

Begin with a narrative:

- 1 In the late 1990s, a student works in her high school library, searching for information on E. E. Cummings. She types in the poet's name and waits, and suddenly a buzzer at the front desk rings, alerting the teacher and staff that a student is looking for "inappropriate" material. The student's screen flashes a red command to report to the front desk, and the buzzer continues to blare so everyone can see her walk of shame. The buzzer -- a customized add-on to the off-the-shelf filter -- speaks on behalf of someone's decision that "cumplings" is a plural noun, not the name of a New England poet. After explaining herself, the chagrined student abandons that search and begins another one, this time for Emily Dickinson. And then imagine Emily Dickinson blushing in her grave when the buzzer rings again at the sound of her name.

[read the rest of this for a strategy you can use

<https://www.commonsense.org/education/privacy/blog/digital-redlining-access-privacy>

- 2 Early in October, in the midst of discussing Jean Anyon's "The Hidden Curriculum of Work," my community college professor asked what college we would go to if money were no object. At first, no one could even name any schools other than a handful of large public universities (I'm in Michigan) and then came a sprinkling of names like Harvard, Phoenix, the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, and Full Sail. We were all sort of embarrassed that we didn't really know many schools and that we had no idea what made them different. Eventually, the discussion connected this to Anyon's idea that education is a tool for creating and maintaining class boundaries. Since our class discussion, I see class boundaries everywhere, and it enrages me.
- 3 I'm 18 years old, and part of a semester-long project in my writing class that keeps asking about things like class, class consciousness, and education. No doubt that lots of this is new to me in the sense that I have names for things that have struck me as weird or unfair, but mostly I see how my school's Guided Pathways program is meant to keep me in my class by narrowing the way I think of education (as job training, not critical thinking). This seems unfair, and it is for some people, but for me, it's realistic because I live on my own, pay my own tuition, and live on the edge of financial catastrophe all the time. As far as I'm concerned, the argument for critical education is an argument that pretends students have income, health care, transportation, and all the rest. I don't have those, and most of my friends here at a community college don't either. But I see the assumption that we do as part of the things that are used to judge me all the time.
- 4 Ask me why I haven't been able to read Jimmy Carter's interview in *Playboy*. Ask me why my professors give my work to a company called Turnitin so they can use it to make money from my work. Ask me why . . . about a lot of things, and I'll ask *you* why the students at Michigan State and the University of Michigan don't have the same limitations. Maybe then we can talk about the difference between education as job training and education as learning to do critical thinking. In the meantime, I'm going to

talk about how almost *all* schools pay lip service to “diversity,” but it’s a kind of selective diversity that leaves out working-class students.

- 5 Surveillance is as natural to me as sunlight, and I need some sort of electronic sunscreen to protect me from its rays and from the digital doppelganger it creates, an electronic identity that isn’t the same as the sloppy, messy, human that I am. Here are just a few of the ways I’m watched:
 - a. Maxient
 - b. Third party additions to Canvas
 - c. Credit ratings based on my Facebook
 - d. The profile that Google has built from my past searches
 - e. The tracking that keeps me on “Guided Pathways”

Does it matter? Well, here are thumbnail sketches of how these work . . . and why I’m not always so happy about being tracked.