

Research Agenda: Erin Dietel-McLaughlin

My research interests explore the intersections between technology, literacy, and democracy. My dissertation explores the extent to which composing practices common to Web 2.0 environments might constitute what Gerard Hauser (1999) terms "vernacular rhetoric," or common modes of communication that may resist or challenge more institutionalized forms of discourse, and the extent to which these rhetorics might reinvigorate the public sphere. The project, *Remediating Democracy: The Vernacular Rhetorics of Web 2.0*, takes the popular video-sharing site, YouTube, as its primary case study and examines several instances of vernacular composing practices. Specifically, I discuss "irreverence" as a rhetorical trope; remix and collection as composition strategies; the remediated genre of *epideictic* rhetoric; and what these discussions reveal in terms of rhetorical practice, democracy, and the specific site of the composition classroom. I have already published one article based on this work, and I recently received the Charles E. Shanklin Award for Research Excellence for a portion of this research. I plan to develop this project into a book after completing my Ph.D. and feel that it may be a good fit for the New Dimensions in Computers & Composition series at Hampton Press or the University of Pittsburgh Press Series in Composition, Literacy, and Culture.

In addition to my interests in new media literacies, much of my research engages women's issues. This research is closely linked to my involvement with community literacy projects, such as the Digital Mirror Camp for Girls, an annual, 4-day camp I have co-directed for the past three years at Bowling Green State University. This camp is designed to offer girls in grades 6-8 an opportunity to develop technoliteracies that are often gendered as masculine. My involvement with the Digital Mirror has led to several conference presentations, as well as a co-authored book chapter that is forthcoming. In addition to my work with the Digital Mirror, I was recently involved with a service-learning project with *Adelante*, an organization serving Latino/a communities. As part of my involvement with this project, I developed a literature review that explored the potential of social networking sites as a means for disseminating sexual health programming to young women. I plan to continue my involvement with community literacy projects that explore these connections between technology and gender, as I welcome opportunities to put theory into practice.

To further bring these two research threads together, I am developing an annotated bibliography that weaves literature on women's vernacular rhetorics with literature on women's relationships with technology. I plan to use this project as a starting point for researching and writing about the ways in which women use Web technologies to facilitate identity construction, negotiate relationships, express citizenship, and cultivate communities. I also plan to extend some of the other themes uncovered in my dissertation to engage gender specifically, such as the ways in which women use new media parody as a mode of argumentation.

Finally, my research interests are deeply connected to my pedagogy, and I always seek opportunities to link my scholarship to classroom praxis. My research interests are evident in both my commitment to working with both print-based and new media texts, as well as my efforts to foster a more democratic, multivocal, feminist classroom environment in which student voices are valued and student-produced texts are privileged. In short, I strive to engage in research that addresses issues relevant to the student populations I proudly serve, particularly those who may feel most disenfranchised by the academy, technology, and traditional modes of discourse.