**The Qualified Self**

**Assignment/Discussion Prompts**

1. According to Humphreys (2018), the qualified self is the sense of self that comes from interacting with the media traces that are created about us. Go to your Facebook timeline. What do the media traces say about you (both the ones you create and the traces that others create that include you)? What parts of you aren’t represented in media traces? Why aren’t they represented?

Now go to a close friend or family member’s profile page. Scroll through their media traces. What do the traces say about them? What do you know about them that isn’t represented in the timeline? Why do you think it’s not there?

2. According to Humphreys (2018), the qualified self is the sense of self that comes from interacting with the media traces that are created about us. Compare your Facebook traces to how Facebook and its advertisers understand you. (Go to your Facebook Settings, Ad preferences and then Your Interests. What surprises you most about your supposed Facebook interests? How do your top 20 interests align with your media accounting? What is listed as a top interest but shouldn’t be? and what’s left out? Why do you think these discrepancies exist?

3. Look through your Instagram posts, categorize them according to the media accounting practices that Humphreys (2018) identifies:

1. sharing the ordinary

2. identity work

3. remembrancing

4. reckoning

*Remember media traces can serve multiple purposes at the same time, so feel free to double or triple code.*

Which are most common media accounting practices in your posts? Which are least? How might the categorizations change if someone else was reading and categorizing your posts? How might the categorizations would change if you looked at your posts on a different platform?

4. Humphreys (2018) argues that people engage in media accounting across various media technologies. How do the different platforms you use (e.g. Facebook vs Instagram vs Twitter) convey different things about you? Look at your traces in aggregate on at least two different platforms, how do they differ? How do the affordances of the platform impact the traces that are created and shared on them? How are the imagined audiences similar and different across the platforms?