

## The Life of the Data

Currently data are being gathered in a variety of distinct social media silos about an immense number of facets of human behavior including (but most certainly not limited to): eating habits, reading habits, social activities, interests in (i) film, (ii) news, (iii) any and all web media, attendance of events, locations visited or frequented, opinions, feelings, work experience, professional associations, websites visited/used, facial recognition profiles, personal and professional networks, education, musical taste, political affiliations, and leisure activities - many of them representations of dynamic and current states or actions (as opposed to static and outdated summary statements). The integration of social media widgets on most websites affords the aggregation of web-related behaviors into the respective invoked social media application event. "Liking" a web resource or element of a resource, or posting or sharing it - for example - captures geographical information, interaction duration, time information and feelings about said resource. This information creates a rich individual profile that sites such as Facebook and Google use to target advertising towards individuals, or to tailor the web "experience". The prospect for leveraging this data for other beneficial personalized services is undoubtable. It is therefore foreseeable that within the next ten years users may assert a licensing right to this personal information that will allow access from third parties to mine and make assertions for other purposes within, for example, higher education. From this application the data may therefore be given new life.

This aggregated data about any and all facets of human activity may be used to inform academic underperformers in a university setting by influencing what has been referred to in educational sociology as "habitus" ("one's view of the world and place in it") and "social capital" ("linguistic and cultural competence and broad knowledge of culture that belongs to members of the upper classes and is found much less frequently among lower classes") that have been found to contribute to educational success in a traditional pedagogical environment.<sup>1</sup> Susan Dumais declares that, "To acquire social capital, a student must have the ability to receive and internalize it. Although schools require that students have this ability, they do not provide it for them; rather, the acquisition of cultural capital and consequent access to academic rewards depend on the cultural capital passed down by the family." Brokering the seemingly mundane data about social behaviors, tastes and activities will provide the university with an opportunity to play a part in the provision and development of these essential facets of success. These data may be leveraged by peers outside of networks with abundances of social capital and become tools of socialization, informing and contributing to the growth of habitus and social capital for underperforming individuals.

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<sup>1</sup> Susan A. Dumais, "Cultural Capital, Gender, and School Success: The Role of Habitus," *Sociology of Education* 75, no. 1 (2002): 44-68.