A Vegan Culture through Social Media: An Autoethnographic Study
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Project Description: This poster presentation will preview the results of an autoethnographic study examining vegan culture in Thailand. The RawTill4 Bike Fest was recently held in Chiang Mai, Thailand; the conference focused on promoting a vegan diet rich in fruits, vegetables and carbohydrates along with daily physical activity—primarily cycling. Two very popular public figures and vegan activists, Harley Johntsone and Leanne Ratcliffe are the keynotes of this conference experience. This unique environment provides hundreds of opportunities for members of the vegan community, cyclists, and/or social media content producers who have established names for themselves on platforms such as YouTube and Instagram, to network and build lasting relationships. Through my participation I had the opportunity to apply knowledge gained through recent coursework in strategic social media and analyze my intercultural experience through digital storytelling. Additionally, there was value in networking with international leaders who presently monetize their use of social media as a means of income, and as a result of this experience I’ve come away enhanced intercultural and technologically-mediated communication skills that improve the creation, delivery, and reception of the vegan message. By having intentional conversations and engaging in intercultural discovery with other vegan activists, I’ve been able to learn about successful approaches of intercultural and online storytelling used by others. Presenting this project at the Digital Projects Showcase hosted by the Digital Humanities Initiative will allow me to share the details of my research experience with student peers, faculty, and other members of the UNF community.