Recent developments in personal computing have moved devices increasingly closer to our bodies. Wearables, bio-implants, and other embodied technologies embed computational ability into objects we can carry or wear on our bodies to perform tasks and track our behaviors (Pedersen, 2013), and seemingly minimize our interactions with computers as interfaces. In a recent Rhetoric Society Quarterly special issue on rhetoric and wearables, editors Catherine Gouge and John Jones (2016) define wearable technology “inclusively as those technologies, electronic or otherwise, whose primary functionality requires that they be connected to bodies” (p. 201). Similarly, in a Computers and Composition Online webtext, we identify wearables as “hybrid, network-enabled devices that can be worn on or in the body, that are integrated with the user’s everyday life and movements” (Duin, Moses, McGrath, & Tham, 2016).

Across business, education, medical, design, and technical industries, wearables and embodied computers have gained notable popularity for their ability to engage users at a level unprecedented by traditional print or 2D screen media. Yet wearable technologies pose new issues related to the way we think and communicate information about ourselves and our bodies (Pedersen, 2013; Ryan, 2014; Gouge & Jones, 2016), presenting opportunities for rhetoric and writing studies scholars to reconsider what and how writers compose and deliver in an age of pervasive technology. For instructors, wearables invite us to reexamine how we might help students develop digital, critical, and ethical literacies at a time when immersive media are becoming commonplace (Hai-Jew, 2011). Furthermore, as these embodied computers continually quantify our being and identity
(Neff & Nafus, 2016), we need to expand our theoretical capacity to study how this phenomenon affects the writer’s sense of self and agency. We may do so by extending existing rhetorical theory and/or creating new frameworks, and through emergent use cases, investigating what it means to technologize ourselves through wearable and embodied devices.

While scholars of digital rhetoric and computers and writing have scrutinized the ways wireless technologies and networked pedagogy have transformed how we approach writing instruction (Hea, 2009), we are called to continually examine emerging technologies that would impact our composing practices. In a recent examination of the writing lives of 1,366 first-year students, Jessie Moore and 10 colleagues (2016) emphasize that if composition pedagogies are intended to prepare students for future writing, “strategies for embracing the flexibility of these technologies should be a central component of writing curricula” (p.9).

In this special issue, we aim to investigate the impacts of wearable technology, ubiquitous/pervasive computing, and immersive media on rhetoric, composition, and technical and professional communication pedagogy and practice. Grounding this investigation is an interest in how wearing a computing device calls us to revisit and re-envision the processes through which we read, write, and teach. We look forward to exploring connections and conceptions of computers and composition, the borders and intersections of writer and writing, of identity and modality, of self and other, asking how wearable technologies can serve the purposes to which a discipline commits itself.

Particularly, we seek to explore the following questions:

- How might wearables and emerging embodied computing experience inform the writing process and its pedagogy?
- How are wearables and/or pervasive computing technologies transforming our social, political, and digital identities?
- To what extend do wearables and embodied computers blur or erase the line between the private and the public selves?
- How might rhetorical theories and methods inform the design and (non)use of wearables and emerging technologies?
- What literacies are required to navigate the social, technical, or technological issues that arise as wearables and pervasive computing technologies emerge and infiltrate shared spaces?
- How might wearable or pervasive technologies encourage civic participation at a time when public writing and expression are key to the development of national policies?
- What ethical questions do the technologies raise for classroom instruction, connected learning, research, and privacy?
- What challenges and opportunities might the minimization of interactions between humans and computers pose for writers and communicators?
- What implications do the materiality and adoptions of these technologies have on the literate aspects of our lives?

We especially welcome pedagogical case studies that include syllabi, curricular design, and deployment strategies.

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