area of interest? Like? Whether I'm whether we're talking about professional or personal interests, right, where do they where most people they're so far, I think gamers, for example, have their own space of like discord, which most people don't use, if they're not gamers, you can use it, but to find your community arts were so for me, because I work in edtech, Twitter is maybe the space where most of them are in that square one. But also Where's most accessible like works while on your phone? Works well with your bandwidth. And where are you for institutional stuff versus social and personal interaction, and some people use someone was talking about whether you have both in the same place or not? And that's a choice that a lot of people have. I'm gonna, I'm gonna try using zoom annotation to see where we're at. Yeah, you use Discord for a lot of things that are not gaming stuff, right? Yeah. And it works. I mean, the functionality works for all kinds of things. I just know that a lot of gamers use it for communities about games. But if Yeah, if your book club is there, go there for sure. That's good. I've actually only used it

once for a conference, that was kind of cool. I use slack a lot more than Alright, so we're going to use zoom annotation, if you I don't know if you know, this feature, but it's a pretty straightforward feature. And I forgot to check if it's turned on, right? Or did I ask if it was turned on? Hmm, we may not have it turned on. Pick up forgot to ask. Yeah. forgot to ask, right? It's not turned on? I'm not the I'm not the host, but I don't think I can turn it on. Okay. No, I don't think so. Okay, I'll just skip this activity, it's not a problem. I'll tell you what we were gonna do. Okay, so what we're gonna do is there's something called visitor resident mapping. And basically, it's goes against, you know, that whole digital natives thing turns out to be not based on anything. So, instead of digital natives were saying you can be you can feel like a resident in one social media space, or like a visitor in another social media space. So it doesn't mean that you have to be comfortable with every single thing all the time. You can be comfortable in one space for institutional purposes, but not for personal uses, for example. So what they would what you would do, but we're not going to do it today, because we ran out of space that we were going to collaboratively map where you each are on certain things. So you could you could do one for yourself and just say, you know what, right now, I feel comfortable and I'm a resident that I check in right? Literally on Twitter for institutional purposes, and for personal purposes, I do this with Instagram. But I'm a visitor and I rarely ever go to LinkedIn, for example. And we will be, or we could do it collaboratively as a group. And we pick one tool and see where we are. And that would help us figure out which phase we're all in together, for example, and we're all comfortable together. But we'll skip this one for now. So I'm going to stop now and ask you to Google yourself. And then when you come back from that, I'll just give you a minute to do it. should take about a minute, right. And I'm going to Google myself as well and show you something funny. Have you done that before? Have you googled yourself before?

 Christine Fruin 25:48
Oh, I do it all the time.

 Maha Bali 25:49
Oh, yeah. So you know what to expect. Okay.

 Matthew Thiesen 25:58
There's American act with my name. So that's hard for me.

 Maha Bali 26:02
Well, your name is in general, quite common.

M Matthew Thiesen 26:05
Exactly.

M Maha Bali 26:07
Yeah. That makes it really difficult. What would you have to what qualifiers would you put next to your name to actually find yourself?

M Matthew Thiesen 26:17
My middle initial C. Who's doing a lot.

M Maha Bali 26:23
Okay, that would limit this. Okay. Jane, what did you find? You don't have to share on the screen if you're not comfortable. But tell us what you found. old photo? Okay. That's that would happen, I guess. All right. Anything else that you found? That's interesting. thing. Publications you forgotten you'd written? Oh, wow. Okay, that is so interesting.

C Christine Fruin 27:00
It goes to show that that Atla does really good SEO because, like the first page, which I've noticed before, it's a lot of Atla stuff.

M Maha Bali 27:09
Okay, that's good, actually have no idea how this SEO thing works. So that's, that's good to know. All right. So Christina, is that what you find when you Google yourself? Atla stuff? Yeah,

C Christine Fruin 27:23
I mean, the first couple pages, it's all professional set. It's all professional stuff. I mean, but that's also due to my setting privacy settings, social media to not allow my profiles Republic or to be off. So I mean, the first three, four pages are publications, I've written conference presentations, I've given LinkedIn profiles, Atla profiles, it's all

M Maha Bali 27:48

academic and scholarly, all what you would want people to find, Yes, correct. That's important. And that's good. And I don't know how much of it you have. I mean, obviously, is what you want people to find. But they're like formal spaces, right? So they're not like, they're not the kinds of spaces where you update all the time, like Twitter or something like that. Right? They're static ish. For scenario thinking about the question, or

C Christine Fruin 28:23
Oh, I didn't I I, what did you ask me?

M Maha Bali 28:25
I'm asking what are they mostly static spaces? So they don't change all the time? They're spaces that are set up? Yeah.

C Christine Fruin 28:33
That expresses? Um, yes, yes, they are. Because it's, it's like news releases or links to conference presentations or publications, yes, they're not going. These are not things that are ever going to change.

M Maha Bali 28:47
The lobby is similar to you in the sense that it gets to her LinkedIn profile and academic profile. And then Jordan says Your name is at the end of the second page. So yeah, that could happen. Or we even know your name sounds like it's unique. But I'm gonna show you guys something really quickly. Now. It's very different. When I google myself, then when you Google me, because I google myself a lot knows it's my computer. So it finds my stuff, I think a little bit easier than a little bit easier than usual. So what I find is these things. I actually recently claimed this panel. Because as an academic on you, you have a Google Scholar profile. But I think you can claim a panel so that when people search for you, they find this thing not.

C Christine Fruin 29:36
See I've looked at that before and I'm not comfortable with uploading a copy of my ID to Google. Oh, yeah, that was so weird.

M Maha Bali 29:44
Yeah.

C Christine Fruin 29:46
gone through the steps to do that for to claim. I'm not giving you a copy of my driver's license.

M Maha Bali 29:55
I thought that was very, very weird. Yeah. And you have the right not to do that. course. But I did want this space, because I didn't know what what happens if I don't claim it with someone else. Obviously, the I didn't know they would ask for the ID and that would stop someone else from claiming it. But I didn't know that until I got to that. But it gets my first of all my faculty page, which makes sense. That's what you want first, probably, then my Twitter. And then it's other stuff that's LinkedIn, my blog and things like that. But what is funny, is what I search for images of myself because I don't put a lot of images on myself on my either like three, these are the three images of me. But there is a mythical Indian king called Muhammad Ali. Like that's such a coincidence that your full name is actually something that's this cartoonish. So, and if I search for videos, I mean, there's so many videos of me personally. But again, you'll find a lot of this my belly person. These ones are okay, though. All right, I'm gonna stop sharing. How do you go about cleaning a panel? I can't remember. It was a it was a late, it was a click somewhere like it showed me something. And I clicked. I can't remember the details. Christine, you remember you said you went through the process recently, as well?

C Christine Fruin 31:22
Um, what happens when you click that? To verify it?

M Maha Bali 31:27
Well, how do you get there in the first place? That's what she's asking.

C Christine Fruin 31:30
Well, um, so I mean, you may know we're that page go to my tabs open, um, where just like, you should just like you showed on your when you shared your screen. When you search your name, your your panel shows up over on the right hand side? And there is I

mean, can I share my IP?

M

Maha Bali 31:53

Because is it when you have a Google Scholar profile that you get a panel and then you decide, or is it? I mean, that's the point. It's like, it's here to

C

Christine Fruin 32:05

show you really quick what it looks like, since this is enabled. So when I searched my name, it shows up. There's a button here it says claim this knowledge panel. Yeah, whether this comes from Google Scholar, I have no idea. There's nothing here to there. Even when you hover over stuff. There's nothing here to indicate that this is. This is generated by Google Scholar.

M

Maha Bali 32:35

Yeah, it's not. I think,

C

Christine Fruin 32:37

because I have never, I don't recall ever going in and create because this is a fairly recent feature. I don't think I've ever gone in and changed. I'm not this one. No, we'll get next.

M

Maha Bali 32:51

Okay, well, I so yeah, so Jane, if you're not finding that panel in the first place, that would be the question. I just found it. And then I was able to claim it, as, as Christine said, then there's other things speaking of pictures, because we've talked quite a bit about pictures, like how do you choose which profile picture to use for certain spaces. So I'm just going to say like, for example, I had this one on Twitter for a while because I want it to be a little bit playful, but I usually had this more formal one. This one is I'm much younger, so when I put it, people thought I was younger and caused a lot of confusion, confusion, so I kept taking your pictures. And this one, this black and white half face is one that I use in spaces, where I intentionally don't want people to focus on my identity as a Muslim has carved woman, black and white, you can't really tell what Color My Skin is, you can't tell that I'm headscarf you can tell even if I'm not necessarily even male or female. And I use it if I'm gonna be like with my gravatar on WordPress where I'm that might be commenting on someone else's site. Because occasionally people who don't know me at all just respond to me and focus on the fact that I'm Muslim. And I don't always want that but on social

media like Twitter, I want people I want people to know me for who I am. So that's okay with me and and I have my, my space already set up there. So this is like what kind of choices do you make with your own? Do you put profile and there's people put their profile pictures with masks on which is very funny because like you can't see their faces, but it signifies something right. Like people put a picture with a mask on for their social media profile. Like a political statement, like I'm someone who believes in masks and I care about everybody's safety, kind of, but it doesn't help you know what you look like. And if you want to say something,

A

Ana Cackley 34:47

I was just going to agree, I think definitely. It it sends a message of I think masks are important and I support wearing them or Or think other people should wear them.

M

Maha Bali 35:03

Kind of like the cat, cat hats that women wear wear as well. The only difference is that the math doesn't tell me how you look like the profile picture is supposed to tell me that I think. All right. So the other thing is like when we put up our social identity, we say things about ourselves. And we have a limited number of spaces and characters to say things, right? So if you were for your Twitter profile, there's a word limit. I can't remember how many characters it is. But when you think about 10, words are less things about yourself, where you want to say like two things that are professional, and maybe one thing that's personal, like I would say, that usually helps on spaces like Twitter that even if it's a very, very professional space, and you're using a very professional way, it's nice to say one thing about yourself, that's not professional. What's the one thing I won't let you go through the whole process of like writing all the things, but what's the one thing that's personal about yourself that you're happy to share in a professional context? Like for the social media thing? Because it makes you feel less dry and cold? Yeah, so what would you what's the one thing that you're comfortable sharing? Loving books, some dogs? Yeah, that's, that's quite common, actually talking about pets and definitely loving books is something that goes well with that. For me, it was the one that I have with my Twitter profile is a PhD mom, which is a hashtag. Because for some reason, like I'm particularly proud of finishing my PhD, while I was a mom, it was hard. So I maintain that one. What about others? What are some of the things that people share? Weird coffee person, lots of people write things about coffee, and beer and drinking and stuff. All right. And feel free to keep typing about this. And then the other thing is James Paul, he talks G, I think I keep saying D. But it's actually Jean James, Paul G, talks about these four different dimensions of identity. And so there are aspects of our identity that we don't control, like just what color skin we're born with, right. And then there are other things that are you gain by

someone granting you like a degree from an institution or a job in a space or a country giving your citizenship, then there are affinity groups, like you're part of a book club or something like that. And then there are other things like gender and religion. So there are elements of these things that we can choose to show or hide online. And I think was either Jane or Christina was talking about like, people are only showing the positive stuff. But this is actually a good thing in terms of vulnerability and safety. So you can decide, and how do you decide whom to follow? Or a friend or something like that? Or which hashtags to follow on? how frequent? And then which hashtags to use? What are some of the choices that you make?



Christine Fruin 38:01

I choose not to I don't follow hashtags. I rarely use them. Okay.



Maha Bali 38:11

How do you find? What's the social media space we're talking about here? But you are not going to do that work? I know, you're saying you're staying away from social media altogether these days? As much



Christine Fruin 38:21

as well. I mean, I don't I don't really use I don't use them on. I mean, besides a professional Twitter account, I don't use them there. I don't use them. I don't at least I don't search by them on Instagram. Oh, I just made me it's made function of my age.



Maha Bali 38:41

No, it's it's actually possible also that the kinds of things that you're looking for don't often come with hashtags. I mean, the reason the way I learned about hashtags is that I find articles that are interesting to me. And I start to realize that the people are tweeting them with a particular hashtag. And then you keep seeing that say, Oh, well, maybe if I click that hashtag, I'll find other articles around that same topic. So for example, like on Twitter, there's a higher ed hashtag. And there's an academic chatter hashtag. And those seem to have materialism, and then ed tech hashtag, and they seem to have material that I'm interested in. So I used to use something called TweetDeck, which organizes this so that you see all the hashtags naturally, you don't have to keep searching for them. It just shows you what's happening. So it's a little bit easier to use the lead list, which features a lot security, the people they're interested in, follow up. And so what are the things that make you decide to follow a person? So if you're using a place like that, how do you decide to

follow people? How did that come about?

A

Ana Cackley 39:38

I usually look at their profile, usually on Twitter. And if I'm on Facebook, I might base it more on whether I know them in real life, or at least have met them. On Twitter, I generally look at what kind of content they post and if I'm interested in that, I'll read their bio. And if particularly if there's Somebody who either works in my profession or talks a lot about something that I'm interested in, I'll follow them.

M

Maha Bali 40:08

Yeah. So I saw, I noticed one thing that you said is like the content that they post, not just their bios, right? This is one of the things I also I'm gonna ask you guys in your social media, do you like do things like a pinned tweet? Or there's a pin Facebook post? You do that? What do you so how do you choose? I just have like, you're always persistent, even if it's not your latest. So what

A

Ana Cackley 40:31

I have a cute photo of me and my cat.

M

Maha Bali 40:36

Okay. So I mean, the key thing about this pinned tweet is that it's going to show no matter what your latest thing is, because so if someone's coming in and seeing who you are, at least you're going to make sure that they've seen that. Even if your last post was just Haha, because you were just responding to someone else or whatever. So for me, that's one of the important elements, because so there's already what you post in terms of what information you share about yourself and what you don't. And whatever link which link, would you put a link to your personal website, your LinkedIn, your faculty page? How do you make those decisions in different spaces?

M

Matthew Thiesen 41:26

I link to my the institutions that I work at, and my personal page.

M

Maha Bali 41:33

Okay, so both, sometimes you can only do one, right.



Matthew Thiesen 41:37

Yeah, sorry. Yeah. So at the the other handles on like Twitter, there.



Maha Bali 41:41

Yeah. I see what you mean, right, rather than the actual webpage. But yeah, I see what you're saying. Yeah. And that makes a lot of sense that that adds to your credibility so that when people come in, and they look up your profile, they know immediately those things, they were saying, you know, you choose probably the things that will give you prestige and to help people find you. If you're interested in finding other people who are librarians, you may actually say, if there's a Twitter handle for the library, you put that as well as your institution, right. And if you're interested in showcasing for me, like I want to show the university or finished my PhD, and so I've got that. And if you're part of another organization like Atla, and they have a Twitter account, you want to put that. All right. And then I want to I mentioned personal learning network early on. And I wanted to ask you, if this was a term that's familiar to you, or at least the concept of building networks of people who aren't necessarily in your immediate social circles or work circles? Is that a term that was familiar before? Some of you,



Christine Fruin 42:53

that's what's the term? I didn't hear what you said,



Maha Bali 42:55

personally learning personal learning network, so I just posted in the



Christine Fruin 42:58

personal learning networks, okay. Now, I'm not



Maha Bali 43:03

familiar, we're working on curating it takes a lot of time to curate it. So I know you were familiar with it. Yeah. And so I know what kind of behaviors or what kind of like how to, do you have do it? Would you consider that you have built a personal learning network? Of course, it doesn't end like you build it, and then it stays like it's an ongoing thing. But would you say that you've been doing that?

A

Ana Cackley 43:29

I would definitely say over the last few years, I've been doing that, particularly on Twitter, around various social justice issues. And also around my career, which is writing and communications.

M

Maha Bali 43:49

We have here weren't familiar with it until we chatted a couple days ago. Okay. So one of the things that I think, can go really wrong, or can be a missed opportunity with social media and being like in Facebook groups, or things like that, is when you engage, and then you don't remember people's names. You know, it doesn't stay here. I know, a friend of mine used to read a lot of books, but he doesn't notice for the office. So there was, there's a guy called, I think, Pasi sahlberg, who's a Finnish educator who wrote a book called Finnish lessons. And he was visiting Egypt. And I'm telling my colleague who was just reading the book, what his homework is here in Egypt, like, like you were just reading his book is like which book and it was a missed opportunity. Like he could have missed going to the conference where this author who he really liked was going to be because he didn't notice the names and I think the personal learning network is when you start to notice particular people with their names, so that when Matthew says Sunday and Sunday and then told me about you, I know what he's talking about. It's not like two random people on Twitter that sometimes retweet my stuff or sometimes comments on my tweets, you know, so I think that's for me the turning point, I started to notice people and then you start to actually want to read stuff by these people and this probably. And but it doesn't like, it's not gonna come automatically. How do you decide like I was saying like, how do you decide that you're going to follow this person, and then not just follow them, but like, follow them closely and put them on these curated lists that lemmya was talking about. For me, like my first few days on Twitter, when I had less than 100 followers, one of the things I did is I asked a lot of questions, and I had to post them to hashtags, because I didn't have a lot of followers. So when, when Christina was talking about not having a hashtag, not using hashtags, if you don't have a lot of followers, then nobody's gonna see what you've written. But if you use hashtags, even people who don't know you will see it and great for conferences. Definitely. And when you use hashtags and conferences, then you'll see what's happening at that conference. And then find people who are tweeting things about the conference that you agree with, or going to sessions that you like, and then you can go to those sessions and follow those people. So asking questions, answering questions to those hashtags, so being useful to other people. And that can be a bit tricky, because sometimes we don't know that what we have is going to be helpful enough. And there are people who are mean, on social media spaces, so it can happen. And then the third one, which sometimes we do with that intention, and sometimes not, which is amplifying others work, like, what do we share and to which hashtags again, like if I know,

like, there's a conference about open education or whatever, and there are people using a hashtag for it. And so, you know, people are talking these days about x. And so something just came out, and you share it out to that space, with that hashtag is that everyone who's following that hashtags gonna see it, they're gonna realize that you're a helpful person, you have useful content to share, then they might follow you. And then the other element of that is the person if you tag the person who wrote it, you're amplifying their work, and you're telling them Hey, you, I recognize you by name, that you're doing this stuff. And that's something people appreciate a lot is being tagged and being recognized as themselves and being seen online in those ways. And so I mean, there's, there's new, there's two things you could be doing, you could be sharing it so that people who follow you and follow the hashtag benefit, but you're also benefiting the person who wrote it, who made it. And I think that's one of the things that people do for each other. And the personal learning network, like someone just had an article out and all their friends retweeted, and they comment on it. And that is a really helpful thing to do, especially if you really like each other's work, like you're not just doing it. Yeah, it's preferred service. Or if you don't want to create your own context, yet, you're not happy with that yet. But you can retweet something with the comments. And I say twit retweet because I'm on Twitter. But whatever the format is, you can do this kind of thing on LinkedIn you can do it elsewhere, is let someone know I'm reading you and share it with people for connected to you. And then you're still useful without creating your own personal content, but just your little commentary. It's kind of like an annotated bibliography type of things with something, or sometimes just even retreating without really sharing something without necessarily saying that could still be useful sometimes. I've noticed recently that Twitter asks you to read something before you retweeted sometimes, I just show you what do you want to read this article before you tweet it out? So that's important. What about blogging? Is anyone interested in something more long form like blogging? And why Why not? Yeah, yeah,

A

Ana Cackley 48:43

I will just say I had a blog maybe a decade ago, or so. I feel like it sort of went through a boom, at one point. Maybe around, I don't know, 2008. Nine, somewhere around then. And so I did blog for a little while. But I got really, I think self conscious about it, and wondering whether what I had to say, like had any point and wondering who was reading it? And if anybody was interested in it at all? Yeah.

M

Maha Bali 49:19

So it definitely went through a boom, maybe 10 years ago, or something like quite a while ago, like around the time you're talking about. But I think it still has value. If you're

someone who writes a lot and you want to share your unfinished ideas before you have to put them in like a peer reviewed paper or something like that. And if they don't, then that's there's no reason to the whole setup a whole blog when you're not. But this thing about consistency is really important that a lot of people feel like they have to be very consistent, very particular way, then I don't think we need to do that to ourselves. I think if if there's a space that will sometimes be useful to you and your network, I think it's useful to have it. And then if you can't like I sometimes write a lot in one week and then I'll stop for a whole month because I'm busy. doing other stuff? No, that's fine. But there are certain groups of communities where this makes sense. And they will read each other's blogs, and then there, sometimes there isn't. And it's important to think who would read it? And why would I write it? Why would I write it in public space versus a private space? Would I just write a long LinkedIn post instead? For example, if your space is LinkedIn versus Twitter, because Twitter will let you do that, well let you put put something very long. And then some people do like, have you seen these like Twitter threads where they're really writing an article, but in 10, Twitter threads, and that has pros and cons? Like what do you guys think of those Twitter threads? Why come you don't like them?

C Christine Fruin 50:40
don't know anything about?

A Ana Cackley 50:42
I really like them.

M Maha Bali 50:44
Yeah, so sometimes someone will say, a tweet. And say one of 10.

C Christine Fruin 50:50
Oh, that I can't stand that. I think that's annoying.

M Maha Bali 50:53
Yeah.

C Christine Fruin 50:56
Oh, I hate that.

M Maha Bali 50:57
Yeah. For me, it annoys me because you don't always. It's not always easy to follow where everything is going. And then you might retweet one, but you haven't seen the rest of the context. So I'm always worried about people doing that. I will do it if I need to say something. And I don't have enough space in one tweet, but like those ones that are almost an article. Yeah, I think it's meant to be punchy. So it gets all these different messages across and maybe different messages will reach different people are gonna think

C Christine Fruin 51:22
that defeats the purpose of Twitter, just like when they increase the character account, you know, the character count. This is what it was supposed to be short bits, something short bytes of consumable information. I don't, I don't want to read a novel in Twitter.

M Maha Bali 51:36
Yeah, the whole point is to be concise, right. So how do other people feel about that?

M Matthew Thiesen 51:47
I've seen a Twitter handle, I forget the word is, but it's where there's a command where you will ask another Twitter account and AI to bind the Twitter thread thread into a single form of post to multiple thread, tweet threads. I thought that was interesting.

M Maha Bali 52:05
What did it again,

M Matthew Thiesen 52:07
I have to have to find exactly what it's called. I just saw it yesterday for the first time. Okay. So unroll it on a roll. That's the one

M Maha Bali 52:15
Unroll Yeah, but it doesn't work very well, if it's a branching tree. So if it's, if it's a thread by one person, all in a row, it works. But if it's like different people responding to each other, it doesn't work. I was gonna say,



Christine Fruin 52:30

I was applied depends for me, because the one thing is I agree with Twitter's there to be concise. I also spend the majority of my social media time on Twitter. And if I'm not getting anything, like has a little more in depth from there, I might miss it all together.



Maha Bali 52:45

So that's it doesn't bother me. Yeah, yeah. That's a good point. And that, I mean, some people will write a link to a blog post. So that's what you could get. But yeah, sometimes you can get stuff that way. It is still more adjustable than something else was longer. I actually noticed recently that WordPress allows you when you publish a blog post to also publish it as a Twitter thread. Rather than as a link to the entire blog post. I thought that was interesting. I'd never seen I saw it like last week or something. So Jane, you are going to ask something, and I'm gonna this meta question about the type of content I'm going to show you something real quick. My blog took me 10 years to start it. So in those 10, the early 2000s. I knew about blogging, and I knew technically how to use it, but it took me 10 years to get the confidence to start it, which, yeah, but it works out for me. Okay. So what was happening was, I was participating in learning opportunities where people use hashtags and Twitter a lot and use blogging and would read each other's blogs. So I developed an audience that way. And I built my personal learning network blogging about education and social justice, critical pedagogy, digital education, but I also made decisions to talk about parenting to include poems, and my poet, my blog evolve. So I personally think of my blog is my personal space, and I'm comfortable blending my personal and professional, but that's a choice you make. And you know who your audience are, and whether they would appreciate that or not. I think for me, it's a feminist move, to be very explicit about gender issues and about parenting. And it fits Okay, with an education audience. I think maybe if I was, I don't know a rocket scientist or something, people wouldn't appreciate that. But I might still do it as a feminist move again, still. So I'm actually almost done. So I think I better not so much focus on my slides, and just give you guys a chance to talk because there's only one minute left. And the only other thing I was going to talk about is vulnerability and how the personal learning network would protect you when you're vulnerable. Because when someone attacks me on Twitter, because I in a conversation about proctoring what helped me is that a lot of people stood up for me and And then responded, so I didn't feel like I could get harmed by that person. But I can totally understand that you know, what you choose to post and how risky the things you say are depends on how safe you feel in this space. So how do you choose the space that's safe that has the people that you want to follow? And who will follow you order to build your identity there and nurtured there, so that when you need to speak up and do those riskier things? I'm going to stop and give you guys room to ask questions. Yes, working towards a more diverse PLN is one of my goals to always. And one of the

things I do in terms of this diversity of PLN. I learned this from Steven Brookfield, and it's that try to focus on only marginal populations for a while. Because if you don't do that, the white ones are gonna keep popping up all over, like the white ones of the very similar ones to you won't be popping up because they're going to be dominant anyway. So you need to make a lot of effort to just make sure that you're if you have four tweets in your timeline, pick the ones always start with the one that's like a woman of color or someone who has a very different viewpoint than you so that you get exposed to it a lot more. Or if all of them are writing, like longer articles, like click on those ones, and train yourself to do that for a while. And then it's going to come naturally to you. And it's going to be diverse contacts will introduce you to more diverse contacts, because they often will be following each other. When when something's happened, I'll look at particular people's feeds, and then I'll find other people to follow. I'll see what kind of hashtags they're doing what they're talking about, like, definitely. Well, my African Americans, friends say about Black Lives Matter is different than what my white friends who are allies say about it. No need to know that you're looking at, you know, the thing that you need to be looking at at the time. Any other questions, comments? Is there anything that set out for you today? I think I've sort of talked about lots of different elements of digital identity. There's no like, specific way to go about it. But is there anything that stood out for you today, it's now it's gonna help you do something different? Or that you're interested in doing something different? Because it's okay, Christine, take care. You're one minute late already. Bye, bye, thank you.

A

Ana Cackley 57:38

I think I'm just gonna try to be a little bit more active on on Twitter, I tend to be an observer, as a couple of other people have said, I like reading the things that others say, may be retreating them. But I don't always feel comfortable sharing my own thoughts. And I think you've inspired me to just try to connect a little bit more.

M

Maha Bali 58:07

Melody, Lamia, Matthew, James, any other thoughts? Give Twitter another chance. Yeah. Because you said something about Egypt not being on Twitter, but educators on Twitter. I mean, most of my followers on Twitter aren't from Egypt, for sure. But that's kind of part of the diversity and part of the getting the like minded in terms of their other spaces to find Egyptian educators. And you'll find them that you'll find a few on Twitter, too. But yeah, yeah. And the thing is just when you go in and you don't have followers, the hashtag thing is going to be huge. So I think what Matthew said about conferences, that could be like the introduction, because a lot of people will share something to a conference hashtag, and you'll know what that competition is. But they'll use some other hashtag that is of

interest to your type of your people. So that will be one way to discover people and hashtags that you can then use in the future. Sharing other people's content build up the community, especially since I'm more of an observer and yes, greater focus on PLN and blogging. Yeah, if you want to go read up a little bit more on personal learning networks, you could do that. I think experiencing it as what, what helps you build it? There's so many different ways to go. How do you combat the feeling of needing your content to be perfect or polished? That's an important one, I think we are indoctrinated into believing it needs to be. I actually think you'll find a lot of people on social media, especially the ones who post a lot are not like that. So if you if you observe a lot of people who are like that, you'll start to feel like it's okay to be that. But also don't do it with content that could be risky. So don't talk about race issues. And post an incomplete thought about that. You know, a lot of people have gotten in trouble, because they're still living under a rock that they don't realize that saying things like all lives matter is not acceptable. So, so those things happen, so you don't want to be one of those. So For a very controversial topics, I would be very careful about what I post until I'm like, really important scholar in the field or whatever, I'm going to be careful. But with like regular stuff, I think, I think the thing is, if you're looking for something and asking you a question, that's not a risky way to make yourself vulnerable. So it's kind of like saying, Oh, I'm looking for resources on this. This is one thing that will let people know what you're interested in without letting them know how much you know. So if then it doesn't need to be that polish. I just ask a good question. I think you could do that, probably. And that's what I did a lot early on in my PhD was just asking questions. And then if other people are asking questions that answering with like a resource or something that's, again, not your answer, but it's a resource. And that's another way to contribute without in less risky ways. until you start to feel like people can trust you and you feel like it's a safe space to respond to these particular people. Melody might revisit your incident starting a blog. All right. Yeah, I'll show you something. I'll show you my graduate students blogs. They know that people are looking at them these days. So you can take a look, what I said to my graduate students is Korea blog. Our entire computer assisted language learning course is you can do whatever you want. Do whatever you want with the blog, you want to reflect on what happened in class today, you want to reflect on something you read or reflect on your teaching today, do whatever you want, and this is what they ended up with. They were some of them were very worried about what are they going to do and I said like post every couple weeks, you have to post very regularly. Yeah, this you know, the people who need to post regularly are like the people really famous bloggers, but the rest of us don't have to do. You got a 404 error? Oh, sorry, I wrote it wrong. I'm very sorry. It's good that you caught me on that. Okay. I don't want to I want to respect everyone's time. Such