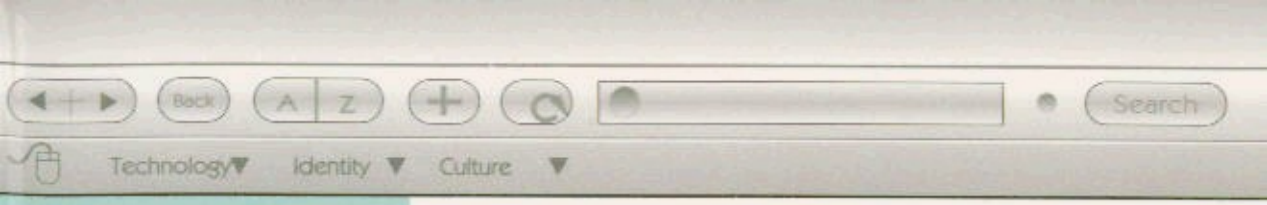
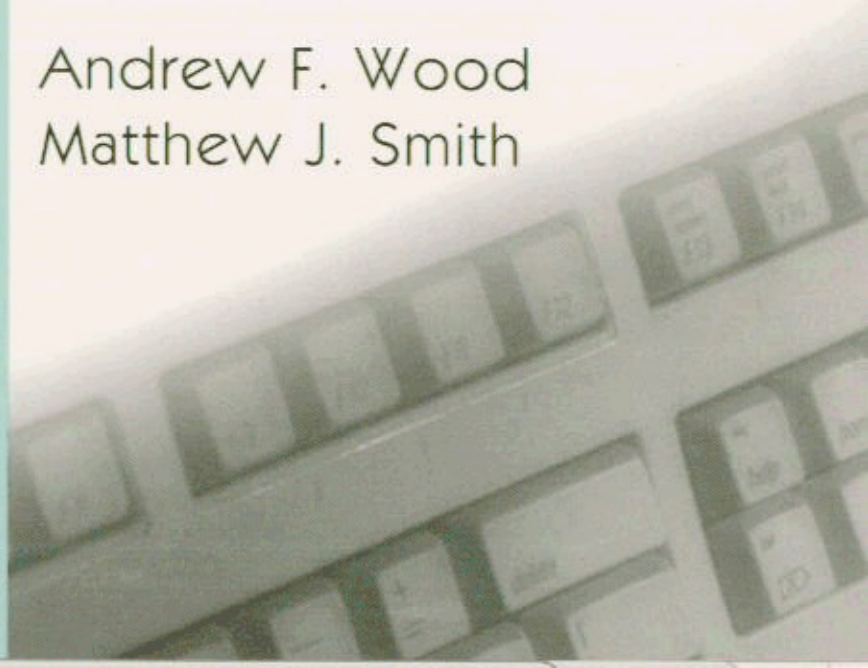


Online Communication

Second Edition

Linking Technology, Identity, & Culture

Andrew F. Wood
Matthew J. Smith



DETAILED CONTENTS

Preface xvii

Part I: The Internet as Social Technology

Chapter 1. Using Technology to Communicate in New Ways 3

What Is CMC? 4
Why Study CMC? 5
Immediacy Versus Mediation 5
Mediated Society 6
Mediated Self 6
Ethical Inquiry 7
Mediated Reality 8
Hyperlink: Technology and Tragedy 9
How Do We Communicate Through CMC? 10
Electronic Mail 10
Hyperlink: Chain Mail and the Proliferation of Internet Hoaxes 11
Bulletin Board Systems 12
Internet Relay Chat 13
Multiuser Domains 14
The World Wide Web 15
Hyperlink: Computer Anxiety 16
Comprehending the Internet Through Language 17
Defining Cyberspace 18
Finding Cyberspace 19
Hyperlink: Get a (Real) Life 20
Extending the Metaphor 20
Critiques of the Spatial Metaphor 22
Chapter Summary 23

Online Communication and the Law 23
Glossary 24
Topics for Discussion 25
References 26

Chapter 2. Understanding How New Communication Technologies Work . . . 29
A Brief History of Cybernetic Technology 30
Thinking Machines in the 19th Century 30
Cybernetic Devices in the Early 20th Century 31
Ethical Inquiry 33
Hyperlink: What's the Difference Engine? 34
The Internet as Cybernetic Organism 34
Hyperlink: Vannevar Bush and His Amazing Memex 35
What Is the Internet? 36
The Browser Wars 37
Hyperlink: A Post-Beige Revolution 38
What Are Some Characteristics of Online Communication? 40
Packet-Switching 41
Multimedia 41
Interactivity 41
Synchronicity 42
Hypertextuality 42
Hyperlink: The Dark Side of the Rainbow 44
Chapter Summary 45
Online Communication and the Law 46
Glossary 46
Topics for Discussion 47
References 47

Part II: The Self Among Others

Chapter 3. Forming Online Identities 51
Hyperlink: 15 Megabytes of Fame 52
The Principle of Telepresence: Is Anyone Out There? 54
Performing Identity on the Internet 56
Casting Call: Performing Multiple Roles 58
Learning One's Lines: Performing Through Language 60
Gender-Swapping: Performing in Virtual Drag 61
Hyperlink: The Doggoned Log-On 62

Anonymity, Pseudonymity, and Identity 63
Anonymity 63
Pseudonymity 64
Ethical Inquiry 66
Hyperlink: A Rape in Cyberspace 67
Protecting Identities in the Information Age 68
Identity Fraud 68
Shadow Identities 70
Hyperlink: Judging Information on the Web 71
Chapter Summary 72
Online Communication and the Law 73
Glossary 74
Topics for Discussion 74
References 75

Chapter 4. Relating Online 78
Impersonal Communication: Defining Limits to CMC 79
Social Presence Theory 80
Social Context Cues Theory 81
The Impersonal Perspective Reconsidered 82
Hyperlink: Emoticons—Frequency and Force 83
Interpersonal Communication: Opening Channels Through CMC 84
The SIDE Model 85
Frequency of Interpersonal Relationships 86
Hyperlink: Task and Social Functions of E-Mail Among Undergraduates 87
Hyperpersonal Communication: Transcending Relational Limits through CMC 88
Managing Online Relationships 90
Working Relationships 91
Hyperlink: Matchmaker, Matchmaker, Make Me a Match 92
Romantic Relationships 93
Ethical Inquiry 95
Chapter Summary 95
Online Communication and the Law 96
Glossary 97
Topics for Discussion 97
References 98

Chapter 5. Seeking Therapy Online 101
Internet Addiction Disorder 102
Symptoms of IAD 103
Hyperlink: Obscenity in Cyberspace 104
Addiction to Sexual Content 105
Ethical Inquiry 107
Is IAD Real? 107
Hyperlink: Computer-Assisted Therapy Programs 109
Online Therapy 110
Coming to Online Therapy 110
Communicating Support in Online Therapy 112
Hyperlink: Online Memorials as Therapeutic Communication 113
Shortfalls in Online Therapy 114
Chapter Summary 116
Online Communication and the Law 116
Glossary 117
Topics for Discussion 117
References 118

Chapter 6. Communicating in Virtual Communities 122
Defining Virtual Communities 123
Hyperlink: What a DivI'! 124
Precedents for Virtual Communities 125
Hyperlink: Society Comes to LambdaMOO 126
Qualities of Virtual Communities: What Makes a Community? 127
A Minimum Level of Interactivity 128
A Variety of Communicators 128
Common Public Space 129
A Minimum Level of Sustained Membership 129
Qualities of Virtual Communities: What Attracts People to Community? 129
External Factors 130
Temporal Structure 130
Infrastructure of the Computer System 130
Purposes for CMC's Use 130
Characteristics of the Group and Its Members 131
Hyperlink: Commercialized Community 131
Netizenship: Responsibility and Regulation in the Virtual Community 133
Hyperlink: Group Decision Support Systems 136
Ethical Inquiry 137

Critiques of the Community Metaphor 137
Chapter Summary 138
Online Communication and the Law 139
Glossary 140
Topics for Discussion 141
References 142

Part III: Internet Culture and Critique

Chapter 7. Rebuilding Corporations Online 147
Hyperlink: Changing Corporation Cultures—Telephony and the Internet 149
CMC as Corporate Discipline 150
Ethical Inquiry 152
Electronic Surveillance and Anticipatory Conformity 152
Hyperlink: Microserfs 153
Corporations and Consumers Online 153
Cookies 154
Voluntary Data Submission 154
Data Mining 154
Ethical Inquiry 155
CMC and the Diffusion of Innovation 156
Communicating New Ideas 156
Communicating Through Channels 156
Communicating Over Time 156
Communicating in a Social System 157
CMC and Corporate Convergence 158
Convergence and Clusters of High-Tech Jobs 159
What Are the Factors Necessary for the Development of High-Tech Clusters? 160
Chapter Summary 161
Online Communication and the Law 162
Glossary 162
Topics for Discussion 163
References 164

Chapter 8. Accessing the Machine 166
A Chicken in Every Pot and an Internet-Capable Computer in Every Home? 167
Race, Class, and Internet Usage 168
Hyperlink: The PEN and Electronic Democracy 169

Critiquing the Digital Divide 170
Snapshot Critique: Have-Nows and Have-Laters 170
Place, Not Race, Critique 170
Hyperlink: Mapping the New Economy 171
Rediscovering the "World" in the World Wide Web 172
Ethical Inquiry 173
Decentralization Versus Recentralization 173
Fragmentation Versus Integration 173
Diversity Versus Homogenization 174
Hyperlink: The Great Firewall of China 174
Chapter Summary 175
Online Communication and the Law 175
Glossary 176
Topics for Discussion 176
References 177

Chapter 9. Carving Alternative Spaces 179
Discursive Resistance: Crafting Alternative Spaces Within Dominant Places 180
Places of Control: Spaces of Resistance 181
Hyperlink: Laptops in the Jungle 183
Agonistic and Utopian Rhetoric Online 184
Ethical Inquiry 184
Hyperlink: Kathy Daliberti's Cyber-Quilt 187
The Rhetoric of Hate Online 187
Community 189
Anonymity 189
Outreach 189
Commerce 190
Information 190
Chapter Summary 190
Online Communication and the Law 191
Glossary 191
Topics for Discussion 192
References 192

Chapter 10. Pop Culture and Online Expression 194
Literary Depictions of Technology 195
The Weakness of Human Flesh 199
The Power of the Wired Corporation 200
The Pace of Human Life 201

Popular Film and Technology 202
Ethical Inquiry 202
2001: A Space Odyssey—Confronting Technology 202
Tron: Taking on the Master Control Program 203
Hyperlink: "Invasion of the Dots" 204
WarGames: Is It a Game or Is It Real? 205
Blade Runner: More Human than Human 205
AI: Artificial Intelligence—His Love Is Real. But He Is Not 206
The Matrix Trilogy: Ghosts in the Machine 206
Hyperlink: What About Virtual Reality? 207
Chapter Summary 208
Online Communication and the Law 209
Glossary 209
Topics for Discussion 210
References 210

Appendix A. Introduction to Hypertext Markup Language 213
Some Common Tags 216
Displaying Images 219
Other IMG Attributes 219
Uploading and Downloading Files 220

Appendix B. Researching the Internet Experience 222
Research into the Technical or Social Aspects of CMC 222
Hyperlink: Reading up on Internet Research 223
Practicing Ethics in Online Research 224
References 225

Glossary 227
Author Index 235
Subject Index 240