

# Annotated Bibliography of Multimodal Theories and Practices

From [\*Writer/Designer: A Guide to Making Multimodal Projects\*](#)

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The ways we think about, approach, and enact multimodal composing have been largely shaped by the good scholarly work of those teachers across the country who are doing this work themselves. This list, while surely not exhaustive, includes some of our key go-to texts. Do note that while at first glance you see more books than articles here, many seminal article-length texts are included in the Bedford/St. Martin's *Multimodal Composition: A Critical Sourcebook* (see citation below). We hope this annotated bibliography provides a starting place to explore the best theories and practices for employing a multimodal pedagogy.

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Anderson, D. (2003). Prosumer approaches to new media composition: Consumption and production in continuum. *Kairos: A Journal of Rhetoric, Technology & Pedagogy*, 8(1). Retrieved from <http://kairos.technorhetoric.net/8.1/>

Anderson's highly multimodal webtext explores how new digital tools blur the boundary between consumers and producers. He suggests that because our students are prosumers (consumers and producer) they are often better able to critically produce and analyze multimodal texts.

Arola, K.L. (2010). The design of web 2.0: The rise of the template, the fall of design. *Computers & Composition*, 27(1), 4-14.

Arola compares the affordances of teaching and learning web design via handcoding versus working within the template-driven design of Web 2.0. She suggests that while no one method is necessarily *the right* one, teachers of digital rhetoric should engage students in the rhetoric of design. Doing so helps students think carefully through the design choices they make and/or the design choices made for them.

Arola, K.L. & Wysocki, A.F. (Eds). (2012). *Composing (media) = composing (embodiment): bodies, technologies, writing, the teaching of writing*. Logan, UT: Utah State University Press.

This edited collection brings together a range of essays that offer approaches for theorizing and teaching with new media while attending to issues of embodiment. Through feminist, queer, phenomenological, disability studies, legal studies, and other theoretical lenses, the chapters address a wide range of texts (comics, blogs, Wikipedia, online maps, videos, games, digital interfaces, Pow Wow regalia).

Ball, C.E. & Arola, K.L. (2005). *IX: Visual exercises for technical communication* [CD-ROM]. Boston, MA: Bedford/St. Martin's.

This interactive CD-ROM provides a heuristic for teaching multimodal analysis in the technical communication classroom. Students are given opportunities to engage with multimodal analysis through a variety of interactive examples.

Ball, C.E. & Arola, K.L. (2011). *IX: Visualizing composition*. Available from <http://ix.bedfordstmartins.com/>

This interactive online tutorial provides a heuristic for teaching multimodal analysis in any classroom. Students are given opportunities to engage with multimodal analysis through a variety of interactive examples. *Writer/Designer* relies heavily on these terms, and often asks students to visit IX in order to practice multimodal analysis.

Ball, C.E. & Kalmbach, J. (Eds). (2010). *RAW: Reading and writing new media*. Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.

Ball and Kalmbach offer a series of essays that focus on reading and writing practices in new media. These practices range from close, rhetorical, critical, cultural and posthuman readings of databases, Flash texts, protohypertexts, university Web sites, and the lives of new media themselves. Authors address pedagogical issues including the changes in teaching new media from 10 years ago, students' identities in online spaces, teachers as first-time composers, and issues of curriculum, access and space design.

Ball, C.E. (2012). Assessing scholarly multimedia: A rhetorical genre studies approach. *Technical Communication Quarterly*, 21(1).

Ball describes how and why she asks students to produce scholarly multimedia in her writing classroom. She offers a set of assessment criteria for such texts, and describes how a teacher-editor can provide formative feedback on student projects.

Ball, C.E. (2013). Adapting editorial peer review for classroom use. *Writing & Pedagogy*.

This article describes how the process of editorial peer-review (as described in Ball's "Assessing Scholarly Multimedia") translates into students' peer-review workshops.

Bawarshi, A. & Reiff, M.J. (2010). *Genre: An introduction to history, theory, research, and pedagogy*. Fort Collins, CO: Parlor Press.

Through examining the historical and interdisciplinary trajectory of genre studies, Bawarshi and Reiff offer a way of understanding how rhetoric and composition engages with rhetorical genre studies. They suggest that genre studies helps instructors, scholars, and students approach analysis and production through a social lens whereby a text can only be understood by exploring how meaning is made in multiple contexts.

Bowen, T. & Whithaus, C. (2013). *Multimodal literacies and emerging genres*. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press.

This collection examines the possibilities and challenges of engaging with multimodal composition. By exploring texts ranging from storyboards to speeches, authors suggest the responsibility of instructors and institutions to critically consider multimodal composition through the lens of audience, ethics, and effectiveness. An argument is made for advancing multimodal composition on an institutional level so as to meet the needs of today's student within a digital and global economy.

Brooke, C.G. (2009). *Lingua fracta: Toward a rhetoric of new media*. New York, NY: Hampton Press.

Brooke explores how new media require an acknowledgement that technology and rhetoric are inextricable. He suggests that the classical canons of rhetoric offer an ecology of practices that can help us map the affordances of all media. He then defines a rhetoric of new media, one which attends to interfaces that manifest ecologies of code, practice, and culture.

Cope, B. & Kalantzis, M. (Eds.). (1999). *Multiliteracies: Literacy learning and the design of social futures*. New York, NY: Routledge.

This edited collection begins with, and proceeds from, the New London Group's seminal article, "A Pedagogy of Multiliteracies: Designing Social Futures" (note, this article is also included in the Lutkewitte collection). Articles in the book deal with the future of literacy education within the context of globalization, and explore issues ranging from multilingualism, cultural diversity, and the effects of technological change.

Eidman-Aadahl, E., Blair, K., DeVoss, D., Hochman, W., Jimerson, L., Jurich, C., Murphy, S., Rupert, B., Whithaus, C., & Wood, J. (2013). Developing domains for multimodal writing assessment: The language of evaluation, the language of instruction. In McKee, H. A., & DeVoss, D. N. (Eds.). *Digital writing assessment & evaluation*. Logan, UT: Computers and Composition Digital Press/Utah State University Press. Retrieved from <http://ccdigitalpress.org/dwae>.

Drawing on the collaborative work of the National Writing Project's Multimodal Assessment Project, the authors provide an argument for using overlapping domains to evaluate the creation and reception of multimodal texts. They also offer examples to demonstrate how these domains and rubrics can be applied to evaluation of student texts.

Kress, G. & van Leeuwen, T. (1996). *Reading images: The grammar of visual design*.

Drawing on a range of examples from fine art, to children's drawings, to photojournalism, Kress and van Leeuwen provide a grammar of visual design. This grammar, based heavily on semiotics, offers a tool-kit for those looking to theorize and discuss how it is that images make meaning.

Kress, G. & van Leeuwen, T. (2001). *Multimodal discourse: The modes and media of contemporary communication*. New York, NY: Routledge.

By describing two processes involved in communication, design thinking and production thinking, Kress and van Leeuwen provide a theory and vocabulary for engaging with multimodal texts.

Kress, G. (2009). *Multimodality: A social semiotic approach to contemporary communication*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Building off the work done van Leeuwen, Kress offers a framework for understanding multimodal communication within the context of the early 21<sup>st</sup> century. This text is a bit more accessible than prior attempts to create a grammar of visuals and multimodality, and is well suited for advanced undergraduate and postgraduate students.

Lankshear, C. & Knobel, M. (2011). *New literacies: Everyday practices and social learning*. Open University Press.

Lankshear and Knobel explore what it means to consider literacy as a social practice. By paying close attention to the ways digital literacy continues to shape communication practices, they suggest ways of best engaging with literacy education.

Lutkewitte, C. (Ed.). (2013). *Multimodal composition: A critical sourcebook*. Boston, MA: Bedford/St. Martin's.

This critical sourcebook brings together the most influential articles on multimodal composition. Specifically, the sections explore what counts as multimodal composition, what is lost and gained by treating composition as design, how meaning making is made through multimodal composition, how to best assign and assess multimodal work, and how literacy is affected by a multimodal pedagogy. Articles include the New London Group's manifesto, "Designing Social Futures" (which *Writer/Designer* draws heavily from), Jennifer Sheppard's "The Rhetorical Work of Multimedia Production Practices" (in which she encourages us to value technical production as rhetorical), and Cheryl Ball's "Show Not Tell" (where she offers a method for recognizing and interpreting the meaning-making potential of aesthetic modes used in new media scholarly texts).

Palmeri, J. (2012). *Remixing composition: A history of multimodal writing pedagogy*. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press.

Palmeri argues that multimodal composition is not a new phenomenon, but instead has been involved in the teaching of composition since the 1960s. He looks to early scholarship as a way of building a thicker history of multimodal composition, while also offering pedagogical suggestions for how instructors can build upon this history in order to best meet the needs of today's students.

Roswell, J. (2012). *Working with multimodality: Rethinking literacy in a digital age*. New York, NY: Routledge.

This book's chapters are divided by mode—words, images, sounds, movement, animation, hypertext, design and modal learning. Each chapter/mode includes a case study that helps illuminate how modes function so as to help students and scholars critically consider their own production of multimodal texts. The book is geared primarily to advanced undergraduate and postgraduate students.

Selber, S. (2004). *Multiliteracies for a digital age*. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press.

Selber explores different kinds of literacies that help us rethink computer literacy beyond just the technical. In doing so, he asks the questions: What should a computer literate student be able to do? And, what is required of literacy teachers to educate such a student? His humanistic critique of scholarship on computer literacy provides a pathway for instructors to engage with a pedagogy of multiliteracies.

Selfe, C.L. (Ed.). (2007). *Multimodal composition: Resources for teachers*. New York, NY: Hampton Press.

This collection is designed to help composition instructors incorporate multimodality into the classroom by offering theoretical rationale and practical advice. Authors provide a range of multimodal assignments and sample student work alongside advice on intellectual property, software, hardware, and large scale pedagogical concerns.

Sheridan, D.M., Ridolfo, Jim, & Michel, A.J. (2012). *The available means of persuasion: Mapping a theory and pedagogy of multimodal public rhetoric*. Fort Collins, CO: Parlor Press.

The authors examine how emerging technologies have changed public rhetoric. The ability to produce, reproduce, and distribute multimodal texts have made kairos a key term for understanding multimodal public rhetorics. By understanding kairos as necessarily including genre considerations, material-cultural contexts are thus invoked, thereby issues of race, class, gender, sexuality, and place are more thoroughly enmeshed in our rhetorical theories and practices.

Sheridan, M.P., & Roswell, J. (2010). *Design literacies: Learning and innovation in the digital age*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Through utilizing interviews with over thirty multimodal producers (including video game designers and community activists), Sheridan and Roswell explore how out-of-school literacy practices share patterns and themes that can be brought to the multimodal classroom so as to best meet students' needs.

Shipka, J. (2011). *Toward a composition made whole*. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press.

Shipka argues for a definition of multimodality that is not solely associated with digital/screen-mediated texts. Instead, she asks us to rethink composition as a hybrid of aural, visual, and written modes. Case studies of students working with multimodal texts are included, and assessment strategies are discussed. She asks us to consider what is left out not only when we limit composition to writing, but when we limit multimodality to the digital.

Wysocki, A.F., Johnson-Eilola, J., Selfe, C.L., & Sirc G. (2004). *Writing new media: Theory and applications for expanding the teaching of composition*. Logan, UT: Utah State University Press.

The authors argue for expanded definitions of new media, and in doing so work to prepare students and teachers to compose with new media both in, and outside, the classroom. Each chapter includes a theoretical discussion as well as classroom assignments from the authors' own teaching.