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Who is Really Behind the Username? (Re)affirming Oneself in the Digital Age

Taylor Dixon
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"Who is Really Behind the Username? (Re)affirming Oneself in the

Digital Age

Identity, Authenticity and its Importance in the Digital Age

Taylor Dixon

Senior Capstone HCOM 475

Practical and Professional Ethics

Research Essay

Dr. Qun Wang

Division of Humanities and Communication

Fall 2016

Dedication

My academic journey has not been an easy one. I decided when I was a young adult that college was not for me. I dropped out of my local community college, got into the work force and slowly learned the value of a degree.

My parents supported any decision I made and I am thankful for that. So I would like to dedicate this project to my parents, Fred and Dana Dixon and to my brother sister, Morgan and Kyle Dixon. Without their endless support and encouragement I would not be where I am today. I don't know what I did to deserve such amazing people in my life.

"My family is my strength and my weakness." - Aishwarya Rai Bachchan

Acknowledgments

My academic journey has been a long one and I've had many professors in the last four years but there is one professor that really made an impact on my life both personally and professionally. Professor Stephanie Hopper of Sierra Community College in Rocklin, California. She has helped me navigate my way into adulthood and believed in me when I didn't believe in myself. I am endlessly thankful for you and your support.

I have had many great professors here at California State University, Monterey Bay but there are a couple professors that taught lessons that will stick with me forever. I would like to thank Professor Qun Wang, Professor Sam Robinson, Professor Aimee Escalante, Professor John Berteaux, Professor Jen Mott and Professor Darby Campbell. Thank you for sharing your knowledge with me.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Project Proposal

Essay Proposal

1. *Name and Concentration*

   Taylor Dixon, HCOM - Practical and Professional Ethics

2. *Title*

   Who is Behind the Username? (Re)affirming Oneself in This Digital Age

3. *Topic*

   I am going to study authenticity and see the fluidity of the word over the passing decades and see if the meaning has changed due to societal changes. I am then going to study the digital age and show the progression of the internet. Starting from when at home computers were created to present day. After researching those topics I'm going to see if social media users are about to be authentic and true to their identities while using these online platforms. I want to look at case studies that represent authentic identities as well as inauthentic identities

4. *Research Questions*

   People all around the world depend on the internet for their day to day activities and I want to study why and if they are authentic.

   - How can we be truly authentic while using platforms that allow us to recreate, reinvent and hide our identities all at once?

   - Are people mostly authentic online? Why do people use social media?

   - Do these people solely rely on the internet for their identity?

   - How long have they been using these platforms?

   - How many people would consider their online life a major part of who they are?

5. *Alignment With Common Theme*

   The semester's theme is the search for self-identity and a lot of online users depend on the internet for their identity.

6. *Sources*

   Scholarly articles- Life in the Digital Age

   Websites- American Behavioral Sciences

7. *Next Steps*

   In order to succeed in this study I am going to have to set time aside to really research the topic and figure out what angle I will want to pursue. Using all resources that are provided including the library to see how one can create this type of self-identity.

8. *Timeline*

   For the Timeline I will allow myself one week for every item I need to accomplish. By that I mean the research, outline and rough draft. After that I will require two pages a week to complete my essay on time. That will allow me time to still receive feedback and edit.

Introduction

The rapid onset of the digital age has been and will continue to be overwhelming. There are more questions than answers when it comes to understanding the affect our global interconnectedness is having. Many of the current questions scholars grapple with are, quite frankly, unanswerable. But that should not deter us from studying, researching, and synthesizing case studies in an effort to make our own contributions to the discourse. One of the most perplexing questions that has come into focus is this- can we can be authentic with our identity when using online platforms which allow us to recreate, hide, and reinvent ourselves all at once? While this paper may leave you wanting more, my ultimate goal is to incite interest and awareness in our digital advancement. This will require a thorough exploration of what it means to be authentic and how these proposed definitions have changed to function in our digital age. We will dive deep into the world of social media usage and how people to affirm their authentic selves through those platforms.

Study of Authenticity

There are many angles that one could take while trying to reveal some form of authenticity and identity in the digital age but for this I want to divert back to the historical definition of authenticity and show the fluidity of the word and how its meaning has slightly changed over the passing decades. The first mention of authenticity comes from philosopher Rene Descartes in the late 1500's. According to Tiffany Marra of the University of Michigan, Descartes believed that authenticity "is a moral inner voice; and, according to this voice, individuals must think and act responsibly." In other words we all have a moral compass inside that helps us decide what is right or wrong. Each of our compasses are different and this is what

allows us to be an individual. This aligns with the modern day definition of authenticity but is not yet complete.

The next study of authenticity comes from Jean-Jacques Rousseau, a late eighteenth century philosopher. His studies of self and of inner self lead him to the idea of authenticity. Which is getting closer to the modern day understanding of the word. Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy published some of his work and the study starts with this excerpt of Rousseau analyzing autonomy.

> "The idea of autonomy—the view that each individual must decide how to act based on his or her own rational deliberations about the best course of action—has in many ways paved the way for the idea of authenticity. However, authenticity goes beyond autonomy by holding that an individual's feelings and deepest desires can outweigh both the outcome of rational deliberation in making decisions, and our willingness to immerse ourselves into the reigning norms and values of society."

Rousseau brings up the point that authenticity is within all people and sometimes rational thinking is not present because of the need to be true to oneself can outweigh anything else. This is relevant to what is happening in the world today because of social media and different internet platforms, people are able to follows those deepest desires. Whether or not they are true or false, right or wrong.

There were major cultural advancements and changes, such as the availability to aquire at home computers that occurred in the early 1970's that introduced a new ideal for the western world. This new way of thinking allowed for people to become more individualistic and moved away from seeing people as just an element of a society. So the meaning of authenticity had to be

somewhat modified from the original meaning because societal changes made that meaning out of date with the freedom to share information so easily and potentially make it inauthentic. So again the issue of authenticity becomes relevant. The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy states that "the older concept of [authenticity], referring to being truthful in order to be honest in one's dealings with others, comes to be replaced by a relatively new concept of authenticity, understood as being true to oneself for one's own benefit." This means that there can be underlying motives that can alter ones authenticity, in other words, gives people the ability to portray an authentic self without being truly authentic to their identity and morals. And with the digital age still developing this issue has become more relevant because people are able to create fake aspects of their lives through the platforms that are used daily by the majority of the public.

Between the late 1900's and early 2000's the concept of authenticity took on a life of its own and it was studied in a capacity never seen before. The introduction of social media sites allowed us to portray versions of ourselves that may or may not be authentic. The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy talks more about the current meaning of authenticity with the added components of the internet. "In more contemporary terms, we can say that Kierkegaard (an eighteenth century philosopher) provides a criticism of modern society as causing "inauthenticity." The platforms that the digital era provides is perfect for people that want to show their authentic selves as well as people that want to hide behind an inauthentic version of themselves. This is why there are so many ways of self-expression on the internet, for example, Facebook. This site is supposed to be an extension of who you are authentically.

The Digital Age

The era that we live in now is known as the digital age. The digital age means that there is a surplus of information that is readily available to those who have access to the internet. According to Your Dictionary it is specifically defined as, "the time period starting in the 1970's with the introduction of the personal computer with subsequent technology introduced providing the ability to transfer information freely and quickly." In the digital age, information is now spread easily and on a global scale. This reliance on computers started around the 1970's with the introduction of at home computers, as stated, but it gained momentum in the early 1990's with the evolution of the internet that was then known as the World Wide Web. The connection between the digital age and authenticity was not an immediate revelation. Although the internet and global interconnectedness advanced quite rapidly, not many could have predicted just how deeply, each individual would come to rely on its power consistently throughout their day.

Progression of the Internet

In the early 90's it was clear that the World Wide Web would play an integral role in streamlining domestic and international business. At that time, the role it would play in transcontinental business was the most promising prospect. For example, Amazon was created and this began the realm of online shopping. Originally it was a fast and convenient bookstore but the founder of the site quickly realized its potential and started selling everything under the sun. But the power of this global interconnectedness went far beyond the business world. Computer scientists, entrepreneurs, communication scholars and some of the most highly respected scholars of our time have transformed the digital age into something far beyond anything the inventors of the internet would have imagined it to be, where we are now.

The internet has allowed for the entire world to become more connected and makes sharing information sometimes too simple. Since this type of online sharing is common and easily understood, it has left room for a lot of false information and not authentic information to arise. There was a slow start to the dependency that is experienced today on the internet but it all started in the early 1990's and I am going to illustrate the very steady progression of social media. The World Wide Web became widely used by the majority of households by 1997 and in that year we saw the birth of what would eventually lead to a world ran by social networking.

America Online, otherwise known as AOL, is an email and news server that was the first to invent instant messaging. A way to connect immediately through a computer screen and much faster than an email. And according to History Corporative, a website that conducts studies on and about the internet, by the year 2000 there were nearly 100 million people using the internet daily, this of course was before the major progression of social media sites so this online usage was seen more as a hobby than anything and few could predict what these platforms would grow to become.

Introduction of Social Media

In 2003 the world was hit with its first successful social media site, MySpace. This was a platform that people used to share ideas, opinions and much more. This site allowed for the average person to create a safe space to express themselves and show their authentic identities. Users were able to personalize their site and create a sense of self through this social media platform. There were even some musicians that were discovered via Myspace because it encouraged individuality, creativity and authenticity. The site was able to have effects in the lives of real people through a virtual world. When MySpace was popular it seemed like that was

the best that social media could get, but the ball had just started rolling for this type of interaction and MySpace was just a small stepping stone for what was to come.

There is one site, one platform, one mega star of the social media world that has set all the standards that surround social media. As of February 4th, 2004 Facebook officially launched. It originally was made for Harvard students and soon Facebook creators realized its potential and expanded to all universities. Again, Facebook had an even bigger potential and after 2006 it opened its site to anyone over the age of 13. Facebook has surpassed the lifespan of almost every other social networking site and is still exponentially growing. The United Nations concluded that there are 7.5 billion people on this planet and according to Statista, a site that compiles data and statistics claims there are 1.79 billion active Facebook users. (Statista defines active Facebook user as someone who has logged on to the site once in the last 30 days) Mark Zuckerberg, the creator of Facebook claims that one in seven people are on the site. With a platform as large as that information is able to be spread at astonishing rates.

Positive Effects of Facebook

Facebook has helped society connect in ways that were unpredictable and it has aided in information sharing for years now. Facebook has allowed people to connect and share without having to leave the comfort of their own homes and helps to fulfill the basic human need of contact with others. It is human nature to want to connect and find companionship amongst others so this at home platform has been able to make people feel interconnected while still holding the power, meaning that if they don't want to respond or want to stop engaging, they can.

Facebook has helped society in many ways, one example is that it has helped people to not feel so alone. Not all days are good days and some people are not able to handle the stresses that can arise daily. So the ability to stay at home while still interacting with friends and family is highly cherished. A study done by the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee found that the lonelier a person is, the more time they will spend on Facebook. Even though you are not physically interacting with people, you are still virtually communicating with them, in turn that makes people not feel so alone. Social media sites have created somewhat of a safe haven for people that are in need. Another way that Facebook has helped its users is the effortless ability to share information, authentic or inauthentic. People are able to post a picture of their new animal, job promotion or recent vacation and get feedback instantly from other users. That leads into the last major advantage that we have today because of Facebook, the ability to keep in touch with almost everyone we meet. Coworkers, high school friends, friends of friends, family, extended family, employers, the list is endless. The more that we use Facebook to interact with all these different people the healthier our social lives will be.

There are many case studies that show how the virtual world of Facebook has aided the lives of its users and there are very different ways this site has helped each person but I'd like to focus on the times Facebook has been a platform for people to find love. If the user is being authentic then the opportunity to create and build real life relationships is possible. Facebook allows for users to join groups and like different pages that show what the member is interested in, Sophie and Trevor, two college aged students that lived oceans apart were able to connect and find love. Trevor, a student at the University of Indiana and Sophie who lives in Leeds, England met on a Star Wars interest page and found that they had more than just their favorite movie. They continued to keep in touch and about two years into their friendship Trevor made the trip to

meet Sophie in person. Since that day they have been commuting between the two continents and in 2012 they both moved to New York City and got married. When Facebook is used by authentic members that are true to their identity, social media it is a great addition to the communicating world.

Negative Effects of Facebook

So far I have only highlighted the happiness and helping aspect of Facebook but there are many dark sides to this site as well. While Facebook may leave its users happy and feeling fulfilled one moment it also promotes for unhealthy comparisons between its users in the next moment. We all know that person that goes on constant vacations and always has the nicest new things. This "keeping up with the jones" lifestyle used to be talked about when thinking about neighbors but now, we have to keep up with trends that circle around the globe. It creates for a sense of anxiety online. Also, since everyone on social media sites are in charge of what they post and say online, the viewers are only seeing what they chose to post, so it could be a fabricated truth, they could lie about the details and leave a sense of envy in their audience. This envy that is seen today can lead some users into a sort of depression because they think everyone else on their Facebook is more successful and happier than they are.

A benefit of Facebook is that you are able to keep in touch with virtually everyone you meet but this could also be seen as a downside to the site. As humans we aren't meant to stay in touch with everyone we come in contact with. We would simply be overwhelmed. Specifically when two people end a relationship its best to just go separate ways but with Facebook, users are able to go to their pages and see what they are up to, who they are dating and what changes they have made in their personal lives. Research shows that this is not a healthy addition to our lives and makes people feel worse about their lives. So instead of aiding friendships it could be a way

13

for people to hold onto the past and not move forward with their lives. Running into people that you don't want to see if inevitable but searching them out on a social media site is not natural.

Another negative aspect to Facebook is that this platform doesn't require people to have a face recognition or doesn't force people to be true to their identities, so users can be anyone they want to be. This is negative because they use these created identities live an inauthentic life online. One example of this comes from a well-known TV show on MTV called *Catfish*. Catfish is a show that is hosted by two men and their goal is to help social media users find out who they are actually talking to online. The show always starts out the same way, one online user reaches out to the hosts and explain that they are falling in love with someone they have met online but have yet to meet in person. They usually state that they have made efforts to meet in person but something always comes up. There is an episode that is titled, "Joe and Kari Ann", and in this episode Joe was the one to reach out to the hosts. Joe claims he has met the former Miss Teen USA on Facebook and they have been communicating for months and he believes they are in some sort of a relationship, but they have yet to meet in person. The hosts spend some time searching for Kari Ann to find out who is actually behind the username.

Finally they get Kari Ann on the phone and she agrees to a meeting. When the day comes and she gets out of her car, she is in fact Joe's old high school friend named Rose. Now Rose shows little regard for Joe's feelings and then continues to explain to the TV show hosts that she enjoys making fake profiles and toying with people's feelings. She states that making people believe she is someone else is fun and entertaining for her. Rose is the perfect example of someone that might not like their own identity so they create an identity for themselves through the use of social media platforms. Inauthentic uses of Facebook and other social media sites are very common today. The fact that there is a show that has been produced and is now in its fifth

14

season and its sole purpose is to debunk fake profiles online means that there is a clear need for more authentic interactions online.

Conclusion

Facebook and social media sites are fairly new to our society, they have only been around for 9 years and they have already made such an impact on the world as a whole. It has promoted the interconnectedness that we feel and experience today. Since platforms like this have made such profound changes in such little time, it is almost impossible to predict where they will take us in the next 10 or even 5 years from now.

Authenticity in the digital age is going to be a topic that stays relevant for years to come because the digital age is still developing and there are going to be many scholars that try to dig deeper into the world of social media. We cannot force people to be true to their identities but we can push for a more honest world. After learning about the true meaning of authenticity, understanding what the digital age is and hearing about the negative and positive affects social media has on society today, I hope that you will consider your personal online usage and try to be as authentic as possible. Again this paper might leave you with more questions than answers when it comes to understanding the effects of online usage but the main take away is simple, the power is in your finger tips and it is your responsibility to be true and authentic to your identity while navigating through this digital age.

Final Synthesis Essay

When first starting my capstone project I had many ideas and struggled with trying to decide what avenue to take. I decided to study online user's authenticity and see if these users were able to be true to their identities while navigating through the digital age. At first I wanted to study multiple online platforms, including video games, to see how many users rely on these platforms as the sole connecter to their identities but slowly realized that there was one site that encompassed all avenues. I chose to focus on Facebook. It's the largest social media site and had more than enough case studies, authentic as well as inauthentic for me to study.

When starting my studies I knew that I was going to make a meaningful contribution to the discourse because social media sites are relatively new and are related to human communication. The internet was made public in the 1990's and then the first social media site was born only a short 9 years ago. There are many scholars that are equally trying to understand the social media phenomenon that has swept the globe. The human communication department of CSU, Monterey Bay focuses on the interconnectedness of today's society so studying social media fits right in. Our class was given the capstone theme of self-identity and sites like Facebook give people the option to be anyone they please, so I decided to dig deeper into that topic and study how one can be true to their identity when there are so many platforms that allow for people to recreate, reinvent and hide they identities all at once.

Since social media is still so new, the earlier generations did not grow up in a society that was so connected via the internet so of course some people are whole-heartedly against it. I learned that whether you love or hate social media, chances are that you have at least been on it once. My project highlights the way that Facebook has helped people as well as ways that it has

hurt them. I hope that this essay will incite interest into the authenticity of online user's identities.

This project allowed for me to collaborate with my colleagues when it came to having the essay peer read. I learned the value of listening to others and taking constructive criticism. When I would get writers block I would have someone read my paper aloud and then we together, would discuss my topic. It helped me to incorporate multiple viewpoints. Another lesson I learned from this project is that when working independently, you must set a realistic timeline for yourself. I originally wanted to begin this project in September after a couple classes had taken place and I had a good grasp on what was expected. I procrastinated and started late October. When you don't have deadlines it is important to be self-motivated. Once I realized I was losing time I kicked myself into gear and was able to complete this paper in a timely manner.

This capstone theme was one that allowed for a lot of creativity. Self-identity could be anything because you can't tell someone that they are wrong for thinking, feeling or believing they are a certain way. There is no right or wrong answer when it comes to being who you truly are. We watched a movie in class titled *Real Women Have Curves*, and this movie closely aligned with our topic. The movie is about a young woman that is constantly been suppressed by her mother. The mother is constantly telling her who she should be, how she should act and so on. It starts out with the daughter trying to follow every direction her mother gave her and by the end she breaks and is tired of her mother dampening her spirits and she moves away to college. The ending implies that she is moving on with her life and it is representative of the fact that she is going to choose her own identity, not be told who she is from other people. When thinking about identity and social media, authenticity comes to mind, and that's where I got the idea for

my project. If someone is online and they are being their true to their identities, it can be a beautiful tool for communication. But if people are being inauthentic it can hurt all parties involved.

Overall my project aligns with the class theme of self-identity because I studied online user's capability to be true to their identities. I highlighted two case studies that came directly from Facebook usage. I chose one that was an example of an authentic interaction and one that was an inauthentic interaction. The first case study was of a couple that met on Facebook after liking some of the same interest pages and after communicating for months they met in person. These two people were authentic with their identities and it blossomed into a marriage. They married in 2012 and are still together today. Then next case study was from a well-known TV show on MTV called *Catfish*. This episode introduced a gentleman that claimed he met a former pageant winner on Facebook and after months of communicating they still hadn't met in person. The hosts of the show spend some time identifying the pageant star and come to learn that she is not who she claims to be. This is an example of an inauthentic interaction on Facebook. These two case studies displayed different ways that people can have identities online.

This project gave me the freedom to research a topic that I am interested in and it gave me the opportunity to showcase the things I've learned during my academic career here at California State University, Monterey Bay.

<center>**Annotated Bibliography**</center>

Dewey, Caitlin. "Almost as Many People Use Facebook as Live in the Entire Country of China."

      The Washington Post. WP Company, 29 Oct. 2014. Web. 01 Dec. 2016.

            The Washington Post is a credible source that generally leans a little to the left.

            This is a newspaper that circulates in Washington D.C and it is the oldest

            newspaper in the area. This particular article focused on statistics based around

            Facebook. It illustrated the how many users were on Facebook all around the

            world. This source helped me to get my statistics correct for my paper when I

            describe Facebook. I used many of the numbers that were displayed on this

            website for my paper as well as the graph for my speech.

"Digital Age Dictionary Definition | Digital Age Defined." Digital Age Dictionary Definition |

      Digital Age Defined. LoveToKnow Corp, n.d. Web. 8 Nov. 2016.

            This is a website that helps people define words. It's a more traditional spin on

            your average dictionary. It has key words as well as many examples and short

            excerpts that help to further explain definitions. This site is credible because they

            use an accumulation of knowledge to create the definitions. This was helpful

            when I was trying to find an appropriate definition for the digital age. I was able

            to use a quote from this site that perfectly defined the digital era.

"Facebook Users Worldwide 2016 | Statista." Statista. Statista, n.d. Web. 15 Oct. 2016.

            This website was extremely helpful. They specialize in acquiring data and then

            compiling it into a graph for easy to understand statistics. The website provides

            multiple ways to view the data and different ways to organize the data. It gives the

19

user the freedom to play with the layout. It also gives a reference list so if you want to dig deeper into a certain statistic, you are able to follow their paper trail to get to what you're looking for. This site was significant for my project because I wasn't only able to see how many people globally were on Facebook but I was able to see many subcategories as well.

Gross, Doug. "5 Ways Facebook Changed Us, For Better and Worse." CNN. Cable News
Network, 31 Jan. 2014. Web. 01 Dec. 2016.

CNN is a very reliable news source for most of America. It is nationally known and has very talented journalist working for the company. CNN covers a wide range of topics from elections to social media trends and everything in between. This source was a major help for my essay because it was a starting point as to where to begin with my Facebook studies, specifically the harms of the site. This article had 5 ways that Facebook hurts society in a very organized manor and it was a fun and easy read. I would use this site again and I hope to in the future.

"The History of Social Media: Social Networking Evolution! | History Cooperative." History
Cooperative. HISTORY COOPERATIVE, 31 Oct. 2016. Web. 11 Nov. 2016.

This site was originally published by the University of Illinois Press and it allowed for people to have access to certain scholarly journals surrounding history. It was a way for people that weren't able to become members to multiple scholarly journals to be able to read some articles. The article that I looked at was the *History of Social Media* and it showed the progression of the sites starting with instant messaging. It was very helpful for my essay because it presented the

information in an organized fashion and it was fun and easy to read. The author

made it interesting by adding in some facts about the sites too, not just giving

dates.

"Internet Society." The Internet - History, Evolution & Future | Internet Society. Internet Society,

n.d. Web. 01 Dec. 2016.

This site is one that works for the people, by the people. This website's main goal

is to protect the internet from being governed, "We work to ensure the Internet

continues to grow and evolve as a platform for innovation, economic

development, and social progress for people around the world." So this companies

helps start companies and helps guide users. The article that I read just described

what the internet was intentionally created for. It talked about the beginning of the

digital era and how it would come to shape our society today. This helped me to

better understand the progression of the internet which in turn made my paper

have stronger claims and evidence to back them up.

Julie. "Facebook Love Stories Archives - Facebook Love Stories." Facebook Love Stories.

Facebook Love Stories, n.d. Web. 01 Dec. 2016.

Facebook Love Stories is more or less a blog that one woman created. She started

to notice the trends of people falling in love after communicating on Facebook so

she decided to create a website that would highlight these love stories. She has

page after page of love stories, some with pictures and all very different. She lays

them out by the names of the lovers and then give an explanation of their love

story. I used one of the love stories as a case study. She highlighted an authentic

21

couple and I was able to analyze this case and add it into my research paper as well as talk about it during my speech.

Kenrick, Douglas T. "7 Ways Facebook Is Bad for Your Mental Health." Psychology Today. Sussex Publishers, 11 Apr. 2014. Web. 18 Nov. 2016.

This source is more for leisure reading than academic reading. This site is for the average person to get somewhat of an idea on topics concerning psychology but it is not credible enough to be used as an academic source. When it comes to my research essay I used this article as a guideline, a starting point. I looked at the common topics that surround the ways that Facebook hurts its users and then went for the most common ones. This had a nice list and quick explanations for its claims but did not provide hard evidence for claims. So again it was used as a starting point for my research.

Marra, Tiffany. "The History of Authenticity." The History of Authenticity. University of Michigan, n.d. Web. 13 Nov. 2016.

This is a site that was created by a student named Tiffany Marra and she attends the University of Michigan. This site is solely dedicated to the study and history of authenticity. This website has multiple tabs and all are related to authenticity. This is a credible source because it is an academic website but also she has a reference list at the bottom that states where she received her information. She also provides links to other sites that she believes will be useful for others during their studies. This Website helped my project because she illustrated the fluidity

of the word throughout the decades which is what I wanted to do in my paper as well.

Steph Barnes. January 12, 2013 3:00 Am. "Catfish: Average Joe Meets Princess of Fake Profiles." HelloGiggles. Time Inc. Style Collection and the Time Inc. Lifestyle Network, 12 Jan. 2013. Web. 01 Dec. 2016.

Hello Giggles is a site that was created by the famous actress Zooey Deschanel and it focuses on positive feedback of things pop culture. It has a strict no gossip rule and focuses on the positive attributes of its subjects. This source is credible because it is mostly just summarizing what happened on the attest episode of your favorite show. I used this website to help me understand what happened on the episode of catfish that I analyzed in my research essay. I watched some clips of the episode but was unable to find the whole thing so this website and summary of the episode was extremely helpful.

"Top 20 Facebook Statistics - Updated December 2016." Zephoria Inc. N.p., 09 Dec. 2016. Web. 7 Dec. 2016.

This site specializes in digital marketing and helps its customers grow their companies online. They have many links that analyze a multitude of different web pages that have ads on them. This is so their customer can decide where they should place their online ads. This website was helpful because unlike the other Facebook statistic websites it was being constantly updated and it just has a list of facts surrounding Facebook. I used the quotes from Mark Zuckerberg and many other statistics that were provided on this site.

"Lonely People More Likely to Use Facebook, Study." University Herald. Computers in Human

    Behavior, 15 Oct. 2014. Web. 15 Nov. 2016.

> This website takes scholarly articles from multiple universities and compiles them
>
> into one place. The site has different tabs that offer different scholarly articles and
>
> made them public so they could reach more people. This study was done by
>
> University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee and published to their databases. Because
>
> this is a website that displays scholarly articles, it is a highly credible source. It
>
> helped me strengthen my paper because I was able to bring in an actual study that
>
> had quantitative and qualitative data. This study was used to show how Facebook
>
> helps society.

Varga, Somogy. "Authenticity." Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. Stanford University, 11

    Sept. 2014. Web. 07 Sept. 2016.

> This website is an extremely credible source because it is constantly being
>
> updated by experts in the field. For example I used this site to study authenticity
>
> so the leading researchers were the ones to compile this page of information.
>
> There are many links within this site that will lead you to where the information
>
> was pulled from and credit is given where it is due. This was my main point of
>
> research when it came to understand authenticity. They broke it down by
>
> philosopher and decades so that it was easy to understand. I used a lot of
>
> quotations from this site which allowed me to have a solid and strong
>
> understanding of authenticity.