

Girls, Media and Online Gaming: Reflections on the Use of Popular Culture in Education

**Popular Culture in the Classroom Conference
Columbia University Teachers College**

**Renee Hobbs
Temple University
March 24, 2007**

My Six Hats

ADVOCATE

RESEARCH SCHOLAR

CURRICULUM DEVELOPER

EDUCATOR

PARENT

CITIZEN

Each role shapes my questions about girls, games, media literacy and online media.

Launched in July 2006

My POP STUDIO

Ready to pop behind-the-scenes of the television you watch, magazines you read, music you listen to and websites you visit? Our "studios" let you take the reins. Create. Comment. Control. Explore your media, your way!

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POP POINTS TOP SCORES:

clayton	405
naynay	250
thedavester	245



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Creative Production & Critical Analysis

- Celebrity culture
- Music and emotion
- Time & choice in media consumption
- Personal and social identity & values
- Stereotyping/issues of representation
- Impact of multi-tasking on attention
- How digital media affects friendships
- The beauty ideal





Overall Learning Goals

Girls will understand...

- 1) that people make choices when they construct media and those choices shape the form and content of messages;
- 2) that there are values present in media messages that imply ideas about people's attitudes, lifestyle and behaviors.

Music is present everywhere we turn. It's a TV theme song, a jingle in a commercial, or a download for your MP3. Try your hand at our Music Studio and see where the music takes you!

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POPSTAR PRODUCER

Mix and match your way to stardom!

TRUTH OR RUMOR?

Extracurricular activities of the stars

Selling With A SONG

How does it feel?

POLL: Song Lyrics

What are song lyrics really talking about? Read the lyrics below. What do you think she's singing about?

So Yesterday by Hilary Duff



*If it's over, let it go and
Come tomorrow it will seem
So yesterday, so yesterday
I'm just a bird that's already
flown away*

- I love the beat.
- These lyrics are confusing.
- Her lyrics make her seem powerful.
- These lyrics are sensitive and poetic.

Vote!

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POPSTAR PRODUCER

I'm smart and I need freedom.

STAR MAKER

First, make your pop singer a star by choosing how she looks and dresses.

SONG SHOW SHARE

SONG CHARTS

When creating a Pop Star, music producers have to make decisions about image and music. Those decisions communicate a value message to the audience. What kind of value message will your PopStar send to her audience?

Choose one!

I'm sexy and I want you to like me

I'm a little crazy and a little jealous

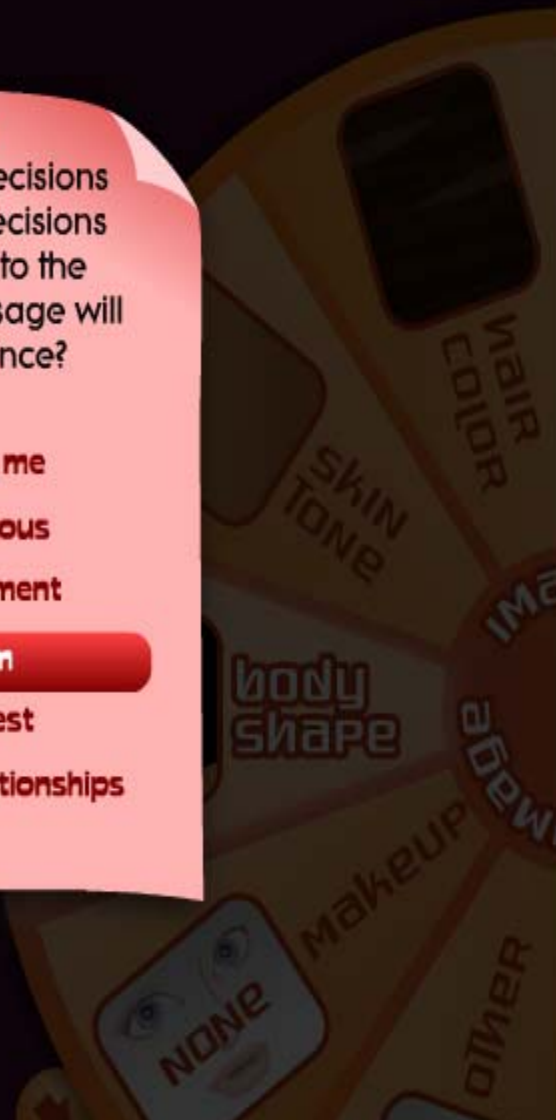
I'm all natural and up for excitement

I'm smart and I need freedom

I'm independent and I'm the best

I'm playful and conflicted about relationships

Begin



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POPSTAR PRODUCER

I'm a little crazy and a little jealous.

STAR MAKER SONG MAKER SHOW TIME! SHARE CONCERT SONG CHARTS

First, make your pop singer a star by choosing how she looks and dresses.



My POP STUDIO

POPSTAR PRODUCER

I'm smart and I need freedom.

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STAR SONG MAKER MAKER

SHOW TIME!

SHARE CONCERT

SONG CHARTS

First, make your pop singer a star by choosing how she looks and dresses.



NEXT: Make your Song



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POPSTAR PRODUCER

YOUR POPSTAR: *Maya*



STAR SONG MAKER

Create your song by choosing a beat, instrument track, and lyrics. Then choose a vocal style for your pop star, and apply a cool effect to her voice!

SHOW TIME!

SHARE CONCERT

SONG CHARTS

My Song

Beat

Bubbly Beat

Instrum

Island Bounce

Choose the Lyrics



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POPSTAR PRODUCER

STAR SONG MAKER

SHOW SHARE TIME! CONCERT

SONG CHARTS

Crushin', yeah I was crushin' on you.

Crushin', and I wish you had a clue.

Crushin', how about a rendezvous?

Crushin', and now my dream has

Crushin', but now you found somebody

Crushin', but it's over now, I'm through.

Crushin', they'll never catch me and

Crushin', on a bad boy like you.

The chorus is the musical highlight of the song, with a catchy phrase or "hook" that also gives the song its title. Most choruses use repetition, so don't be afraid to use the same phrase more than once in your chorus!

Breakout! Yeah, it's time to break away.

Breakout! Everything is going my way.

Breakout! It's gonna happen today.

Breakout! You better get out of my way.

Breakout! You can't make me stay.

Breakout! I know a game we can play.

Krunk it up! Yeah, I wanna party on.

Krunk it up! Keep it going til dawn.

Krunk it up! Yeah, we've only just

Krunk it up! Further than anyone.

My Song

Beat

Bubbly

Instrum

Island

Lyrics

Verse

Transition

Chorus

Verse1

This party just ain't happening, the boys clown around.
 We gotta get away from here or I'm gonna drown.

In the corner, on the couch, you whisper in her ear.
 You can tease me, dupe me, mock me, but I won't disappear.

Transition

First you want more, baby, then you want less.
 Get outta here now, we ain't playing chess.

Chorus:

Breakout! Everything is going my way.

Crushin', but now you found somebody new.

Krunk it up! Yeah, we've only just begun.

Crushin', they'll never catch me and you.

This party just ain't happening,
 We gotta get away from here,
 or I'm gonna drown.
 In the corner, on the couch,
 you can tease me,
 You can tease me,

VERSE

Breakout! Every

Crushin', but no

Krunk it up! Yea

Crushin', they'll

CHORUS

LYRICS

Choose Verse/Chorus

YOUR POPSTAR: *Maya*

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My Song

Beat

Bubbly Beat

Instrum

Island Bounce

Lyrics

Verse This party just ain't
Transition First you want me
Chorus Breakout! Everyth

Styles

Hip-Hop

Apply Effects

ROCK-POP

HIP-HOP

YOUR POPSTAR: *Maya*



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Beat

Instrum

Lyrics

Styles

Effects

My

Verse:

This party just ain't happening, the boys clown around.
We gotta get away from here or I'm gonna drown.

In the corner, on the couch, you whisper in her ear.
You can tease me, dupe me, mock me, but I won't disappear.

Transition

First you want more, baby, then you want less.
Get outta here now, we ain't playing chess.

Chorus:

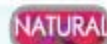
Breakout! Everything is going my way.

Crushin', but now you found somebody new.

Krunk it up! Yeah, we've only just begun.

Crushin', they'll never catch me and you.

Effects:



Listen to the effects you can apply to each vocal phrase.
Choose an effect (or no effect) for each phrase. You must click
on each next phrase before you can apply an effect to it.

Play Song

LIVE CONCERT

Choose

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POPSTAR: *Maya*

SONG: *Crushin'*



Verse:

This party just ain't happening, the boys clown around.
We gotta get away from here or I'm gonna drown.

In the corner, on the couch, you whisper in her ear.
You can tease me, dupe me, mock me, but I won't disappear.

Transition:

First you want more, baby, then you want less.
Get outta here now, we ain't playing chess.

Chorus:

Breakout! Everything is going my way.
Crushin', but now you found somebody new.

Krunk it up! Yeah, we've only just begun.
Crushin', they'll never catch me and you.

Rewind

Stop

Play

VALUE MESSAGE: I'm smart and I need freedom.

Share Your Concert

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POPSTAR: *Maya*

SONG: *Crushin'*



Verse:

This party just ain't happening, the boys clown around.
We gotta get away from here or I'm gonna drown.

In the corner, on the couch, you whisper in her ear.
You can tease me, dupe me, mock me, but I won't disappear.

Transition:

First you want more, baby, then you want less.
Get outta here now, we ain't playing chess.

Chorus:

Breakout! Everything is going my way.
Crushin', but now you found somebody new.

Krunk it up! Yeah, we've only just begun.
Crushin', they'll never catch me and you.

Rewind

Stop

Play

VALUE MESSAGE: I'm smart and I need freedom.

Share Your Concert

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You can share your Popstar in 3 ways!

Submit to Song Charts

Let the world enjoy your popstar by submitting your song to the charts. Other people can watch her concert and rate it.

Submit

Download It

Download your popstar's concert to your computer and enjoy it over and over again. You can even put it on a CD-ROM!

Download

Invite Friends to See It

Send an email to your friends to come and watch your popstar's concert online.

Your Information:

Name

Email

Send it to:

Name

Email

Send it to:

Name

Email

Send Email

Back to Showtime!

See Other Songs in the Charts

The Balancing Act



Play vs. learning

<http://mypopstudio.com>

Key Concepts of Media Literacy



1. Messages are constructed
2. They are representations that have embedded values and points of view.
3. Media use unique languages, codes, genres & conventions.
4. Messages are created and circulate within a socio-political and economic context.
5. People interpret messages differently depending on their lived experiences & prior knowledge.

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Selling With A SONG

What kind of music would make people feel like buying Cell Phones?



Choose a song to see how it feels, then vote for your favorite!

- Outkast**
"So Fresh And So Clean"
- Willie Nelson**
"On The Road Again"
- Men At Work**
"Who Can It Be Now"
- Irish Tenors**
"Danny Boy"
- Death Cab For Cutie**
"Soul Meets Body"
- Gwen Stefani**
"Cool (Richard X Remix)"



POLL:

- Outkast - "So Fresh And So Clean"
- Willie Nelson - "On The Road Again"
- Men At Work - "Who Can It Be Now"
- Irish Tenors - "Danny Boy"
- Death Cab For Cutie - "Soul Meets Body"
- Gwen Stefani "Cool - (Richard X Remix)"

Vote!

The Balancing Act



Play vs. learning

Immersion/flow vs. meta-cognition

<http://mypopstudio.com>

Some Reflections & Implications



Games provide immersive experiences where users can experience flow states that build a sense of mastery/competence, but...

...immersion may work against the process of developing meta-cognitive thinking where critical distancing & analytic skills are important

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Watch popstar concerts produced by girls around the world. Give them a star rating, then share your thoughts in the chat forum!

SEE:

New Releases

Top 40



Producer Popstar Released Rating

naynay blondie 6/5/2006 ★★★

Taylor Sarah 5/27/2006 ★★★★★

Renee bashiry 5/24/2006 ★★★★★

cleo Sasha 5/20/2006 ★★★★★

SARAH CHARAL. wendy 5/17/2006 ★★★★★



PRODUCER:

POPSTAR:

Join the Discussion!

Login to Join the Discussion.

[Login to Add a Comment](#)

clayton says:

3:28pm 6/8/2006

Commenting about Sarah:
I believe in the power of messages, but this one just didn't exert its power over me.

clayton says:

3:09pm 6/8/2006

Commenting about bashiry:
This is a test message

[Back to Your Concert](#)

Eight Forums Provide Conversation Places for Users

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**Synchronous
Communication
ie.,
IM/chatrooms**

Eight Forums

Provide a Conversation Place for Users

- **Compliments**
- **Criticisms**
- **Connections: between game and personal
life, media & world**
- **Promotion**



Examples

Britty_free: (commenting about Rivers): You are really good at this.....maybe you can help me with some some?

Zaraerliz: (commenting about Emma): This was awful- you really need to sort out your girl – she is U.G.L.Y!!!!

BrokliGr15: Can someone please watch Riley?? Pleasee

Coolmary22: If any of u were celebritys you wouldn't say so u would want to be treated "normel" or sompin like tha

Eight Forums

Provide a Conversation Place for Users

- **Dialogue among existing friends**
- **Flaming**
- **Self-disclosure & authenticity verification**
- **Self-policing**
- **Flirting/sex talk**
- **Cyber sex**
- **Luring/stalking**



Examples

Annoyingjabber411: is any1 there now!!!???? *SIGH*

Ms.Concedded: mandycaro78, why did you name your pop star puerto rico? Thats stupid!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Applepie413: Are you going to Smileys after practice?

Pam-pam: Crystal u sound like u is on crack

Channel: yeah you just jelous!



Examples

Hey: soccerkate u need to stop being mean and using bad language because this is not what the web site is

Shelayx3: r u from Toronto?

Chrissie777: where do you live?

Lets_have_s.e.x.: how old r u

Hot guy: go 2 the tv chat room

Hot guy: come on hottie

The Straws that Broke the Camel's Back

Two parent complaints

One cybersex dialogue

One possible luring/stalking situation

We moved from an unmonitored site (July 2006) to a monitored site for 10 hours weekly (September 2006) to pre-approving comments (March 2007)

Some Reflections & Implications

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The Balancing Act



Play vs. learning

Immersion/flow vs. meta-cognition

Freedom/exploration vs. control/safety

<http://mypopstudio.com>

Some Reflections & Implications



Self-disclosure and authenticity verification are normal communicative processes of social interaction yet they are contradicted by the language of “privacy and safety” used by adults about online communication

Some Reflections & Implications



Sexual exploration is a natural developmental milestone for adolescent girls and IM/chat provides anonymity to practice or try out various identity roles

...but this doesn't support our key learning outcomes for media literacy

Some Reflections & Implications



There was a more authentic sense of community when there were no controls...

Some Reflections & Implications



There was a more authentic sense of community when there were no controls...

...but IM/chat social interaction was distracting from the educational goals of the site and creating potential safety hazards

Opportunities and Challenges for the Use of Popular Culture in the Classroom

- **Play vs. learning**
- **Immersion/flow vs. meta-cognition**
- **Freedom/exploration vs. control/safety**

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