INTERVIEW WITH DEBORAH LUPTON

ENTREVISTA COM DEBORAH LUPTON

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Your work holds significant importance for our research here in Brazil. Therefore, this presents an excellent opportunity for us to listen to you and gain further insights into your work. We could initiate by posing our introductory question, particularly for readers unfamiliar with your work. We would appreciate you sharing a bit about your career and research interests. How did you venture into the field of social sciences, and specifically, how did you commence your research in digital sociology, digital food culture, and online food activism?

Indeed. That is a substantial question. My interest in social sciences began during my high school years. I had always been drawn to subjects such as history and English literature. I immersed myself in literary fiction, focusing mainly on the cultural dimensions of people's lives. Studying social sciences and English literature in high school strongly connects the two areas, as both strive to understand people's lives, experiences, and emotions. Upon entering university, I continued my social sciences, English literature, and anthropology studies. I also delved into human biology, as I had a longstanding interest in biology. Throughout school, I excelled in both biology and humanities. Additionally, during my first year at university, instead of cultural anthropology, I shifted my focus toward biological anthropology for my final graduation project. I graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology and English Literature. Therefore, my inclination to study sociology and anthropology about health, diseases, and public health has persisted.

There was a period in the mid-1980s during the emergence of the HIV epidemic – the first decade of AIDS. The first identified case of HIV was in 1981. This was when concerns about it began to surface. Unfortunately, during that time, as you may know, there was substantial stigmatization, primarily directed at gay men but also encompassing marginalized groups such as intravenous drug users. Those who contracted HIV succumbed to the disease due to the lack of a cure in the 1980s. However, in countries like Australia and similar English-speaking nations such as the United Kingdom, the United States, and Canada, the 1980s marked a turning point. These countries started to address the issue, acknowledging that homosexual and heterosexual individuals were at risk of contracting HIV.

Numerous Australian citizens directed their attention toward the potential risks associated with HIV and AIDS transmission. Consequently, I undertook in-depth research into the attitudes exhibited by heterosexual individuals living with HIV/AIDS. Subsequently, I

pursued a Master's degree in Public Health. In embarking on this academic journey, I acquired epidemiology, biostatistics, health economics, and health promotion knowledge. However, as someone with a foundation in the social sciences, my perspective was inherently critical, distinguishing me from fellow students with backgrounds in health sciences.

These colleagues were seeking professional reorientation to enter the field of public health, notably in areas such as medicine, nursing, or related disciplines. As a critical thinker with a background in social sciences, I couldn't accept the kind of assumptions about human behavior being taught to us in the context of health promotion. Phrases like "the public is ignorant," "people need motivation," "they require education," and "persuasion is necessary" to foster healthy citizenship were prevalent. During that time, due to my engagement with coding theory, I drew connections between the works of Michel Foucault and concepts related to individuality, such as self-management and governability. Exploring the intersection of these concepts with the operation of public health, I observed how the field operated by stimulating self-accountability.

Upon completing my Master's in Public Health, I continued at the Medical School to pursue my Ph.D., where I studied through the lens of social sciences and discourse analysis how the Australian press portrayed HIV and AIDS. I aimed to bring my prior knowledge into this subject while continuing within the context of public health. And yes, that's what I did for my doctoral thesis. Once I finished, I secured my first position as a lecturer, teaching health communication at a communication and media studies school. Since then, I've been involved in public health communication, media studies, sociology, and cultural studies. My educational journey encompassed various perspectives, propelling me into different disciplinary realms. Thus, I've always been interdisciplinary. Now, I hold a particular interest in the digital aspects. In essence, my academic background lies in health sociology and medicine.

I am of an age that allows me to vividly recall the introduction of the original Apple computers into the university library. At that time, we designated a particular room for their use. These computers resembled enhanced word processors. Before this, writing was done manually or through typewriters. Suddenly, this magnificent processor emerged, and we were granted the privilege of scheduling its use. We had an hour to compose our assignments and print them out elegantly. As personal computers began to gain popularity and email was introduced, we started utilizing them, likely in the early '90s. Initially, we employed personal computers for creating spreadsheets, drafting documents, and accessing email. Furthermore,

during a time when the internet had not yet become established, we confined the use of this technological system to the office environment.

I became significantly intrigued by this topic as my profound interest in the human body and its interactions with the natural environment became remarkably pronounced. Consequently, I began to develop an appreciation for viruses, as exemplified by the case of HIV, a viral agent. My specific interest veered towards comprehending the metaphorical representations associated with viruses in my research concerning HIV/AIDS. In the mid-1990s, there was a growing concern about computer viruses and the potential spread of these entities among devices. I used floppy disks during that time since computers weren't extensively interconnected. The phenomenon of sharing virus-infested floppy disks between computers emerged, instigating metaphorical analogies. The undertaken research focused on exploring the dynamics that shape our understanding of the interaction between our bodies and personal computers, drawing parallels between the conception of our computers afflicted by viruses and the perception of our bodies afflicted by illnesses.

I was amalgamating all of my sociological experience, which encompassed the realm of digital sociology, although back then, we didn't employ the term "digital sociology" but rather concepts like "cyberspace," "cyberbodies," or "cyberworld." You know, everything was quite cyber-centric in the 1990s. So, I began to write. My interest in health effectively converged into a directed attraction toward digital computing. Within this context, I embarked on a project investigating how people incorporated their personal computers into the professional and domestic spheres of their lives. Through this lens, my interest deepened in these aspects inherent to the everyday use of digital technologies concerning health and other elements associated with daily life.

We are curious to know when food became a part of your research interest. You have shared many aspects, such as health care and technology. This has provided a great introduction to getting to know you better. However, when did the study of food become an intriguing subject for you?

Due to my interest in public health and health promotion, I observed a significant emphasis on the role of diet in maintaining health. Guidelines regarding what should or should not be consumed to promote well-being have been widely highlighted. This context prompted me, in the mid-1990s, to undertake a research project. I intended to investigate the public's perception of the risks associated with food and their understanding of various health promotion messages instructing healthy food choices. I interviewed individuals in Australia about their knowledge of food and danger. One episode that drew attention was the bovine spongiform encephalopathy, which, although it didn't affect Australia, became a widely discussed topic in the mid-1990s, especially in the United Kingdom. In Australia, we had incidents that raised public concern, such as cases of food poisoning and discussions about the risks associated with consuming pesticide-containing foods. I authored a book titled "*Food, The Body and the Self*" published in the mid-1990s, around 1998 or 1997. The book was based on a series of interviews I conducted with Australian citizens, addressing the theme of food risk and, equally importantly, the memories intertwined with food. I employed a methodology called "memory work," which asked participants to document their food-related memories. As a social researcher, my scope was to discern the genuinely relevant aspects of these food memories.

Within this book, "*Food, the Body and the Self*", I highlighted issues of nostalgia and childhood, along with the values people attribute to food. The book also resulted in the publication of a journal article, thus consolidating the findings of my research. In that same period, the mid-1990s, I engaged comprehensively, merging diverse interests. It was a time when I found myself entangled in reflections about food, the body, and identity, themes that found expression in the title of my book.

Perhaps there is an interest in understanding how I established the connection between digital media and the subject of food. In this context, I took a significant academic hiatus to dedicate myself to raising my children. Between 2005 and 2010, I stepped away from the university entirely, making room for other activities. My reintegration into academia occurred in 2011. Upon resuming my position, I encountered the growing role digital media played in health promotion. The landscape encompassed apps, wearable devices, online searches via

Google, and various technologies that emerged during my absence from the academic sphere. Digital discussion forums gained significance, accompanied by the interest in health-promoting apps and bright devices. Given this overview, I decided to re-enter this domain, sparking my interest in the intersection between digital media and health. So, essentially, I re-entered that world and thought – Wow, this is interesting! And I began researching digital health extensively, coinciding with the "obesity crisis."

The epidemic became a topic of interest in public health and medical circles from the late 1990s to the early 2000s, probably the same happened in Brazil. I imagine this occurred worldwide. Many governments and public health agencies began issuing alerts about this epidemic. My longstanding interest in food, the body, and health, as well as in stigmatization, marginalization, and the complex relationships with body shape and weight, directed my attention toward the discourses and meanings associated with the "obesity crisis."

I crafted my book titled "*Fat*", in which I delved into all these themes. However, it's important to emphasize that this approach is intrinsically linked to my prior interest in representing food as a risk factor. In this context, I began directing my attention to the digital space, investigating the use of apps, mobile devices, social media platforms, and websites to depict bodies in specific ways. These representations ranged from overly thin bodies, often tied to practices of dietary restriction, to significantly voluminous bodies, frequently associated with moral guilt and greed due to their size and shape. As a subsidiary focus, I generated texts about the representation of bodies in the digital environment, focusing on the relationship between body weight and eating habits. These diverse realms of interest were once again converging.

Regarding food activism, I researched 3D printing, driven by my interest in integrating digital technologies. In the recent past, when the fervor around this field had slightly waned, I observed the application of 3D printing technologies in food production. This led to a specific project where I examined how 3D printing technologies, often embraced by chefs in high-end culinary establishments, could be interpreted as an innovation regarding the aesthetic presentation of dishes and meals. During this analysis, I realized there was a growing interest in the discourse surrounding the 3D printing of food, particularly in relation to reducing food waste and seeking sustainable food alternatives. These alternatives included algae or insects, whose culinary acceptance was facilitated by applying 3D printing technology. As a result, I produced writings that addressed how the imagery around these products and the way they were presented positioned them as alternatives to foods contributing to environmental devastation and climate change. Undeniably, the degradation of natural landscapes and the resulting impacts

exacerbate the global devastation observed, both in terms of the natural ecosystem and climate shifts.

In this context, the heart of food activism resides within this sphere. I draw particular attention to how the emergence of digital technology and its subsequent application aim to address environmental degradation and explore alternatives that promote food security in areas affected by this issue. It must be acknowledged that I have not delved deeply into this topic but instead conducted a preliminary analysis. My collaboration in editing the book with Zena Feldman, titled "*Digital Food Cultures*", provided a space for contributions that explore various food activism initiatives.

Lupton, we will revisit some questions related to what you've mentioned, and we may also request some examples. However, the first thing I would like to inquire about regarding the study of digital sociology is the advancements these studies have brought to contemporary theory, and what are the primary challenges it faces today? For instance, how does it grapple with ethical concerns, the utilization of algorithms, new methodologies, and social relationships? Therefore, in your view, what are the key challenges and contributions that digital sociology has also brought to social theory?

I mentioned that in my previous work, I extensively employed "codeine theory," which significantly heightened my interest in the material dimension of existence. As utilized in its theoretical approaches, the emblematic metaphor of the "panopticon" highlighted the intrinsic material dimensions of the asylum and the prison system. I am not suggesting that the theory of coding already encompassed a discussion imbued with place, space, and objects. However, I focused more intensely on these dimensions in a context I refer to as "more-than-human." While some employ the term "post-human," I prefer the expression "more-than-human." Consequently, in my recent writings, which pertain not only to food but also to digital devices and media, I strive to comprehend what I designate as "more-than-digital" dimensions in people's lives. In this manner, whenever individuals interact with digital devices or software, these interactions occur within a context of area and space about other people, living beings, and objects in this realm that are not of a digital nature. Human bodies invariably are part of environments that transcend the digital. I believe that, at times, in the field of digital sociology, one can fall into the trap of excessive concentration on the digital aspect, neglecting that digital

technologies are always used within a context of place and space and are not necessarily confined to the online domain.

Let us take as an example, my research involving individuals who monitor their cycling activities through digital devices, such as smartwatches or apps on their mobile devices, as well as bicycle computers attached to their bikes. In this scenario, while moving through different places and spaces on their bicycles, the bicycle, as an object itself, does not possess a digital nature. However, through the use of cycle computers or apps that record the bike's movements in space and place, such as the distance covered, cyclists digitize their experiences. It's important to highlight that these movements occur within the context of places and spaces involving interaction with other cyclists, pedestrians, and motor vehicles on the roads. Thus, the constant movement through space and place during the bike ride generates digital data. Furthermore, this dynamic includes interactions with other living beings, such as birds and dogs, that may cross the cyclist's path and must be avoided. Likewise, the occasional presence of air pollution constitutes an additional variable. Therefore, tracking bike activities is characterized by a considerably broader dimension than the mere digital aspect. However, this example is just one among many. The concept can be applied to any form of using digital devices and media.

I frequently employ materialist feminism, referencing authors such as, Karen Barad, Rosie Bray and Dotty Donna Haraway, and Jane Bennett's work, particularly in her book "The Power". These four theorists play a fundamental role in my approach, and it is notable that I consistently draw on the contributions of their works. However, it is imperative to recognize that these theorists come from a white racial origin and enjoy privileges within the context of the Global North, much like myself. A critical point raised about them is the potential neglect of the millennia of wisdom and knowledge present in cultures which indigenous peoples possess about the world. In Australia, we hold our indigenous peoples' most extended continuous culture, specifically the Australian Aboriginal people. The recognition and incorporation of the knowledge held by these communities are crucial in recent works. Therefore, I have delved deeply into the reading of works that contain indigenous knowledge, encompassing theoretical perspectives that extend beyond the borders of Australia, whenever linguistic barriers did not limit me. Regrettably, my language proficiency is only the English, constraining my understanding of works written in other languages. However, it is undeniable that the field of social theory presents a predominance of colonial origin to the detriment of representing theoretical perspectives originating from indigenous cultures.

All of us should devote more attention to this perspective, as there is much to learn from the knowledge held by indigenous communities. Within the scope of my work, I am committed to integrating these theoretical approaches alongside empirical research. I am also interested in employing innovative and creative methods to develop studies. Recently, I have been exploring different techniques, such as creative writing, artistic expression, and the creation of zines. These distinct analytical methods allow for examining how individuals interact with the digital environment and, more significantly, with the world beyond human spheres. This realm of exploration has ignited great enthusiasm within me, particularly concerning exhibitions. Currently, I am in the process of curating two exhibitions aimed at the general public. My approach involves utilizing artistic creation as a medium, focusing on museum exhibitions. This strategy represents a new paradigm for research, translation, and audience engagement beyond the academic context. The expectations for both productions are highly positive, with one of them titled "The More than Human Wellbeing Exhibition". In this showcase, I present the outcomes of recent research that have led to the creation of artistic works and the production of a film to be screened.

One of the projects to which I have dedicated my efforts is a video documentary, the process of which has provided me with substantial learning. Indeed, I am particularly excited about this documentary, as it allows me to avoid the monotony of routines. I am inclined to experiment with new approaches, and the second exhibition in which I am involved is linked to a doctoral advisor, a sociologist, and an artist. Our investigation is centered around the peculiarity of service robots, resulting in the exhibition "*Living with Animal Robots*". The theme addresses animal-shaped robotic devices employed in care contexts – such as the white seals used in nursing homes for the elderly or people with dementia, a practice established for over two decades – and in situations of entertainment and companionship, like robotic dogs. Within the framework of this exhibition, a variety of animal robots will be showcased, accompanied by the contributions of artists in creating artwork. Furthermore, we will conduct applied research that facilitates people's interaction with these animal robots, fostering discussions about the sensations and relationships they establish with such devices. With projects of this nature, I am deeply engaged at the present moment.

This content is also linked to my upcoming book titled "The internet of Animals", which will be released in 2023. Therefore, this is the activity to which I am currently dedicated. Regarding the digital health of human beings, it is evident that they constitute the epicenter of considerations related to digital health. However, delving deeper into the analysis of human

digital health, an emerging perspective encompasses the well-being of individuals and the planet. I am convinced that digital health will contain much more than the care and well-being of the human species; it also includes the care and well-being of other forms of life, the ecosystem, and the environment.

In the context of my book, "The internet of Animals", the chosen subtitle is "Human Animal Relationships in the Digital Age". As a result, my research addresses animal robots and extends to the field of intelligent agriculture, where livestock monitoring, for example, is carried out using drones, wearable devices, and advanced detection technologies. I closely observe how companion animals, such as dogs and cats, are increasingly under surveillance through apps and wearable devices. In this way, a convergence emerges between the digitization and monitoring methods employed for children and those used for pet animals. My focus extends to the realm of gaming, encompassing not only animals present in entertainment apps but also those integrated into console games. This is the perspective that I outline in my book. Therefore, the exhibition centered around animal robots is a direct manifestation of the themes addressed in the work I am about to launch.

Your research and book, "The internet of Animals", are incredible! I didn't know you were writing this book, and I'm not sure if Maycon was aware, but it's fantastic! As you mentioned, I have many comments about how digital sociology can bring new ways of conducting public sociology more meaningfully through art exhibitions and how we can present online the research we have been working on social networks, etc. So, I don't want to take up too much of your time, so I'll focus on the topic of digital food cultures. Therefore, what issues or research agendas, do you believe are currently the most critical and urgent in digital food studies?

Let us resume the discussion of the book entitled "The Internet of Animals," as the field of intelligent agriculture maintains a clear connection with the production of food derived from animals intended for consumption. Consequently, within agricultural circles, there is a growing emphasis on the adoption of intelligent technologies for livestock monitoring. In this context, it gives rise to the need not only for digital sociology but also for digital ethics. In other words, the central theme underlying my book is the objectification of animals. Through this work, I argued that the more we proceed with digitization and data generation, whether for food

production or other purposes, the more we instrumentalize our relationship with animals. Notably, the human perspective still privileges the "human," relegating everything related to animal beings to a stigma. The differentiation and segregation of humans from other animals, including in our language, create an environment in which digitization and depersonalization of animals, particularly in food production, promote an increasingly pronounced distance between us and these beings. Consequently, physical interactions and direct contact with these animals are reduced.

An example of this is the digitized milking systems, in which there is often limited human interaction with cows, as these animals are integrated into automated milking systems, eliminating human touch. Although these practices undoubtedly raise ethical considerations regarding the exploitation of cows for milk production, it is observed that traditional milking maintains an embodied and often significant relationship between farmers and their animals. As digitization intensifies and robots take over these tasks, the connection between humans and animals weakens. Often, these methods of digitized monitoring, although identified as focused on farm productivity, primarily prioritize the economic profitability of the producer rather than the well-being of the animal itself. Another intriguing aspect is how farmers frequently use social media to portray sunny images of happy animals on their properties. However, these images completely omit the underlying issues related to the fate of these animals when directed for slaughter. These seemingly content animals are slaughtered for human consumption or economic profit.

I have presented and discussed various thought-provoking issues in this book. Like many others, I have observed how animals are used for therapeutic purposes. On social media, it is common to witness individuals resorting to endearing images of pets when feeling somewhat disheartened. For instance, there are the so-called "Pet Zoos." Although I am uncertain whether such a practice occurs in Brazil, Australia, at university institutions, or at community fairs, pets and farm animals are made available for children and students to interact with and fondle, aiming to foster well-being. This parallels the notion of bringing kittens to universities to alleviate students' stress during examination periods. However, it is imperative to consider that this approach can also be perceived as objectifying animals, reducing them to mere therapeutic instruments for humans.

Another aspect addressed in my book is animal activism. A notable example is the PETA[6] movement, which combats animal cruelty and frequently centers on animal welfare. A prominent topic is raising chickens on farms, with considerations regarding the organization of egg or meat production. PETA adeptly employs digital media strategies, oscillating between showcasing content of happy and adorable animals and presenting animals subjected to terrible tortures. The organization has achieved success by leveraging the digital medium for activist purposes. Thus, digital media experts working in nutrition should examine how this approach has proven effective. Nevertheless, it is vital to acknowledge the ethical dilemmas involved, considering the divergences that may arise concerning the rights of indigenous communities to uphold their traditional hunting activities. Frequently, animal advocacy groups criticize and condemn this practice. Indigenous communities may persuasively argue in favor of their ways of life and traditions.

Ethical considerations warrant discussion both within the realm of digital food culture studies and within research institutions. I address this theme in the book "The Internet of Animals." It is evident that social media still significantly emphasize aspects such as bodies, dimensions, and physical conformations. There is a noticeable rise in activism for body positivity, encompassing the acceptance of various body shapes, including those categorized as "plus-size." However, the persistent use of digital media platforms, such as Instagram, to represent certain archetypes of bodies deemed more attractive continues. The ongoing use of social media, exemplified by Twitter, promotes extreme practices related to eating disorders, often utilizing specific hashtags that gather individuals engaged in such behavior. This aspect is particularly intriguing, as these individuals are involved in digital cultures due to their struggle against life-threateningly thin eating disorders. It's worth noting that they receive extensive support and engagement through social media, especially on platforms like Twitter, which do not tend to exercise as stringent control over such discourse as observed on other social networks, such as Instagram. It's relevant to ponder the future of Twitter, given its recent acquisition by Elon Musk.

In any case, a complex narrative underlies this situation. On the one hand, individuals grappling with eating disorders often find support and assistance within these communities. In this regard, I highlight the presence of an ethically relevant inquiry. Furthermore, specific patterns of dietary practices are promoted more prominently than others. There is a movement

[6] Pessoas para o Tratamento Ético dos Animais (PETA)

towards clean eating, the paleo diet, and other nutritional approaches and food trends that have gained considerable momentum through social media platforms. Additionally, I consider TikTok a platform of significant interest, although it still lacks in-depth investigation. Individuals interested in the dynamics of digital food cultures tend to dedicate a substantial portion of their time to TikTok, especially the younger demographic. I observe that a culinary discourse flourishes within this demographic—a dialogue about cuisine, to put it more accurately. This space presents a wide array of food-related content. However, I acknowledge the plausible existence of harmful content related to dietary practices. While I have not conducted specific research on the subject, I am aware of the presence of culinary advice and short videos instructing in preparing healthy foods—content that has proven beneficial to many young individuals. In light of this, I emphasize the need for those interested in digital food cultures to remain vigilant regarding the content disseminated on these platforms.

There are several pertinent issues concerning food activism within the context of digital activism. Specifically, it is feasible to formulate a concept that addresses the characterization of this type of activism, the engagement of individuals in it, and the distinctions between digital activism and traditional activism, such as that conducted on the streets and in social movements. Could you provide some information on these topics?

Once again, emerging digital platforms have been gaining popularity, which warrants the attention of activists who need to harness them for their benefit. TikTok may be a future trend until another platform arises.

However, it is noteworthy that young individuals are often the primary drivers of activism, whether environmental, food-related, or of any nature. It is observed that issues like climate change, for instance, have been the focus of numerous movements cleverly led by the youth through social media. Therefore, I believe TikTok can effectively serve as an engagement medium for those wishing to partake in such activities. Another positive aspect of TikTok is its user-friendly interface for creating original content. Crafting a personal "TikTok" is considerably more straightforward for the youth than producing more elaborate visuals, such as those found on Instagram and YouTube. YouTube has proven to be a valuable tool, and although I have previously mentioned this fact, it is essential to underscore that the platform has been highly useful in reaching a broad audience. The youth also extensively employ

YouTube to learn various tasks, from repairs to cooking, rendering it a popular platform in the culinary realm.

Beyond the conventional use by food activists, there are additional opportunities to amplify the popularity and use of YouTube. I analyzed culinary-related videos on the platform, considering both those exploring more "exotic" culinary cultures and those focused on healthy eating and physical activity. Thus, maintaining interest in diverse content is crucial, given the multifaceted nature of YouTube. In this context, it is worth highlighting the organizations above, such as PETA and the anti-animal cruelty movement, which have sparked substantial debates across social media platforms.

How would it be possible to outline the definitions of food and digital food activism? We want to gain insight into your perspective on your work titled "Digital Food Cultures." Is it accurate to state that most of the book is centered around examples from Europe, the United States, Australia, and New Zealand? In this context, what is your opinion regarding the contributions of this book to understanding digital food cultures on a global scale? Additionally, what is your viewpoint on expanding these investigations to other regions where cultural and socioeconomic realities differ from those presented in the book, as is the case in the African continent and Latin America?

Indeed, your observation is entirely accurate. The book's focus was established from the perspective of English-speaking countries in the northern hemisphere. This inclination is partly due to the origins of the two symposia I organized in collaboration with Zena Feldman. One of these symposia took place in Australia under my coordination, while the other was held in London and organized by Zena Feldman. The call for paper submissions was targeted, but it is evident that geographical accessibility is a barrier for many individuals, particularly when traveling to Australia due to its distant location from various parts of the globe, including the southern and southeastern hemispheres.

Although the scope of the book is global, it is undeniable that there are significant opportunities to give voice to perspectives from the southern hemisphere. The approach in the book is globally oriented, yet it acknowledges the need for a more robust representation, especially when considering voices from the southern hemisphere. My position is rooted in the context of the Global North, where I conduct my research, primarily in Australia. Therefore, this dynamic results in the participation of individuals from various ethnic and racial

backgrounds. In working recruitment processes, they are not limited solely to groups of Anglo-Celtic European descent. This trend is consistently observed in Australia, aligning with my research setting. My role does not resemble that of an anthropologist who explores diverse cultures. In reality, I am a sociologist focusing on Australian culture and society. However, it is undeniable that such an approach needs to be implemented. Efforts in this direction must be intensified. Establishing more effective networks between digital food activists and researchers is essential. I acknowledge that, given my lack of experience in that specific context or language, I am not in a position to offer concrete suggestions for such an endeavor, but it is indisputable that this process needs to occur. (Could you remind me of the first part of the question?).

The initial part of the question was how do you define digital food activism?

Digital? How would I define digital food activism? I would state that digital food activism encompasses initiatives that have found space through digital communication devices and platforms. However, it is essential to highlight that, when examining this sphere, it is inevitable to predominantly observe the digital dimension, given that such expressions often occur within these domains. Locations ranging from applications to social media primarily utilize basic visual interfaces. I want to emphasize that research through Google, at least in the northern hemisphere – I cannot provide insight into the Global South – represents a widely used simple tool for many people to gather information and be directed to websites. This brings me back to a more traditional style of research tools, which remains in high demand. Therefore, the dynamics are not limited solely to innovative emerging technologies or robots. My studies have indicated that people employ a variety of digital and technological devices, both modern and more traditional.

I had the privilege of being part of the global health commission, an opportunity that allowed me to interact with various researchers from Africa. One insight I gained from participating in the mentioned commission is the focus on promoting health-related technologies for youth, particularly in digital technology. However, it is essential to recognize that approximately half of the world's population still lacks access to the Internet. In this context, when considering solely how people can engage with digital devices through the Internet, there is a risk of completely overlooking the lack of access. We are effectively dealing

with a substantial portion of the Earth's population. Therefore, this is something we always need to be mindful of.

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