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Innovative Pedagogies for The Digital Age: Extending Higher Education Beyond the Walls of The University.

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This paper details an explorative and experimental project that is seeking to better implement virtual technologies of Web 2.0 into the pedagogy of higher education. Our project endeavours to position these technologies as a means of reorienting pedagogic practice within higher education around truly chaordic communities of practice that serve to develop digital citizens. We have undertaken this project with the belief that higher education should be concerned with answering the calls of our increasing digital society; that is to say become a place for foster digitally literate learners, who's learning is not restricted to physical boundaries of the university but rather happens at all times over physical and virtual spaces.

We ascribe to the connected and co-dependent world described in the future world of 'only connect'. A world where the zeitgeist of individualism, liberalism and competition has dissolved and been replaced with cultural, political and economic socialism, coherent with the Marxist traditions of Gramsci, Hall and McLaren, and the fall of the regime of neoliberalism (Jameson, 2007; Giroux, 2005). Moreover, and centrally, it is a world based on the recognition that our freedom is not facilitated, not denied, by the Other (Sartre,1981). This mutual recognition ensures that we are truly free beyond what neoliberalism defined freedom as, and unveiling the 'Other's' being within the world as part of our own can allow us to surpass our current capabilities as a society (Sartre, 1992). Reorienting society around our ontological and epistemological interdependence and connectedness, and moving citizenship to the core of our existence is the only possible future that can be sustainable and unleash our full potential as a coexistent and collaborative society.

As we move through the 21st century, society is becoming increasingly played out across new virtual realms of existence underpinned by new economies of digital and virtual media (Beers and Burrows; 2007; Castells, 2010; Turkle, 2011; Zylinska, 2009). This new landscape has placed us on a trajectory toward limitless connective power, and it is this that will form the vehicle of collaboration; the mechanism through which we can actualise a society that is founded upon values of collaboration, togetherness, moral citizenship, critical pedagogy and shared knowledge(s).

Toward this end we suggest that higher education must break from the neoliberal matrix within which it exists, one where constructs of what constitutes knowledge are reduced to that which is performative, ascribed and commodifiable (Apple, 2004, Bush *et al.*, 2013; Côté and Allahar, 2011; Dahlström, 2008). However, to service the future world 'Only Connect' we must strive for a conception of education that seeks to facilitate the development of digital citizens (Bennett, 2008; Farmer, 2011; Longford, 2007), who are digitally literate and proficient to the point of innovation and who are reflective practitioners (Bolton, 2005; Schon, 1987) able to engage in critical pedagogies (Giroux, 2008) whilst being empathetic' and collaborative in their thinking. Higher education in this world should be concerned with providing the tools and the environment to develop an awareness of virtual epistemological spaces between individuals, within which shared knowledges and collaborative endeavours flow. This is in line with the goals of higher education described within the 'Only Connect' world; recognising one's responsibility to the Other, apprehending their perspective and most importantly providing experiences of lived moral digital citizenship. This said, we posit that an even more significant shift in education is needed. A shift that frees education from the shackles of formal learning environments and into more informal and non-formal learning environments (Coombs and Ahmed, 1971), so that there is distinction between life and education, yet recognition of the importance of both in order that learning becomes contingent upon all areas of experience and context.

Our paper then is an explorative project into how we might begin to implement these values. We are imagining how social media platforms can be better used as pedagogical tools, and how we better implement them into curriculum design to enhance the learning of our students toward the goals above. The project is guided by the question of how we utilise the connective, democratic, interactive and constantly accessible qualities of web 2.0 to further our endeavour of a pedagogy of collaboration and the development of digital moral citizens. We are asking these questions via practical and experiential implementations into our curriculum at Oxford Brookes University on the Sport, Coaching and Physical Education undergraduate degree. Particularly, the use of Google+ communities that centre around selected modules provides a vehicle within and without which to ascertain how students connect with the self and other as they construct the

knowledge(s) required of a truly digital citizen. We are also using Twitter to run virtual and distance lectures, which use the power of the hashtag to encourage engagement and collaborative thought. Alternative modes of 'assessment' via virtual platforms are also being experimented with.

Our ultimate aim is to create a functioning virtual stage for truly 'choardic' Communities of Practice (Lave and Wenger, 1991; Van Eijnatten and Putnik, 2004, Wenger, 1998) that are constructivist in nature and allow for fluid, non-linear and democratic learning. Virtual communities of practice as the site of education in this new world exist both inside and outside the institution and shift the relationship between teacher and student from knower and learner to co-constitutional learners. This arrangement will allow higher education to better prepare learners to have agency and be empathetic digital citizens of a world defined by collective existence.