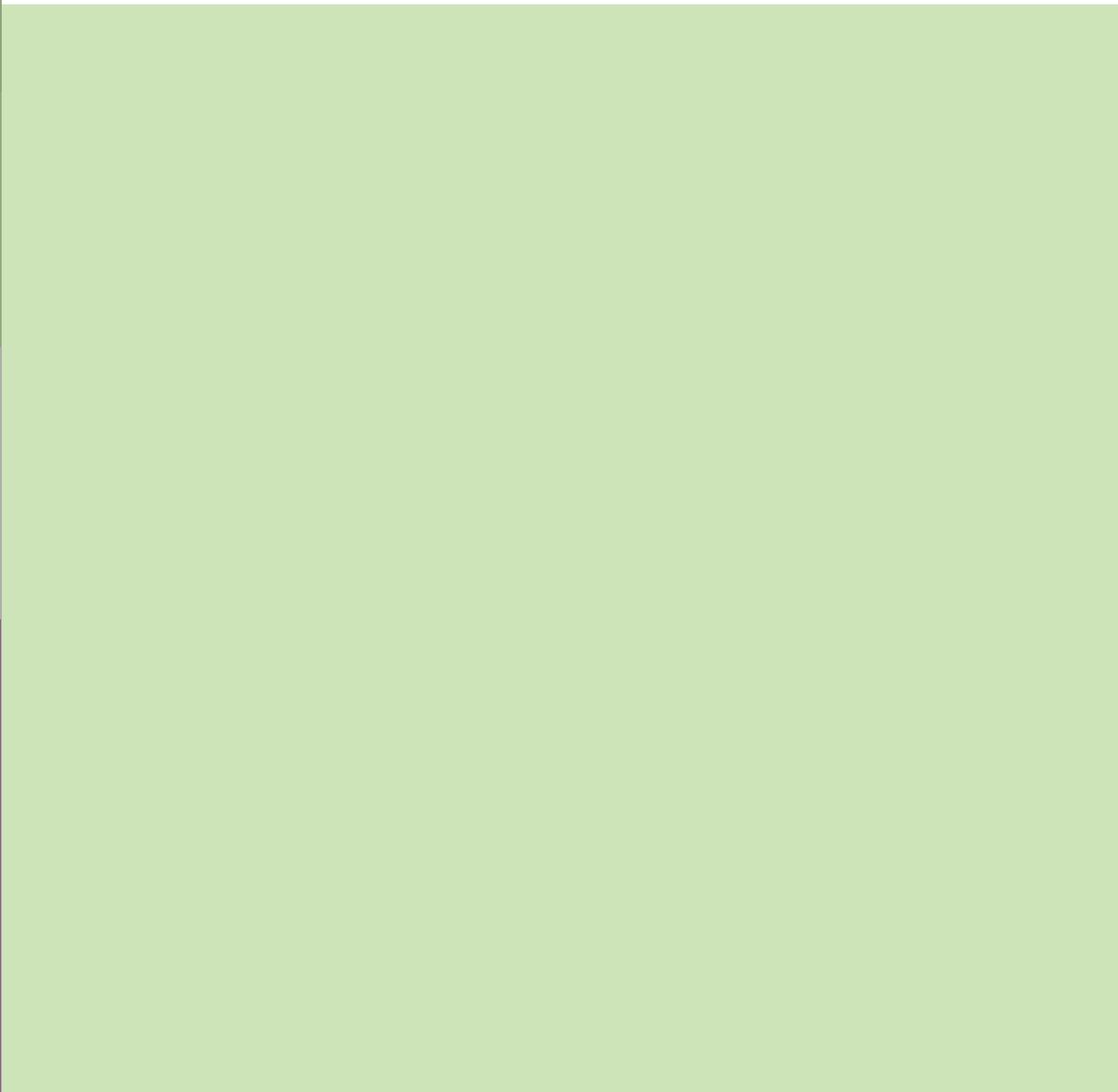




ROLE **Research in Online
Literacy Education**
A GSOLE Publication

Volume 4 Issue 1 Spring 2024



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To Boldly Continue ROLE's Mission: A Letter from the Editor

To boldly go where no one has gone before. The famous phrase, whether you are a Trekkie or not, has some meaning. Maybe it's the realization that the original quote used gendered language--where no man has gone before. Maybe it's the concern that we are dealing with a split infinitive--to boldly go, as opposed to the formerly more proper to go boldly. Maybe it's the notion that such a simple phrase sparked an empire that has inspired many engineers, teachers, and tech giants to take us into the next phase of human-computer interaction--where someone else ventured to dream, and others have brought it to fruition. Or perhaps the phrase invokes a history of television representation that challenged the status quo of the 1960s successfully in some ways while at the same time not boldly going far enough in others. It is here I invite you to boldly go on a journey of reconceptualization of *Research in Online Literacy Education* (ROLE) for Spring 2024.



The reference to *Star Trek*, notably *The Original Series* (TOS), is intentional. Design-wise, TOS's use of bold, bright colors, '60s hairdos, plots derivative of current events, precursors to Siri/Alexa, and the 3D printing of food all served as a means of reflection and projection. "The medium is the message," Marshall McLuhan (1964) would say, is an opportunity to reveal where we are and to imagine where we are going. For example, the change in color scheme denotes where we are--a proud publication housed under the GSOLE organization. But it also projects where we are boldly going: to use muted color schemes rhetorically with a high enough color contrast that invokes a sense of calm and addresses some potential limitations of engaging with content on a screen. However, the medium can't be the message if it is inaccessible. In response, we are adding PDF versions to the web texts, which we are working toward updating with navigational aids, document structure tags, appropriate tag titles, alt text, etc. We also see PDFs as an opportunity for greater interfacing with AI research assistants, which are often restricted to located PDF search forms. Our goal is to offer Spring 2024 as the cadet cruise--a soft relaunch of *ROLE*--that will segue into the Fall 2024 grand NCC-1701-A voyage in memory of our founder, Michael Greer.

While the design of this issue is reflective and prospective, the articles themselves are equally so, fitting nicely within the medium. A common theme among the articles is articulating (dis)ability and access as ever-expanding notions of boldly being in the classroom--whether we are teachers, students, or instructional designers. And like the Trekkie metaphors, the order of the pieces is also highly logical, moving from a larger-scale view of developing online support content and working toward specific practices and experiences shared by our contributors.

Our five-article mission begins with Newman's plenary address from the GSOLE 2024 conference, "The O-Files: Truths About Online Teaching and Learning Are Out There." Newman (2024) draws amazing parallels between the investigative nature of *The X-Files* and the search for truths, consistencies, and innovations in online teaching and learning. Though not referencing *Star Trek* directly, this article's frame for searching for truth as an act of more nuanced and accessible online instruction provides an excellent grounding for the rest of the articles in our collection.

“Creating an OER that Lasts: A Sustainable Model for Design, Publication, and Maintenance,” which provides strategies for approaching the labor of developing online resources that are scalable and accessible. Brown et al.’s (2024) use of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) as a means of centering accessibility is stellar, and the attention to detail for how to replicate online educational resources will leave readers brimming with accessible and creative solutions. “Accessible Affordances of Asynchronicity: Crippling Online Instruction” picks up the UDL thread in the classroom, complicating this framework by articulating additional opportunities for inclusivity. Ubbesen and Anglesey (2024) push the classroom conception of time and engagement to places where few have gone before--that of access intimacy--noting the specific affordances of asynchronous learning for students with disabilities. Rice’s (2024) “Reconceptualizing Distance and Time in Effective Literacy Instruction” briefly takes us back to impulse power, reminding us of the essential need for flexibility during the pandemic. Readers will be encouraged to think broadly about how time, distance, and modality can be reconfigured in ways that most benefit students. Yet, in asking questions on how to best include students, the time factor must include another consideration: age. “Aging and Ageism in Higher Education: Suggestions for Improving Opportunities -- Online and Otherwise -- for Older Adults” provides an engaging frame narrative of an older adult student returning to academia and explores what this means for higher education. Rather than leaning into Kirk’s original sentiment that “galloping around the cosmos [of education] is a game for the young,” Chapman provides examples of how institutions can be more inclusive of older adult students.

Even if *Star Trek* ain’t your thing--and I respect that--the show’s cultural significance cannot be ignored. It gave a distinct venue to raise questions about who we are, what sort of barriers different bodies encounter, how we conceptualize individual and collective rights, and finally, how time and space can reconfigure into many possibilities. While these themes may not be fully comprehensive, they call into question, like this issue of *ROLE*, what it means to be part of humanity--to be visible, to exist, and to have rights. I also recognize that there are gaps in the voices represented in this issue, and I hope that our call for Fall 2024 will work toward inviting many others into the conversation. Michael Greer was good at that--inviting folks in, mentoring, working as an online writing/literacy scholar and practitioner, advocating for others, and being a friend to many. He boldly went when he took on the position of editor and publications visionary for GSOLE. In this spirit, I invite you to join our eclectic away team of online scholars, digital rhetoricians, writers, technologists, and teachers on *ROLE*’s revamped mission:

To explore strange new worlds of digital pedagogies; to seek out new opportunities for online literacy and writing instruction; to boldly go where no one has gone before!

Ashlyn C. Walden

Suggested Readings

- Cedillo, C. V. (2018). Race, disability, and critical embodiment pedagogy. *Composition Forum*, 39. <https://compositionforum.com/issue/39/to-move.php>
- Dolmage, J. (2014). *Disability rhetoric*. Syracuse University Press.
- McLuhan, M. (1964). *Understanding media: The extensions of man*. New York: McGraw Hill.
- McLuhan, M., & Powers, B. R. (2007). *The Global Village: Transformations in World Life and media in the 21st Century*. Oxford University Press.
- Mingus, M. (2017, April 12). Access intimacy, interdependence and disability justice. *Leaving Evidence*. <https://leavingevidence.wordpress.com/2017/04/12/access-intimacy-interdependence-and-disability-justice/>
- Schalk, S. (2018). *Bodyminds Reimagined: (Dis)ability, Race, and Gender in Black Women's Speculative Fiction*. Durham and London: Duke University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1215/9780822371830>

Call for Proposals

Article Deadline: August 1, 2024

Inquire TODAY About Submitting an Article

We are pleased to announce a call for proposals for a special issue of *Research in Online Literacy Education* (ROLE), the peer-reviewed research journal of the Global Society for Online Literacy Education (GSOLE). This issue engages with the work of scholar, teacher, and founding editor of *ROLE*, Michael Greer, to commemorate his contributions to *ROLE*, GSOLE, and the field of online writing instruction more broadly.

In his “Editor’s Note” from the March 2018 inaugural issue of *ROLE*, Greer put forth a number of priorities for the journal, including multimodality, multidisciplinary, strategic pedagogy, and hybrid practices. Greer noted that the journal would define literacy “broadly, as a convergence of writing, reading, composing, interpreting, and designing texts that are alphabetic, multimodal, oral, visual, and digital.” He emphasized the importance of “bringing voices from reading, writing studies, technical communication, composition, writing centers, writing across the disciplines, digital humanities, cultural studies, and beyond.” He centered teacher-research and reflective practice, reiterating the journal’s commitment to “strategic pedagogy, where theory and practice engage and question one another.” And he invited teacher-scholars to imagine “new, hybrid approaches and practices” that address the unique context of online literacy “with its complex mix of technology, discourse, talk, text, image, and play.”

One of his last publications, *Design for Learning: User Experience in Online Teaching and Learning*, co-authored with Jenae Cohn (2023), is an accessible guide for designing and teaching online classes. Reviewers note the strength of this work is its usability; situating the approach to online course design in user experience, Cohn and Greer crafted an exceedingly usable guide that offers readers multiple pathways to engage with it depending on their needs and experience.

Cohn and Greer crafted an exceedingly usable guide that offers readers multiple pathways to engage with it depending on their needs and experience.

The editors of the journal invite scholars, teachers, and practitioners working broadly in the field of online literacy education to contribute to this special issue. We invite submissions that engage with or consider in some way one or more of the following questions:

- What are current best practices in teaching, composing, designing, and/or interpreting multimodal texts?
- What new literacies related to multimodal composing are emerging?
- What new technologies or best practices can improve the accessibility of alphabetic, multimodal, oral, visual, and digital texts for both author and audience?
- What impact is AI having on online pedagogy, digital literacy, and/or multimodal composing?

- What new opportunities for multidisciplinary research exist in the fields of user experience, online literacy instruction, and instructional design for learning?
- What tutor training or writing center practices can provide tutoring support for online literacy learning or multimodal composition?
- In what ways do WAC/WID programs engage with multimodal composition and digital literacy?
- What opportunities exist for multidisciplinary collaboration in curriculum design to facilitate learning transfer related to digital literacy and multimodal composing?
- What strategic pedagogies are needed in the field to advance and improve online literacy education?
- What kinds of professional development opportunities can WPAs provide to support teacher-research and reflective practice for faculty engaged in online literacy education?
- What “new, hybrid approaches and practices” are needed to address the unique context of online literacy teaching and learning?
- What ways have you applied, tested, and/or benefited from the practices and strategies outlined in *Design for Learning*?

We welcome proposals for full-length research articles (4,000-6,000 words) as well as shorter vignettes and narratives (500-1,500 words) that engage with the impact of Greer’s work on your teaching, tutoring, instructional design, learning, and research. Presenters at GSOLE conferences are especially encouraged to submit a proposal based on your presentation. We also invite submissions that push the boundaries of form to imagine other ways of presenting academic research, embodying the spirit of Greer’s vision for *ROLE* as “not just another journal, but another kind of journal.”

Submit 500-word proposals via this Google form by April 15, 2024. We also welcome email questions and project ideas as you prepare your proposals to Ashlyn Walden or Michelle Stuckey at role@gsole.org.

Timeline for the issue:

- Style Guide and Permissions Process Sent to Authors: June 15, 2024
- Full Draft Due: August 1, 2024
- Comments Returned: September 1, 2024
- Revised Draft: October 1, 2024
- Tentative Publication Release: December 2024

References

- Cohn, J., & Greer, M. (2003). *Design for Learning: User Experience in Online Teaching and Learning*. Rosenfield Media.
- Greer, M. (2018). Editor’s note. *Research in Online Literacy Education*. 1(1). Retrieved February 17, 2024 from <http://www.roleolor.org/editorsnote.html>