

CCCC Workshop on Genres in Action, March 2013
Historical and Cultural Research on Genre
Carolyn R. Miller, North Carolina State University

1. *What are some things we know about genre?*
 - Genre is (can be thought of as) “social action.”
 - Genre is (can be thought of as) a product of dynamic tensions between tradition and innovation, text and action, intention and exigence.
 - Genres provide forms, spaces, places, expectancies, conventions, not only for social cohesion but also for adaptation and improvisation in particular instances (Schryer 2010).
 - Genres evolve.

2. *What research complicates these conclusions?*
 - Genre is a cross-disciplinary concept, a boundary object.
 - Each discipline tends to focus on particular domains or types of genres.
 - Many conceptions of genre emphasize the dynamic relationship between medium and object, or transmission and commodity.
 - Much of the genre experience of students presupposes this dynamic.

3. *What research issues can come next?*
 - Does the medium/product dynamic enrich or undermine the text/action dynamic?
 - Can the experiences people have with genres they take up voluntarily, rather than as classroom assignments or professional commitments, inform our understanding of genre acquisition? of genre change and evolution? of cultural capabilities, limitations, and values?
 - Can the formal or aesthetic satisfactions of voluntary, popular, or vernacular genres inform our understanding of what it takes to truly engage the identities, forms, actions, relationalities, and meanings of a generic tradition?
 - Are there other dynamic polarities that might inform our conception(s) of genre?

- Miller, Carolyn R., and Dawn Shepherd. 2004. Blogging as Social Action: A Genre Analysis of the Weblog. In *Into the Blogosphere: Rhetoric, Community, and the Culture of Weblogs*, edited by L. Gurak, S. Antonijevic, L. Johnson, C. Ratliff and J. Reymann. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Libraries, http://blog.lib.umn.edu/blogosphere/blogging_as_social_action.html.
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- Schryer, Catherine F. 2002. Genre and Power: A Chronotopic Analysis. In *The Rhetoric and Ideology of Genre: Strategies for Stability and Change*, edited by R. Coe, L. Lingard and T. Teslenko. Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press: 73–102.