



Teaching in the Global Village: Towards a Pedagogy of Participatory Media

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Abstract

At the dawn of a digital era, numerous challenges face contemporary education. Of particular concern is the striking, if not widening, disconnect between student literacy experiences inside and outside of the classroom. Our social world has rapidly transformed amidst significant technological advances. The penetration of information and communication technologies around the world has produced transformative effects in all dimensions of society, including how we interact, communicate, learn, create, produce and consume. The recent shift to ubiquitous digital-media consumption has raised serious concerns about teaching and learning, transforming our everyday experiences with the media. Concurrently, media power is more concentrated than ever before, yet, everyday citizens now have increased access to the skills and resources to produce and distribute their own media. In response to such major shifts in social and learning environments, this study suggests a more postmodern and critical approach to media education.

By engaging youth in participatory media projects in Madrid, Spain, the current research evaluates the changing relations between youth, media, and education. Specifically, this paper investigates how youth between 15-18 construct their understanding of literacy today in the context of digital media proliferation. Further, it attempts to demonstrate the limits and possibilities of participatory media pedagogy among youth. The author suggests that a participatory media pedagogy facilitates social change through increased peer-to-peer learning, critical literacy, and an increased conception of empowered citizenship, making education more responsive to the challenges of a democratic, global, and multicultural society. In the face of rapid social and technological change, the author maintains the development of a participatory media pedagogy will meet the interrelated goals of 21st century learning and civic engagement. While little research exists today on youth media production, this study will contribute to future research and practice in relation to media and literacy education.