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In recent decades, ongoing technological advances have opened up a variety of new and unique avenues for engaging in the practices of everyday life. These technological advances are perhaps most visible in the screen-based digital media that are almost seamlessly incorporated into our homes, classrooms, and even our daily commutes. Such screen-based technologies have given rise to unprecedented changes in how people communicate and collaborate, organize social movements, and access and share information across disparate times and spaces. As these digital media and new information and communication technologies become increasingly ubiquitous in our daily life practices, it behooves us to closely examine both the pitfalls and possibilities that such technologies afford. In "Handbook of Research on the Societal Impact of Digital Media", editors Barbara Guzzetti and Mellinee Lesley—both accomplished researchers in the arena of technology, identity, and learning— undertake a portion of this considerable task
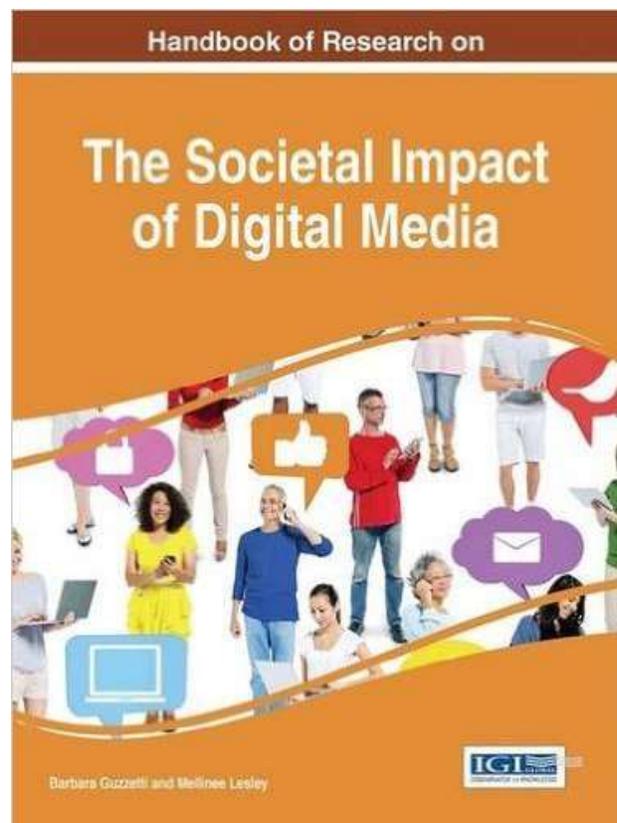
by bringing together a collection from top-notch scholars and educators who investigate the influence of digital media in the domains of research, education, and social and civic engagement.

The handbook is organized around three broad focal areas: how digital media afford opportunities for creating content and interacting with Web 2.0-based technologies; issues of access and diversity of use; and the evolving nature of digital media in relation to social and political factors that shape their adoption and use in a global society. The handbook follows a format designed to meet the needs of a broad audience of both novices and experts who are interested in the intersection of digital media and disciplinary foci such as education, critical media literacy, play-based learning, human-computer interaction, as well as communication and gender studies. The utility of the handbook is enhanced by a uniform structure and reader-friendly features in each chapter. Novices to a particular area will benefit from the comprehensive overview and summary of relevant research, definitions of key concepts, and suggestions for further reading that are standard in each chapter. Those with more expertise in a particular domain may appreciate how each chapter also provides nuanced and critical examinations of areas of need, suggestions for future directions in research, and discussion of implications for education, policy, and a unique focus on implications for civic and social engagement in each topic domain.

The first section of the book provides readers with a relatively well-rounded perspective on the many impacts digital media have had on the ways people interact both with each other and with information. Within the fields of literacy and media studies, some researchers have questioned how the communicative shifts stemming from the advent of digital media and computer-mediated communication compare to those that took place with the development of other technologies such as the telephone, television,

or the printing press. Collectively, the chapters in this section offer a careful interrogation of the ways in which digital technologies have opened up new possibilities for multimodal means of communication, access to interest-driven forms of participation and learning, and engaging critically and actively with media content for both learning and instruction.

While some readers may view the authors' claims about the "irrevocable" and "seismic" nature of changes to contemporary landscapes of communication with skepticism, the first section is dedicated to providing compelling evidence of such shifts. Each chapter explores distinct ways in which digital media are "reorganizing and managing our actual and metaphorical households and villages" (Alvermann, Beach & Boggs, p. 2) as we move from creating and curating digital content to inhabiting digital spaces. However, even the notion of space can present a challenge for such research, as digital media are increasingly comprised of "an unstable constellation of ever-changing platforms" (Alvermann, Beach & Boggs, p. 4). As the authors point out, this instability and assemblage requires a move beyond grand narratives that uncritically couple technological advances with social and economic progress to more nuanced perspectives that can account for the messiness of digital media's everyday impact on society.

A common thread that carries across section one is the many different possibilities that digital media offer for "potentiating connection" (Alvermann, Beach & Boggs, p. 3) a concept that refers to facilitating connections between people, places, information, objects, and ideas that may be geographically, temporally, or even ideologically distant. For example, in some chapters, the focus is on potentiating communicative connections and the ways in which digital media facilitate "the increasingly fluid and borderless movement of people, ideas, information, and capital" (Bean, p. 46). A related focus emphasizes digital media in school spaces and the potential such media

offer to connect teachers and students with tools and techniques for learning the sort of digital competencies and literacies that are desirable in 21st century workplaces. For some authors, this notion of potentiating connection is tied to the economic forces in people's lives and the ways in which digital media may (or may not) be used to impact their "capabilities, agency, and freedom" (Boggs, p. 190). For others, the ability to potentiate connections between people, products, or other media is a commodity with economic value in and of itself. Thus, in their various ways, the authors in the first section of the handbook all take a critical and nuanced look at the connective capabilities of digital media and the various ways such connectivity facilitates new or improved ways of learning, sharing information, and accessing resources that might otherwise be unavailable.

Section Two of the Handbook extends the broad foci from the first section by honing in on a distinct type of digital media and its role in society. For example, featured technologies and spaces include video games and virtual worlds, apps, digital storytelling, e-textiles, fan communities, wikis, multimodal books, instant messaging, and texting software. Through in-depth explorations of unique digital media platforms, the authors provide concrete examples of the social, cultural, and creative practices in a range of participatory cultures that utilize these platforms. There are, however, some noteworthy gaps in the coverage of platforms in this section. For example, social media, music-sharing, and photo-sharing platforms are highly prominent in young people's digital lives, yet they are given little to no coverage in the handbook.

As someone who studies digital media and children's learning, I found the authors' approach to the "everyday creativity" (Jones, p. 389) of young people and the "larger landscape of productive practices made possible or enhanced by digital media" (Gee & Tran, p. 261) to be particularly compelling. Rather than simply celebrating the fact that

such digitally-enhanced practices exist—as is often done in this type of research—the authors present critical and nuanced accounts of the many different forms of creative production and participation that take place in their respective communities of practice. In addition, the authors describe how these communities allow youth to connect via their shared interests—in art, video games, civic engagement, e-textiles, digital storytelling— and take advantage of the DIY (do-it-yourself) ethos of teaching and learning associated with participatory culture and affinity spaces. Another persuasive aspect of section two is the emphasis on the importance of young people developing skill and facility with digital media as they engage in interest-driven, meaningful activities. This emphasis can be contrasted with what Beach & Castek refer to as a discourse of "hyperbolic 'boosterism'" that often characterizes policy decisions on the adoption of technology for schools and emphasizes the "ways in which technology itself will serve to enhance learning that focuses on use of an app or device isolated from activities in which they are employed" (p. 360). By way of contrast, Davis & Foley remind us that when young people engage in creative digital media practices, they are not merely learning decontextualized technology skills. Instead, "they are engaging in what others have called authentic learning experiences, which can have a transformative role for both the learner and the society that they aim to impact" (p. 400). Examples of the transformative potential of youth's engagement with digital media discussed in these chapters include questioning and disrupting dominant narratives, modifying or repurposing existing technologies, using technology "at the margins" and to do social good, and opening up new avenues of participation in STEM activities for traditionally marginalized populations, to name just a few. Along these lines, as Merchant points out, such "opportunities for creative and imaginative exploration are important, not only for our psychological wellbeing, but also

in providing opportunities to reflect upon or critique other aspects of our lives; these opportunities are an important and often undervalued part of learning" (p. 310).

A strength of this section is the acknowledgement—one that is often missing in schools—of the collaborative and remixed nature of cultural production. That is, when an individual engages in any creative semiotic activity (i.e., writing a term paper, creating a piece of digital fan art, modding a game), "it is neither a simple reproduction (as the myth of standards and transmission pedagogy would have us believe), nor is it simply creative (as the myths of individual originality and personal voice would have us believe)" (New London Group, 1996, p. 76). Instead, cultural production in these communities is participatory (open to all rather than confined to the province of experts), collaborative (often involves a group effort), and distributed (materials and knowledge come from a diversity of sources). In their work exploring young people's digital literacies, Lankshear and Knobel (2003) suggest that this approach to cultural production is part of an "ethos" that has developed around new media and online spaces. Understanding the nuances of these types of creative youth practices can be beneficial to both researchers and educators who seek to build bridges between youth's out-of-school activities and more formal learning environments.

That said, while some chapters allude to the democratizing potential that digital media might offer for schools and calls to "reconceptualize the role of such media in education," (Gee & Tran, p. 262), more explicit connections between the ethos of DIY communities and participatory affinity spaces and that of traditional classrooms would have strengthened some of the chapters (with the caveat that each classroom is so different that it is often difficult to make sweeping generalizations about how to best connect a particular classroom context with a particular affinity space). Nonetheless, Peppler and some of the other authors do offer some

suggestions to facilitate thinking around this sort of bridging work, to include providing educators and students with compelling examples of digital media projects (e.g., e-textile patterns, slam poetry or do-it-yourself news videos), developing pedagogical approaches that capitalize on the DIY, workshop, and maker mindset (e.g., collaborative, distributed, active, hands-on, interest-driven), and to provide clear connections to the constraints of traditional school settings (e.g., Common Core State Standards). Forging connections between the theoretical and practical roles that such media might play in more traditional learning environments is a way to help educators recognize the various skill sets and interests that students may bring with them to the classroom (e.g., web design, photo and video editing capabilities, creative writing, music production, etc.) and leverage these abilities and interests to support students' success in school-based activities. Approaches might include anything from integrating popular digital media into classroom assignments all the way to embracing a more collaborative ethos of creativity in the classroom.

The third section of the Handbook explores a set of critical issues in the domain of digital media and society. The possibilities of connecting via digital media is explored further, demonstrating the potential that digital media has to exacerbate and ameliorate existing social issues. In particular, since an estimated 95% of 12-17 year-olds are online, the probability of cyberbullying and concerns for internet safety are heightened (Madden, Lehnhart, Duggan, Cortesi & Glaser, 2013, cited in Kelly & Arnold). Several authors allude to a culture of "online incivility and harassment" (Kelly & Arnold, p. 545) that may amplify existing societal problems along the lines of gender, race, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status and question the impact that such hostile behavior may have on vulnerable populations' access to democratic participation in a digital society.

What makes this section stand apart from a great deal of research on digital access and the so-called digital divide is the authors' attention to broader structural issues that impact certain groups' access to technology as well as to situated and contextualized ways that vulnerable populations make use of the technology to which they have access (Kelly & Arnold, Dunkerly-Bean & Crompton). This juxtaposition of the macro (e.g., broader sociopolitical structures) and micro (e.g., local contexts) ranges from examinations of autocratic government policies that attempt to restrict access to information and the ways citizens use social media to "enhance accountability and transparency" in such regimes (Manzoor, p. 616), all the way to broader economic factors that impact immigrant families' access to mobile technologies and how such restricted access plays out along gender lines in individual households. The authors also move between the macro and micro in their examinations of the policies and curricular decisions surrounding "placed technologies," or digital media that are brought into a context to implement some sort of change, and tensions that arise in local contexts as a result of the placement of such technologies. Through this attention to both global and local contexts of use, the authors avoid reifying broader trends in technology-related practices while presenting a robustly contextualized perspective on individuals' digital media use.

Section three presents an interesting tension between the claim that that Internet access is a "matter of social justice" (Rubinstein-Avila & Sartori, p. 564) on the one hand, and the idea that an excess of attention to social media and connected issues clouds the real-life social inequities that underpin such issues. However, the authors do a convincing job of balancing the potential that digital media offer for both reproducing and challenging existing social inequities. After all, as Manzoor points out, "social change requires a lot of work," (p. 624) from acquiring funds, organizing action, all the way to garnering support from the public. Given the complexities of our contemporary social landscapes that are "big" (fluid, transnational, and geographically dispersed), and "small" (constantly connected and available at our fingertips), the chapters in this handbook present a realistically optimistic perspective on the ways that digital media—as learning tools, social organizers, avenues for crowdfunding, alternative presses, a means of connecting vulnerable populations to social support and resources, and more—may play a significant role in translating the potentiality for connection and reach into movement and action toward a more civil and equitable society.

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