

Only for White, Middle-class Feminists? Issues of Intersectionality within the Worlds of Contemporary Digital Feminist Campaigns

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Intersectionality was a term first articulated by Kimberle Crenshaw in 1989; Crenshaw describes intersectionality as the acknowledgement that domination exists along multiple axes, including those related to class, race, sexuality, and disability. Initially being incorporated into feminism’s third wave, intersectionality continues to play a prominent role in contemporary feminist groups and campaigns. Furthermore, Alison Winch (2014) argues that it can be “dangerous” not to engage with the histories and debates of feminism, as this helps us to recognise why some feminists—and their existing campaigns—are more visible than others. Using qualitative interview data, I examine the role of intersectionality within a contemporary Australian-based campaign: Destroy the Joint (DtJ). DtJ has previously received criticism for their approach to intersectionality; resultantly, I will consider questions of access, diversity, and voice as existing within DtJ’s ‘world’, and analyse how the campaign has previously handled and addressed these critiques. Can feminists equally access and contribute to these campaigns in a social media-based space? Does DtJ fully emphasise issues that impact women of colour, queer women, and women of other minority groups? These questions are further complicated by the existence of DtJ within an online space—one in which the “blocking” of opposing voices is as straightforward as clicking a button. This paper argues that intersectionality should be a central activity and consideration for social media-based feminist campaigns, and that to ignore this issue is understood by other feminists to presume to speak for other women..

Introduction

The concept of intersectionality has played a significant and recognised role in feminist theory and activism since at least the 1980s. The term, coined by Kimberle Crenshaw in 1989, was partially a reaction to earlier tensions within the U.S. feminist movement, and stemmed from the erasure of black women within second wave feminism. The theory of intersectionality has since also been expanded to understand the experiences of women of various abilities, and women of different sexualities and gender identifications.

This research examines the role intersectionality plays in a contemporary digital feminist campaign: Destroy the Joint (DtJ). Drawing on interview data with activists from the campaign, I consider how DtJ has addressed issues of intersectionality in terms of access, diversity, and voice.

Intersectionality: From the Second Wave to the Digital Era

Following the two World Wars, second wave feminism came to prominence in the early 1960s. Key to second wave thinking was the search to “render women’s immediate and subjective experience to formulate a political agenda” (Dekel, 2011, p. 475). Second wave feminism sought rights for women

to receive equal pay for equal work and access to birth control and abortion (McHugh, 2007), and sexual liberation (Gerhard, 2001).

However, second wave feminism was also critiqued for its emphasis on issues primarily impacting white, heterosexual women (Hallstein, 2008). As Lynn Hallstein points out, much of second wave feminist thought comes from a site of “situated knowledge”, and members of the second wave movement held experiences and understandings that were “situated within a very specific context of privilege and advantaged cultural currency” (2008, p. 145). Audre Lorde, an African-American lesbian poet, was one of many women who rejected large portions of second wave feminist thought due to its continued focus on the plight of middle-class, white, educated women. When radical feminist theologian Mary Daly spoke about reclaiming women’s spirituality through rituals honouring the goddess, Lorde in turn asked Daly the question, “What colour is your goddess?” (Freedman 2002, p. 89). Lorde’s question highlighted a larger attitude towards the second wave—generations of feminists in the US would speak largely to white, middle-class, educated women, and mistake their problems for all women’s problems.

Resultantly, third wave feminism was partially born from these critiques—and alongside it, the theory of intersectionality. Kimberle Crenshaw initially described intersectionality as how the “dominant conceptions of discrimination condition is to think about subordination as disadvantage occurring along a single categorical axis” (1989, p. 140). She further argues that this single-axis framework erases the unique experiences of disadvantage and oppression faced by women of colour (1989)—an idea that has since also been expanded to understand the experiences of women of various abilities, and women of different sexualities and gender identifications (Gordon, 2016). Crenshaw’s initial conception of intersectional was intended to draw upon the differences between sex discrimination and race discrimination (Gordon, 2016): however, other scholars have reconceptualised intersectionality as existing along a series of axes (Yuval-Davis, 2006), or as a dynamic process (Staunæs, 2003). Furthermore, other feminist collectives across second wave feminism have articulated similar concepts to that of intersectionality: the African American feminist Fran Beal used the term ‘double jeopardy’ to refer to the costs of being both black and female in 1969, whilst a decade later the Combahee River Collective described the “major systems of oppression [as] interlocking” (1977, no page). The application of intersectionality can therefore be summarised as one that, according to Patricia Hill Collins (1998), challenges the matrix of domination. It is also dynamic and malleable: according to Hill Collins and Bilge, it is a theory “constantly under construction” (2016, p. 31).

In contemporary feminist campaigns, groups, and research, intersectionality continues to play a role prominent role. Alison Winch writes that an emphasis on the plurality of contemporary feminisms without considering deeper theories and history can lead us to “gloss over the [existing] power structures” (2014, p. 15). Winch (2014) further argues that it can be dangerous not to engage with the histories and debates of feminism, as this helps us to recognise why some feminists—and their existing campaigns—are more visible than others. Risman emphasises that there is a “considerable consensus that one must always take into consideration multiple axes of oppression; to do otherwise presumes the whiteness of women” (2004, p. 442). Evans argues that intersectional feminist praxis is central to the activism of younger feminists in three ways:

- 1) It underpins the types of activities and events they organise; 2) it influences discursive approaches to inclusion; and 3) it constitutes a popular subject of theory application amongst the activists (2016, p. 67).

Intersectionality can therefore be considered a way to understand the unique and different experiences of oppression faced by, for example, a gay, black woman (when opposed to that of a straight, white, woman)—and is therefore of key significance to contemporary feminism. How intersectionality is applied in online feminist campaigns—if it all—is therefore the primary concern of this paper.

Contemporary literature has also analysed how intersectional practises are considered to be lacking in contemporary offline feminist campaigns and publications. Miriam (2012) argues that SlutWalk marches fail to recognise that the ‘choice’ that women of colour have in electing to call themselves ‘sluts’ is dissimilar to the ‘choices’ of white women. Elsewhere, Hughes (2011) asserts that lobby groups advocating for quotas to advance the role of women in politics do not consider the representation of women from different minority backgrounds. Melissa Phruksachart notes that the recent Women’s March on Washington “received pushback from black and women of colour feminist for its inattention to intersectional feminist philosophy and activism” (2017, p. 514). Finally, Baer’s 2012 assessment of German feminist activism demonstrated that some forms of activism within the country are characterised by an unexamined level of privilege, and a limited engagement with differences amongst women.

However, little work exists in considering how intersectionality is applied in digital settings. A significant contribution to the discussion of the role of intersectionality in digital feminist spaces is the work of Christina Scharff, Carrie Smith-Pei, and Maria Stehle (2016). In their examination of digital feminist campaigns originating from Germany, Scharff, Smith-Pei and Stehle note that the exclusion of different subjects may be “potentially (re)produced in and through the performances of neoliberal subjectivities in these online environments” (2016, p. 6). They further argue that the process of identity making is a “continually shifting process... fostered by the circulatory, even viral, reach of the digital” (Scharff et al, 2016, pp. 11–12). In the face of a digital environment in which identities are fluid, shifting, and potentially excluded due to wider neoliberal values, how do feminists then best apply intersectionality?

Exactly what constitutes intersectional practices in campaigns also remains somewhat unclear. Williams suggests user engagement within feminist digital spaces needs to prioritise discourse that is “anti-ableist, anti-racist, and anti-sizeist” (2017, p. 10), whilst Mgbako noted that there was a “delicate balance of priorities” required between sex workers and HIV/AIDS activists to build an offline intersectional campaign in Botswana (2016, p. 10). Furthermore, Gines (2011) observes that although intersectionality is a useful analytical tool at an individual level, it is made more difficult at a group level because of the varying, different behaviour of groups. As feminism increasingly moves to online campaigning (Winch, 2014, it is important to consider the implementation of intersectionality in digital environments and campaign groups. The following section outlines the research methods used within this paper, before then moving to examine the data considering how intersectionality is applied in DtJ.

Methods

This paper draws upon data gathered during a series of semi-structured interviews with Australian-based feminist activists. The interviews took place between November and December 2014. The

three feminist activists interviewed for this research had each undertaken moderation of the DtJ public Facebook page.

The use of in-depth interviews meets several demands of the research. As this paper examines the perceived intersectionality of a specific online feminist campaign, it is central to discuss these perceptions with people directly involved in the campaign. Interviews “enable researchers to obtain information that they cannot gather by observation alone” (Berger, 2000, p. 111). Additionally, Rakow argues, “in many disciplines... feminist scholars have found the [interview] methods particularly appropriate” (2011, p. 417). In this case, interviews allowed for the views and opinions of those directly involved with the DtJ campaign to be represented and analysed within the research. The three interviewees were also, as Klaus Jensen (2002) says, ‘informants’ on specific topics—they are do not just represent a variety of social categories, but are instead well-placed sources. Steinar Kvale (1996) further deems informants to be not the subject of analysis (as they would be in a representative study), but instead subject to, and witnesses of, events.

In addition to semi-structured interviews, the wider DtJ campaign was examined using a case study method. As a method of examination, case studies are noted for their ability to pay close attention to detail, and to uncover unique features of each case (Pyke and Adams 2010; Thomas 2011). Following from this, the purpose of this case study is instrumental in nature—it is framed by the understanding that the research is commenced with a specific purpose in mind (Stake 1995; Thomas 2011). In this instance, the purpose of the research is to understand how a specific feminist group either has or has not incorporated intersectionality into their campaign. The case study method allowed for the gathering and analysis of data—including newspaper articles, Facebook posts, blog posts, and Tweets—that contained information related directly to DtJ’s approach to intersectionality.

The results of these interviews and the relevant case study data hold a number of significant themes: therefore, the following results are separated into three sections, each discussing a specific subject. The first section outlines the campaign origins of DtJ, giving particular consideration to the group’s grounding in digital activism. The second section considers how intersectionality is essential for digital feminist campaigns, and draws on a specific 2015 example from the DtJ campaign to highlight the campaign’s current shortcomings in relation to intersectionality. The third section analyses the specific views of DtJ campaigners in relation to intersectionality, and details the particular approaches of DtJ to incorporate a diversity of perspectives in their digital activism. Finally, the concluding section of this paper argues that feminist activists in digital spaces should take further steps to incorporate intersectionality into their work.

Destroy the Joint Campaign Origins

The DtJ campaign began as a response to a particular incident involving an Australian talkback host, Alan Jones. On 31 August, 2012, during the course of an on-air discussion with a guest, Jones began discussing the plans of the then Australian Prime Minister Julia Gillard to promote Pacific Island women in business and politics. Jones said:

She’s promised \$320 million to promote ‘gender equality’ in the Pacific region... She said that we know societies only reach their full potential if women are politically participating... Women are destroying the joint—Christine Nixon in Melbourne, Clover Moore here.

Honestly. (Jones, 2012, as cited in Farr, 2012, no page.)

The Destroy the Joint campaign (DtJ) materialised from a tweet responding to Jones' initial on-air comments. In response to Jones' comments, Jane Caro tweeted the following response on the same day:

Got times on my hands tonight so thought I'd spend it coming up with news ways of 'destroying the joint' being a woman & all. Ideas welcome. (Caro, 2012)

The #destroythejoint hashtag was then added by Jill Tomlinson—a Melbourne based plastic and reconstructive surgeon—in her response to Caro's initial Tweet. Tomlinson said:

Bored by Alan Jones' comments on women destroying Australia? Join with @JaneCaro & suggest ways that women #destroythejoint (Tomlinson, 2012)

Following the initial Twitter hashtag (which generated a number of news reports on the issue), another woman, Sally McManus, started the Facebook page, "Destroy the Joint"—a term that was quickly co-opted by a number of Australian women to describe their actions in resisting forms of patriarchal oppression. The initial popularity and resultant growth of DtJ was originally focused solely of Jones' actions—following his initial comments about women "destroying the joint", he made a further series of gaffes a few weeks later about Gillard's father "dying of shame" that triggered a DtJ-led advertiser boycott of Jones' radio station, 2GB (Radio Today, 2012; The Sydney Morning Herald, 2012).

Following this boycott, DtJ began expanding its campaign scope to move beyond Jones' comments. Prior to December 2012, DtJ began to launch a series of campaigns that appeared to encompass a more comprehensive approach to feminist issues outside of Jones' initial comments. However, these campaigns varied in their approaches to the incorporation of intersectionality, with several of DtJ's campaigns attracting criticism for their lack of perceived intersectional values (Ellis, 2015; Joint Destroyer, 2013). The following section outlines a particular incident that took place in 2015, and concerns the digital silencing of the voices of disability activists by the DtJ page.

"Destroy the joint? Shit, I'd be happy just to be allowed in the joint."

In November 2015, Sam Connor—an Australian-based disability activist—privately messaged the DtJ Facebook page to ask if the page could share an upcoming memorial event. The memorial event Connor had asked DtJ to share was intended to "remember women, men and children who have died as a result of violence, neglect, or abuse" (Connor, 2015, no page). DtJ responded to Connor's request by querying the memorial's relevance to its audience, and said that they would "suggest posting it to disability activism pages... unfortunately we won't be able to post this to our page as we have to stick to our remit closely" (DtJ, as quoted in Connor, 2015, n.p.). Connor's further attempts to discuss this with the DtJ moderator were blocked—according to Connor, Facebook sent her a message alerting her that the DtJ Facebook page had reported her message as "abusive" (Connor, 2015, n.p.). At this point, Connor visited the main DtJ Facebook page in order to "find out what kind of information DtJ considered more important than the counting of dead disabled women" (Connor, 2015, n.p.). Connor then noticed that the page had just "posted a

lighthearted ‘Buzzfeed’ post, where women were asked to contribute their experience of #beingawoman” (Connor, 2015, n.p.). At this point, Connor and her fellow activists began publicly posting their experiences of being women with a disability on the main DtJ Facebook page, with Connor arguing that some of the posts were “so far removed” from her experiences of being a woman with a disability.

DtJ then banned the commenters (including Connor) from the Facebook page, stating that they were “spamming this post and page with a large number of obvious half truths and distortions” (Ellis, 2015, no page). Connor then went on to write about her experience for the independent news site *The Stringer*, stating that DtJ were silencing the voices of women with disabilities by blocking and deleting their comments (Connor, 2015). Following the publication of Connor’s piece, DtJ issued an online apology, and stated that “anyone who has been banned as a result of this will be unbanned” (DtJ, 2015).

This observation—one of a denial of access to the digital world of feminism—was also made by other disability activists prior to Connor. In 2013, the prominent Australian disability activist and writer Stella Young wrote a piece in which she notes that, as a disabled woman, she would “just like to be allowed in the joint” (Young, 2013, no page). Young continues to highlight the invisibility of women with disabilities by pointing out that the initial DtJ pledge, published on their website and Facebook page, omits any references to disability. For the sake of brevity, the entire pledge is not reproduced here, but the relevant section is as follows:

I want an Australia where we respect each other; an Australia where no person experiences hate because of their gender, race, religion or sexuality. And I will challenge anyone who uses sex, race, religion or sexual orientation to incite hatred or to demean or vilify any of us. I will not stand by and let others do so without speaking up. (Cited in Young, 2013, n.p.)

In her piece, Young said that she had raised the issue of the omission of disability as a reason many people experience hate with the DtJ creators of the pledge; however, Young noted that “disappointingly, they said ‘we can’t include everything’” (2013, n.p.).

Critiques of DtJ’s blocking of Connor and her fellow activists were also evidenced elsewhere in the mainstream media. Wendy Syfret, of *i-D*, said:

When abled bodied women speak about issues like wage imbalances, public representation, family violence, poverty, and prejudice they need to make sure they're speaking for *all* women, and not restricting themselves to an ableist point of view. (2015, no page, emphasis in original)

To this, Katie Ellis added that the “silencing of disabled voices does not further the [feminist] cause” (2015, n.p.). The wider feminist movement has a long-standing history of ignoring the rights of disabled women; simultaneously, disability rights activists have also ignored the varying experiences of people within its movement as being at times dependent on their gender identity (Garland-Thomson, 2002). Margaret Lloyd describes women who have a disability as therefore being “caught between... [a] movement in which they have been invisible as women, and [another] in which their disability has been ignored” (2001, p. 716). Additionally, Helen Meekosha wrote in 2002 of the potential of the Internet to level the playing field for women with disabilities when it comes to communicating with their peers, and to provide a space for women to have a “voice” online (p. 80).

Online movements such as DtJ can therefore be viewed to hold conceivable potential for women with disabilities: unlike offline activist groups and movements, the participation and input of women with disabilities is not restricted by issues of physical access, location, or other problems that may arise with face-to-face activism. As Kate Ellis and Mike Kent point out, “social media has the potential to both enable and further disable people with disability” (2016, p.24). The deletion of comments and blocking of disability activists from the DtJ page is therefore of particular concern: it not only goes against wider intersectional values that feminism has traditionally struggled to incorporate, but it also targets a particular minority that may struggle to participate in more traditional offline settings.

At this point, it is worth turning to the direct voices and experiences of DtJ moderators, in order to bring further nuance and experience to this research. Drawing on interviews with three DtJ Facebook page moderators, the following section outlines campaigners’ perspectives and approaches to intersectionality in their particular digital world.

Only for White, Middle-class Women?

DtJ’s initial approach to intersectionality within their campaign was articulated by three former campaign members during interviews for this research. Jennie Hill, El Gibbs, and Kim¹ were each moderators of the Facebook DtJ page during its initial inception. The roles and tasks of each campaigner differed, with Hill outlining that she was primarily responsible for training other moderators, and Gibbs stating that she undertook a large portion of organising for the initial boycott campaign. In contrast to these specific roles, Kim said that they undertook more general moderating duties on the DtJ Facebook page. Furthermore, Hill also noted that she had a higher level of access to the DtJ Facebook page than a standard moderator—she noted that during her initial six months with the campaign, she was ‘promoted’ from a moderator role to an administrator role. On Facebook, moderators have the ability to respond to or delete comments, and send messages as the page. Administrators operate at a higher level of access from moderators – they can manage all aspects of a Facebook page, including responding to and deleting comments, sending messages as the page, and assigning other people as moderators or administrators.

When asked about the role of intersectionality in DtJ, Hill said that attempts at inclusivity and intersectionality were made within DtJ, and that the moderating team for the DtJ Facebook page consisted of people who were from a number of different minority groups—including people who were gay, disabled, and trans. Hill explained that every post that was written on the DtJ page would first be posted on a private administrator group consisting of DtJ moderators and administrators. In this private group, administrators would be able to vet and change posts, and moderators would have the “opportunity to comment on a post before it goes up”.

According to Hill, this vetting process would allow campaigners who held particular concerns with issues of race, sexuality, or gender to suggest changes to posts prior to publication—something that Hill considered to be “very, very valuable”. Gibbs, a DtJ moderator, further outlined this vetting process when she said that her contributions to this private Facebook page were typically focused on ensuring the group was “acknowledging privilege [and] particularly white privilege”. According to Gibbs, these acknowledgements would cause “a lot of fights in the [Facebook] admin group” during her time as a moderator. These feelings of frustration were echoed by Kim. Kim said

¹ Not her real name.

that they felt they were “constantly hitting [their] head against a brick wall trying to get a bit more discussion about issues of class and race” to take place within the DtJ public page.

Each of the three DtJ moderators interviewed for this research—Hill, Gibbs, and Kim—acknowledged that DtJ were, at times, not practising intersectional values. Hill cited perceptions that DtJ weren’t “doing intersectionality well enough, which we’re not, and we’re not getting at lower socio-economic [class] women, which we’re obviously not”. Kim said that DtJ was an example of “mainstream feminism inhabited by white liberal feminists”, but added that DtJ did “help push the agenda along”. Gibbs added that she would sometimes “get annoyed when things [posted on the DtJ social media pages] were just focused on heterosexual women or white women or wealthy women”. To this, Gibbs added that she personally identified as an intersectional feminist, and that her particular “feminist school” was one of “acknowledging privilege, particularly white privilege”.

Significantly, DtJ moderators also spoke of wanting to incorporate more intersectional values—but also stated that the wider DtJ audience were not always ready to take that next step in terms of understanding and undertaking a deeper analysis. Gibbs said that the first few months of DtJ’s existence consisted of “fairly feminism 101 [style posts]” on their Facebook page, and that “there was some really basic work [done] around race and class”. Gibbs further expanded on this point saying that she could “write technical essays about intersectionality and white privilege... but it’s not going to get the woman in the suburbs to actually see [this] corporate kind of crap”. This raises a noteworthy question for feminist activists in digital spaces: to what extent do the needs of a particular audience dictate the content posted on a campaign page? Gibbs expanded on this point by saying that:

It was a joke in the beginning that I would get the least comments on the posts that I would write and put up because I’d do more complicated things and people would kind of go “I don’t understand”...then one of the others would put up something about something sexist in an ad and they’d get 300 comments and I’d just go “Okay, I’m really not doing this right”.

Consequently, Gibbs had to adjust her initial approach—one that she described as discussing “power and power relations”—to instead find other ways to lead into conversations that received a higher level of engagement with the DtJ audience, and use “some pop culture sort of stuff as a way into talking about [these issues]”.

However, this approach—one of leading the DtJ audience towards discussions of power and intersectionality through pop culture—was not universally accepted or enforced by other DtJ moderators. Kim cited the lack of consistent intersectional values on behalf of DtJ as one of the reasons they eventually left the moderating team. Kim said that they were “very aware of the differences in feminism and I felt that the particular kind of feminism that DtJ is advocating wasn’t reflective of my feminism”. When asked to expand on these differences in feminist perspectives, Kim said that there were “so many other issues that we need to deal with as feminists... DtJ wasn’t doing enough for my liking”, and that groups like DtJ “can’t [continue to] look past race and class, and ability and gender, and sexuality”.

The attempts at intersectionality within DtJ have, according to campaigners, typically focused around the need for diversity within the moderating team and the ongoing focus and discussion of issues that impact women outside of Australia. However, Kim suggested that these attempts were “quite tokenistic”. There were no clear written policies from DtJ regarding their policy on

intersectionality and inclusivity: however, as an informal campaign group this is neither always anticipated nor expected.

This leads to wider questions of what intersectionality may look like in contemporary feminist campaigns. Whilst considering the fact that feminist activists in these groups already undertake large amounts of unrecognised digital labour (Gleeson, 2016), how can campaigns implement a level of intersectionality that opens their digital spaces and ‘worlds’ to other, more traditionally marginalised, voices?

Intersectionality in Digital Feminist Worlds

The primary theme outlined in the sections above was the silencing of digital voices. This was undertaken by DtJ in the case study analysed through the deletion of comments, and the banning of activists from the DtJ Facebook page. This silencing speaks to wider issues of digital access and voice within DtJ, and as evidenced by these concerns, I argue that intersectionality needs to be not just a central concern and focus for digital feminist campaigns, but also the subject of active and ongoing implementation and discussion.

Furthermore, social media has been positioned as a site of particular importance for feminist activists (Carter, 2014; Khoja-Moolji, 2015; McLean and Maalsen, 2014; Portwood-Stacer and Berridge, 2015). Feminist groups have used both Facebook and Twitter to facilitate coordinated acts of protest and wide-ranging discussions on issues pertinent to contemporary feminism (Altinay, 2014; Antunovic and Linden, 2015; Meyer, 2014; Thrift, 2014; Williams, 2015). The issue of intersectionality in online spaces is one that is therefore not unique to DtJ: a number of other feminist campaigns have also been accused of not fully considering or practising intersectionality in their online spaces, and have taken steps towards further incorporating intersectional practises into their work. In the case of SlutWalk, the Melbourne-based local campaign group have developed and implemented a code of conduct in response to criticisms regarding intersectionality (SlutWalk Melbourne, 2016). Additionally, a number of white women based within the US chapters of the Women’s March have addressed concerns of race-based exclusion by stepping down from their leadership roles, and altering the initial name of the march (from the ‘Million Women’s March’ to the ‘Women’s March’) (Gebreyes, 2017; Stockman, 2017).

However, DtJ’s efforts at implementing intersectional values remain somewhat ambiguous. As Hill outlined earlier, the campaign group has previously incorporated people from a number of diverse backgrounds into their moderating team. However, none of the three interviewees could point to a firm policy or code of conduct related to the implementation of intersectional practises within DtJ. Further clarification on this issue was also sought through the DtJ Facebook page, however no response was recorded.

The silencing of voices is an ongoing site of tension within feminist digital spaces. On one hand, campaigners have noted that constant inclusivity and intersectionality are incredibly hard – according to Hill, “trying to be all things to all people is not always possible”. But on the other, the suppression of marginalised voices is not an acceptable practice within contemporary feminism. If these voices are not incorporated and discussed within wide-reaching groups such as DtJ, feminists risk isolating important voices for the movement beyond the traditional white, middle-class woman.

In not fully engaging in intersectionality, DtJ risks ignoring wider power structures. The perspective that activists such as Connor should contact other groups and pages to “raise

awareness” regarding issues for disabled women demonstrates Winch’s (2014) earlier concerns: that this emphasis on the plurality of feminisms can lead to a glossing over of power structures. Digital spaces can also be considered indirectly complicit in reinforcing these pluralities: in an online world in which every activist campaign can have its own Facebook page, it can be difficult to unite within one group.

Exactly *how* DtJ can incorporate intersectional values into its campaign is an issue that both the literature and the activists interviewed for this research could not fully resolve. As noted earlier, some activists and academics have ventured suggestions on user engagement with wider literature regarding intersectionality (Williams, 2017), but activist groups do not always make firm strategies regarding the steps they have undertaken for inclusivity publicly available.

What does remain clear at the conclusion of this paper is that further consideration needs to be given to the silencing of activist voices in digital feminist spaces, and the perceived lack of intersectionality in prominent feminist groups such as DtJ. If an activist group such as DtJ wishes to lay claim to intersectionality, further work needs to be done by the campaign to anticipate and work alongside voices of dissent.

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