



## Participatory Composition: Video Culture, Writing, and Electracy

By Sarah J. Arroyo

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**Participatory Composition: Video Culture, Writing, and Electracy** By Sarah J. Arroyo

Like. Share. Comment. Subscribe. Embed. Upload. Check in. The commands of the modern online world relentlessly prompt participation and encourage collaboration, connecting people in ways not possible even five years ago. This connectedness no doubt influences college writing courses in both form and content, creating possibilities for investigating new forms of writing and student participation. In this innovative volume, Sarah J. Arroyo argues for a “participatory composition,” inspired by the culture of online video sharing and framed by theorist Gregory Ulmer’s concept of *electracy*.

Electracy, according to Ulmer, “is to digital media what literacy is to alphabetic writing.” Although electracy can be compared to digital literacy, it is not something shut on and off with the power buttons on computers or mobile devices. Rather, electracy encompasses the cultural, institutional, pedagogical, and ideological implications inherent in the transition from a culture of print literacy to a culture saturated with electronic media, regardless of the presence of actual machines.

Arroyo explores the apparatus of electracy in many of its manifestations while focusing on the participatory practices found in online video culture, particularly on YouTube. Chapters are devoted to questions of subjectivity, definition, authorship, and pedagogy. Utilizing theory and incorporating practical examples from YouTube, classrooms, and other social sites, Arroyo presents accessible and practical approaches for writing instruction. Additionally, she outlines the concept of participatory composition by highlighting how it manifests in online video culture, offers student examples of engagement with the concept, and advocates participatory approaches throughout the book.

Arroyo presents accessible and practical possibilities for teaching and learning that will benefit scholars of rhetoric and composition, media studies, and anyone interested in the cultural and instructional implications of the digital age.

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

“What is so amazing about Sarah Arroyo’s writing is that she ‘performs’ what she puts forth theoretically and pragmatically. Her work/play is a model for all of us, inasmuch as she participates with others in search of a pedagogy that can deliver what we have hoped for in the teaching of ‘writing.’ She points to a relatively new para-method of choric invention, provides a history based on three countertheses, and then points to a variety of new grounds to continue the teaching of literacy, but more so, the teaching of video and electracy. In *Participatory Composition*, Arroyo argues that the new pedagogy of the participatory is already present for not only faculty but also students. **This book needs to be studied by all in rhetoric and in composition!**”—Victor J. Vitanza, professor of English and rhetorics, director, RCID PhD program, Clemson University; and professor of rhetoric and philosophy at the European Graduate School, Switzerland

“In *Participatory Composition*, Sarah J. Arroyo offers an insightful consideration of video culture and its expanding role as the means by which we produce and participate in community. The book presents a refreshing engagement with Gregory Ulmer’s electracy, Victor Vitanza’s three countertheses, and the broader contemporary scholarship of digital rhetoric and poses important challenges for rhetoric and higher education in general as we engage digital literacy.”—Alex Reid, associate professor, University at Buffalo SUNY, and author of *The Two Virtuals: New Media and Composition*

#### About the Author

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Sarah Johnson Arroyo is associate professor of English at California State University Long Beach. She has published articles in *JAC*, *Composition Forum*, and *Kairos*.

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