

## Chapter 1 : Living and Learning With New Media | Derek's Blog

*Living and Learning with New Media | The MacArthur Foundation 1 Social network sites, online games, video-sharing sites, and gadgets such as iPods and mobile phones are now fixtures of youth culture.*

Living and Learning with New Media: The goal of this work was to gain an understanding of youth new media practice in the U. A collaboration between 28 researchers and research collaborators, this was a large ethnographic project funded by the MacArthur Foundation as part of their Digital Media and Learning initiative. It tested my skills at so many levels -- fieldwork, conceptually, theoretically, and in management. I feel so fortunate to for the opportunity to have undertaken this project with fabulous colleagues and a team of graduate students and postdocs who taught me so much along the way. We took a step that is unusual with ethnographic work, of trying to engage in joint analysis rather than simply putting together an edited collection of case studies. We spent the past year reading each others interviews and fieldnotes, and developing categories that cut across the different case studies. Each chapter of the book incorporates material from multiple case studies, and is an effort to describe the diversity in youth practice as it emerged from a range of different youth populations and practices. You can find all the details in the documents linked below, and a summary of our report. The book is due out from MIT Press next fall, but in the meantime you can read a draft of it online. Our book is dedicated to the memory of Peter Lyman. Saturday November 22, at 6: Click here to download a two-page summary of the report. Click here to download the summary white paper. Click here to access the full report. Click here for the press release and video being hosted by the MacArthur Foundation. They found that social network sites, online games, video-sharing sites, and gadgets such as iPods and mobile phones are now fixtures of youth culture. Many adults worry that children are wasting time online, texting, or playing video games. The researchers explain why youth find these activities compelling and important. The digital world is creating new opportunities for youth to grapple with social norms, explore interests, develop technical skills, and experiment with new forms of self-expression. Most youth use online networks to extend the friendships that they navigate in the familiar contexts of school, religious organizations, sports, and other local activities. A smaller number of youth also use the online world to explore interests and find information that goes beyond what they have access to at school or in their local community. Online groups enable youth to connect to peers who share specialized and niche interests of various kinds, whether that is online gaming, creative writing, video editing, or other artistic endeavors. In these interest-driven networks, youth may find new peers outside the boundaries of their local community. They can also find opportunities to publicize and distribute their work to online audiences, and to gain new forms of visibility and reputation. Youth engage in peer-based, self-directed learning online. In both friendship-driven and interest-driven online activity, youth create and navigate new forms of expression and rules for social behavior. Through trial and error, youth add new media skills to their repertoire, such as how to create a video or game, or customize their MySpace page. Teens then share their creations and receive feedback from others online. By its immediacy and breadth of information, the digital world lowers barriers to self-directed learning. Contrary to popular images, geeking out is highly social and engaged, although usually not driven primarily by local friendships. Youth turn instead to specialized knowledge groups of both teens and adults from around the country or world, with the goal of improving their craft and gaining reputation among expert peers. While adults participate, they are not automatically the resident experts by virtue of their age. Geeking out in many respects erases the traditional markers of status and authority. New media allow for a degree of freedom and autonomy for youth that is less apparent in a classroom setting. Their efforts are also largely self-directed, and the outcome emerges through exploration, in contrast to classroom learning that is oriented by set, predefined goals. Contrary to adult perceptions, while hanging out online, youth are picking up basic social and technical skills they need to fully participate in contemporary society. Erecting barriers to participation deprives teens of access to these forms of learning. Participation in the digital age means more than being able to access serious online information and culture. Youth could benefit from educators being more open to forms of experimentation and social exploration that are generally not characteristic of

educational institutions. Friendship-driven and interest-driven online participation have very different kinds of social connotations. In addition, the content, behavior, and skills that youth value are highly variable depending on what kinds of social groups they associate with. In interest-driven participation, adults have an important role to play. Youth using new media often learn from their peers, not teachers or adults. Yet adults can still have tremendous influence in setting learning goals, particularly on the interest-driven side where adult hobbyists function as role models and more experienced peers. To stay relevant in the 21st century, education institutions need to keep pace with the rapid changes introduced by digital media. What, the authors ask, would it mean to really exploit the potential of the learning opportunities available through online resources and networks? Posted by Mizuko Ito at November 19, 9:

### Chapter 2 : Living and Learning with New Media - MacArthur Foundation

*The MIT Press is a leading publisher of books and journals at the intersection of science, technology, and the arts. MIT Press books and journals are known for their intellectual daring, scholarly standards, and distinctive design.*

### Chapter 3 : Living and Learning with New Media - DML Hub

*This report summarizes the results of an ambitious three-year ethnographic study, funded by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, into how young people are living and learning with new media in varied settings—•at home, in after school programs, and in online spaces.*