CALL FOR PAPERS

Digital literacy practices have often been celebrated as means of transcending the constraints of the physical world through the production of new social spaces, though Mills and Comber (2013) write that “place matters to literacy because the meanings of our language and actions are always materially and socially placed in the world” (p. 1). In this special issue, we consider how the U.S. South offers opportunities to examine the links between space, place, justice, and the role of digital literacies in creating possibilities for our individual and collective futures (Avila & Zacher Pandya, 2013; Pleasants & Salter, 2014). We find Soja’s (2010) trialectic of the social, the spatial, and the historical to provide a helpful heuristic in examining the ways that the materiality of place is an important anchor to determining the “so what” of work that involves digital media and literacies.

In this Special Issue of the journal E-Learning and Digital Media (www.wwwords.co.uk/ELEA), the editors encourage manuscripts that consider how the U.S. South is a particularly generative context for exploring how social, cultural, historical and political literacies are brought to bear on a range of places that traverse the urban, rural and suburban, with emphasis placed on the ways digital technology is used to create identities and do work within social and material worlds. This focus on the South foregrounds the ways that place matters within our understanding of ourselves and the world around us. As Robinson (2013) writes, “The South is forever rural, forever 1964, sometimes forever slavery, which obscures the way it both is and is not those things. To say that the South ain’t changed and is all country is not true. But then neither is saying it has changed and is new and shiny and cosmopolitan.” In our social and spatial imaginaries (Appadurai, 1996), the South is often constructed as a monolith; yet, in actuality, notions of what the South is/isn’t, was/will be are continually contested, negotiated, reified, and renegotiated. Considering the heterogeneity of the South across intersections of differences (including, but not limited to race, class, gender, sexuality, ability and language), we argue that studies of digital literacies in the South have great potential for informing how the investigations of other regions within and outside of the U.S. context can be conducted in regard to social, spatial, and historical considerations.

This special issue encourages manuscripts that consider the following questions:

• How do particular digital literacy practices challenge or complicate monolithic or binary notions of place, identity, and issues relevant within the U.S. South?

• How are representations of the South interrogated, contested, reinforced, or reified through the digital literacy practices of youth and adults?
• In what ways do digital spaces and tools allow individuals to understand, transgress, and/or reimagine the material and historical realities of Southern physical places and/or social imaginaries?

• How do place-based struggles, tensions, and issues in the South impact teaching and learning with digital tools and spaces? How or to what extent do the affordances of technology (digital and/or multimodal means of representations of learning) support students’ abilities to speak to and interrogate their own social/cultural, spatial, and historical contexts?

• How does an awareness of context-specific norms of Southern places, mobilities, and/or boundaries help students and teachers practice critical perspectives (e.g., the ability to express and critique what is permitted and not permitted, what is possible and not possible) for the purposes of social/spatial justice and ethical action?

SUBMISSIONS

All contributions should be original and should not be under consideration elsewhere. Authors should be aware that they are writing for an international audience and should use appropriate language. Manuscripts should not exceed 8000 words. For further information and authors’ guidelines please see: www.wwwords.co.uk/elea/howtocontribute.asp

All papers will be peer-reviewed, and evaluated according to their significance, originality, content, style, clarity and relevance to the journal. Please submit your initial abstract (300-400 words) by email to the Guest Editors.

GUEST EDITORS

Heather Pleasants, University of Alabama (heather.pleasants@ua.edu)
Ryan Rish, Kennesaw State University (rrish1@kennesaw.edu)

IMPORTANT DATES

Deadline for abstracts to guest editors: November 15, 2014
Deadline for submissions/full papers: February 15, 2015
Deadline for feedback from reviewers: March 30, 2015
Final deadline for amended papers: April 30, 2015
Publication date: June 1, 2015

REFERENCES


