

Collaboration, Community, and Engagement: A Case Study Examining the Relationship between
March for Our Lives on Twitter and Shoaling Rhizomes

A Dissertation Presented for the
Doctor of Philosophy
Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Paige Elizabeth Walker

May 2020

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am forever grateful to an army of people who encouraged and guided me through the process of attaining this life-long goal of earning my PhD.

I must first thank Dr. Jud Laughter who helped me realize I maybe had something interesting to say and then collaborated with me on my first academic article which ignited the spark for this dissertation. I also owe profound gratitude to my dissertation chair, Dr. Sean Morey, whose prompt response and guidance in many aspects of theory and research that related to my dissertation helped me see my place in this realm of academia. I am also extremely grateful to Dr. Jeff Ringer and Dr. Lisa King who also served on my dissertation committee, but more than that, who were always willing to lend a discerning ear and new perspectives. I am so grateful to all of the instructors I have worked with during my studies at the University of Tennessee. They made a transition back to academia after many years away enjoyable and always made me believe that I should never doubt the importance of my ideas and contribution to our field.

While attending the University of Tennessee, I met truly genius people who laughed and cried with me all the way through to the diploma. There are far more to thank than I have room to list, but I will say that the graduate students who I have met at this university are a dream team of academics and all around fabulous human beings. I hope we will be able to work with each other again in the future, and I am sure we will remain lifelong friends.

To my family, there will never be an adequate way to express how much I love and am thankful for you all. You have each spurred me on to this finish line, and this dissertation is as much yours as it is mine. Rusty Walker, I could not have envisioned a better partner. You are my cheerleader, my drill sergeant, my tech support, and my think tank.

And lastly, thank you to the survivors and warriors who inspired the focus of this work. In times of worry for my own children's futures, I take solace in knowing that the generations that have come after mine are brilliant, hungry, and dedicated to making this world a safer and better one for all.

ABSTRACT

The theoretical framework, Shoaling Rhizomes, can be used to examine the social justice movement, March for Our Lives (MFOL), and its use of social media to further discourse on gun reform. The Shoaling Rhizomes Matrix helps to put into conversation the theory and research explored through that framework with established research on the public sphere, networked ecologies, rhetorical velocity, and circulation from researchers and theorists such as Michael Warner, Frank Farmer, Jenny Edbauer, Jim Ridolofo, and Dànielle Nicole DeVoss. The resulting conversation emphasizes the social, participatory, and communal nature of new media, like that of social media, by examining how student activists from Parkland, Florida united with other marginalized communities like Chicago's black youth to champion their discourse.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	1
Chapter 1 How March for Our Lives Functions as a Counterpublic	6
1. MFOL, A Networked Ecology of Affinities	7
2. MFOL, A Digital Counterpublic	9
3. MFOL, A Participatory Social Media Community	14
4. MFOL, A Circulation of Counterdiscourse	16
5. MFOL, A Member of a Modern <i>Polis</i>	18
Chapter 2 Shoaling Rhizomes: A Theoretical Framework for Understanding Social Media's Role in Discourse Communication and Composition	22
6. Summarizing the Building Blocks of Shoaling Rhizomes	26
6.1. Context: Rhizome Thinking	26
6.2. Content: Microaggressions	27
6.3. Outcome: Cultural Capital	29
7. Rhizome Thinking, Microaggression, and Community Capital in Social Media ..	30
7.1. Rhizome Thinking	30
7.1.1. Microaggression	35
7.1.2. The Rhizome and Microaggression Matrix Outline	37
7.1.3. Maxine Waters Example of The Rhizome and Microaggression Matrix	38
7.1.4. The Asignifying Rupture Effect of Community Cultural Wealth in Social Media	40
8. Hybrid Cultures and Shoaling Rhizomes	47

9. Implications for Social Media as a Shoaling Rhizomes in the Composition	
Classroom	48
Chapter 3 Understanding the Circulation of MFOL as a Shoaling Rhizome	52
10. MFOL's Circulation Strategy	54
11. MFOL's Beginnings as a Shoaling Rhizome.....	55
12. MFOL's Expansion of their Shoaling Rhizome	68
Conclusion	83
References.....	91
Vita.....	106

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Relational Matrix Outline Between Rhizome Thinking and Microaggression	36
Table 2. Relational Matrix Between Rhizome Thinking and Microaggression in Maxine Waters Example	38
Table 3. Expanded Matrix for Alternative Capital, Miroaggression, and Rhizome for Tables 1 and 2	44
Table 4. <i>For Harriet</i> (2013) Expanded Matrix	46
Table 5. Expanded Matrix of the Shoaling Rhizomes in Figures 9, 10, 11, and 12	66
Table 6. Expanded Matrix of March for Our Lives Protest on March 24, 2018	80

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Maxine Waters’s Tweet Response to Bill O’Reilly Commentary	32
Figure 2. Twitter Feed in Response to Maxine Waters’s Original Tweet Responding to Bill O’Reilly.....	33
Figure 3. BBC News Trending Webpage Featuring #BlackWomenAtWork	34
Figure 4. Response Tweet to PPBlackComm Retweet of Maxine Waters and Bill O’Reilly Controversy.....	35
Figure 5. Response Tweet to PPBlackComm Retweet of Maxine Waters and Bill O’Reilly Controversy.....	35
Figure 6. Response Tweet to #BlackWomenAtWork Initiated by Maxine Waters.....	40
Figure 7. Screenshot #iTooAmHarvard Twitter	41
Figure 8. Screenshot of #NeverthelessShePersisted Twitter	42
Figure 9. Cameron Kasky Tweet of Emma Gonzalez on NowThis News	57
Figure 10. Warrior Ryan Replying to Cameron Kasky’s Tweet in Fig. 9	58
Figure 11. Gman and Fontaine Carpenter Replying to Cameron Kasky’s Tweet in Fig. 9	58
Figure 12. Jaclyn Corin Thank You, Andrea Vietnam, tHeWeNdY-LoRiAn Connection Tweets	60
Figure 13. Cameron Kasky Replying to Charlie Callahan’s Divisive? Tweet	61
Figure 14. Tweets including Jennifer Reider Replying to Cameron Kasky’s Fig. 13 Tweet.....	62
Figure 15. Sarah Chadwick Reply Tweet to Students For Trump on Arming Teachers	64
Figure 16. Cameron Kasky Tweet Replying to Donald J. Trump Praising Arming	

Teachers	64
Figure 17. Profession Professor Tweet Replying to Cameron Kasky with HuffPost	
Article	65
Figure 18. March For Our Lives Establishes Itself as the Official Name for the	
Movement	69
Figure 19. Support from Various Countries for MFOL.....	69
Figure 20. Businesses Supporting MFOL by Not Supporting NRA	70
Figure 21. Support for MFOL as an Authentic Movement from Marco Rubio	70
Figure 22. Tweeted Images of MFOL March in Washington D.C.....	71
Figure 23. Peace Warriors Speakers Speaking about Gun Violence in Chicago at	
MFOL	72
Figure 24. Student Activist at MFOL Speaking on the Loss of His Twin Brother to Gun	
Violence	73
Figure 25. Naomi Wadler Brings Attention to African-American Girls Hurt by Gun	
Violence	73
Figure 26. Paul McCartney Joins MFOL and Remembers Lennon.....	74
Figure 27. Emma Gonzalez’s Speech is Viewed by Millions through CNN and Social	
Media	75
Figure 28. Tweet from TheRightMelissa Claiming Gun Debate is Too Complex for	
MFOL	75
Figure 29. Reply Tweets to TheRightMelissa Demonstrating the MFOL Shoal Resisting	
Subversion.....	76
Figure 30. Twitter Support of Students’ Treatment on Twitter	85

Figure 31. Patriots Send Plane for Stoneman Douglas Students to Attend March 85

Figure 32. Clooney Announces \$500,000 Donation for MFOL 86

Figure 33. PolitiFact Provides Disclosure Check on NRA Accusations of MFOL 86

Figure 34. QR Code Shirt from MFOL Website’s Merchandise Link 87

Introduction

When is the appropriate time to provide a child with her first cell phone? Studies abound that provide various perspectives on this question (Tsuguhiko, Yorifuji, Yamakawa, & Inoue, 2018; Huss et al. 2015; Fowler & Noyes, 2017), but I would put more emphasis on asking not when is it appropriate, but when does a child need a cell phone? I distinctly remember not so much the day, but the period that I decided to buy my eldest child a cell phone. It was a moment grounded not in parental, educational, or developmental philosophy, but one grounded in an exigency of terror.

In 2012, I was teaching twelfth grade English in a large suburban high school outside of Houston, Texas. My children, who were all in elementary school at the time, attended a newly built school situated in the middle of our master-planned community in what many would describe as an idyllic and extremely safe neighborhood. I had been teaching for ten years by this time, both in high schools as well as community colleges. I loved and still love teaching and had never felt as if even the most stressful of my students' lives ever posed a threat to my own or my children. I never felt as if my children's schools were places to fear or monitor, even when we lived overseas for a short time. And so, in 2012, I did not think my eldest, only ten years old at the time, needed a cell phone. She and her sisters were dropped off in the mornings by me. After school, I walked them home when they exited their school bus. And if I couldn't meet them at that stop, designated family or friends picked them up from school. Why would my ten-year-old need a cell phone when she was in a safe school, in a safe neighborhood, and always with safe people?

But, in December 2012, my perspective changed.

On December 14, 2012, a disturbed 20-year-old man shot and killed 26 people, including 20 children between six and seven years old and six adult staff members of Sandy Hook Elementary in Newtown, Pennsylvania. As news spread of the mass shooting, every parent--including myself, in our idyllic, master-planned community--began to rethink everything. Many of us could not call our children to check that they were safe, unafraid, to check if they needed us. We had to wait until they came off their afternoon buses at their community bus stops to hug them tight and answer so many questions and reevaluate our parental philosophies.

When my girls disembarked at their designated stop, they greeted me as usual, with smiles and hugs. All but the eldest, who immediately saw the concern and tension in my face as well as the tears welling in my eyes. We discussed what had occurred in Newtown that day, as much as I could bring myself to discuss such a tragedy with my own elementary-aged children, and I spoke with my eldest about buying her a cell phone. I can imagine that the thought of finally having a cell phone of her own was exciting, but she restrained that excitement because she understood that my decision was not based on reward or some proof that she was now responsible enough for a phone. Rather, I simply wanted what eluded myself and many parents on December 14, 2012--to be able to hear my daughter's voice or see her words on a screen, letting me know she was safe; her sisters were safe.

The very next school day, I sent my ten-year-old to school with a cell phone, armed my eldest with what her generation would continue to master over the span of their childhood and teens—instantaneous communication, whenever and wherever they needed it.

Teaching also morphed after that day. I had to read over instructions on Active Shooter drills and practice those drills with my students, all of whom seemed to want to focus their attention on graduation, college, the future. No one wanted to discuss Sandy Hook. It was too

far away, too removed. But the first time that I instructed 30 plus high school seniors to crouch along the least visible corner of the room, scooch into each other as much as possible, and wait in the dark for the all clear, acknowledged a reality my students wanted to avoid—the “safest” neighborhoods and schools were no longer safe; mass shootings could happen anywhere, and cell phones were no longer the enemy in class. We tried to bring humor into the situation, into this alien part of high school—active shooter drills. We discussed what we would do to come out of the situation alive, and I reminded them as I reminded myself that we had families that wanted to see us live; I had three daughters whom I wanted to see every day. Do whatever it takes to communicate you are safe, to live.

All of the fear, concern, anger, and sadness I experienced in 2012 has invaded my life several times since Sandy Hook, but no tragedy since that day would resonate as deeply as the mass shooting on February 14, 2018 at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida. On that awful day, a gunman opened fire killing 17 students and staff members and injuring 17 others. My eldest was now a fifteen-year-old Freshman, the same age as the majority of those killed or injured. The panic from 8 years prior returned when I learned of Parkland, and I did exactly what I wanted to the day of Sandy Hook: I texted my daughter to know she was okay, to say I love you.

The survivors of this mass shooting, as well as my own children, have come of age during a time of ever-developing digital communication. David Cullen (2019), author of *Parkland*¹, described today’s teens as “amateur media creators” (p. 17). The conversations they have over text, the images and thoughts they express in various social media posts, the

¹ *Parkland* is a book tracing the first-hand experiences of some of the survivors of the Stoneman Douglas shooting as well as the journey these survivors traveled to form #Neveragain and the March 24, 2018 March for Our Lives (MFOL) rally in Washington D.C.

livestream of news they view over one app or another provide instantaneous connection and access. This instantaneous connection and access fuels the research and analysis here. Through their connection and access as “amateur media creators,” the Parkland survivors created a networked ecology of affinities, their own counterspace that challenged the public sphere’s discourse concerning gun laws and reform. Thus, this research stems from the disaster that these teens experienced, the worries I have for my own children, and a desire to know how movements like those initiated by several of the Parkland survivors leverage social media to affect the public discourse.

Through the Shoaling Rhizome Matrix defined in the second chapter, I will conduct a discourse analysis of how March for Our Lives, henceforth referred to as MFOL, established itself within the public sphere using the new media, Twitter, and how, once established, MFOL built a community cultural wealth with marginalized groups like the Peace Warriors to strengthen their movement and challenge the dominant discourse. The Shoaling Rhizome Matrix offers a new method for understanding how the MFOL community cultural wealth available through social media both addresses the exclusion of the traditional *polis*, the public arena wherein, as explained further in Chapter 1, the opinions and thoughts of the citizenry---white, landowner, and male---are voiced and debated, and ensures the participation of those excluded in the modern *polis* via the counterpublic of new media, in this case, Twitter. “The foundations of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari’s (1987/2014) rhizome thinking, critical race theory’s attention to microaggressions (Pérez, Huber, & Solorzano 2015a), and the community cultural wealth of Pierre Bourdieu’s (1991) social capital theories” provide the “lenses [that] when combined through the survival and prosperity method of shoaling, form a framework that...can [be] use[d] to analyze social media” (Walker & Laugher, 2019, p. 61). These shoaling rhizomes include

marginalized and disenfranchised communities that held limited space and capital within the traditional *polis*, but that also construct rhetorical nodes through new media like Twitter, thus capitalizing on that limited space.

Chapter 1

How March for Our Lives Functions as a Counterpublic

The study of rhetoric has thoroughly established the idea that the citizenry should participate in discourse to the betterment of society (Bizzell & Herzberg, 1990; Pfister, 2014; Reiff & Bawarshi, 2016; Selfe & Hawisher, 2012). Researchers, scholars, and theorists have conducted studies, including ethnographies, that follow and analyze how groups create an identity (Warnick & Heineman, 2012) and disseminate their discourse for social change (Gries, 2015; Gerbaudo, 2012). Of particular interest to rhetoric and composition, studies that provide an in-depth discourse analysis of online groups can help elucidate how these groups use social media as a space that brings communities together online, which then encourages them to enact change, perhaps through meeting in a physical space.

Such an enactment comes through “mobilization [that results] in the construction of shared meanings, identities, and narratives” (Johnson & Klandermans, 1995 as cited in Gerbaudo, 2012, p. 9). A case study of the Parkland survivors that created #Neveragain, the original hashtag for their movement that eventually changed to March for Our Lives (MFOL), can offer a closer examination of how these *amateur media creators* used the new, digital media of Twitter to engage the exigence of their personal tragedy, connect across discourse communities, and begin to challenge the dominant public discourse, particularly discourse around the United States’ gun laws.

Collin Gifford Brooke (2009) explained, through his adoption of Anne Wysocki’s definition, that “new media texts” are “made by composers who are aware of the range of materialities of texts and who then highlight that materiality...help[ing] readers/consumers/viewers stay alert to how any text...doesn’t function independently of how it

is made and in what contexts” (p. 3). The Parkland survivors used new media texts by constructing tweets that specifically drew in an audience to the context of social change amidst the tragedy of mass gun violence. These survivors contextualized their experiences and desire for change by using their “amateur” digital literacy or “complex set of socially and culturally situated values, practices, and skills involved in operating linguistically within the context of electronic environments” to further MFOL’s purpose (Selfe, 1990, p. 251).

1. MFOL, A Networked Ecology of Affinities

In order to better understand how the Parkland survivors used social media to participate in the public sphere, we must first understand the medium of social media as a communal and participatory ecology. Lloyd F. Bitzer (1992) described discourse as created by or required of particular situations or exigences. For Bitzer, the context directs the rhetorical discourse. Richard E. Vatz (1973), however, explained that rhetors actually create exigency through the choices they make regarding communication about a given situation. These two theorists’ approached rhetorical situation from different perspectives regarding how that situation actually exists, and Jenny Edbauer (2005) addressed these conflicting perspectives by moving the discussion away from rhetorical situation and toward rhetorical ecology. Such an ecology includes a social field that is often a networked life which Edbauer (2005) notes theorists such as Steven Shapiro may find an invasive and inescapable presence. However, “ominous perspective” aside, a networked social field also provides a “practical consciousness [that] is never outside the prior and ongoing structures of feeling that shape the social field” (Edbauer, 2005, p. 10). A study of rhetoric focused on ecology over situation, then, works to include the “temporal, historical, and lived fluxes” that exist in any given rhetoric, and this consideration is better understood through a “framework of affective ecologies” (p. 9). In understanding the

affective ecologies that contextualize, specifically, public rhetorics, we can better analyze the way that discourse is a part of networked life, lived out in a series of events “that are shifting and moving, grafted onto and connected with other events” (p. 10).

The Parkland survivors demonstrated how this ecology can live in a networked plane. Cullen (2019) explained that “throughout” the shooting “they [Parkland survivors], got updates on the carnage by text and Twitter...By the time Jackie and Cameron [two of the creators of MFOL] hit their beds that night, this movement was in motion...that was their secret weapon: waging this battle on so many fronts with a host of different voices, perspectives, and talents—healing each other as they fought” (p. 3). The communication of students who would go on to form #Neveragain lived in a digital ecology that grafted onto the physical public arena. Their discourse, first initiated through Twitter and other social media platforms amidst the terror of a mass school shooting, would continue to “shift and move” so as to bring together the voices of inner-city Chicago youth, Sandy Hook families, celebrities, moms, and many others at their pinnacle, physical event—MFOL.

This networked ecology of affinities is observable in the way that people, in this case, the Parkland survivors, communicate on and through social media. Such an ecology represents the kind of place that Edbauer (2005) described as “a space of contacts, which are always changing...contacts [that]...carry with them the traces of effects from whole fields of culture and social histories” (p. 10). When the Parkland students combined their educational histories and traumatic experiences with those of the Peace Keepers (black youth survivors of gun violence) from Chicago, their affinities spread through their united social media channels demonstrating the networked ecology available through new media. For Parkland survivors, the rapid expansion of this ecology would go viral during the live Twitter feeds of the actual MFOL event.

As will be developed in the analysis portion of this study, the MFOL event featured a compilation of live speeches and performances broadcasted across traditional media as well as the platform of Twitter, putting into practice the sociality, situated nature, and interrelatedness of new media (Brooke, 2009). Twitter's new media characteristics provided a public sphere space where an alternative narrative concerning gun laws was championed by voices on the outside of the dominant discourse, teens.

2. MFOL, A Digital Counterpublic

The public sphere that MFOL engaged in over Twitter emphasized a counterdiscourse spearheaded by marginalized teens that seemed in direct opposition toward the long-standing public discourse over gun laws and reform. Frank Farmer (2013), in *After the Public Turn: Composition, Counterpublics, and the Citizen Bricoleur*, addressed Habermas's original definition of the public sphere to make room for the counterpublic or subaltern publics. Habermas's ideas on the public sphere partially focused on "bracketing" status differences "for the purposes of rational discussion" (Farmer, 2013, p. 12). And although Habermas's take on public sphere worked toward an "expansion of possible topics for discussion, and thus of interpretive freedom," it fell short of recognizing that "multiple contending publics [which] often have an oppositional relationship with the larger public, and each other," exist despite Habermas's preference toward an ideal public. Habermas, as explained by Farmer, defined the public sphere as "a rational, discursive arena, a freely accessible space of unfettered, communicate interaction wherein participants debate and deliberate on matters of common concern" (2013, p. 57). What Farmer (2013) and others brought to this "rational, discursive arena" was the idea that the public sphere is messy, and any attempt to idealize it would likely result in making it "exclusionary," (p. 14) thus failing to challenge those "conditions for

legitimation of political domination” that Habermas suggested needed to occur in the public sphere (Habermas, 1981, p. 241).

Cullen’s (2019) description of how gun law reforms were dealt with in the public sphere since Columbine shows the messiness of the public sphere in action.

Hope for gun reform swelled after Columbine, but even the Colorado legislature failed.

Guns laws actually grew much looser when the federal assault weapons ban expired five years later. Virginia Tech brought another push, which didn’t quite get there—but momentum seemed to be building. Finally, Newtown was such a horror that gun safety advocates were sure something substantial would pass. No...Polls indicated huge majorities favoring several gun reforms, but most of us went silent about them...The NRA kept introducing new bills to weaken gun laws, and they were passing in legislatures around the country. The opposition folded. (pp. 8-9)

The call for gun law reform was a counter to the lobbying of the dominant discourse from the NRA and the actual decisions of many state and federal legislatures; however, this alternate message never gained enough influence to result in significant change. The “multiple, contending publics” surrounding the discourse could not effectively challenge the “political domination” of the NRA. In order to push through this seemingly insurmountable barrier, those championing gun law reform discourse needed more social capital to embed their message in the public sphere, and the Parkland survivors, from the start of their movement, had the digital literacy to address that need through their ability to move the public sphere onto social media. Kathy A. Mills (2016) described this digital literacy as a combination of “technical content and process knowledge required for innovative digital media production” (p. 3). She further

emphasized that students need to understand more than how to use a particular digital media in order to “participat[e] in the knowledge economy” (p. 3).

Mills (2016) pointed to the need for students such as those who started MFOL to develop “critical literacy skills and discernment to judge the appropriateness, morality, authenticity, truth, significance, relevance and substance of the texts they encounter[ed] online, and to counter hegemonic discourses with their own critique and socially responsible text production” (p. 4). When these skills are developed or as they are implemented in discourses like those counterdiscourses put forth through MFOL’s social media posts, they can start to effect change. As Connie Sanders, daughter of Dave Sanders who was killed saving students at Columbine, explained “I am in awe of what [the MFOL movement] is happening...It’s working...All these years and it’s working” (Cullen, 2019, p. 98). It seemed to take a combination of students’ digital critical literacy skills and those teens working as a counterpublic actively engaging the traditional, dominant public sphere through social media to move gun law reform out of the doomed and into the possible. Farmer (2013), like many contemporary rhetoricians, acknowledged that Habermas’s description needed to go further to include circulation of oppositional discourse, the embodiment of cultural concerns, and attention to those on the margins of the sphere, those like teen activists influencing how we identify and engage in the public sphere (Hauser, 1999; Reiff & Bawarshi, 2016; Warner 2002). The survivors who created MFOL represent a marginalized group whose embodied experience with gun tragedy fueled their concerns that they were able to form into a powerful message attended to within the public sphere, partly, because of their ability to harness the influence of social media as both a tool and place for their discourse.

Warner (2002) explained that there need not be a specific ordered space for the discourse of the public sphere, but rather, “a public is a space of discourse organized by nothing other than the discourse itself...It exists *by virtue of being addressed*” (p. 413), and through MFOL’s use of Twitter, gun law reform was being addressed. Social media is a networked ecology of affinities that includes participants organized around their interests or concerns which Warner described as “social contexts...defined through kinship” (p. 414). Social media exists as a kind of public sphere that does not need an absence of differences for rational discussion as described by Habermas (Farmer, 2013). It is self-organized and “text based—even though publics are increasingly organized around visual or audio texts...picked up at different times and in different places by otherwise unrelated people” (Warner, 2002, p. 414). Warner described the public sphere in terms of content and context, and this focus on content and context, on being connected through the very act of communication rather than any one particular grouping or membership, is supported by Hauser’s (1999) explanation of the public sphere as a communicative ecology, a “communicative environment [that] conditions our *publicness*, defines how we experience ourselves in a milieu of strangers, and shapes the character of those publics that actually do form” (p. 60).

When the Parkland survivors who formed MFOL met with the Chicago Peace Keepers at the home of Emma González (one of the founding members of MFOL), the stories they shared and the path forward they designed pointed to the communicative ecology Hauser described. The new and digital media, Twitter, was the tool that these teens used to promote their discourse and stay alive in the public sphere. As Hauser (1999) defined, this public sphere, especially a new, digital media public sphere such as Twitter, acts as “*a discursive space in which individual and groups associate to discuss matters of mutual interest and, where possible, to reach a*

common judgment about them. It is the locus of emergence for rhetorically salient meanings”

(Hauser, 1999, p. 61, emphasis in original). As each member of MFOL initiated their presence

on social media in terms of their experience as survivors, they made personal connections.

Reinforcing those connections either in local meetings at their designated office space or through

their creation of MFOL Twitter became that locus of emergence where others encountered and

enacted rhetoric that gave an urgency to their experiences and made MFOL an exigency of its

own.

As the consequences of new media communicative ecologies unfold within the public/counterpublic sphere, they initiate, as Jenny Edbauer (2005) explained through Smith and Lybarger’s address of Bitzer, a “rhetorical situation” inclusive of a “plurality of exigencies and complex relations between the audience and a rhetorician’s interest” (Edbauer, 2005, p. 6).

Furthermore, the recognition of the social media as communicative ecology introduces an

equally important focus on how MFOL’s communications across Twitter moved, reformed, and

initiated other discourses, and continues to exist in a networked public sphere. Brooke (2009)

adopted W.J. T. Mitchell’s (1995) thoughts on media as “‘ever-elastic middles’ that include,

incorporate, and indeed constitute their ‘outside’” (p. 24). So as MFOL contemplated tweets that

were retweeted upon dissemination and then adapted across platforms and even different types of

media, their adeptness with Twitter highlighted how those on the “outside” like those calling for

attention and change in gun laws, could create entrance into the public discourse by popping in

and out of various “ever-elastic middles.” Social media, and particularly the more discourse-

oriented platforms such as Twitter, employ Brooke’s and Edbauer’s ecology components as its

participants communicate with each other within and across various platforms and through

various textual types.

3. MFOL, A Participatory Social Media Community

Sarah J. Arroyo (2013) described the communal and participatory aspects of new media, which again could include social media, when she explained that the “human interaction” of writing “makes it a cultural practice...intertwined with identity construction, relationship building, and community involvement” (Chapter 1, para. 2). When Lauren Hogg, the younger sister of David Hogg (a founding member of MFOL), contemplated how she would engage other survivors as well as those watching and chronicling what was happening in the aftermath of the Stoneman Douglas shooting, she chose to use Twitter in a manner she never had before. Her initiation on Twitter featured an all caps plea to all those following the survivors on social media to move from discourse toward action. “NO ONE SHOULD HAVE TO BE TALKING TO FRIENDS ONE DAY AND SEE THEIR FACES ON THE TV THE NEXT. THIS IS UNACCEPTABLE. THINGS MUST CHANGE IM FOURTEEN NO ONE SHOULD EVER HAVE TO GO THROUGH THIS. PLEASE JUST DO SOMETHING! WE DO NOT NEED COMFORT, WE NEED CHANGE” (Hogg & Hogg, 2018, P. 77). Although Lauren Hogg did not identify as part of the MFOL group at the time of her Tweet, she “knew people were doing things on Twitter, and...wanted to do at least something” (p. 77). This desire to engage was integral to the development of MFOL over social media as well as to its ability to reach out to other marginalized communities as part of what Arroyo (2013) described as an “electric, or online world [which] necessarily leaves ‘traces’ of participation...emphasiz[ing] a multiplicity of meanings for any one concept, support[ing] imagination, and encourage[ing] creativity and invention” (Chapter 1, para. 9). Lauren Hogg, along with the larger MFOL community, embodied Arroyo’s definition of an electric new media as they envisioned what change in gun

laws would look like and collaborated to invent ways to engage in the public discourse to ensure their vision was included in that discourse.

The community and relationship building available through new media such as Twitter derives from, as Poster quoted in Crick (2012), “The magic of the Internet...that...is a cultural technology that puts cultural acts, symbolizations in all forms, in the hands of all participants” (p. 268). As participants, like Lauren Hogg, engage in discourse through their various textual posts on Twitter, they add to this cultural production that again emphasizes the ecological characteristics discussed by Brooke and Edbauer—contextual, interrelated, social, historical, changing.

Furthermore, Arroyo (2013) determined that an online space of social media writing and the writer “are intricately intertwined...the writing subject and the space within which he or she dwells are symbiotic” (Chapter 2, para. 7). Each tweet sent out by any of the Parkland survivors added to the identity being created by this group online, and within hours and days, they went from a hashtag to an intentional movement that depended on the circulation of their rhetoric to move their message into the greater public discourse. “Less than a week after creating her Twitter account, Emma would surpass a million followers—about double that of the NRA. By the summer, Cameron would amass 400,000 followers, David twice that, and Emma at 1.6 million towered over them all. America was listening, eager to do something, supposedly, and turning to these teenagers to be led (Cullen, 2019, p. 110).

This symbiotic relationship between individuals within the public sphere of social media and their embodied communications points to the way that the rhetoric in general and the networked, new media space of social media in particular can “open invention spaces: places where ideas, relationships, emotional bonds, and of course action can be experienced in novel,

sometimes transformative, ways” (Hauser, 1999, p. 33). What is integral to the possibilities available in this ecology is the way social media acts as a public sphere where counterdiscourses can be heard or even featured.

4. MFOL, A Circulation of Counterdiscourse in the Public Sphere

The SAGE Handbook of Social Media Research Methods (2017) described how understanding narrative is at least partially dependent on understanding circulation. Georgakopoulou’s (2017) chapter in this handbook described narrative as “contextualized...then recontextualized...ceas[ing] to be just a single event and its historicity...circulation becom[ing] part of the analysis” (p. 268). In her introduction to *Circulation, Writing, and Rhetoric* (2018), Laurie E. Gries pointed to circulation’s meaning-making characteristics through her adoption of Benjamin Lee and Edward LiPuma’s (2002) definition of circulation as a “cultural process with its own forms of abstraction, evaluation, and constraint, which are created by the interactions between specific types of circulating forms and the interpretative communities built around them” (p. 12). Both of these approaches illustrate that circulation is a part of narrative building, and as a group like MFOL tweets its narrative, the tweet could be posted across other social media platforms or adapted for something like a news article or broadcast, undergoing different interpretations yet always affecting the greater discourse through the process of circulation. For social media social justice movements like MFOL, this circulation is key to the analysis of the movement and its capability to expand the public sphere to include, even promote, counterdiscourses and the social capital of marginalized peoples.

Counterdiscourses regularly exist on the fringe of the public sphere. Dominant voices often maintain that counterdiscourses represent too disruptive of approaches to the concerns of civil discourse. However, this approach comes from a place that shuns the strange and different.

For Warner as quoted in Farmer (2013), “the stranger is no longer someone who must either be banished or received into the common fold because ‘publics orient us to strangers in a different way’” (p. 60). In order to challenge these views, the goal must be for the alternative narratives from groups like MFOL and other marginalized peoples to continue circulating a challenge to the dominant voices. As Arroyo (2013) concluded when it comes to circulation of narrative in new media like Twitter, “the goal is not to fill the apparent ‘gaps,’ but to remain in a constant state of production, which moves desire out of the realm of the negative and allows knowledge formerly excluded to emerge” (Chapter 2, para. 4). When formerly excluded knowledge, like the personal testimonies of black, inner-city Chicago youth as highlighted in the MFOL speeches on March 24, 2018, are added to a larger narrative in circulation via social media, the “networked activism has the power not only to affect the status quo but to become intertwined with it so that alternative views can be recognized” (Edwards & Lang, 2018, pp. 119-120).

This recognition can then lead to the ultimate goal of counterpublics, as Farmer (2013) put forth through Nancy Fraser’s (1990, p. 67) attention to feminist subaltern counterpublics—“disseminat[ing] [their] discourse to ever widening arenas whereupon they can potentially effect changes in public opinion en route to effecting changes in public policy” (p. 58). When MFOL representatives took a trip to the Florida state legislature so they could connect with state lawmakers on gun reform, they organized the trip through social media, demonstrating the circulatory power found in new media for counterpublics. Many participants of this trip left the state capital in Tallahassee, Florida disgruntled with government and policymakers, but the connection was made, and the Florida governor “signed a variation of it [a modest gun bill] into law. It banned bump stocks, raised the minimum age for buying a gun to twenty-one, and added a three-day waiting period for most long gun purchases. It did not address assault weapons”

(Cullen, 2019, p. 74). This particular achievement would be met by setbacks throughout the life of MFOL, but whether or not government or corporate policies change through influencing made via social media justice movements, the end result (good or bad) of social media as a discourse platform should at least include the expansion of the public sphere overall.

5. MFOL, A Member of a Modern *Polis*

Since ancient Greece, various thinkers, specifically the Sophists, believed that discourse acts as a meaning making tool, often a “collective construction” and influenced by “cultural traditions and historical circumstances” of different communities that work toward forming this knowledge (Bizzell & Herzberg, 1990, p. 5). This traditional view of discourse concentrated on the opinions and thoughts of the citizenry—white, landowner, and male. Any offerings from those not considered members of the citizenry—female, immigrant, marginalized—could only arise via a citizen’s representation. Furthermore, this discourse occurred in an open, public, and central location to the daily lives of the region’s people. All of these characteristics made up the *polis*.

Even though this *polis* consisted of an exclusionary set of voices, the Sophists’ approach to the *polis* remained opened to “communities uniting...on grounds of a common recognition that humanity could express itself in many ways and was not subject to an absolute standard that could mark some ways for annihilation” (Bizzell & Herzberg, 1990, p. 24). When Arroyo (2013) suggested that “with participation...civic engagement and action is inevitable” (Chapter 1, para. 26) or that when participatory compositions like memes are shared and discovered “participants believe that their remixes and contributions actually matter and hold values for the loosely defined community,” (Chapter 2, par. 11) she paralleled the participatory and communal qualities of the *polis* in Bizzell and Herzberg’s (1990) descriptions of the Sophists’ emphasis on

varieties of expression. Edbauer (2005) also gave significance to a more inclusive, Sophistic style *polis* when she explained that “rhetoric emerges already infected by viral intensities that are circulating in the social field” (p. 14). For Edbauer (2005), as the *polis* deliberates, perhaps through MFOL’s tweets on gun law reform, the participants in this *polis*, via their counterdiscourse, “directly respond to and resist the original exigence...[and] expand the lived experience of the original rhetorics by *adding* to them—even while changing and expanding their shape” (p. 19). These contemporary looks into the *polis* as a public sphere reveal that although some voices still fight to confront the dominant discourse of the traditional *polis*, the participatory nature of networked ecologies like those available through social media provide a communal approach to that confrontation, using the “dynamic cultural system” to remain heard (Arroyo, 2013, Chapter 1, para. 31).

According to Bourdieu’s (1991) theory of capital which consists of “the active properties that are chosen as principles of construction of the social space,” attaining any cultural, social, or economic capital occurs through family or formal education, and therefore, the dominant groups within society are able to maintain power because access is limited to acquiring and learning strategies to use the forms of capital for social mobility (p. 230). What new media, and specifically MFOL’s use of Twitter, offers, however, equates to a space where the strategies for obtaining the social capital needed to engage in the *polis* do not solely lie with society’s dominant groups, the traditional citizenry. When individuals or groups of individuals master the tools, genre expectations, and movement available online which are further analyzed in chapter 3, they can maneuver into societal discourse that regularly remained out of reach. The inclusion of the marginal and disenfranchised means that social media like Twitter can help to form a

modern *polis* (counterpublic) where participants “expand...horizons...[and] attend to how other people reason and reflexively evolve their own beliefs” (Pfister, 2014, p. 36).

Social media challenge the traditional *polis* of dominant, exclusionary voices through community cultural wealth (Yosso, 2015), a concept that includes the following elements: incorporating “hope for the future (aspirational); intellectual and social skills attained through multilingual communication (linguistic); a sense of community history, memory, and cultural intuition (familial); resilience from maneuvering through social institutions (navigational); and the ability to challenge inequality (resistant) within a virtual world” (Bell et al., 2016; Carpentier, 2016; Pérez Huber & Solorzano, 2015b; Yosso, 2005 as cited in Walker & Laughter, 2019, p. 68). These communities of cultural wealth break into dominant power structures by employing their mastery of social media online ecology which combines these alternative capitals with Bourdieu’s cultural and social capital (Walker & Laughter, 2019). Using the virtual ecology “to negotiate and exchange support (Bell, Mackness, & Funes, 2016) through their own agency,” previously excluded members of a modern *polis* meet the historically dominant voices as a “unified” and communal “front” or *shoaling rhizome* (Walker & Laughter, 2019, p. 68). Furthermore, the community cultural wealth available through online ecologies allows those previously excluded from discourse to participate in the “constant state of production,” familiar through social media, which also “allows knowledge formerly excluded to emerge” (Arroyo, 2013, Chapter 2, para. 4).

The networked ecology of affinities that exists through this constant state of production creates a counterspace where the public sphere has the potential to be inclusionary. What much of the research has thus far studied is how networked ecologies circulate counterdiscourse (Farmer, 2013; Gries, 2018; Palczewski, 2001; Warner, 2002; Warnick & Heineman, 2012).

However, current research does not provide enough analysis of whether or not this circulation can expand the *polis* to effectively include marginalized communities. Nor does current research move beyond the inclusion of marginalized communities toward evaluating the effectiveness of a shoaling rhizome on reframing dominant discourse. In order to close these gaps, we must answer how the affordances of new, digital media like Twitter shape shoaling rhizomes, and what we can learn about how to develop these shoaling rhizomes by closely analyzing networked ecologies like MFOL.

As formerly excluded communities create spaces of discourse through social media, they build a presence for their communications and can begin to engage the dominant discourse. This engagement does not simply provide a shallow presence in the discourse, it realigns the discourse to include the personal experience and opinions, the embodied affinity ecologies, of those previously ignored. Marginal communities may even gain social capital through their communal interactions on social media so significantly that the dominant voices start to their own discourse (Walker & Laughter, 2019). In the next chapter, I will discuss how the Shoaling Rhizome Matrix affords a concise, visual method for analyzing samples of this communal communication within the ecology of social media. Following the discussion of the Shoaling Rhizome Matrix's usefulness toward analyzing marginalized groups on social media, I will then apply this matrix toward MFOL specifically to show how this movement was able to establish a cultural capital that moved public discourse toward significant political and community change.

Chapter 2

Shoaling Rhizomes: A Theoretical Framework for Understanding Social Media's Role in Discourse and Composition Education

A version of this chapter was originally published by Paige Walker and Jud Laughter:

Walker, P., & Laughter, J. (2019). Shoaling rhizomes: A theoretical framework for understanding social media's role in discourse and composition education. *Computers and Composition*, 53, pp. 60-74. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compcom.2019.05.005>

Author contributions: The lead author for this manuscript is Paige Walker with co-authorship by Jud Laughter.

The next chapter delves into how subjectivities and identities like race, gender, and class play a significant role in how we express ourselves through writing as well as how we engage digital technologies. In order to better understand the presence and effect of digital writing as that produced on social media platforms, we need a theory that helps connect how social media acts with how we experience this digital discourse. Chapter 2 describes a theoretical framework for discussing social media in relation to composition and critical discourse analysis, entitled shoaling rhizomes. After establishing this framework's relationship to rhizome thinking, microaggressions, and community cultural wealth, an evaluation of specific examples from Twitter, Instagram, and Tumblr through the concept of shoaling rhizomes is explored.

Composition 101: Two students sit in the center of a group, while others stand around them. The two in the center begin to debate a particular topic. As the two in the center critically analyze the issue, students from the outskirts may tap one of the center debaters and hand them a question or comment to pose. Those on the outskirts may even offer a tap to indicate they would like to take the place of the students in the center. This scenario is called a Fishbowl Debate.

Social media can mimic the fishbowl. Twitter users post a comment with a hashtag to another trending topic. This hashtag acts as the impetus for further debate with those on the outside. In time, a single-issue debate branches out to several discussions from various viewpoints, all stemming from the original post. Social media provide platforms for these fishbowl debates to cross geographical, ideological, racial, gender, political, and intertextual boundaries, boundaries that often limit the typical classroom. It is through this boundary crossing that social media's ecology of practice (Brooke, 2009) provides the relational context necessary to understand the discourses and composition strategies found in these new media.

For Collin G. Brooke, new media ecologies are “vast, hybrid systems of intertwined elements, systems where small changes can have unforeseen consequences that ripple far beyond their immediate implication” (2009, p. 28). Social media, due to its immediate, pervasive, and ubiquitous nature, creates a place of debate among educators and rhetoricians as to its usefulness in teaching discourse analysis and composition as well as its effect on the quality and veracity of modern day communication (Bell, Mackness, & Funes, 2016; Gin, Martínez-Alemán, Rowan-Kenyon, & Hottell, 2017; Nakagawa & Arizubiaga, 2014; Nishi, Matias, & Montoya, 2015; Pérez Huber & Solorzano 2015a, 2015b; Robinson, 2015; Yosso, 2005).

Subjectivities and identities play a significant role in how we engage the ecology of digital technologies and writing. How we experience our race, gender, and class in social media

discourses often produces what A. Abby Knoblauch (2012) described as “gut reactions” that point to our embodied experience of language interaction. According to Tracey J. Hayes (2017), discourse communities, especially on social media platforms, not only consist of individual “gut reactions” to various communications; they also feature reactions from groups of individuals bonded not just through their subjectivities and identities but also through their interests or affinities. When groups like #BlackWomenAtWork, #NeverthelessShePersisted, and #iTooAmHarvard establish a presence through social media, they bond together various individuals from diverse subjectivities and identities. The individuals in these online communities support each other through group dynamics that strengthen the discourse of the individual through the social capital of the whole. This group bonding for a social purpose has similarities with a phenomenon called shoaling.

Fish have developed a technique for prospering called shoaling. Shoaling benefits fish by increasing their ability to find food, access to potential mates, and protection from predators (Saint Joseph’s University, 2017). A fish shoaling is a fish that is not swimming alone, and the result of this group dynamic thwarts those who would prey on individuals. Predators become confused, overwhelmed, and too slow to assault individual fish when those individuals work together to present a united front (Saint Joseph’s University, 2017). Furthermore, shoaling fish include numerous species; the only requirement is that species are similar enough in appearance to maintain the united front (Saint Joseph’s University, 2017). For social media communities, the embodied characteristic of shared affinity provides the appearance that communities are a united front that predators find difficult to dominate or silence. Such possibilities are called *shoaling rhizomes*.

This chapter builds on the foundations of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's (1987/2014) rhizome thinking, critical race theory's attention to microaggressions (Pérez Huber & Solorzano, 2015a), and the community cultural wealth of Pierre Bourdieu's (1991) social capital theories. These lenses, when combined through the survival and prosperity method of shoaling, form a framework that can be used to analyze social media that reveals its usefulness toward establishing a more inclusive social discourse.

6. Summarizing the Building Blocks of Shoaling Rhizomes

The development of this framework by which to analyze shoaling rhizomes in social media draws on three primary foundations:

- Delueze and Guattari (1987/2014) help to clarify the mechanics of the social media *context* for shoaling rhizomes.
- Research on and descriptions of microaggressions (Pérez Huber & Solorzano, 2015b) define the *content* of social media against which shoaling rhizomes might be effective.
- Developing ideas of cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1991; Yosso, 2005) define an *outcome* ideal so that the framework can describe and evaluate real world examples of shoaling rhizomes.

Each of these foundations are briefly described below.

6.1. Context: Rhizome Thinking

Social media is a relational construct, and Deleuze and Guattari's (1987/2014) rhizome thinking explains and analyzes that relational construct (Bell et al., 2015). A rhizome, such as a book for Deleuze and Guattari (1987/2014) or social media here, "ceaselessly establishes connections between semiotic chains, organizations of power, and circumstances relative to the

arts, sciences, and social struggles” (p. 7). When participants in various social media groups interact within individual and group identities, they form context-specific connections. In reinforcing these connections through tweets and retweets that confirm the individual experiences as indicative of the whole, they create a sense of heterogeneity. These heterogeneities challenge and are challenged by dominant discourses. Each challenge creates a “rhizome or multiplicity” that, once recognized by those considered on the outside of a specific social media community, begin to “change in nature and connect with other multiplicities” (1987/2014, p. 9).

The continuous connect, change, and reconnect of these rhizomes makes the space for asignifying ruptures that permit “cutting across a single structure...start up again on...old lines, or on new lines” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987/2014, p. 9). Ceaseless social media connections make breaks in the dominant discourse, providing a cartography of language use online. Social media do not require a physical presence for language sharing to occur; rather, observing the cartography through decalcomania or tracing reveals how individuals in various social media groups have embodied virtual discourses. A social media platform like Twitter acts as a space where one user connects to another through their posts, the center of the fishbowl. These posts could be hashtagged or retweeted, thus creating a multiplicity of conversations throughout the Twitter platform. Tracing the hashtags and retweets as they branch out from the original post acts as the cartography of the debate. Whether the posts that follow the original support or subvert the original, those that follow can produce significant ruptures that change the entire debate, spawning new hashtags and retweets.

6.2. Content: Microaggressions

According to Pérez Huber and Solorzano (2015b), microaggressions exist as systemic, everyday instances of aggression that can be

(a) verbal and non-verbal assaults...often carried out in subtle, automatic or unconscious forms; (b) layered assaults...based on race, gender, class, sexuality, language, immigration status, phenotype, accent, or surname; and (c) cumulative assaults that take a psychological, and academic toll on the victim. (p. 223)

While Pérez Huber and Solorzano discussed microaggressions as racial, microaggressions existing on social media can span beyond the original, racial focus.

Microaggressions' four major components include the following:

- *types* describe how a victim of an instance of microaggression is “targeted”;
- *context* refers to the manner and place or space of the microaggression;
- *effects* are the “physical, emotional, and psychological consequences” of the assault; and
- *responses* include the victim’s reactions to the “interpersonal and institutional” microaggression acts. (Pérez Huber & Solorzano, 2015b, p. 225)

Applying these components to the context of a rhizome in social media creates a space to observe how these components work to initially subvert marginalized communities as they attempt to shoal.

Microaggressions can affect targeted individuals and communities in any number of psychological and physiological ways, and these affects can result in cumulative damage to a victim’s psyche and health through constant battle fatigue and trauma incurred from microaggressions (Pérez Huber & Solorzano, 2015a). Tracing these affects point to the gut reactions or embodied responses from targeted communities and guides a critical discourse

analysis of various social media contexts. Those targeted through microaggressions respond in a variety of ways, and those responses are highly dependent on the type and context of the microaggression (Pérez Huber & Solorzano, 2015a). Victims' responses open up the tracing of this discourse to a greater understanding of how what may be intended for harm could result in "counterspaces" on social media, where marginalized individuals and communities can shoal to protect themselves, engage their aggressors in more productive communications, and perhaps enact change.

6.3. Outcome: Cultural Capital

Bourdieu (1991) describes how various communities attain the resources or capital necessary to build communal presence in society and work toward empowerment (Yosso, 2005). Access to cultural capital needed for communities to thrive and grow has typically been limited to dominant groups. Social media, however, can act as a pathway to cultural capital as access is almost limitless, and even marginalized communities can pool their individual presences through shoaling online and creating a community cultural wealth. For those who have access to the internet, social media provides a virtual context of connection that pools the capital of typically marginalized individuals into a community of cultural wealth. This wealth uses aspirational, familial, linguistic, resistant, and navigational alternative capital to rupture the existing power structures by combining these alternative capitals with the more established categories of cultural and social capital (Yosso, 2005).

In fact, community cultural wealth could allow for marginalized communities to build social capital that ensures their voices are heard in larger, more dominant discourses (Bourdieu, 1991; Yosso, 2005). While this chapter focuses on responses to microaggressions by marginalized communities, it must be acknowledged that dominant groups might also use a

shoaling rhizome to perpetuate their own beliefs. Herein, shoaling rhizomes are described as a positive political tool but it is also understood that such tools are not intrinsically positive; recent history has demonstrated how social media can both promote and inhibit democracy and political discourse.

Through studying the various microaggressions that social media participants either post or receive in online discourse, we can observe and trace how social media act as rhizomorphic discourse. As participants enter and exit their online communities, they create a map of discourse that can point to the importance of community capital through shoaling to challenge dominant discourse and work toward changing the social media landscape from microaggressions toward understanding and inclusion. The character and potential of social media as a shoaling rhizome could then be used to educate people in how to evaluate online discourses and participate in a more productive and progressive manner.

7. Rhizome Thinking, Microaggression, and Community Capital in Social Media

7.1. Rhizome Thinking

The connections found within a rhizome are continuous through experimentation and avoid any predication on hierarchy (Carpentier, 2016). This continual experimentation produces nodes (postings in social media) that result in lines of flight and multiplicities of connections that defy boundaries, definition, or categorization and create the heterogeneous nature of the nodes (Bell et al., 2016; Coyne, 2008). When these nodes form, they produce more connections, sometimes resulting in a cartography (e.g., Facebook wall or Twitter feed) that can be traced in a manner to reveal the multiple entries and exits that exist for a social media user to participate in or to initiate any one discourse (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987/2014). The complexity of this loop is not just continual discourse from the middle, but that it allows each discourse to represent only

itself, resulting in a continual *scrambling of the codes*, the asignifying rupture, that makes new connections, new lines of flight, and constant experimentation (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987/2014).

On social media, participants often experiment with different platforms and discourses to create an ever-changing communication that not only crosses boundaries but refuses to be defined by those boundaries. When individuals from a marginalized community use Twitter, they develop a place to voice their psychological and physiological experiences. In this way, they establish a position that must be recognized in the dominant discourse. The constant experimentation and varieties in communication that can support or subvert the dominant discourse resemble rhizome thinking. Sometimes, these communications, as asignifying ruptures, can even transform the original nodal discourse into a new conversation stemming from multiple lines of flight.

For example, in March of 2017, Representative Maxine Waters used Twitter in a manner that challenged the dominant context of television news commentary put forth through a microaggression against her by then Fox News commentator Bill O'Reilly. Initially, O'Reilly used his dominant, television platform to claim that Representative Waters's hair, her "James Brown wig," kept him from hearing her speech to the House of Representatives. Representative Waters's tweeted response that she is "a strong black woman" and "cannot be intimidated" not only demonstrated she would not permit the effect of O'Reilly's microaggression to be internalized, but her use of #BlackWomenAtWork initiated a new node in the discourse (Fig. 1).



Fig. 1. Maxine Waters's Tweet Response to Bill O'Reilly Commentary.

Representative Waters's tweet created an asignifying rupture that spawned multiple lines of flight, and those multiple lines either created a heterogeneity of the Representative's supporters in response tweets like "@MaxineWaters you're beautiful and an inspiration. These men are in a 'death spiral' its both ugly and energizing," or they ruptured the Representative's node through subversive tweets like "Democrats are winning? LMAO what fantasy land these ppl live in, same one as Maxine" (Fig. 2). Throughout the subsequent feed, new hashtags and retweets produced new nodes on Representative Waters's original post. This example demonstrates that the rhizomorphous nature of social media is one of the middle, exiting one line to create another that often returns back to the original.



Fig. 2. Twitter Feed in Response to Maxine Waters's Original Tweet Responding to Bill O'Reilly.

When Representative Waters started a rupturing nodal line with her response to Bill O'Reilly's microaggression, her line ruptured into multiple posts that eventually created a powerful node under #BlackWomenAtWork. This line appeared at the beginning with the Representative's own use of #BlackWomenAtWork, reappeared throughout the various posts stemming from her original tweet, found its way to mainstream media through its viral power, and returned to the original message: "I am a strong black woman. I cannot be intimidated, and I'm not going anywhere." When BBC News's Trending webpage posted a side-by-side picture of both Representative Waters and Bill O'Reilly with a description of the rhizomorphous discourse, including quotes from O'Reilly's microaggression and Representative Waters's responding tweet, they demonstrated this decalcomania (Fig. 3).



Black women are sharing their experiences of prejudice in the workplace, using the Twitter hashtag #BlackWomenatWork, after Fox News host Bill O'Reilly made fun of a black congresswoman's hair.

Fig. 3. BBC News Trending Webpage featuring #BlackWomenAtWork.

7.1.1. Microaggression

The second component of shoaling rhizomes involves microaggressions, particularly in how microaggressions are deployed, sustained, and resisted. For social media, the nodal lines seen in Representative Waters's response to O'Reilly produce a number of transformative communications that often address microaggressions. Some of these microaggressions can be seen in response tweets to the Planned Parenthood Black Community retweets of Representative Waters's original thread (Fig. 4 and Fig. 5).



Fig. 4. Response Tweet to PPBlackComm Retweet of Maxine Waters and Bill O'Reilly Controversy.



Fig. 5. Response Tweet to PPBlackComm Retweet of Maxine Waters and Bill O'Reilly Controversy.

As a member of a marginalized racial community and as a new line of flight supporting women's reproductive rights, PP Black Community retweeted the trending BBC blog (Fig. 3) and attempted to support the subversion of the dominant and microaggressive discourse surrounding Representative Waters's original tweet (Fig. 1) through their own commentary. PP Black Community embodied a call for community around attention to "racism, microaggression & discrimination in the workplace" (Fig. 5) through their use of #BlackWomenAtWork, and this call elicited further microaggressive responses like, "Looks like james brown" and "You don't want to be treated equally, you want special treatment with kid gloves" (Fig. 4 and Fig. 5) that challenged the marginalized community's call for an online counterspace.

The relationship between microaggressions and rhizome thinking on social media can be more clearly understood by aligning microaggression's four major components and the five principles of rhizome thinking represented in Table 1. Table 1 represents an outline with which an educator or rhetorician might use rhizome thinking to critically analyze a microaggression. Such an analysis would provide language with which to describe how social media discourse develops and a means by which to better demonstrate where and how this discourse could be engaged to promote more inclusive and progressive communication.

Table 1
Relational Matrix Outline Between Rhizome Thinking and Microaggression.

RHIZOME				
Frameworks	Connection (CON)	Multiplicity & Heterogeneity (M&H)	Cartography & Decalcomania (C&D)	Asignifying Rupture (ASR)
Microaggression				
Context (CTX)				
Types (TYP)				
Effects (EFX)				
Responses (RSP)				

7.1.2. The Rhizome and Microaggression Matrix Outline

In Table 1, the microaggression components are used to trace the development of a specific social media node. The tracing of the microaggression framework over the rhizome thinking framework further reveals the multiplicitous and heterogeneous nature of microaggression types as they appear in social media discourse. The net environment, particularly of social media, exists as a complex series (multiplicity) of conversations (Coyne, 2008). In Table 1, the beginning of this multiplicity is noted by identifying the platform of the social media node to be analyzed in connection and context. Once the connection and context have been identified, the multiplicity can be examined through microaggression types. Often, users only see their individual part in the complex whole of social media discourses; however, that individual part could be subverted or supported through these microaggression types (Gin et al., 2017; Nishi et al., 2015; Pérez Huber & Solorzano, 2015a). The subversion or support renders specific affects that often result in various communities either shoaling around a victim or backing an aggressor.

No matter the multiplicity of microaggression types present in social media, those microaggressions that pervade and persist can create secondary targets who, because of the virtual, multiplicitous nature of social media, may never have been the intended victim of the original posts and with whom the original victim could connect to form a new node of support and community (Pérez Huber & Solorzano, 2015a, 2015b). Each of these new nodes can be identified through the responses that provide a cartography and decalcomania of the social media node being analyzed. When new nodes form from the subversion or support of different microaggressions, the resulting rhizomes enact the asignifying rupture that makes visible new responses to microaggressions (Bell et al., 2016). After an analysis of a social media node is

completed through the matrix comparison available via Table 1, counterspaces where marginalized communities shoaled together to increase their protection and cultural wealth can be better identified.

7.1.3. Maxine Waters Example of The Rhizome and Microaggression Matrix

An educator working with students to analyze such discourse through this matrix comparison can help future generations mark where microaggressive discourse can be challenged and more inclusive discourse initiated. The matrix in Table 2 shows how a critical analysis of Representative Waters's tweet responding to Bill O'Reilly's microaggression identifies both the rhizomorphic nature of a sample social media discourse as well as how this particular rhizome responded to microaggression in a manner that pushed the dominant discourse toward opportunities for marginalized communities to be heard and to be impactful.

Table 2
Relational Matrix Between Rhizome Thinking and Microaggression in Maxine Waters Example.

RHIZOME				
Frameworks	Connection (CON)	Multiplicity & Heterogeneity (M&H)	Cartography & Decalcomania (C&D)	Asignifying Rupture (ASR)
Microaggression Context (CTX)	Twitter (CON/CTX)			
Types (TYP)		Resistance (M&H) Insulting Looks (TYP)		
Effects (EFX)			#BlackWomenAtWork (C&D) StrongWoman (EFX)	
Responses (RSP)				PP Black Community (ASR) #DefundPP (EFX)

The analysis of the Representative Waters social media rhizome outlined in Table 2 begins with understanding how the context of the microaggression relates to the connection created in the rhizome. As the connection and context are established, the matrix moves down and across to further analyze how the thread develops as a social media rhizome, including microaggressions and responses to them. The connections and contexts provide the places and spaces through which Twitter posts related to the original two rhizomes (O'Reilly and Representative Waters) were initiated and propagated. These posts may cut across borders and build linkages, as with the connections between #BlackWomenAtWork and PP Black Community, but they can also make a space where the anonymity of a user births the opportunity to instigate microaggressions (Gin et al., 2017; Nishi et al., 2015). Such an assault is evident in the discourse used by Twitter user, AllTheFiends, who responds to identifying microaggressions toward #BlackWomenAtWork with another microaggression and a call to “#DefundPP” (Fig. 5).

A supporting microaggression can be seen in the connection between AllTheFiends (Fig. 5) and amERiCa (Fig. 4), while the Tweet from PP Black Community citing O'Reilly's eventual apology to Representative Waters subverts that microaggression. Representative Waters's post, including the #BlackWomenAtWork line of flight, instigated the asignifying rupture that engaged Razz (Fig. 6) to form her own response to O'Reilly's original microaggression by recounting her experience as a microaggressed black woman in the workplace, retweeting #BlackWomenAtWork and furthering the new rhizome. This response continues to subvert the microaggression by connecting, possibly as a secondary target, to PP Black Community's tweeting of #BlackWomenAtWork with an additional definition of what this new rhizome means: “highlight racism, microaggression & discrimination in the workplace” (Black Women At Work, 2017).

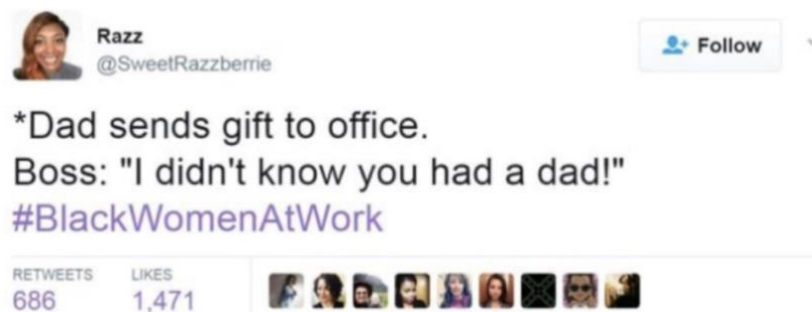


Fig. 6. Response Tweet to #BlackWomenAtWork Initiated by Maxine Waters

Each mark of resistance or additional microaggression demonstrates a heterogeneous node developing in the rhizome. The cartography and decalcomania of the discourse develops through the initiation of new hashtags and retweets. Eventually, the resulting offshoot or break indicated by the BlackWomenAtWork and DefundPP hashtags, as well as the retweets from PP Black Community and other Twitter users, show the ultimate responses and challenges to microaggressions. How those responses develop highlights how the social media rhizome ruptures into new lines of flight and opportunities to engage in discourse that either subverts or supports the dominant voices of society.

7.1.4. The Assignifying Rupture Effect of Community Cultural Wealth in Social Media

Social media offer prime spaces to incorporate multiple types of capital: hope for the future (aspirational); intellectual and social skills attained through multilingual communication (linguistic); a sense of community history, memory, and cultural intuition (familial); resilience from maneuvering through social institutions (navigational); and the ability to challenge inequality (resistant) within a virtual world (Bell et al., 2016; Carpentier, 2016; Pérez Huber & Solorzano, 2015b; Yosso, 2005). Communities like #iTooAmHarvard (Fig. 7) and #NeverthelessShePersisted (Fig. 8) can create places of engagement and social capital by recognizing social media's power and pooling their resources to harness it.



Fig. 7. Screenshot #iTooAmHarvard Twitter

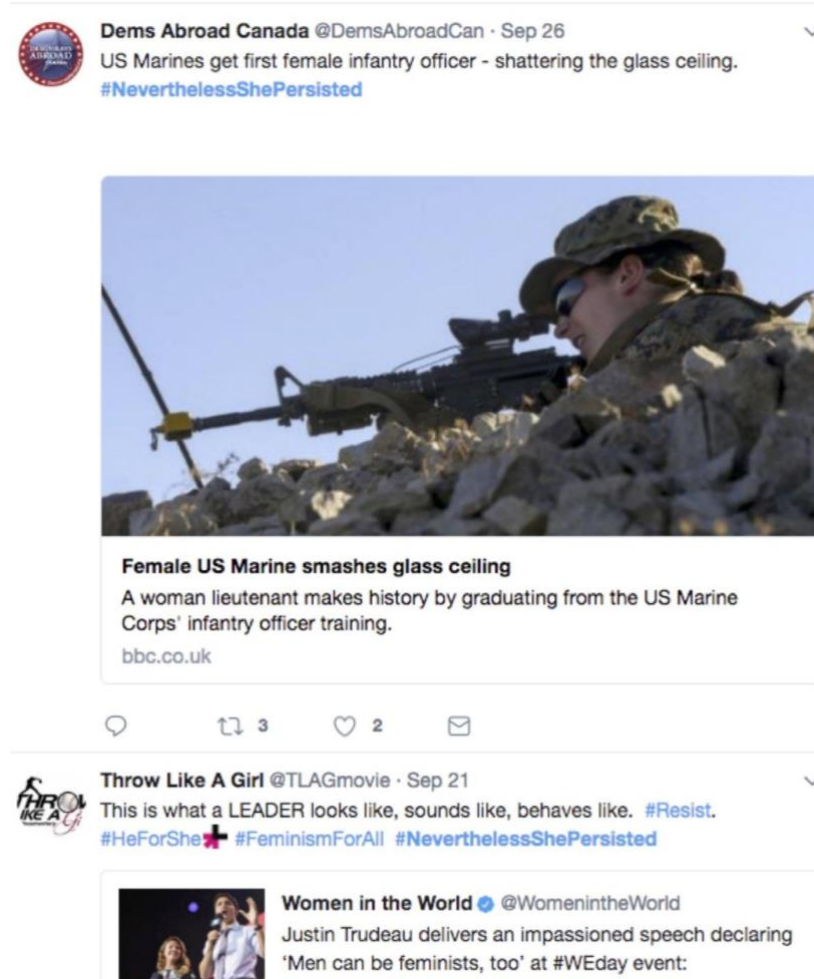


Fig. 8. Screenshot #NeverthelessShePersisted Twitter

These social media communities of wealth combine individual experiences and knowledge into a continual discourse responding to the damage of microaggressions and other assault-oriented communications. These communities use the virtual environment to negotiate and exchange support (Bell et al., 2016) through their own agency, ensuring that perpetrators of objectifying and prejudiced discourse are addressed by the unified front of several voices speaking as a community (Yosso, 2005).

#iTooAmHarvard (Fig. 7) grew their agency through tweeting images of black women holding whiteboards testifying to their experiences with microaggression; as followers tweeted

comments on those images, they directed this community into the feeds of wider audiences, as with Adriane Williams adding @iTooAmOxford and @Oprah to her tweet.

#NeverthelessShePersisted (Fig. 8) exhibited this virtual negotiation for support when one of its followers tweeted “US Marines get first female infantry officer – shattering glass ceiling” with an embedded link to a bbc.co.uk story on the achievement, which emphasized a global audience for the marginalized community.

These discourses’ use of alternative capital to address the rhizomorphous nature of social media and microaggressions that may occur on its various platforms are explored through an expansion on the matrices in Tables 1 and 2, as featured in Table 3. Examining the comments, images, and stories tweeted throughout #iTooAmHarvard and #NeverthelessShePersisted reveals the innovative way these communities pool their alternative capital. Linguistic tools like whiteboards and common phrases like “glass ceiling,” familial expansion via hashtagging iTooAmOxford and FeminismForAll, and navigating together through dominant communities, like universities or the Marines, to actively resist microaggression and grow communal wealth captures and gathers such accomplishment.

Table 3
Expanded Matrix of Alternative Capital, Microaggression, and Rhizome for Tables 1 and 2.

ALTERNATIVE CAPITAL						
MICROAGGRESSION	Aspirational (ASP)	Linguistic (LNG)	Familial (FAM)	Navigational (NAV)	Resistant (RST)	RHIZOME
Context (CTX)	#iTooAMHarvard (ASP/CTX/CON) (Fig. 7) #NeverthelessShePersisted (ASP/CTX/CON) (Fig. 8)					Connection (CON)
Types (TYP)		Videos of Whiteboard Messages (LNG/TYP/M&H) (Fig. 7) Glass Ceiling for Military (LNG/TYP/M&H) (Fig. 8)				Multiplicity & Heterogeneity (M&H)
Effects (EFX)			@iTooAMOxford (FAM/EFX/C&D) (Fig. 7) #FeminismForAll (FAM/EFX/C&D) (Fig. 8)			Cartography & Decalomania (C&D)
Responses (RSP)				Harvard University/ Oxford University/ Twitter (NAV/RSP/ASR) (Fig. 7) Marines, Government (NAV/RSP/ASR) (Fig. 8)		Asignifying Rupture (ASR)
Infinitely Connected (IFC1)					Share Message Against Stereotypes (RST/FC1/FC2) (Fig. 7) Men Can Be Feminists Too (RST/FC1/FC2) (Fig. 8)	Infinitely Connected (IFC2)

As seen in the expanded matrix in Table 3, social media communities of wealth invite those outside to view and perhaps even join the ongoing discourse, ensuring continued visibility (Bell et al., 2016). This invitation is accepted each time the contextual and aspirational hashtags, posts, and testimonies of marginalized communities are retweeted, continuing the rhizome connection. Visibility may even cross boundaries through lines of flight that jump from what perhaps originally was a Twitter discourse to other social media discourse, such as Instagram and Facebook. Should a privileged voice try to hijack the discourse of these communities, the united voice these communities developed can confront the privileged voice and embolden their own (Nishi et al., 2015; Pérez Huber & Solorzano, 2015b).

For example, the black feminist blog *For Harriet* (Foster, 2013) experienced community cultural wealth empowerment when a commenter on the blog challenged the community's stance on the proposed plantation venue for an upcoming songwriting workshop (Nishi et al., 2015). A white woman, Mandi (a privileged, dominant voice), expressed her view that black women should "change their attitudes and reclaim the location for themselves;" however, several black women, as a community of typically subjugated voices, banded together to confront the white woman's comments (Nishi et al., p. 469).

In response to the confrontation, Mandi assumed a black, female avatar, LaQueeta Jones, and used the linguistic and familial capital of the black community to try to bolster her views (Nishi et al., p. 469). By following lines of flight, including blog posts, virtual images, and IP addresses, the community of black feminists on *For Harriet* reclaimed their online community and successfully revealed the blatant microaggression perpetrated by the white commenter.

Applying the expanded matrix from Table 3 to the *For Harriet* (2013) discourse, Table 4 shows how social media communities' alternative capital can rupture dominant power structures.

Table 4
For Harriet (2013) Expanded Matrix.

ALTERNATIVE CAPITAL						
MICROAGGRESSION	Aspirational (ASP)	Linguistic (LNG)	Familial (FAM)	Navigational (NAV)	Resistant (RST)	RHIZOME
Context (CTX)	Righteous Retreat in the Big Easy (ASP/CTX/CON)					Connection (CON)
Types (TYP)	misuse black vernacular (LNG/TYP/M&H)					Multiplicity & Heterogeneity (M&H)
Effects (EFX)	IP tracked on Facebook for reveal (FAM/EFX/C&D)					Cartography & Decalcomania (C&D)
Responses (RSP)	<i>For Harriet</i> (NAV/RSP/ASR)					Assignifying Rupture (ASR)
Infinitely Connected (IFC1)	Challenging ignoring history and fight for equal rights (RST/FC1/FC2)					Infinitely Connected (IFC2)

8. Hybrid Cultures and Shoaling Rhizomes

As social media participants post original commentary or respond to the commentary of others, they begin to recognize affinities that bond them together, emerging into communities of shared experiences that cross boundaries of race, gender, and social class. These possibilities can result in hybrid cultures that embody shoaling techniques for protection and achieve the social mobility available through community cultural wealth. When this hybrid shoaling culture meets microaggressions perpetuated by dominant discourse communities, the new culture moves and responds together, to not only survive but thrive in what could be a hostile environment.

According to Ian Clothier (2005), hybrid cultures generate a space of their own, not just by merging two cultures together, but by creating a new sense of authenticity through diversification from traces of the various formative cultures that negotiate the new third space. Social media, as a continually reforming and modifiable map of perpetual lines of flight, afford hybrid cultures their third space (Clothier, 2005; Coyne, 2008; Deleuze & Guattari, 1987/2014). As a third space, social media allow hybrid cultures to disturb tradition and replace established, oppressive discourse with novel solutions (Clothier, 2005; Kirsty, 2017; Microaggressions, 2017).

Hybrid culture social media sites use shoaling to ensure users' voices and communities amass the community cultural wealth necessary to thrive online. When this shoaling technique is combined with the rhizomorphous structure of social media, more boundaries are crossed, more connections are built, and even more microaggressive lines of flight that arise are addressed. Shoaling not only initiates the third space, where the microaggressed make their experiences known regardless of the nature of those attacks; it also proactively seeks to address the attacks as they happen.

The danger for the traditionally marginalized on social media lies with the anonymity of the virtual world, which blurs the line between creator and avatar, emboldens aggressive projections in other online avenues, and easily dismisses aggressions online that would require addressing if perpetrated face-to-face (Nishi et al., 2015). The shoal is often the only defense against such danger. Should a shoal be able to turn a perpetrator into a community member, they would strengthen their social capital and protect their discourse further. This point will be addressed below.

9. Implications for Social Media as a Shoaling Rhizomes in the Composition Classroom

Millennia of evolution were required for fish to discover the benefits of inclusion and a means by which to defend themselves against attacks. Social media have only come of age within the last few decades; in that time, the plethora of discourse content and communities is beyond measure. These serious circumstances demand rhetoricians and educators consider the nature and influence of social media on discourse. The composition classroom provides one space where students might be invited into discourse communities that examine the context and effectiveness of shoaling rhizomes as they present themselves.

Recent scholars enumerate how social media can be used to address dominant discourses that too often include microaggressive encounters online. Hayes (2017) suggested that through “understanding and analyzing an event [perhaps a microaggressive post] and the resulting tweets, students learn” rhetorical strategies and choices (p. 132). Through a featured Instagram page of a mother of Down Syndrome children, Kara Poe-Alexander and Leslie Hahner (2017) demonstrated how discussing the intentions and effects of social media in the classroom can invite dominant voices into the shoal of microaggressed and marginalized voices. The composition classroom, however, should be seen as a proactive and not merely a reactive space.

Perhaps there was a time when the composition classroom focused more on content knowledge like genre devices and rhetoric. Today, however, this knowledge is immediately available; thus, the focus is now much more on process. What you know is no longer as important as understanding what you know and how to retrieve it efficiently. Yet, this shift from content to process does not mean that students remember and use these tools outside the classroom any more than they remembered content after the end of the test. According to Douglas Kellner and Jeff Share (2006), for these types of critical tools to be useful, they must be portable and regularly reinforced. To this end, the complete matrix outline in Table 3 becomes useful.

Table 3 represents a distillation of three different theories that can be used to analyze and critique online interactions, perhaps even directing users to shoal in ways that promote diverse voices. Instead of having to remember the intricacies and interactions of rhizomes, microaggressions, and cultural capital, students can practice using Table 3 as an analytical framework. While it would not be sufficient to do this just once, repeated use of such a tool might encourage students to remain vigilant even outside the composition classroom, where they are likely to spend a much greater amount of time engaged on social media. Examples of effective outcomes can also reinforce the continued use of such a framework. Much of the practice Laurie Gries (2015) described when teaching students about audience and delivery choices in effective social media campaigns is evident in the #BlackWomenAtWork, #NeverthelessShePersisted, and #iTooAmHarvard examples, which were analyzed in this article.

Understanding social media through shoaling rhizomes will help rhetoricians and educators identify and contextualize issues like microaggressions and the nodes of these issues as they arise (Bell et al., 2016; Nakagawa & Arzubiaga, 2014; Yosso, 2005). As social media

become contextualized, rhetoricians and educators can lead discussions that ask why a post is worded in a certain manner, how the platform of the post reestablishes or challenges the hegemony, how dominant discourses seem to be reinforced or challenged in certain posts, and how the language and rhetorical choices used in a post address victims or silence certain groups (Nakagawa & Arzubaga, 2014), all the while using the matrix in Table 3 as an analytical guide.

In response to specific microaggressions, this framework might also open students in the composition classroom to more proactive stances. Judson Laughter's development of a theory of micro-kindness may be productive, where Laughter defined micro-kindness as "brief verbal, behavioral, or environmental acts of respect, consciously intended to provide a potential space for positive and humanizing interaction" (2014, p. 7). In social media ecology, micro-kindness could mean choosing to follow and participate with communities that cross personal subjectivities and identities. The engagement that could occur should a new Tumblr, Instagram, or Twitter micro-kindness page be hashtagged and reposted on the microaggressions pages would be an example of how "this action [has the]...potential for opening positive interaction" (Laughter, 2014, p. 10). Although Laughter's suggestions recognized that "you cannot counter every negative thing posted on a social media site" (2014, p. 10), we must "realize that you have a broad audience through these platforms" (2014, p. 10). In the realm of social media, a shoaling community that attempts micro-kindness as a proactive defense against microaggressions could find a new member in an old enemy. The addressing of such attacks through micro-kindness demonstrates exactly how shoaling can develop social media into a realm of proactive rather than solely reactive.

If we, as educators and rhetoricians, sought out these opportunities and asked students to talk about their online communities as a way to identify the various affinity groups represented

in our classrooms, we would be working toward a more inclusive environment. Furthermore, if we used critical discourse analysis and the microaggression and rhizome matrix in Table 3 to study the discourses present within our students' social media communities, we might guide students toward recognizing where they can challenge microaggressions among their online groups as well as initiate micro-kindness techniques to propagate more inclusive discourses online. As social media are a multiplicity, there may be times when students reinforce the dominant and discriminatory discourses we intend to combat through shoaling. When these counterproductive communities, like White Supremacy Twitter threads, are brought into a classroom discussion analyzing social media discourse, we must return to the idea of inviting those communities to reconsider their perspective and see the benefit in shoaling with rather than attacking marginalized voices.

We have seen recently how students initiated the movement March for Our Lives in response to tragedy through social media. We have also seen how those students intentionally reached out to even more marginalized youth of color to share the community cultural wealth and create a powerful shoal. The shoaling rhizome is evident in the way today's youth employ their familiarity with social media to engage society and enact change. We, as rhetoricians and educators, can only add to this phenomenon by continuing to study the ways in which social media discourse can be used in the composition classroom and beyond to illuminate the need for change.

The Shoaling Rhizome Matrix evolved throughout this chapter not only demonstrates the framework for analyzing social media discourse in composition classrooms, it also provides a tool with which to clearly evaluate how MFOL mobilized Twitter to establish their gun reform rhetoric firmly within the dominant discourse of the public sphere.

Chapter 3

Understanding the Circulation of MFOL as a Shoaling Rhizome

From the first days after the shooting at Stoneman Douglas High School, the students who would soon form MFOL recognized the global stage available to them via social media. Cameron Kasky recalled in *Glimmer of Hope* (2018) how after learning of losing the beloved teacher, Scott Beigel, to the shooting, he “wrote two long essays on Facebook about what had happened,” and those essays attracted the interest of journalists who asked Kasky to explain his experience and feelings via op-eds and other traditional media (“How It All Began: February 14,” p. 6). Sarah Chadwick (2018), another MFOL founding member, explained how before the shooting she had about “400 followers on Twitter,” which grew to around 13,000 by the day after her initial tweet—a response to the president’s offering of condolences, thoughts, and prayers (“Creating a Social Media Movement: Mid to Late February,” p.43). By February 16th, the students who would become the founding members of MFOL recognized that their individual social media accounts were growing exponentially with followers who wanted to know how they could help or become involved, so they “created a collective account [@NeverAgainMSD]² where people from all over could contact [the creators of MFOL] and share their stories” (p. 44). The students who became MFOL would eventually spend hours together in an office space deciding what to post and on which accounts so as to ensure optimal remixing and circulation of their message regarding gun law reform, a tactic similar to rhetorical velocity as described by Ridolofo and DeVoss (2009). Rhetorical velocity centers on invention and focuses on how invention uses “strategic theorizing for how a text might be recomposed...and how this

² Although the movement began with #NeverAgainMSD, as of March 24, the date of their march on Washington D.C., members had to refrain from using NeverAgain which is “owned by the Anti-Defamation League” (Cullen, 2018, par. 45).

recomposing may be useful or not to the short- or long-term rhetorical objectives of the rhetorician” (Ridolfo and DeVoss, 2009, para. 1). MFOL did not start as a specific organization looking to establish its discourse in a manner that strictly followed this definition of rhetorical velocity; however and due to the rhizomatic nature of social media, they recognized the need for the considerations featured in rhetorical velocity early on, and once key leadership was established, they used rhetorical velocity’s considerations in a manner more true to its theoretical purpose.

The flurry of online activity that the MFOL founding members engaged in pointed to their understanding of the power in circulating their message via social media. MFOL members knew that “in newspapers and on TV, reporters can edit what you say, and they can decide what they keep in their pieces...But [MFOL] didn’t need the approval of anyone to speak [their] minds” on social media (Barnitt, Chadwick, and Whitney, 2018, p. 42). So as these student activists encouraged public discourse toward their “major objectives: a ban on assault weapons and high capacity magazines; universal background checks, and reauthorizing the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to study gun violence” (Cullen, 2018, par. 44), they also recognized the importance of circulating that message via a networked ecology. “Social media [gave MFOL] the platform to say what [they] want to say to reach millions of people” (Barnitt et al., 2018, p. 42). When they formed this message, MFOL followed the strategy in rhetorical velocity of “weigh[ing] the positive and negative possibilities of different types of textual appropriation against desired objectives” (Ridolfo and DeVoss, 2009, paras. 1-2). This strategy resulted in MFOL members picking the appropriate social media account to disseminate a particular message at a particular time, ensuring their desired objectives could be better met.

10. MFOL's Circulation Strategy

Dustin Edwards and Heather Lang (2018) in discussing “thing-power” noted that we can better understand “how, once delivered, a thing gains life of its own via a process of circulation” (p. 123). MFOL members latched on to the influence of circulation on affective ecologies, especially networked ecologies like those available through social media, which is what fueled the “to use Gries’s (2016) terminology...rhetorical becoming, which can be understood as a circulating process whereby things [in this case, MFOL] change and transform as they connect with other entities as they move throughout time and space” (p. 122). These young activists saw how “with just a two-word hashtag, the distance to which [their] words could stretch could be infinite” (Barnitt et al., p. 46). And, as they strategized over their YouTube videos, memes, Tweets, and other social media, they enhanced the rhetorical velocity of the MFOL movement to affect a change that would keep “anyone” else from having to “endure the pain and hardships that Parkland had suffered” (Barnitt et al., p. 45). Cullen (2018) described how MFOL members create their communication, demonstrating the way they strategize over what they produce so that their content has a better chance of not only staying in circulation but of addressing oppositional, dominant narratives.

Each member has veto power, and they wield it liberally...The basic rules are simple, no profanity, no violence—actual, symbolic, or implied—and no ad-hominem attacks.

Personal digs are cheap, dirty, and counterproductive. Chiding politicians is the trickiest thicket to navigate: they want to call out bad behavior quick and hard, but they can’t get too personal or derisive...Their opponents are adversaries, not enemies. (paras. 26-28)

The contemplation on what to include in something as seemingly simple as a tweet compares to Ridolfo and DeVoss’s (2009) references to the amplification effect described in a report on Iraqi

insurgent media published by Krimmage and Ridolfo (2007). Any group considering the ways in which their messages are picked up, remixed, and continually circulated by various media producers is considering the amplification effect on their messages, and the “production and re-composition of content...allude[s] to a process of circulation that affords composers the ability to conceive of how their work may be recomposed” (Ridolfo and Devoss, 2009, para. 3). Sticking to careful contemplation among the leaders of MFOL prior to posting social media content points to how these teen activists use their innate ability in social media practice alongside an approach akin to rhetorical velocity to become integral members of the public sphere.

The MFOL movement has over 464,000 followers on its official Twitter account since establishing itself in the hours post the Stoneman Douglas shooting on February 14, 2018. Between the founding members and all of those that follow them via their official Twitter page, @Amarch4OurLives, the volume of discourse is impressive. On February 27, 2018, a few days short of one month prior to the movement’s march in Washington D.C., Estelle Tang’s article for *Elle* magazine identified “80 Viral Tweets” from the survivors that birthed the MFOL movement. An analysis of several of these viral tweets and some tweets from the day of the march in Washington D.C. demonstrate how the circulation of MFOL’s objectives over Twitter reveal the group’s understanding of rhetorical velocity characteristics like “inventive thinking of composing” and “speed.” Applying the Shoaling Rhizome matrix from chapter 2 toward this comprehension will then reveal how MFOL worked toward recomposing the narrative over gun law reform in a manner that invites members of the traditional *polis* to include and perhaps even adopt MFOL’s message in public discourse.

11. MFOL’s Beginnings as a Shoaling Rhizome

In chapter 2, I discussed how social media provides a space where rhizome thinking abounds. Using rhizome components of connection, multiplicity and heterogeneity, cartography and decalcomania, asignifying rupture, and infinitely connected, the article revisited in chapter 2 explains how

Ceaseless social media connections make breaks in the dominant discourse, providing a cartography of language use online...A social media platform like Twitter acts as a space where one user connects to another through their posts...These posts...creat[e] a multiplicity of conversations...Whether the posts that follow the original support or subvert the original, those that follow can produce significant ruptures that change the entire debate. (Walker & Laughter, 2019, p. 62)

The ruptures MFOL created in their social media campaign, which bolstered the circulation of their message, can be traced using the Shoaling Rhizome matrix that combines rhizome thinking with alternative capital and the components of microaggressions. Although many of the tweets discussed in the following analysis met with microaggression that consists of “systemic, everyday instances of aggression that can be (a) verbal and nonverbal assaults...or cumulative assaults that take a psychological, physiological, and academic toll on the victim” (Pérez Huber & Solorzano qtd. in Walker & Laughter, 2019, p. 62) or were birthed as a response to microaggression, this analysis will focus more on how community cultural wealth was built through the alternative capital evident in those tweeting about MFOL.

Less than a week after the school shooting, Cameron Kasky tweeted a video of Emma Gonzalez on *NowThis News*, a social media-focused news organization, in which Gonzalez is interviewed about what she would say during her speech in Washington D.C. Kasky’s tweet used linguistic capital with the informal and humorous words, “Lookin good ma,” in addition to

the closed-captioned video he posted (Fig. 9). Not only did Kasky's tweet work toward growing his and the founding MFOL members' alternative capital through his familial and playful linguistic tools, it also emphasized the aspirational capital of Emma Gonzalez taking her message of reform to the Washington D.C. march. The "thing-power the MFOL members initiated in their social media discourse gave them leverage in the public sphere through delivery of that thing (Edwards & Lang, 2018). Over 1,000 retweets and 6,000 likes following Kasky's tweet created a line of flight that circulated throughout Twitter and highlighted the connections being made between these young survivors and others who came from a multiplicity of backgrounds (Fig. 10 and Fig. 11).



Fig. 9. Cameron Kasky Tweet of Emma Gonzalez on NowThis News.

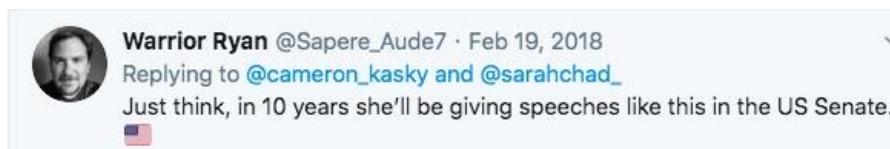


Fig 10. Warrior Ryan Replying to Cameron Kasky's Tweet in Fig. 9.



Fig. 11. Gman and Fontaine Carpenter Replying to Cameron Kasky's Tweet in Fig. 9.

In particular, people from older generations connected to Kasky and his fellow teen activists, providing an entrance to dominant political discourse that often excludes those too young to vote. Warrior Ryan replied in a tweet demonstrating a line of flight focused on hope for change when he envisioned Emma as a member of the Senate (Fig. 10). Further into the replies to Kasky's original tweet, Gman drew attention to how teen activists like Kasky and other future MFOL founders would likely face attempted marginalization by members and groups that have typically dominated the *polis* such as the NRA (Fig. 10). Fontaine Carpenter focused on many of the ways in which MFOL would resist the traditional discourse concerning guns laws (Fig. 11). Both Gman and Fontaine Carpenter put forth a phrase that would come up time and again in the social media discourse centered on the MFOL movement, "cultural change,"

reminding us that the alternative capital and rhizome thinking evident in social justice movements like MFOL seek a cultural shift likely unattainable without the connections and ruptures being made through a networked ecology of affinities like those available via social media.

On the same day that Kasky tweeted the *NowThis* video featuring Gonzalez, Jaclyn Corin, another MFOL founding member, tweeted her thanks for MFOL supporters on social media (Fig. 12). As Corin and her fellow MFOL members increased their presence and rhetorical velocity on social media through hashtags like NeverAgain and eventually March4OurLives, they attracted social media users across generations who saw connections to their own experiences. Andrea's comparison to protests during Vietnam (Fig. 12) with MFOL's goals shows the kind of hybrid culture created when individuals recognize shared experiences with others online and begin to shoal (Walker & Laughter, 2019). This multiplicity of similar experiences created a familial alternative capital focused on resistant discourse that allows typically marginalized groups like teen activist to navigate the impediments that arise when counterdiscourse addresses the dominant and traditional *polis*.



Fig. 12. Jaclyn Corin Thank You, Andrea Vietnam, tHe WeNdY-LoRiAn Connection Tweets.

Another tweet from Cameron Kasky around this same time further demonstrates how MFOL members like Kasky were adapting their messages to be less partisan in order to better navigate the *polis*, a response that shows an MFOL's innate social media expertise in use alongside considerations of how to recompose their tweets in order to bolster their rhetorical velocity and cultural capital (Fig. 13).



Fig. 13. Cameron Kasky Replying to Charlie Callahan's Divisive? Tweet.

When responses questioning Kasky's composition and delivery of rhetoric on gun laws and reform arose (Fig. 13), his navigation of those responses (Fig. 13) exhibited Kasky's ability to connect across partisan lines and increase the overall rhetorical velocity of MFOL's message. Whereas Ridolfo and DeVoss's (2009) theory of rhetorical velocity suggested that composers take into account desired objectives weighed against the speed a message is circulated prior to delivery of that message, Kasky and other MFOL members often arrived at this contemplation only through quick reflection. Even if their messages were initially composed and circulated in their idea lab, adjusting and recirculating messages through reflective responses like that in Kasky's tweet to Charlie Callahan demonstrated an understanding of rhetorical velocity both prior to and after circulation, which also invited reflection upon MFOL adversaries who were likely dominant members of the public sphere.

One of the more notable examples of how MFOL's rhetorical velocity crossed traditional boundaries is observable in Jennifer Reider's reply (Fig. 14) where she identifies herself as a Republican who "stand[s] with you [Kasky] demanding change." Although later tweets revealed that many questioned Reider's stance as a Republican, she continually verified her connection to Kasky and the MFOL movement by linguistically acting as a member of a new heterogeneity formed in a common resistance to more dominant discourse surrounding gun laws and reform. As the MFOL members continued to circulate their message, they "sift[ed] through information, power, media, and actors...[to] then operationalize against those factors" (Edwards & Lang, 2018, p. 119). In the Reider example, that operationalization was met with acceptance and encouragement; however, the examples in Figs. 15 and 16 show a more oppositional stance from MFOL as a means of further establishing and circulating their counterdiscourse.



Fig. 14. Tweets including Jennifer Reider Replying to Cameron Kasky's Fig. 13 Tweet.

Since discourse communities as described in the Shoaling Rhizome article from chapter 2 include embodied reactions to the language these communities' members experience, not every tweet the MFOL discourse community posted attempted to connect through less partisan, even at times, apologetic content. Sarah Chadwick's embodied response to a suggestion of arming teachers as a way to address the issue of gun violence in schools incorporated not only resistant language but created a rupture in Students for Trump's attempt to subvert MFOL's core message of gun law reform (Fig. 15). Chadwick's resistance to such subversion was then bolstered by Kasky's later response to the President's aggressive tweet praising the suggestion of armed teachers as a means to address gun violence in schools (Fig 16). Kasky mirrored Chadwick's gut reaction by questioning the President's message through a hypothetical scenario partly supported by the Professing Professor's tweet which included a link to a huffpost.com article revealing that even professional police officers are not always effective with their firearms (Fig. 17). These embodied, gut reaction tweets to the mainstream, dominant discourse on gun laws and reform show how, acting as a shoaling rhizome, marginalized groups can build alternative capital and continue to successfully circulate their message in a networked ecology such as social media. Furthermore, understanding how to navigate various actors in the "status quo" allowed the MFOL message to "become [even more] intertwined with it [status quo]" (Edwards & Lang, 2018, p. 119).

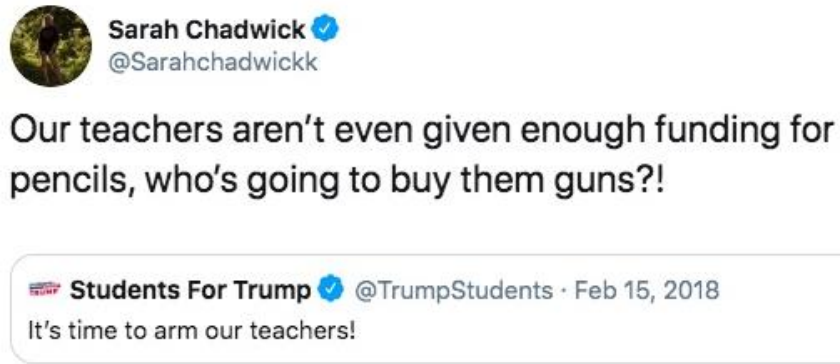


Fig. 15. Sarah Chadwick Reply Tweet to Students For Trump on Arming Teachers.

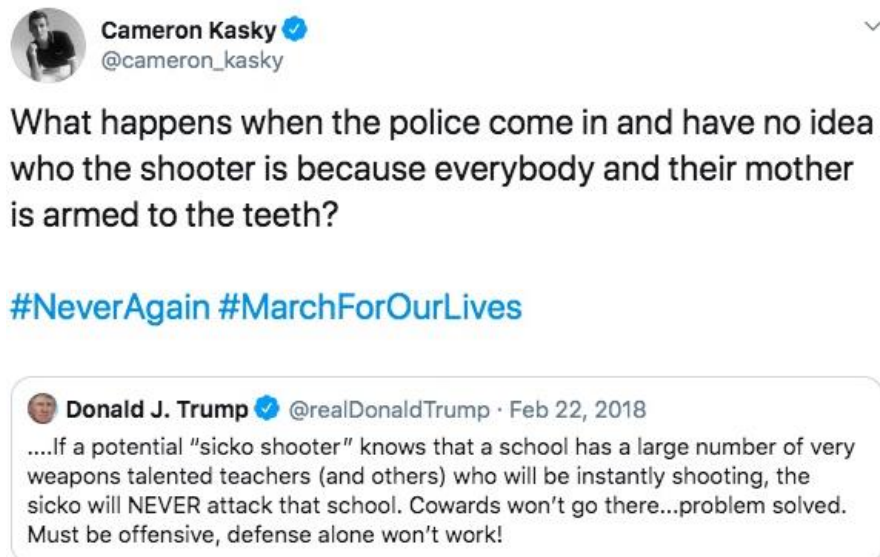


Fig. 16. Cameron Kasky Tweet Replying to Donald J. Trump Praising Arming Teachers.



Fig. 17. Profession Professor Tweet Replying to Cameron Kasky with HuffPost Article.

The Shoaling Rhizome matrix, which includes the components of microaggression and rhizome thinking in conversation with alternative capital, helps to coordinate the descriptions of how MFOL circulated its message and the effects of that circulation with its ability to engage in the traditional *polis*. The Table 5 example, emphasizing the heterogeneity that can be traced within the MFOL shoaling rhizome at the beginning of its circulation, makes visible the analysis explored in one of the Twitter discourses from the beginning of this chapter. The application of that analysis using the matrix can be expanded to include each of the Twitter discourses subsequently discussed, emphasizing the infinite connection available in a shoaling rhizome like MFOL. The matrix can also be applied separately to each, individual Twitter discourse, emphasizing the lines of flight that occur as a shoaling rhizome circulates.

Table 5
Expanded Matrix of the Shoaling Rhizomes in Figures 9, 10, 11, and 12.

ALTERNATIVE CAPITAL						
MICROAGGRESSION	Aspirational (ASP)	Linguistic (LNG)	Familial (FAM)	Navigational (NAV)	Resistant (RST)	RHIZOME
Context (CTX)	Emma to D.C. (ASP/CTX/CON) (Fig. 9) “U can do this!” “More Connected!” (ASP/CTX/CON) (Fig. 12)					Connection (CON)
Types (TYP)		“Lookin good ma” (LNG/TYP/M&H) (Fig. 9) #NeverAgain (LNG/TYP/M&H) (Fig.12)				Multiplicity & Heterogeneity (M&H)
Effects (EEX)			“ma”/NowThis (FAM/EEX/C&D) (Fig. 9) “Thank You” (FAM/EEX/C&D) (Fig. 12)			Cartography & Decalcomania (C&D)
Responses (RSP)				NowThis/Fontaine Carpenter/ Warrior Ryan (NAV/RSP/ASR) (Figs. 9/10/11) Andrea/ tHe WeNdY- LoRiAn (NAV/RSP/ASR) (Fig. 12)		Assignifying Rupture (ASR)
Infinitely Connected (IFC1)					“cultural change” (RST/EC1/FC2) (Figs. 10/11) Vietnam comparison (RST/EC1/FC2) (Fig. 12)	Infinitely Connected (IFC2)

Table 5 uses the components the shoaling rhizome development analyzed in Chapter 2. The matrix again includes the alternative capital components of aspirational, linguistic, familial, navigational and resistant featured in bold type across the top of the matrix. Alongside the far-left column, the components of microaggression including context, types, effects, responses, and infinitely connected are identified using underlining. Along the far-right column, the components of rhizome thinking including connection multiplicity and heterogeneity, cartography and decalcomania, asignifying rupture, and infinitely connected are identified using italicized font. The matrix is a flattened version of what could be viewed as a more three-dimensional model of how a shoaling rhizome develops and functions in a digital space such as Twitter.

Table 5 read down and across shows how the initial tweet surrounding Emma Gonzalez's televised speech from Parkland and the introduction of her trip to Washington D.C. as a part of the March for Our Lives provides a context that initiated connection via subsequent tweets. These subsequent tweets included positive linguistic responses like "Thank You" and "Lookin good ma" that started a multiplicity of discourse with each hashtag and retweet. The heterogeneous discourse created through the multiplicities supporting Gonzalez's original message circulate a familial sense of positive and supporting effects stemming from that original message. The cartography of responses shows a navigation of discourse around gun law reform with asignifying ruptures occurring rhizomatically like "cultural change" or the Vietnam comparison that challenge dominant voices and support the marginalized. Upon reflection and analysis, a decalcomania traces the discourse around #NeverAgain as it circulates revealing infinite connections.

Although these tweets and retweets are represented as following a staircase development, the placement of each tweet in this matrix depends on how that user interprets the use of that tweet in the overall discourse. For this analysis, the focus remains on how Kasky's original tweet of Emma Gonzalez's interview on NowThis represents the development of MFOL during its beginnings into a significant shoaling rhizome bonded through embodied reactions to a traumatic event. This event, although not a microaggression in strict definition, did produce the reactionary context that began the discourse which would work toward building the shoal. The tweets in this discourse often do not represent a chronological tracing as Twitter normally places tweets with the most activity at the top of a feed; therefore, the earliest tweet in a discussion may not be first tweet represented. Since these tweets used in the shoaling rhizome matrix do not have to follow chronological placement, a single decalcomania of a discourse can be analyzed in a number of ways, reconfiguring the placement of each tweet depending on the focus of each discourse analysis. For Table 5, keeping the focus on how the shoal grew or the circulation of MFOL's message in the greater public sphere influenced the staircase result.

12. MFOL's Expansion of their Shoaling Rhizome

Although the MFOL founding members had established an active discourse community on Twitter as individuals using #NeverAgain, on February 20, 2018 that community joined under the specific name of March for Our Lives. This new identity allowed the movement to navigate through social media, mainstream media, and funding sites under a single group identity consisting of typically marginalized individuals shoaling as one for the purposes of keeping their voices integral to the larger *polis* (Fig. 18).

The infinite connections available now that MFOL presented as a unified movement under this name, spread not just across the United States, but gained momentum through the

involvement of voices from various countries (Fig. 19), businesses (Fig. 20), and political affiliations (Fig. 21). All of the voices demonstrated the infinitely connected and continual lines of flight always present through shoaling rhizomes. These connections reached a peak momentum at the movement's seminal event that solidified it as an integral member of the *polis* representing marginalized communities fighting for their counterdiscourse's influence.



Fig. 18. March For Our Lives Establishes Itself as the Official Name for the Movement.



Fig. 19. Support from Various Countries for MFOL.



Fig. 20. Businesses Supporting MFOL by Not Supporting NRA.



Fig. 21. Support for MFOL as an Authentic Movement from Marco Rubio.

On March 24, 2018, a little over one month since the school shooting at Stoneman Douglas birthed a movement from a tragedy, the founding members of MFOL were able to coordinate an impressive and important physical protest across various cities in the United States and abroad. These protests, or the actual March for Our Lives, brought together many groups and individuals into the shoal of MFOL. By the time the march in Washington D.C. was underway, the sheer magnitude of the shoal surpassed the expectations of even the founding

members and was under full display via circulation of images and videos on Twitter and other social media (Fig. 22).



Fig. 22. Tweeted Images of MFOL march in Washington D.C.

#MarchforOurLives was trending and people were united in their resolve to make a counterdiscourse on gun law reform an integral part of the *polis*. The founding members of MFOL had successfully navigated the context of civic engagement typically unavailable to those too young to vote and those not in the dominant discourse. They accomplished this entrance by coming together with other marginalized voices (Fig. 23, Fig. 24, and Fig. 25), using the established social capital of celebrities who championed the same message (Fig. 26), harnessing the traditional media as a context to circulate their message to an even wider and perhaps older audience (Fig. 24, Fig. 25, Fig. 26, and Fig. 27), and learning to resist those that would subvert their message by allowing MFOL's shoal to engage in a united front over social media (Fig. 28 and Fig. 29). The march showed how the circulation of MFOL's message was "more than just the flow of communication, affect, and material; it [took] on a dynamism marked by forms of transformation" (Rickert, 2018, p. 300).



Fig. 23. Peace Warriors Speakers Speaking about Gun Violence in Chicago at MFOL.



Student Activist Gets Personal At March For Our Lives Rally

Fig. 24. Student Activist at MFOL Speaking on the Loss of His Twin Brother to Gun Violence.



Fig. 25. Naomi Wadler Brings Attention to African-American Girls Hurt by Gun Violence.



Fig. 26. Paul McCartney Joins MFOL and Remembers Lennon.



Fig. 27. Emma Gonzalez's Speech is Viewed by Millions through CNN and Social Media.



Fig. 28. Tweet from TheRightMelissa Claiming Gun Debate is Too Complex for MFOL.

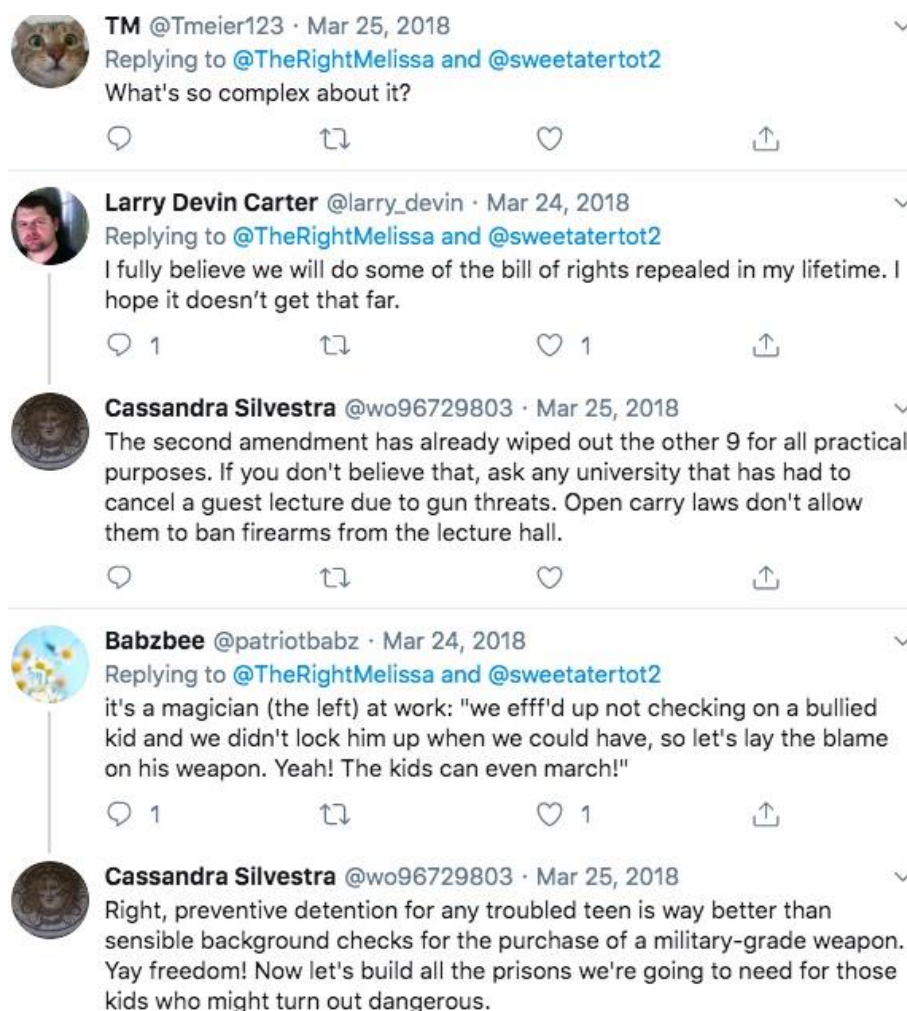


Fig. 29. Reply Tweets to TheRightMelissa Demonstrating the MFOL Shoal Resisting Subversion.

Figures 23, 24, and 25 show how MFOL sought to include marginalized voices affected by gun violence. In Figure 23, two of the key members of the Peace Warriors described in Chapter 1 rallied the crowd in D.C. to recognize that many marginalized peoples have had to live with gun violence for decades. The speaker in Figure 24 testified to the single act of gun violence that took his twin brother showing that the message MFOL champions affects all children. And the young girl in Figure 25 spoke of countless forgotten African-American girls who often represent the largest number of those affected by gun violence. All of the testimonies

represented in Figures 23, 24, and 25 show how MFOL sought to connect across racial and socio-economic boundaries to create a united front for gun reform. The lines of flight, or “continuous connect, change, and reconnect” (Walker & Laughter, p. 62), represented by these speakers created a rupture that stressed the cartography and decalcomania of gun related violence in every community and the need to transform how the *polis* discussed gun law reform.

Figure 26 acts as one of many examples containing the image of celebrities that MFOL connected with in order to pool more social capital. The community cultural wealth was boosted when Paul McCartney, George Clooney, and Jennifer Hudson offered their presence, monetary support, and talent to the MFOL social movement spearheaded by teens, a counterpublic normally situated outside of dominant discourses. Even more, the rhetorical velocity and circulation that occurs when celebrities engage in a movement like MFOL’s opens lines of flight previously unattainable. As someone like Paul McCartney uses his social capital to emphasize the connection he has to gun violence and his solidarity with the teen activists who do not yet have that same social capital, he furthers not only his goal of addressing gun law reform, but also bolsters the overall agenda of the allies in MFOL’s objectives. When George Clooney donates \$500,000 and brings his entire family to the march, he shares his social capital with everyone in attendance and provides a monetary value to the movement itself. When Jennifer Hudson lends her world-renowned voice as one of several performers the day of the march, she adds her social capital to every young activist sharing the stage with her. MFOL and these celebrities know that their words and images in photographs, news broadcasts, and other media will be shared and circulated through traditional, new, and social media to add further rhetorical import to MFOL’s cause. This rhetorical velocity of celebrity works to attract more members to the shoal. These contributions enacted both in-person as well as through tweets, retweets, inclusion of live media,

and remixing via mainstream media using social media platforms spotlights the rhetorical velocity associated with MFOL which created a rhizomatic response to their movement and built a social capital of their own.

Shoaling Rhizomes often work best when they marry the tools available via mainstream media with their expertise on social media. Every embedded television broadcast both local and national, news or magazine report, and even the cross-use of other social media platforms like those represented in Figures 24, 25, 26, and 27 means a marginalized community can reach out to the dominant voices in the *polis*. Mainstream media used within the context of social media connects “fields of culture and social histories” that can then open lines of flight previously unknown or ignored by dominant voices (Edbauer, 2005, p. 10).

The reach of social media for any shoal like MFOL will include those, often dominant voices that seek to subvert the counterdiscourse and halt the circulation of any message contrary to the dominant one. In Figure 28, one such subversion attempts to discredit the validity and capability of the marginalized youth that make up MFOL. In the early days of the movement, it was common to see Cameron Kasky, Jaclyn Corin, Sarah Chadwick, and the other founding members engage these subverters as soon as a post would come through. What began to happen closer to the day of the march was a reluctance for the founding members to reply to comments like that in Figure 28 and rather let the shoal they had worked to foster address attempts at subversion. In this way, the shoal expands and can confront adversaries expediently and effectively. When the shoal contains not only those apex fish such as celebrities providing significant presence for MFOL amidst dominant, intimidating, and well-established oppositional voices but also welcomes fish that often do not embody the same qualities that were used to marginalize the original fish that first formed the shoal, they ensure survival of the shoal as a

whole and demonstrate how crossing boundaries to invite the unfamiliar to familiarize themselves with MFOL's narrative can help solidify their counterdiscourse in the public sphere. The resulting conversation in Figure 29 is one of many examples of how the MFOL shoal questions and resists dominant voices' attempts at excluding MFOL's counterdiscourse. The first comment, in fact, simply asks the TheRightMelissa to answer the question, "what's so complex about it?" (Fig. 29). This strategy could work to invite TheRightMelissa to reconsider the narrative she believes is the correct or better narrative.

In Table 6, another expanded matrix demonstrates how a single event, in this case the actual march organized by MFOL, responds as a shoal to a crisis by using alternative capital in order to establish a counterdiscourse that will circulate despite attempts at subversion. Though many of the dominant voices that often directed the discourse present in the *polis* thought MFOL would wane after the March 24, 2018 worldwide rally, the shoal the founding members began on various social media platforms, especially Twitter, provided a constant presence that ensured their message would circulate through infinite connections.

Table 6

Expanded Matrix of March for Our Lives Protest on March 24, 2018.

ALTERNATIVE CAPITAL						
MICROAGGRESSION	Aspirational (ASP)	Linguistic (LNG)	Familial (FAM)	Navigational (NAV)	Resistant (RST)	RHIZOME
Context (CTX)	“ChangetheFuture” (ASP/CTX/CON) (Fig. 22))					Connection (CON)
Types (TYP)	#MarchforOurLives (LNG/TYP/M&H) (Figs.18/22/25/28-29) Closed-Captioning (LNG/TYP/M&H) (Fig. 24)					Multiplicity & Heterogeneity (M&H)
Effects (EFX)	Peace Keepers (FAM/EFX/C&D) (Fig. 23) Teen Activist (FAM/EFX/C&D) (Fig. 24) Naomi (Fig. 25) (FAM/EFX/C&D)					Cartography & Decalcomania (C&D)
Responses (RSP)	Activist on CBS (NAV/RSP/ASR) (Fig. 24) Naomi on NBC (NAV/RSP/ASR) (Fig. 25) 6 Minutes on CNN (NAV/RSP/ASR) (Fig. 27)					Asignifying Rupture (ASR)
Infinitely Connected (IFC1)	Celebrities/Businesses/Politicians (RST/EC1/FC2) (Figs. 20-21/26) Other Countries/ MFOL Shoal (RST/EC1/FC2) (Figs. 19/29)					Infinitely Connected (IFC2)

Using the same components from Table 5, Table 6 shows how the contextualizing tweet emphasizing the aspirational goal of changing the future began linguistic responses through closed-captioning and quoting of various shoal members' live-fed speeches during the actual march. The effects of these lines of flight demonstrate a familial and capital building connection as with the discourse from Peace Keepers, Teen Activists, and Naomi Wadler that highlights a cartography of the heterogeneous responses the multiple and growing members of the MFOL shoal circulate. The circulation of these responses act as a means to navigate the larger public sphere as the presence of the shoal initiated on social media spreads to include a presence on traditional media through news broadcasts that are then resituated on social media through different news organization's posts and websites. The shoal, then, creates asignifying ruptures that challenge dominant discourse around gun law reform. As the shoal expands to invite typically dominant voices, like celebrities, to join the marginalized, like activists from other countries, they strengthen the shoal with infinite connections that make up the resistance.

The involvement of typically dominant voices, such as celebrities, may seem counter to MFOL's goal to situate their counterdiscourse as one birthed, circulated, and directed by teen activists and other marginalized groups fighting for reformation in gun laws. However, these typically dominant voices joined the movement because of their embodied connection to a tragedy that garnered widespread reactions. MFOL welcoming celebrities and the like into their movement only adds to the shoaling rhizome matrix tracing of how marginalized groups can strengthen their message and challenge dominant discourse by inviting dominant voices to reconsider narratives traditionally excluded from the public sphere. Maintaining control of how the message circulates in that sphere remains in the hands of the MFOL founders and future teen

activist leaders associated with MFOL, thus ensuring that the counterdiscourse continues to challenge the dominant discourse.

Conclusion

Social just movements, like MFOL, are often predicated upon exigent moments that problematize the traditional *polis*'s ability to “debate and deliberate on matters of common concern” (Farmer, 2013, p. 57). Cameron Kasky described how the traditional *polis* fails, time and again, to effectively address the common concerns of its society when it comes to the context of mass shootings. Kasky (2019) explained that “if Las Vegas wasn’t enough, if Sandy Hook wasn’t enough, we [MFOL] are going to be enough. We are going to be the catalyst for real change. This is going to count” (p. 7). This drive to respond in a manner that would ensure their counterdiscourse would remain in circulation among the public and hopefully “effect changes in public policy” (Fraser, 1990 qtd. In Farmer, 2013, p. 58) is what can be traced and analyzed using the Shoaling Rhizome matrix. The resulting analysis provides a visual decalcomania of how a social justice movement initiated by marginalized individuals who act as a shoaling rhizome can produce the community cultural wealth and rhetorical velocity necessary to achieve continued presence in discourse considered by the *polis*.

MFOL’s understanding of how to navigate dominant voices and discourses did not arise out of innate rhetorical prowess. Rather, these student activists used the skills they were learning in civics, speech, acting, and media classes and activities to come together for a common passion and purpose. Once together, they used their comfort and skill with the social media they had grown up with to initiate the rhetorical velocity they would need. Other successful social justice groups and individual activists came to assist MFOL, but, and this was of key importance to the members of MFOL, these groups never took over. As Cullen (2018) explained, “The Women’s March had provided a template, kindred spirits, and plenty of allies...The kids also recruited Emma Collum, a South Florida attorney who had handled transportation and logistics for the

Women’s March;” celebrities donated millions without demanding the teens in turn even listen to their talking points, and with each contributor of time, money, or expertise, MFOL remained “for kids, by kids” (pp. 62-65). In the weeks after the circulation of the MFOL message began and after their march was announced, they received advice and encouragement from those who experienced an affinity for MFOL’s cause. “In an open letter to the teenagers of Marjory Stoneman Douglas high school, four former [Chilean] student leaders-now elected politicians-encouraged US students to fight back against the idea that ‘young people must let the adults make the decisions’” (Franklin, 2018, par. 3).

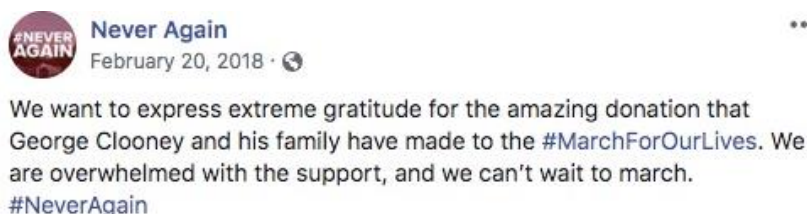
Survivor groups and activists who had direct experience with mass shootings like those at Sandy Hook and Columbine connected with MFOL, and MFOL welcomed those groups and activists into their shoal. And the shoal did not stop with the addition of those most familiar with MFOL’s embodied experiences. The company of Twitter even stepped in to add to the shoal by “actively working on reports of targeted abuse and harassment of a number of survivors of the tragic mass shooting in #Parkland” (Fig. 30). As the message circulated and the march was planned, the MFOL shoal grew to encompass discursive support as well as monetary and informational support (Fig. 31, Fig. 32, and Fig. 33).



Fig. 30. Twitter Support of Students' Treatment on Twitter.



Fig. 31. Patriots Send Plane for Stoneman Douglas Students to Attend March.



“Amal and I are so inspired by the courage and eloquence of these young men and women from Stoneman Douglas High School.

Our family will be there on March 24 to stand side by side with this incredible generation of young people from all over the country, and in the name of our children Ella and Alexander, we’re donating 500,000 dollars to help pay for this groundbreaking event. Our children’s lives depend on it.”

-George Clooney

Fig. 32. Clooney Announces \$500,000 Donation for MFOL.

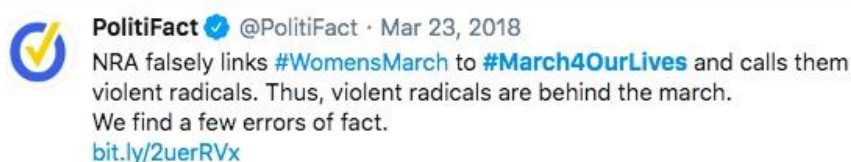


Fig. 33. PolitiFact Provides Discourse Check on NRA Accusations of MFOL.

Pooling the social capital available from the Patriots, Clooney, and a reputable news fact checker not only expanded MFOL’s shoal, it built upon the community cultural wealth that helped to make their march impactful and their message steadily present in the *polis*. The rhetorical velocity that MFOL enacted through their understanding of new media ecologies in the

first few days post the Stoneman Douglas tragedy avoided the quick discarding from the dominant discourse of the day by embracing the shoal while remaining true to the belief that marginalized communities needed to be front and center in their campaign.

Since the initial weeks of MFOL and their March 24, 2018 rally, the shoal has successfully grown in circulation and capital. Their determination to effect a change in public policy added a focus on the 2018 mid-term elections and voting registration of both young voters and those that had possibly been apathetic or complacent about voting in the past. MFOL added the hashtag *Vote4OurLives* to their official list of monikers and social media tags and added to the merchandise link on their website apparel that included QR codes linking to a voter registration page when accessed.



Fig. 34. QR Code Shirt from MFOL Website's Merchandise Link.

Edwards and Lang (2019) in analyzing #YesAllWomen expressed how “tracing the circulation of such [activism] hashtags, as well as treating them as rhetorical things, helps to unravel material complexities within the broader assemblages that animate their [hashtag movements] becoming” (p. 119). Some the subsequent hashtags that MFOL has made part of their becoming include #EndGunViolence which combines MFOL’s goals with that of other organizations like Moms Demand Action to further gun law reform, #VoteEarlyDay to encourage young people to vote and for their voices to be heard, #BackgroundChecksNow and #JaelynnsLaw (a Maryland regional MFOL hashtag) which both work toward legislative priorities intended to affect change in gun laws, #GenerationLockdown which seeks to challenge the idea that school lockdown drills work toward stemming gun violence, and MFOL’s #PeacePlan that points to the organization’s plan to halt gun violence that disproportionately impacts black, latinx, indigenous, and LGBTQ+ communities.

As Matt Deitsch, another MFOL founding member, explained in an interview days after the 2018 mid-term elections, “Our organization (MFOL) has never really been candidate-centric or policy-centric. We hope to expand the electorate of the people who care about this issue, and understand the urgency of putting this issue first...Elected officials now know that they’re going to need young people to win these close races” (Escobar, 2018, par.11). With the results of those elections including a Democrat takeover of the House, more states adding Democrat governors, and a growing presence of women and people from marginalized groups, the question remains how much MFOL has succeeded in effecting the change they sought.

On December 19, 2019, US lawmakers met one of MFOL’s main goals. After twenty years of debate, government funding for gun violence research was solidified for both the CDC and NIH (Wetsman, 2019). Likely, many elements were in play to reach this goal, but assuredly,

the influence of the MFOL shoal made its mark on this policy. MFOL has seemed to manifest the theories and studies that have long existed on how counterdiscourse can make a space in the *polis*, how networked ecologies provide ways to connect and engage, and how, if enough groups and individuals from seemingly disparate communities pool their community cultural wealth and engage the dominant narrative with alternative possibilities, they shoal, successfully.

With the 2020 presidential election on the horizon, we have yet another chance to apply the Shoaling Rhizome matrix to MFOL's involvement in pursuing their issues among the dominant discourse of the day. In these past few months of following the group via Twitter, subscribing to their cell-phone notifications, and adding my email to their website's contacts list, I have already received several reminders of key ballot initiatives, information regarding the platforms of various candidates, and continued reminders to simply vote. MFOL, as evident in my experience with their communications, continues to demonstrate awareness of how savvy attention to rhetorical velocity keeps their message in circulation across diverse media and addressed to diverse recipients. This study gives a clear example of the way MFOL's message is remixed and recirculated, and my research will continue to follow how MFOL and other marginalized groups create a pathway to engagement through collaboration and community.

Back in 2012 when I first considered the implications of technology simply in terms of keeping connected, I never envisioned how our society would continue to grapple with mass shootings, especially mass school shootings. I never envisioned that a group of teen activists would contribute to the direction discourse surrounding gun laws would take, nor did I envision sitting at my dining room table crying while reading an overwhelming list of the vibrant and meaningful lives lost due to mass shootings. Those tears were noticed by my own daughters, and their concern noted what I hold onto throughout this study as well as throughout my parenting—

hope for the future. My daughters and other teens have mastered the technology I and other parents battled with providing years ago. They have contributed to lively discourse on a myriad of topics important to the entirety of the *polis*, especially in terms of inclusivity of narratives in the *polis*. As a researcher, I look forward to learning more about how younger generations and those marginalized by current dominant discourse effect necessary change in society. I hope to take much of what I have tested via the shoaling rhizome matrix into future courses and work with students to analyze not only their presence on social media but the discourse of the social media they follow to hopefully create more responsible consuming of such media. The theories and lenses developed and explored in this study will only lead to further adjusting and honing of the shoaling rhizome matrix perhaps into a virtual, multi-dimensional tool that can add a visual and interactive representation of the reflective and deliberative use of new, digital media in the public sphere.

REFERENCES

10TV.com. [@10TV]. (2018, March 24). Celebrities joined hundreds of thousands of people all over the world to demonstrate against gun violence during #MarchForOurLives bit.ly/2umHlac #10TV. [Tweet]. Retrieved from: <https://twitter.com/10TV/status/977695146618818560>

#MarchForOurLives “United We Stand” Apparel. (2020, March 24). QR code shirt from MFOL website’s merchandise link. Retrieved from: <https://represent.com/store/marchforourlives>

A., M. [@TheRightMelissa]. (2018, March 24). The left has sunk to a new low. They have politicized everything from award shows to sports now our kids. They are propagandizing & radicalizing children who don’t have a full scope of the complexities surrounding the gun debate. This is so shameful #marchforourlives. [Tweet]. Retrieved from: <https://twitter.com/TheRightMelissa/status/977696075770417152>

Act, C. [@courtneyact]. (2018, March 24). I am so inspired and optimistic about the future because these young people will be in charge and they will be voting. Today we remember those lives taken by gun violence and march on to change the future #marchforourlives #neveragain. [Tweet]. Retrieved from: <https://twitter.com/courtneyact/status/977695840759369729>

Andrea. [@DissentNation]. (2018, February 18). Not since Vietnam have I witnessed the youth of our country take control of the message. U are so much smarter than we were. U can do this!. [Tweet]. Retrieved from: <https://twitter.com/DissentNation/status/965323359805476864>

Arroyo, S. J. (2013). *Participatory composition: Video culture, writing, and electracy*. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press.

- Barletta-Farber, P. [@ArgentinaPatito]. (2018, February 21). Made adults proud around the country. [Tweet]. Retrieved from: https://twitter.com/cameron_kasky/status/966528186065522688?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetembed%7Ctwterm%5E966528186065522688&ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.elle.com%2Fculture%2Fcareer-politics%2Fa18727477%2Fmsd-shooting-parkland-survivor-viral-tweets%2F
- Barnitt, J., Chadwick, S., & Whitney, S. (2018). Creating a social media movement: Mid to late February. In By the Founders of March for Our lives, *Glimmer of Hope: How tragedy sparked a movement*. (pp. 39-48). London: Penguin Books.
- Bell, F., Mackness, J., & Funes, M. (2016). Participant association and emergent curriculum in MOOC: can the community be the curriculum? *Research in Learning Technology*, 24(1), 1–19. doi:10.3402/rlt.v24.29927
- Bitzer, L. (1992). The rhetorical situation. *Philosophy & Rhetoric*, 25(1), 1-14.
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/40237697>
- Bizzell, P., & Herzberg, B. (1990). Introduction. In Patricia Bizzell and Bruce Herzberg (Eds.), *The rhetorical tradition: Readings from classical times to the present*. (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Bedford/St. Martin's.
- Black Parenting Magazine. [@BlackParenting1]. (2018, March 24). Anyone know how to reach this young woman and her parents for an interview? Looking to speak to them. #MarchForOurLives. [Tweet]. Retrieved from: <https://twitter.com/BlackParenting1/status/977695771771449345>
- Black Women At Work [@blackwomenatwork]. (2017, April 5). Tweets [Twitter Page]. Retrieved from <https://twitter.com/hashtag/blackwomenatwork>

- Bourdieu, P. (1991). *Language and symbolic power*. J. B. Thompson (Ed.). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Brooke, C. G. (2009). *Lingua fracta: Towards a rhetoric of new media*. Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.
- Carpenter, F. [@feminit4equipar]. (2018, February 18). There is a solution: Ban on semi-automatic weapons, rifles and pistols. National red laws, mandatory ban after DV, background check, ban on those under mental health treatment at risk for suicide or violence. National buyback. Don't settle for pennies, go for culture change. [Tweet]. Retrieved from: <https://twitter.com/feminit4equipar/status/965411093530206208>
- Carpentier, N. (2016). Community media as rhizome: Expanding the research agenda. *Journal of Alternative and Community Media*, 1(10), 4–6.
- CBS Miami. (2018, March 24). Student activist gets personal at March for Our Lives Rally. [video file]. Retrieved from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HuELjL8z3qo>
- Chadwick, S. [@Sarahchadwickk]. (2018, February 16). Our teachers aren't even given enough funding for pencils, who's going to buy them guns?!. [Tweet]. Retrieved from: https://twitter.com/Sarahchadwickk/status/964652669091700737?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetembed%7Ctwterm%5E964652669091700737&ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.elle.com%2Fculture%2Fcareer-politics%2Fa18727477%2Fmsd-shooting-parkland-survivor-viral-tweets%2F
- Clothier, I. M. (2005). Created identities: Hybrid cultures and the Internet. *Convergence*, 11(4). 44–59. doi:10.1177//1354856505061053

- Corin, J. [@JaclynCorin]. (2018, February 18). I am Jaclyn Corin, a survivor of the Parkland shooting. I am working with the #NeverAgain movement to bring change to my state, my country, and the world. Thank you all for the continuous love and support. [Tweet]. Retrieved from: https://twitter.com/JaclynCorin/status/965232403559174144?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetembed%7Ctwterm%5E965232403559174144&ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.elle.com%2Fculture%2Fcareer-politics%2Fa18727477%2Fmsd-shooting-parkland-survivor-viral-tweets%2F
- Coyne, R. (2008). The net effect: Design, the rhizome, and complex philosophy. *Futures*, 40(6), 552-561. doi:10.1016/j.futures.2007.11.003
- Crick, M. (2012). Social media use in the Bronx: New research and innovations in the study of YouTube's digital neighborhood. *Journal of Technology in Human Services*, 30, pp. 262-298. doi:10.1080/15228835.2012.746167.
- Cullen, D. (2018, March 22). Inside the secret meme lab designed to propel #NeverAgain beyond the march. *VanityFair:HIVE*. Retrieved from: <https://www.vanityfair.com/news/2018/03/inside-the-secret-meme-lab-designed-to-propel-neveragain-beyond-the-march>
- Cullen, D. (2019). *Parkland: Birth of a movement*. London:riverrun.
- DaltonBeninato, K. [@kbeninato]. (2018, March 24). "I could be quiet for 6 minutes. I'm probably the quietest for 6 minutes person you've ever met. People are saying they haven't seen anyone as quiet for 6 minutes as me." – POTUS watching #MarchForOurLives. [Tweet]. Retrieved from: <https://twitter.com/kbeninato/status/977696158704431106>

- Deleuze, G., & Guattari, F. (1987/2014). *A Thousand plateaus: Capitalism and schizophrenia*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Edbauer, J. (2005). Unframing models of public distribution: From rhetorical situation to rhetorical ecologies. *Rhetoric Society Quarterly*, 35 (4), pp. 5-24.
doi:10.1080/02773940509391320
- Edwards, D., & Lang, H. (2018). Entanglements that matter: A new materialist trace of #YesAllWomen. In Laurie E. Gries and Collin Gifford Brooke (Eds.), *Circulation, writing, and rhetoric*, pp. 118-134. Logan, UT: Utah State University Press.
- Escobar, N. (2018, November 9). ‘We don’t want to live a long life in fear’: A mass shooting just two days after midterm elections has motivated the young gun-reform activists of March for Our Lives to continue their mission. *The Atlantic*. Retrieved from:
<https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2018/11/what-midterms-taught-march-our-lives-members/575386/>
- Farmer, F. (2013). *After the public turn: Composition, counterpublics, and the citizen bricoleur*. Logan, UT: Utah State University Press.
- Foster, K. (2013, December 28). Dear Ani DiFranco supporters: you cannot reclaim an oppression you have never experienced. Retrieved from
<http://www.forharriet.com/2013/12/dear-ani-difranco-supporters-you-cannot.html>
- Fowler, J., & Noyes, J. (2017). A study of the health implications of mobile phone use in 8-14s. *Dyna*, 84(200), 228–233. <https://doi.org/10.15446/dyna.v84n200.62156>

- Franklin, J. (2018, February 28). Chile student protest leaders send support to Florida gun campaigners: Four leaders of 2011 movement send letter to young US activists urging them to fight idea that only adults should make the decisions. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from: <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2018/feb/28/chile-student-protest-leaders-send-support-to-florida-gun-campaigners>
- Freddy. [@FreddyLawrence1]. (2018, February 19). We all hope desperately you can make the change we never could. It truly feels different now, I'll be marching, and I'll be voting. Stay strong. [Tweet]. Retrieved from: https://twitter.com/cameron_kasky/status/965580402911072257?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetembed%7Ctwterm%5E965580402911072257&ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.elle.com%2Fculture%2Fcareer-politics%2Fa18727477%2Fmsd-shooting-parkland-survivor-viral-tweets%2F
- Georgakopoulou, A. (2017). Small stories research: A narrative paradigm for the analysis of social media. In Luke Sloan and Anabel Quan-Haase (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of social media research methods*, pp. 266-281. Los Angeles, CA: SAGE Publications, LTD.
- Gerbaudo, P. (2012). *Tweets and the streets: Social media and contemporary activism*. London: Pluto Press.
- Gin, K. J., Martínez-Alemán, A. M., Rowan-Kenyon, H. T., & Hottell, D. (2017). Racialized aggressions and social media on campus. *Journal of College Student Development*, 58(2), 159–174. doi:10.1353/csd.2017.0013

GMan. [@GmanBN375]. (2018, February 18). Be prepared the NRA and their puppet politicians are plotting right now to diffuse and marginalized your movement. This is not going to be an easy discussion. Cultural change is difficult at best and gun rights proponents are not open minded or rational on this topic. Stay strong. [Tweet]. Retrieved from: <https://twitter.com/GmanBN375/status/965423993078632448>

Gries, L. E. (2015). *Still life with rhetoric: A new materialist approach for visual rhetoric*. Logan, UT: Utah State University Press.

González, E. [@Emma4Change]. (2018, February 20). For all those who want to know how to get involved with our Movement and don't know how, follow this link!. [Tweet]. Retrieved from: https://twitter.com/Emma4Change/status/966148659527155714?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetembed%7Ctwterm%5E966148659527155714&ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.elle.com%2Fculture%2Fcareer-politics%2Fa18727477%2Fmsd-shooting-parkland-survivor-viral-tweets%2F

González, E. [@Emma4Change]. (2018, February 24). To all companies who severed ties with the NRA, those personally affected by their influence on legislation thank you. [Tweet]. Retrieved from: https://twitter.com/Emma4Change/status/967846203080626176?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetembed%7Ctwterm%5E967846203080626176&ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.elle.com%2Fculture%2Fcareer-politics%2Fa18727477%2Fmsd-shooting-parkland-survivor-viral-tweets%2F

Hauser, G. A. (1999). *Vernacular voices: The rhetoric of publics and public spheres*. Columbia, SC: The University of South Carolina Press.

Hayes, T. J. (2017). #MyNYPD: Transforming Twitter into a public place for protest. *Computers and Composition*, 43, 118–134. doi:10.1016/j.compcom.2016.11.003

Hogg, D., & Hogg, L. *#NeverAgain: A new generation draws the line*. (2018). New York: Random House.

Huss, A., van Eijdsen, M., Guxens, M., Beekhuizen, J., van Strien, R., Kromhout, H., ...

Vermeulen, R. (2015). *Environmental Radiofrequency Electromagnetic Fields Exposure at Home, Mobile and Cordless Phone Use, and Sleep Problems in 7-Year-Old*

Children.(Report). 10(10), e0139869. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0139869>

I Too Am Harvard [@iTooAmHarvard]. (2017, April 26). Tweets [Twitter Page]. Retrieved from <https://twitter.com/iTooAmHarvard>

Kasky, C. [@cameron_kasky]. (2018, February 18). Hey, I don't normally like to answer these types of tweets, but Mr. Callahan has a point. I was very partisan in the beginning and violently attacking the GOP. I was angry and scared. Now I know that people from every party are supporting us. Everybody is demanding change. [Tweet]. Retrieved from: https://twitter.com/99ameron_kasky/status/965580402911072257?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetembed%7Ctwterm%5E965580402911072257&ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.elle.com%2Fculture%2Fcareer-politics%2Fa18727477%2Fmsd-shooting-parkland-survivor-viral-tweets%2F

Kasky, C. [@cameron_kasky]. (2018, February 18). Lookin good ma. [Tweet]. Retrieved from: https://twitter.com/99ameron_kasky/status/965410710917394432?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetembed%7Ctwterm%5E965410710917394432&ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.elle.com%2Fculture%2Fcareer-politics%2Fa18727477%2Fmsd-shooting-parkland-survivor-viral-tweets%2F

Kasky, C. [@cameron_kasky]. (2018, February 20). And that's coming from THIS GUY.

[Tweet]. Retrieved from: [https://twitter.com/cameron_kasky/status/](https://twitter.com/cameron_kasky/status/966122671003131904?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetembed%7Ctwterm%5E966122671003131904&ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.elle.com%2Fculture%2Fcareer-politics%2Fa18727477%2Fmsd-shooting-parkland-survivor-viral-tweets%2F)

966122671003131904?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetembed%7Ctwterm%5E966122671003131904&ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.elle.com%2Fculture%2Fcareer-politics%2Fa18727477%2Fmsd-shooting-parkland-survivor-viral-tweets%2F

Kasky, C. [@cameron_kasky]. (2018, February 22). What happens when the police come in and have no idea who the shooter is because everybody and their mother is armed to the

teeth?. [Tweet]. Retrieved from: [https://twitter.com/cameron_kasky/status/](https://twitter.com/cameron_kasky/status/966674801715830784?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetembed%7Ctwterm%5E966674801715830784&ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.elle.com%2Fculture%2Fcareer-politics%2Fa18727477%2Fmsd-shooting-parkland-survivor-viral-tweets%2F)

966674801715830784?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetembed%7Ctwterm%5E966674801715830784&ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.elle.com%2Fculture%2Fcareer-politics%2Fa18727477%2Fmsd-shooting-parkland-survivor-viral-tweets%2F

Kasky, C. (2018). How it all began: February 14. In *By the Founders of March for Our lives,*

Glimmer of Hope: How tragedy sparked a movement. (pp. 1-9). London: Penguin Books.

Kato, T., Yorifuji, T., Yamakawa, M., & Inoue, S. (2018). National data showed that delayed

sleep in six-year-old children was associated with excessive use of electronic devices at 12 years. *Acta Paediatrica*, 107(8), 1439–1448. <https://doi.org/10.1111/apa.14255>

Kellner, D., & Share, J. (2006). Toward critical media literacy: Core concepts, debates,

organizations, and policy. *Discourse: Studies in Cultural Politics of Education*, 26, 369–386.

Kirsty [@KirstyASC]. (2017, March 21). Person: “Why was there no #autism when I was a child?” Me: “Why was there no ‘gravity’ in the 15th century?” #ActuallyAutistic.

[Instagram Post]. Retrieved from <https://www.instagram.com/p/BSDO5ytjKW-/?tagged=microagression&hl=en>

- Knoblauch, A. A. (2012). Bodies of knowledge: Definitions, delineations, and implications of embodied writing in the academy. *Composition Studies*, 40(2), 50–65.
- Laughter, J. C. (2014). Toward a theory of micro-kindness. *International Journal of Multicultural Education*, 16(2), 2–14. www.ijme-journal.org/index.php/ijme/article/view/842
- March For Our Lives. [@AMarch4OurLives]. (2018, July 12). That’s why I spoke at the March. In his memory, I have and I will continue to speak for my city and bring awareness to the senseless gun violence that occurs everyday in Chicago. (3/3). It has to stop. [Tweet]. Retrieved from: <https://twitter.com/AMarch4OurLives/status/1017533003914936321>
- Microaggressions. (2017, April 26). Posts [Tumblr Page]. Retrieved from <https://www.tumblr.com/search/microaggressions>
- Montilli, F. [@medicaptfm]. (2018, February 27). Longtime NRA member, Orlando attorney turns in AR-15 #BoycottNRA #GrabYourWallet #CancelNRAMembership #NeverAgain. [Tweet]. Retrieved from: <https://twitter.com/medicaptfm/status/968635754950922240>
- Nakagawa, K., & Arzubiaga, A. E. (2014). The use of social media in teaching race. *Adult Learning*, 25(3), 103–110. doi:10.1177/1045159514534190
- Never Again [@NeverAgainMSD]. (2018, February 20). We want to express extreme gratitude for the amazing donation that George Clooney and his family have made to the #MarchForOurLives. We are overwhelmed with the support, and we can’t wait to march. #NeverAgain. [Facebook Post]. Retrieved from: <https://www.facebook.com/NeverAgainMSD>

- Nevertheless She Persisted. [@NeverthelessShePersisted]. (2017, April 19). Tweets [Twitter Page]. Retrieved from <https://twitter.com/search?l=en&q=%23NeverthelessShePersisted%20since%3A2017-09-21%20until%3A2017-09-27&src=typd>
- Newtown Action. [@NewtownAction]. (2018, February 27). Thank you to @Twitter for working to protect the #NeverAgain Parkland students from targeted abuse and harassment from those who protect their 2nd Amendment rights but not the 1st Amendment rights of others. #StandWithParkland. [Tweet]. Retrieved from: <https://twitter.com/NewtownAction/status/968622323409543169>
- Nishi, N. W., Matias, C. E., & Montoya, R. (2015). Exposing the white avatar: Projections, justifications, and the ever-evolving American racism. *Social Identities*, 21(5), 459–473. doi:10.1080/13504630.2015.1093470
- Palczewski, C.H. (2001). Cyber-movement, new social movements, and counterpublics. In Robert Asen and Daniel C. Brouwer (Eds.), *Counterpublics and the state*. (pp. 161-186). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Pérez Huber, L., & Solorzano, D. G. (2015a). Racial microaggressions as a tool for critical race research. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 18(3), 297–320. doi:10.1080/13613324.2014.994173
- Pérez Huber, L., & Solorzano, D. G. (2015b). Visualizing everyday racism: Critical race theory, visual microaggressions, and the historical image of Mexican banditry. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 21(3), 223-238. doi:10.1177/1077800414562899
- Pfister, D. S. (2014). *Networked media, networked rhetorics*. University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State UP.

- Poe-Alexander, K. & Hahner, L. A. (2017). The intimate screen: Revisualizing understandings of Down Syndrome through digital activism on Instagram. In Douglas M. Walls & Stephanie Vie (Eds.), *Social writing/social media: Publics, presentations, and pedagogies* (pp. 225-244). Boulder, CO: University Press of Colorado. Retrieved from <https://wac.colostate.edu/books/social/>
- PolitiFact. [@PolitiFact]. (2018, March 23). NRA falsely links #WomensMarch to #March4OurLives and calls them violent radicals. Thus, violent radicals are behind the march. We find errors of fact. Bit.ly/2uerRVx. [Tweet]. Retrieved from: <https://twitter.com/search?l=en&q=%23mfol%2C%20OR%20%23march4ourlives%2C%20OR%20%23vote4ourlives%2C%20OR%20%23neveragain%2C%20OR%20%23marc4forourlives%20since%3A2018-02-14%20until%3A2018-03-25&src=typd>
- Professing Professor. [@Professing_Prof]. (2018, February 22). Exactly. And even well trained shooters miss. So arming teachers will increase the number of students shot. More guns = more death and destruction. [Tweet]. Retrieved from: https://twitter.com/Professing_Prof/status/966679528834850816
- Reider, J. [@GovernorJen]. (2018, February 19). I'm a Republican and I stand with you demanding change. Stay authentic. [Tweet]. Retrieved from: <https://twitter.com/GovernorJen/status/965581016101539841>
- Reiff, M. J., & Bawarshi, A. (2016). *Genre and the performance of publics*. Logan, UT: Utah State University Press.
- Rickert, T. (2018). Circulation-signification-ontology. In Laurie E. Gries and Collin Gifford Brooke (Eds.), *Circulation, writing, and rhetoric*, pp. 300-307. Logan, UT: Utah State University Press.

- Ridolfo, J., & DeVoss, D.N. (2009). Composing for recomposition: rhetorical velocity and delivery. *Kairos* 13(2). Retrieved from: http://kairos.technorhetoric.net/13.2/topoi/ridolfo_devoss/
- Saint Joseph's University. (2017). Shoaling behavior in fish. Retrieved from <https://sites.sju.edu/biology/labs-and-facilities/the-biodiversity-laboratory/shoalingbehavior-fish/>
- Selfe, C. L., & Hawisher, G. E. (2012). Exceeding the bounds of the interview: Feminism, mediation, narrative, and conversations about digital literacy. In Lee Nickoson and Mary P. Sheridan (Eds.), *Writing studies research in practice: Methods and methodologies* (Locations 530-720). Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press. Locations 530-720.
- Tang, E. (2018, February 27). 80 viral tweets from the Parkland survivors that stared a movement: Emma Gonzalez, Sarah Chadwick, Cameron Kasky, and their fellow activists use Twitter like masters. *Elle*. Retrieved from: <https://www.elle.com/culture/career-politics/a18727477/msd-shooting-parkland-survivor-viral-tweets/>
- TM. [@Tmeier123]. (2018, March 24). What's so complex about it?. [Tweet]. Retrieved from: <https://twitter.com/Tmeier123/status/978026073870028801>
- Vatz, R. E. (1973). The myth of the rhetorical situation. *Philosophy & Rhetoric*, 6(3), 154-161. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40236848>
- Walker, P., & Laughter, J. (2019). Shoaling rhizomes: A theoretical framework for understanding social media's role in discourse and composition education. *Computers and Composition*, 53, 60–74. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compcom.2019.05.005>

- Warrior Ryan. [@Sapere_Aude7]. (2018, February 19). Just think, in 10 years she'll be giving speeches like this in the US Senate. [Tweet]. Retrieved from: https://twitter.com/Sapere_Aude7/status/965712036855537664
- Warner, M. (2002). Publics and counterpublics (abbreviated version). *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 88(4), pp. 413-425. doi:10.1080/00335630209384388
- Warnick, B., & Heineman, D.S. (2010). *Rhetoric online: The politics of new media*. (2nd ed.), New York: Peter Lang.
- Wetsman, N. (2019, December 19). After a 20-year drought, US lawmakers fund gun violence research: \$25 million will be split by the CDC and NIH. *The Verge*. Retrieved from: <https://www.theverge.com/2019/12/19/21028779/gun-violence-research-funding-20-year-freeze-congress-bill-cdc-nih-dickey>
- Yosso, T. J. (2005). Whose culture has capital: A critical race theory discussion of community cultural wealth. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 8(1), 69–91.
doi:10.1080/1361332052000341006

VITA

Paige Elizabeth Walker is completing her dissertation in English (Rhetoric, Writing, and Linguistics) at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville where she currently serves as the Assistant Director of Composition. She has published on Shoaling Rhizomes in *Computers and Composition*. She has presented studies at several conferences including CWPA, CCCC, Mid-South CCCC, and SSLW's 2017 international conference in Thailand. Her research interests include New Media, Digital, and Public Rhetoric, Social Media Composition and Discourse, Multimodal Writing, Writing Studies, Writing Pedagogy, Writing Program Administration, and Research Methods and Ethics