

Michael Healy
Scholarship Plan

Playing with Data, Language, and Historiography

When I examine my current research and reflect upon my future research trajectory, I see three main threads emerging from my work: play as a classroom pedagogy; curriculum development and assessment in the undergraduate major in writing and rhetoric; and digital historiography and digital archives. I see these different threads as overlapping and related to my teaching and service.

Data, Technology, and Historiography

My dissertation, “Tracing *Technē*: Distributed Histories of Invention, Creativity, and Text-Technologies in Rhetoric and Composition Scholarship from the 1990s,” uses data drawn from a corpus of rhetoric and composition field journals from the 1990s to inform and critique disciplinary histories and historiographies. This research has led to acceptances to the 2020 and 2021 Conferences on College Composition and Communication and the 2020 Rhetoric Society of America Biennial Conference. I presented “Historiography, Hospitality, and Data,” a talk on using computational methods to examine and perform historiography, to the Rhetoric Society of America Florida State University Student chapter in May of 2020.

My dissertation is organized into the following five chapters. Chapter one explores the exigence of the project and highlights the difficulty of working with *technē*, especially in scholarship from the 1990s. This chapter defines key terms for the project and places this project within current conversations of a disciplinary turn to provide scale and scope for the dissertation. Chapter two works from contemporary theories and histories of *technē* and traces their historiographies, arguing that there are four dominant historiographic impulses for/from the 1990s: pedagogical, process, social-epistemic rhetoric, and other theoretical matters. Chapter three proposes data curation as a methodology and set of methods for working with large textual data sets in rhetoric and composition. This chapter argues that this methodology is well suited for historiographic inquiry and research through its ability to work with large sets of textual data, use computation for data analysis, and present findings through data visualization. Chapter four presents the results of using data curation on a corpus of scholarly journals from the 1990s, exploring results of data analysis and computation, highlighting textual features, and presenting data visualizations. Chapter five then situates the dissertation and data within the historiographies of *technē*, discussing and highlighting results and contextualizing findings. It starts crafting new historiographies of the 1990s utilizing data and visualizations as a starting place for new inquiry.

Chapters one and three of this project will eventually contribute to the development of a research tool for performing time-series searches of textual data and generating visualization for tracing of keywords within large data sets. This will allow researchers to perform searches that not only return results based on keywords, but to provide views of textual data to illustrate both time-based and topically arranged results. Alongside the tool, chapters four and five of the project provide the basis for an article that critiques historiographies of *technē* and the discipline of rhetoric and composition and explores how they inform current theories of *technē*.

Pedagogy and Play

I also have an interest in play within theory and pedagogy. I found a deep love for language, and how language could become manifest in materials and moments through my scenic route through my education. Play draws a bridge to the work being done already in rhetoric and composition, and especially within the computers and writing community, to gaming, gamification, and pedagogy. I presented on play and pedagogy with “A Symbiotic (and Pedagogical) Relationship: Forging an Alliance between Creative Nonfiction and Composition” at the 2017 Conference on College Composition and Communication and “The Efficacy of Play as an Organizational and Pedagogical Theory” at the 2017 South Atlantic Modern Language Association conference. I have also presented at FSU about play and invention in the writing center and in the composition classroom. I am also currently finalizing an article manuscript on play within the college composition classroom.

Undergraduate Curriculum

My third area of interest is in the undergraduate major in rhetoric and writing, especially in considering curriculum and assessment. This work has led to a co-authored chapter “Institutional Matters: The Localized Conditions of WPA Labor” that deals with, in part, the undergraduate major through the localized experiences of writing program administrators and graduate writing program administration education. This research interest has also been shaped by my time teaching within Florida State’s Editing, Writing, and Media major in the English department. At the 2019 Feminisms and Rhetorics Conference I presented “Student Activism, Assemblage, and the History of Rhetoric” on a panel that explored using assemblage theory in pedagogy, and my talk was focused on engaging students with their activism in the context of a course on rhetoric. I was also accepted to the 2020 Conference on College Composition and Communication for a proposal considering how data can be used in the teaching of advanced composition. I also see this work with the undergraduate major serving as an intersection for service, research and collaboration.