"The key epistemological breakthrough here: doing digital writing research is not merely a matter of shipping old methods and methodologies to a new research locale—for instance, the Internet, the World Wide Web, synchronous chat spaces, virtual classrooms. Rather, technologically mediated research locales demand changes in method and methodology... Digital Writing Research is the perfect title for a work that celebrates the achievement of a well-established field while simultaneously pushing that field into a new identity. This volume makes a strong case for the distinctive and important nature of computers and writing research" (James Porter, Michigan State University).

Computerized writing technologies impact how and what we write, the ways in which we teach and learn writing, and, certainly, computers and digital spaces affect our research approaches. Digital Writing Research thus focuses on how writing technologies, specifically digital technologies, affect our research—shaping the questions we ask; the sites we study; the methodologies we use (or could use); the ethical issues we face; the conclusions we draw; and, thus, the actions we take as scholars, researchers, and teachers. Digital Writing Research analyzes research in computers and writing, reflecting upon broader implications for the field of composition studies, and the complexities of researching in spaces that 5 or 10 or 20 years ago did not exist and that several years from now will more than likely have changed shape.

The chapters in this collection focus on articulating how research practices have evolved—and will continue to evolve—with changing writing technologies. The chapters provide experienced researchers with a means to reflect upon various aspects of their research and offer researchers new to composition studies or new to computers and writing research an introduction to possible approaches and related methodological and ethical issues.

Some questions authors consider include, but are not limited to:

- How have researchers adapted methodologies for digital writing research? For example, how might a researcher conduct an ethnography in an online community? What approaches are available for the coding of digital text?

- What methods are being used by researchers studying sign systems beyond the textual? What research is being conducted on visuals? What methods are being used by compositionists for studying multimedia texts?

- What constitutes appropriate human subject research in online environments? When is consent needed, especially when working in diverse cultural and technological forums? What new issues related to person-based research does writing in networked spaces create?

- How are computerized technologies, particularly global technologies, raising new (or remediating old) ethical issues related to privacy, individual rights, and representation?

- How have electronic journals and other methods of publishing writing research influenced our research directions and the distribution of research findings?

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