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Cyberbook: An Introduction to Topics in Cyberculture

Western Kentucky University Department of Communication

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Cyberbook

An introduction to topics in Cyberculture

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Cyberbook - An introduction to topics in Cyberculture
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To my wife, Ligia Coe,
and my three sons, Andreï, Michel and little Viviane.
Riverson Rios.

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Preface

This work commenced in January of 2014 when I started teaching a course entitled COMM 400-001 Special Topics in Cyberculture in the Spring Session at the Western Kentucky University. It's an adaptation of the same course I have been teaching in the last several years in the Instituto de Cultura e Arte of the Federal University of Ceará (UFC), my home institution in sunny Fortaleza, Brazil, from which I'm on a leave of absence this academic year.

The class was composed of twenty two students, most of whom were majoring in Communication Studies, with a few others in Popular Culture Studies, Film, Psychology, Religious Studies and Corporate & Organizational Communication. Two thirds of them were senior students and the rest were juniors, except for one who was a sophomore. Along the semester, two students dropped out of the course.

As part of the students' work in the course, they were requested to choose a topic to write about. The aim was to create a collaborative book and show the easiness of pursuing such a task by using the tools available online. The idea was inspired by a similar book in Portuguese,

Para Entender a Internet (“To understand the Internet”, in a free translation), although it was used only as an illustration.

Therefore, I first presented them a list of several subjects for them to choose one. In addition, the course consisted of reading several texts during the semester about such relevant topics as privacy, on-line identity, the long-tail theory, digital economics, piracy, free culture, virtual communities, hacker ethics and cyber activism, among others. This certainly helped them choose their topic and research about it.

Later they were asked to present a seminar about their subject so as to organize the ideas and get a feedback from their colleagues besides my own.

A few months later and after quite a few proofreadings, editings, emails back and forth, and probably some all-nighters, it is my pleasure to present the result of their effort, an introductory text on Cyberculture, a book that has been decided to be available online for free.

I really would like to thank my colleagues at the Journalism and Advertising programs at UFC for giving me the chance to spend my sabbatical leave as a visiting scholar at Western.

Thanks go as well to prof. Dr. Helen Sterk, Head of the Department of Communication at WKU, for believing without hesitation in my proposal of teaching such a 400 course, and having the chance to meet such wonderful students.

I also must send special thanks to prof. Loup Langton, Director of the School of Journalism & Broadcasting, without whose invitation to spend a year at WKU nothing of this would have been possible. I truly appreciate his great support and thoughtfulness ever since the beginning. Please extend my gratitude to the faculty at the School.

And of course all the credits go to the authors. The students did a fantastic research and came out with this splendid introductory work which I hope will be useful for all those who want to know a bit more about this cyberspace we now live in.

Way to go, girls and lads! Go tops!

Prof. Riverson Rios, Ph.D.

Spring 2014

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Web 2.0/3.0

Candra Hall

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Tim Berners-Lee [argues in February 2009](#) that what the Internet needs, more than anything, is more sharing of data. The future of the web, the next step, where we want and need to be as a technological society—Web 3.0—depends on the linking of data. Data data data. Scientists want access to other scientist’s data so they can learn from it, improve on it, innovate it. If only there was more sharing of information then the best and brightest minds working around the world could freely and instantly tap into other genius brains, and that knowledge can be combined to create cures for diseases and to save the planet and to make the world a better place.

And not just scientists, everyone wants more information. Policy makers and educators and entrepreneurs. Even your average everyday Internet users want more sharing of information between social media platforms—a more seamless online experience. According to Berners-Lee’s slide, people are literally clambering over walls trying to get their social media sites to swap some

411 so they don't have to log into Bebo, Myspace, and Orkut because how inconvenient is that?

Exactly five years since Berners-Lee's TED talk and social media is inextricably intertwined. Bebo? Myspace? Orkut? Come on, it's 2014. No one uses those things anymore. But you can post to Twitter, Instagram, Tumblr, Vine and Facebook all at the same time! Not only that, but more and more frequently you don't even have to create unique IDs and passwords to access a members-only website—you can just log right in with your Facebook or Google information. And contrary to Berners-Lee's assertion, people are absolutely not stoked on it. And if they are anything other than not stoked, they are probably completely unaware of what's going on.

The same reason that companies like Google and Facebook started cozying up to other online avenues is the exact same reason that Berners-Lee's conception of a new web comprised of openly shared, free-information is still a utopian ideal. Google and Facebook make money by sharing data; the institutions that possess the information that holds the key to making the world a better place don't.

[Manuel Castells](#) says of the Internet (in 2001, 13 years ago, eight whole years before Berners-Lee's talk!), "It is a culture where the amount of money to be made,

and the speed at which the money is made, are the supreme values. This,” he writes, “goes beyond usual human greed” (57). In fact, the whole foundation of Internet entrepreneurship, Castells argues, is that ideas–information, data–are money (56). When it comes to social networking, those ideas are user-generated, and that information is bought and sold by other outlets looking to capitalize on all of the data that they can analyze in a way that teaches them to make money off of you. You do all of the work for them, and then they get paid for it!

But when it comes to industry, biology, human sciences, and all those other fields with world-bettering applications, innovation costs money. So money is made by implementing a system that [this Wikiversity article](#) refers to as “Capitalism 2.0.” We know from Castells that the Internet makes money out of ideas, but our generous [wiki](#) custodian(s) explain, “...the advent of Internet and digital media made storage and distribution of information so easy and inexpensive that the value of the information itself, not the medium... became central.” And the most valuable of all of that information? The raw data that would allow us to cure diseases and save the planet and make the world a better place.

If every scientist in the world working towards sustainable energy sources had instant and free access to

the information discovered by all the other scientists, how would energy companies dependent on gasoline continue to make money? How would pharmaceutical companies dependent on profit from expensive prescription medications continue to mass tremendous amounts of money if their raw data was available to scientists working to make life-saving medical treatment available and affordable to all those in need?

The Wikiversity article argues that this information may be abundant, but in the Web 2.0 system we have created an artificial scarcity of information, and while supply may exceed demand (and potentially save the world, according to the idealists) profits are built by carefully regulating who has access to that information and at what artificially high price.

It seems that both Berners-Lee and our gracious Wiki custodians agree that we must overcome the artificial obstacles set by the information-hoarding elites and freely spread our world-bettering data all over the Internet and bring forth the new era of Web 3.0.

But how, as an online, tech-consuming culture, can we achieve that when Candy Crush is available for free?

Censorship

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Can you imagine a life without the Internet? Being connected online is a part of everyday life, whether it is on a computer, through a Smart Phone, and even now on television. With social media such as Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, and even online gaming such as XBOX Live, being connected is as easy as ever, and equally as important. With these advances we can easily find and communicate with people all over the world, which has never been accessible before.

In the United States we are very much used to freedom when it comes to using the Internet. We shop at the sites we want, we have social networks from across the globe available for us to use, we stream videos freely, and nearly every image is only one Google search away.

More importantly, we have the right, as US citizens, to write and express our opinions freely. We can write articles, tweets, Facebook statuses, and blogs on anything we choose, whether it is something as silly as what we

made for dinner to something as serious as complaining about political views or the state of the economy.

However, some citizens are not as fortunate. Internet censorship occurs in major parts of the world, and no one knows this more than China.

In the People's Republic of China Internet censorship was introduced in the early 2000s. As stated by Phil Deans, who wrote "State Patriotism versus Popular Nationalism," the block on certain Internet sites began with sites that were against the government or "harmful unification." While that may be against the United States Freedom of Speech, China has had laws in place against this.

What the government failed to tell the Chinese people was that the ban would cover more than political arguments. According to GreatFire.org, a website that fights Internet censorship of China, their article states that sites like Google, Youtube, Yahoo, Twitter, Facebook, and IMBD are all completely blocked for the residents of China.

Personal blogging websites like BlogSpot are also not allowed. If people are caught using these sites, they are either faces with a fine of around \$1800 or even the possibility of jail time.

Government officials closely watch social networks, as well. The Chinese government wants an enclosed world. China created a website called Weibo, which is like a version of Twitter. An article in The Telegraph written by Tom Philips in 2012, said there they have “editors” who constantly monitor what is being said.

However, China is not the country with strict Internet restrictions. In the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, more commonly known as North Korea, global Internet is nonexistent to its citizens.

According to The Economist, the government has access to the Internet the rest of the world sees, for everyday people, the government has created their own form, called “Kwangmyong”. It has been known to take full websites of the global Internet and censor them down to only what the North Korean government wants citizens to see, and is only available through dialup.

However, censorship is not the only thing that strongly differs from the United States. Around the world, accessibility is also something that has to be overcome. In the United States, computers and technology run freely and are so very easy to get a hold of. According to the United States Census 78.9% of households in America had at least one computer and 94.8% of those people used the Internet to connect with.

However, according to traigov.in, broadband is very limited in India, compared to the United States, and still the majority people do their online business at Cyber Cafes, not having access at home.

All-in-all, while we still be separated, in many ways, the Internet brings people all around the world together, simply in front of one screen. Though, there are many differences in how the Internet works throughout the world, it is comforting to know, we can find new cultures with a click of a mouse.

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Cyberbullying

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Bullying is a term that is familiar with just about everyone, and particularly familiar with teens. With the rapid increase in technology among teens, cyberbullying has also become an issue and increasingly frequent. To understand cyberbullying, you must also understand the definition of bullying; cyberbullying is the extension of traditional bullying. According to the site Stopbullying.gov, bullying is:

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

Cyberbullying applies this definition to the online world, or the cyberworld. Stopbullying.gov also provides a definition for cyberbullying:

Cyber bullying is bullying that takes place using electronic technology. Electronic technology includes devices and equipment such as cell phones, computers, and tablets as well as communication tools including social media sites, text messages, chat, and websites.

Cyberbullying takes the same concepts of traditional bullying, but applies them to the online world. However, there are some crucial features that differentiate the two.

Traditional bullying typically has a limit as to when the bullying can take place, such as inside the school, schoolyard, bus stops, etc... Going home was a refuge, an escape from the bullies. There is no escape from cyberbullying. It can take place essentially 24/7, and with less strenuous supervision.

It can take place virtually anywhere, and is difficult to avoid. A picture that has been defamed can be viewed by many people when posted in the online world, and this can carry over into the offline world. Lack of education and awareness of the consequences that cyberbullying can have both legally and emotionally has left teens to shrug off the seriousness of bullying.

As [danah boyd](#) points out, cyberbullying is often masked by the word 'drama' amongst teens:

By using the language of “drama,” teens were able to lessen the importance of conflict in their lives, blur the lines between serious and non-serious actions, acknowledge the intrinsic performativity of teen life on networked publics, and – most importantly – “save face.” (boyd & Warwick)

As numbers continue to increase of victims of cyberbullying, methods of to prevent and combat the issues are becoming vital areas of research in youth development. The exponential growth of technology will continue to serve as a platform for cyberbullying if the issue is not resolved.

Through media education programs, awareness campaigns, and implementation of digital media literacy programs within school curriculums will play a vital role in preventing and eliminating cyberbullying, an issue that has led many teens to psychological effects, social anxiety, and even suicide.

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Collective Intelligence

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Collective intelligence emphasizes the idea that intelligence can not only happen inside individual brains but also can arise with groups of individuals. There are many definitions of collective intelligence. Collective intelligence has been defined as:

- The capacity of families, groups, organizations, communities and entire societies to act as whole, living systems – [Tom Atlee](#)
- The capability for a group to organize itself in order to decide upon its own future and control the means to attain it in complex contexts. — [Jean-Francois Noubel](#)
- The oldest human social organization where individuals decide to mutualize their knowledge, know-how and experience in order to generate a higher individual and collective benefit than if they remained alone. Collective intelligence is the foundation of positive-sum economies where the whole is more than the sum of its parts. — [Jean-](#)

Francois Noubel

- The capacity of communities to evolve towards higher order integration and performance through collaboration and innovation. — George Por

Collective intelligence can be enabled by the Internet. People from all over the world come together through cyberspace to collectively create, share, and cooperate with each other.

Examples of Collective Intelligence

The first example of collective intelligence that is enabled by the Internet is Google. Millions of people all over the world create web pages, and link those web pages to each other. Google will harvest all of that knowledge. When we type a key word or a question in the Google search bar, we will receive collective results that seem amazingly intelligent.

The second popular example of Internet-enabled collective intelligence is Wikipedia. Millions of people all over the world have collectively created an amazingly large intellectual product on this site. There is almost no kind of centralized control or power. People contribute to the information without being paid.

Another example of collective intelligence enabled

by cyberspace is the Climate Colab. It is an online platform first created by MIT Center for Collective Intelligence. This online platform is used by a community of almost 4,000 people to come up with proposals for what to do about climate change. They use this site not only to propose their ideas but also to cooperate with others to develop the proposals. [The Climate Colab](#) has gained some reputation, since its members have been selected to present their ideas at the United Nations in New York and on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C.

Factors That Support Collective Intelligence

1. **Diversity:** Diversity enables the increased information, perspective, and stimulation. It enriches possibilities that cannot be achieved through working individually.
2. **Synergy:** Synergy indicates that a whole is greater than the sum of its parts. It emphasizes cooperation and collaboration.
3. **Commonality:** People who come together to collectively create intelligence should share common purpose, vision, and inquiry.
4. **Authenticity:** People should be authentic with themselves in order to interact with others toward desirable outcomes.

5. **Freedom:** Although they are connected, parts of the collective are also autonomous in order to manifest the diversity, authenticity, and creativity.
6. **Trust:** The collective should minimize the threat from each other. This sense of safety can facilitate the authenticity, openness, and initiative.
7. **Feedback:** It is important to evaluate the actions and come up with ways to improve the situations.
8. **Power Equity:** Only by exercising power equity can the collective enhance its diversity, freedom, feedback, and other factors.

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Cyberstalking

Elyse Madigan

<http://cyberculturecomm.blogspot.com>

The Internet has prompted many new cyber phenomenon', one of them being cyberstalking. According to researchers at Bedford University, cyberstalking was more common than physical harassment in 2013. Cyberstalking is a part of modern life that some people don't even realize exists. It can occur over Tumblr, Facebook, Twitter, email, sexting, and any other social media type websites. People post their activities carelessly, unaware that they may have a cyberstalker, which allows cyberstalkers to track a person's personal life very easily. Cyberstalking is a more intense form of just stalking because [“imbalanced individuals who obsess over others now have dozens of convenient online means by which to follow and attack their prey”](#).

Cyberstalking is similar to cyberbullying (see details in this book) in the sense that it often times includes repeated unwelcome messages. However, cyberstalking derives from a more direct obsession with the target, and an incessant desire to know the targets actions and control

them in certain ways. “Cyberstalkers do not wish to just torment someone for an adolescent power rush... stalkers want to force the target into some kind of submission, and are willing to involve other targets to achieve that disturbed result.” Therefore, cyberstalkers will not only potentially attack their victims, but also their family members or friends in order to reach their end goal.

Cyberstalkers use Internet resources to stalk their target, resources such as email, dating site, public discussion forums, social media sites, and even cell phones to stalk their pray. Sophisticated cyberstalkers use combinations of these resources in order to carry out their plans. “Cyberstalkers commonly have four objectives: locate, surveil, emotionally harass, and criminally manipulate their prey. In some cases, the cyberstalker will prey on their target’s family, friends, and coworkers to attack their target.”

They can be anyone, and usually the more serious cyberstalkers are driven to cyberstalk by their disturbed emotions and feelings of inadequacy. Cyberstalkers might act because they feel wronged, want revenge, or even unreciprocated love.

Cyberstalkers can range from people you know personally, to random strangers from the Internet that you may have accidentally added as a friend, or even one who

randomly came across you without your knowledge of their existence.

Common cyberstalkers can be:

- an ex-boyfriend/girlfriend,
- an ex-spouse,
- someone you went to high school with,
- a person you dated in real life,
- a person you dated through an online service,
- a coworker or supervisor,
- a stranger whom you ride the train with every day,
- a stranger who found your writing online,
- someone you randomly friended on Facebook.

For Internet users who frequent online dating websites, you're in luck because Bedford University found that less than 4% of stalker victims were found by their stalkers through online dating websites. However, still be cautious because Bedford University determined that many of the cyberstalking victims in their study were stalked by complete strangers. Cyberstalking is a small risk that regular Internet users face, but it can happen to anyone who is active on the Internet.

If by chance you do become a victim of cyberstalking, there are ways to legally defend yourself such as restraining orders. There are professionals who specialize in defending those victims against cyberstalking who can help you to resolve your cyberstalking issues.

Cyberstalking can at times be less harmful; most Internet users may have even done it without realizing what their actions were. If you go on Twitter or Facebook, many people “follow” celebrities to keep track of their actions and what is going on in life. This is a form of cyberstalking, but it is much less serious. Many people think that since this information is made public by means of the World Wide Web that it is okay to actively follow and look at what Internet users are doing, whether you know them personally or they are strangers.

However, it is still an invasion of privacy and cyberstalking can be obviously wrong, but without blatantly crossing a line or strict privacy laws on the Internet it can also simply be considered browsing other peoples websites.

Web Radio

Monet Becker

<http://cashmoneymonet.wordpress.com>

*PANDORA. SPOTIFY. RADIOTUNA. LASTFM.
NAPSTER. iTUNES. SIRIUSFM. SLACKER.
IHEARTRADIO.*

What do all of these websites have in common? They are all forms of Web Radio, of course!

In 1993, Carl Malamud launched “Internet Talk Radio” - the first Internet broadcast. On June 24, 1993, the band Severe Tire Damage conducted the first Internet concert broadcast... and in November 1994, a Rolling Stones concert was the first major band to be broadcasted over the Internet.

Since the late 1990s, “traditional” radio broadcasters have been using the Internet as a source for transmitting their radio broadcasts/ simulcast programs. Web Radio has been able to withstand web 1.0, 2.0, and 3.0... and now it seems as if Internet radio is expanding its outreach from just your laptop to beyond—mobile phones, mobile devices, within automobiles, etc. Wireless connectivity is continuing to grow—and with it, so will web radio.

Why will web radio continue to grow? It has no geographical limitations (can be heard from all over the world), isn't limited to audio (it can be photos, graphics, texts, links, interactivity, chat rooms, etc.), can appeal to "micro-communities" of listeners focused on special music or interests, and covers a wide spectrum of broadcast genres (talk radio, heavy metal, pop, top 100, country-rap, hip hop, etc).

The only differences between Internet Radio and Internet music (iTunes) are that:

1. it cannot be replayed and
2. advertisers are the ones who drive and support Internet Radio.

Streaming Internet radio and the cost of getting "on air" in the first place are very cheap for both the Internet broadcaster as well as the individual/individuals who stream the Internet radio. The only things that people need in order to set up an Internet radio station are a CD player, a laptop with encoder software, a ripper software, assorted recording and editing software, an audio mixer, outboard audio gear, a digital audio card, and a streaming media server.

The following are links to well-known Internet radio sites:

- pandora.com
- lastfm.com
- slacker.com
- spotify.com
- iheartradio.com

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Cyber Activism

Robert Greenleaf

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We live in a digitized world where individuals all across the globe have the ability communicate with one another very easily. This newfound communication from the last two decades has changed the world, as we know it. It presents an opportunity for our generation and future generations to express themselves very easily to a large-scale audience.

The promotion and growth of social media has allowed communication as a whole to change, thus affecting every communicative avenue on a personal level, adding a digital aspect to everything.

One method of social communication that has been directly affected by the growth in technology and new media is activism. The addition of the digital aspect to world created the new area of concentration referred to as cyber activism. This concept has many pathways of existence that provide individuals a way to send and express their messages about social change to the masses of the population.

Cyber activism has not replaced the physical activism entirely, yet it has contributed to a great deal of change within the realm of activism.

Digital activism, also known as cyber activism or e-activism, describes how citizens can use digital tools to effect social and political change. These digital tools range from mobile phones and digital cameras to Web 2.0 social networking sites like YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter. (Amin, 2010, p. 64).

There now exist many platforms for individual public expression, anyone can create a call to action petition, asking for help from individuals across the globe to help them in their fight for justice and social change.

While these digital tools were originally used by many for networking and entertainment purposes, they soon became a conduit for political activity. (Amin, 2010, p. 65).

What began as a digital playground morphed over time to achieve its potential, which allows everyone to have a voice and the opportunity to have a major impact either socially or politically. We are as a species, headed for an existence where we live and rely on the digital world to provide us meaning and joy.

While thinking about far we have advanced over the last couple up decades, it is hard to imagine where we will be in 25 years, when technology has really had a chance to evolve and takeover. Digital activism will continue to grow and change to really allow everyone a voice, thus completing the journey into a globalized society.

Cyber activism grows around issues selected through the interconnection of many kinds of players: traditional pressure groups that go online, spontaneous aggregation, and individuals. As a timeless, location free and agency medium. (Illia, 2002, p. 327)

This kind of activism provides areas for people to spread the word about physical activism that will take place, which has lead to an increase in the numbers behind social movements. “Human rights abuses and public protests once masked from the world are now made visible with digital technology” (Amin, 2010, p. 65).

We live in an era where every injustice and every wrongdoing can be clearly documented and talked about freely. This type of society protects the individual from injustice and mistreatment, yet put companies and corporations of all kinds at a much larger risk.

Cyberactivism follows a process similar to activism, but is the result of new dynamics that

*definitively change the pressure on corporations.
(Illia, 2002, p. 326)*

Corporations and businesses alike have to focus on their public image even more than ever. One slip up or wrong could lead to extreme public scrutiny via social media platforms.

Cyber activism has changed the world, as we know it. We now have an avenue for individuals to communicate the need for social change or political change. We can communicate freely, effectively, and quickly, which can spark a powerful social movement very quickly. It will be interesting to see how it changes over the course of the next few decades as technology and social media continue to grow and take over.

There might come a time where we really entirely over technological avenues to carry out social and political movements. Right now we are only scratching the surface of what is possible within the new dimension we have created and supported.

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Netiquette

Peej Packer

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To post, or not to post, that is the question. Almost every day, we find ourselves communicating online through e-mails, social networking sites, blogging, etc. We have had those moments when we impulsively formulate a hasty Facebook status, or a sporadic tweet that we are not quite sure if we should release into the abyss of the World Wide Web.

Because the Internet, social media, and blogs are still a fairly new concept to our society, we are only beginning to develop the norms and guidelines that should be followed in the virtual world. An essential online concept, that far too many are unaware of, is netiquette. I am guessing this concept is exactly what you would think it is. It is how one should behave online.

Essentially, netiquette is the social code of network communication. There are several aspects of Internet communication that many people find themselves blurring lines with. According to networketiquette.net, the golden rule of netiquette is to treat others online as you would

want to be treated. The principle is simple, and one that has been embedded into our brains from a very young age. There are several rules of netiquette that should be followed at all times online. The concept of netiquette is comprised of traditional grammar rules, appropriate tone, and attentiveness to detail.

Boise State has offered a helpful list of netiquette guidelines that should always be followed to maintain credibility online. The most basic rules of netiquette, which greatly improves the quality of the message, are accurate spelling and grammar.

With any form of a written message, it is essential to double check spelling, punctuation to ensure that your audience is not left confused or attempting to decode your error filled messages.

In addition, this reflects badly on you as the author. It is no secret that when you say something, it is impossible to take back your message. Internet communication is no different in this aspect. If you post a message that is not accurate or does not follow the basic rules of the English language, it is possible for others to judge or interpret the message as a direct reflection of you as the author. Therefore, it is always necessary to proofread any message, be it big or small, that is going to be posted to social media, blogs, emails, etc.

Is it also important to use appropriate point of view when communicating electronically. You should avoid using words such as “me” and “I”. You want to focus your attention and your message toward your readers. This is called using the YOU attitude. In a world where most people want to focus on themselves, they also want others to focus on them. People tend to be more attracted to language that is targeted specifically for them.

For example, if you were to read a link to an article that says, “10 Things to Know before You Turn 30” you would be more apt to read it because you would assume the targeted audience is you.

Another commonly used rule of Netiquette is that you should get to the point. In the fast pace world of the Internet and electronic communication, people are not interested in sifting through loads of information to get to the main point of an email or a post. In emails and memos, it is especially important to be short and concise with your information, while still maintaining a nice and pleasant tone with the readers or viewers. You must avoid using unnecessary information in these types of formats that will turn readers off.

The final rule of netiquette that strongly influences the reader’s perception of you on the other side of the computer screen is how promptly you respond. Whether

you are it is a post on social media, an e-mail, or a blog, it is essential respond to all messages promptly. Not only are you seen as more credible, but it is also communicating to the readers that you are efficient and reliable. In a professional work setting, quick response time is seen as a very adequate trait in computer mediated communication. Co-workers, supervisors, and clients appreciate rapid response time when a message is sent.

In conclusion, netiquette is an essential asset to have when communicating online via e-mail, social media, webpages, etc. The basic rules of netiquette should be learned and followed to maintain your reputation as a reliable and credible communicator on the web.

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The Digital Divide

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Digital divide is a term used to describe the discrepancy between people who have access to the resources to use new information and communication tools, such as the Internet, and the people who do not have the resources and access to the technology.

Most people think that the digital divide is between the people who were born with the Internet or without, but in fact it spans globally and is not just limited to generations.

The term also describes the discrepancy between those who have the skills, knowledge and abilities and the technologies and those who do not. The digital divide can exist between those living in rural areas and those living in urban areas, between the educated and uneducated, between economic classes, and on a global scale between more and less industrially developed nations.

As can be seen from the definition, the general idea of what the digital divide is was just a chip of the block.

Being connected is what can close the gap or widen it when it comes to the digital divide. Connectivity in the past was limited to desktop computers and laptops, which set the gap at its widest. In the present we have multiple forms of connecting with new technology, like cellphones, gaming systems, tablets, and mp3 players. All of the new technology has brought the gap closer to the middle but there is still another factor of having access to the mediums to connect.

In the beginning these platforms were limited to the reaches of chat rooms and email but with the dawn of social networking the gap of the digital divide is getting even closer. Before Web 2.0 you could only read information and send emails, that only limited communication to people you knew. Now with Social networking sites such as Facebook, connecting to people all over the world is as simple as accepting a friend request.

The digital divide is really the person's ability to access the Internet and have the knowledge to navigate it. In this day and age using a computer is something that has to be taught and learned. Even the older generations who aren't familiar with more technical aspects of the web still can find their way to social networking sites such as Facebook and Match.com. The younger the generation is,

it seems to be more tech savvy than their previous generations.

So what is the digital divide? Who is it that makes the gap from closing up? I would have to say the only thing keeping everyone from being connected on the Internet is a person or his/her family's economic situation or families who choose to not use this technology.

For example the Amish have no reason to use the Internet, the people they connect with are those in their community. The tribes in the Amazon have no earthly idea what the Internet is and in their ignorance they are free from the urge to connect around the world.

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Cyber Dating

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Cyber dating is a phenomenon that has taken the world by storm and only continues to grow. From a beginning of dating sites like eHarmony.com and match.com to people meeting on Facebook or other social networking sites, nowadays cyber dating is everywhere.

People are constantly looking for a connection, but are they really achieving this through online dating? Let's start with this year's film *Her*. It tells the story of a man who falls in love with a personalized computer device reminiscent to me of the iPhone's Siri. They develop a relationship even she isn't a real thing, just an automated computer that can get smarter with the more interaction it receives.

The movie seems far-fetched, but is it really? According to the *Washington Post*, over 41,000,000 Americans have tried online dating at some point in their lives. This could entail simple, completely online relationships that only deal with computer correspondence all the way to people who have moved beyond that and

have actually met and now have physical relationships. Either way, they both began with the Internet.

The most interesting relationships online to me are the couples who have been 'dating' for years but haven't ever met in real life. Two committed individuals who have never even kissed or held hands that have been together for years at a time.

I can't even fathom it and I'm apparently not the only one with television shows like MTV's *Catfish* where the shows hosts follow people in online relationships and help them meet for the first time. It seems that in almost every other episode, the people are not at all what they told their partners they were, sometimes they weren't even the gender they were expecting.

On the other hand, I can sometimes see the appeal: if you never meet, it's a lot less commitment than a real relationship, which in turn means less stress and less confinement. There are no pressures when you can be whatever you choose to be online. No struggling worrying about what you are going to wear on a date, no worrying about whether they are going to want to come home with you at the end of the night; they are simply someone there to talk to when you need them which brings us back to the movie *Her* and its relevancy in today's society.

Maybe we are already imitating falling in love with someone who isn't really there.

The biggest drawback from cyber dating to me would have to be the obvious potential dangers of it. As *Catfish* shows, you can't trust what someone online is telling you, because after all, they are still a complete stranger. Until you have concrete evidence that they are who they really say they are i.e. you actually physically meet them or video chat with them online, then you can never really trust them for sure. I at least could not. Why risk devoting so much to something that doesn't even really exist? Or worse, what if I did meet up with them and they turned out to be a serial killer or a rapist?

I would invest in some serious background check software to make sure I wasn't setting myself up for complete failure before I ever got serious about online dating.

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Twitterature

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Twitterature is a very uncommon and unknown word to many. It is a word coined by Alexander Aciman and Emmett Rensin, two young University of Chicago students in 2009. They wrote a book entitled “Twitterature”, a term which they defined as being an “amalgamation of ‘Twitter’ and ‘literature’; humorous reworking’s of literary classics for the 21st century understanding, in portions of 20 tweets or fewer”.

The two friends have used this concept and produced the Web 2.0 version of CliffsNotes. Each book is condensed into about two pages of tweets. While tweeting may not be for everyone, the one-liners presented do a great job of condensing the main points into a few interesting lines that pretty much sum up what the book needs to say, with a bit of modern banter and some “lols and omgs” along the way.

Alexander Aciman and Emmett Rensin came up with numerous well known novels and converted them into Twitterature. They turned 76 of these classic novels into

Twitterature, most pieces narrated by the main character of the original text but adapted to the Twitter world.

For example they used Hamlet, Dante's Inferno and Opedius. However, they created an actual book on what they believed the characters would say in the 21st century understanding titled: *Twitterature: The World's Greatest Books Retold Through Twitter*.

Some examples for Hamlet given from Hamlet would be

my royal father gone and nobody seems to care

and

STOP TRYING TO CONTROL ME. I won't conform! I wish my skin would just ... melt.

They even converted the ever famous Harry Potter series into the Twitter world texts.

OMG I'm a WIZARD! And my parents are DEAD WIZARDS! Off to magic boarding school. PEACE HOMIES!

and

Oh man, big tournament at my school this year!! PSYCHED! I hope nobody dies this year, and every year as if by clockwork.

As can be seen, this is a very different way of writing literature, however, it is so modern it was bound to be popular, especially with the amount of people using social media.

The authors of Twitterature, both nineteen years old then, have quickly become rich and famous, however, their dreams are not yet complete. Alexander Aciman's work has appeared in The New York Times and the New York Sun. He would like to be a writer, and live his days reading and writing with his brothers in the Mediterranean basin.

Emmett Rensin, on the other hand, dreams of becoming a sea captain. He has settled on a mastery of card magic and shaggy-dog jokes, and penning the Great American Novel.

If you have not yet read their novel, it is greatly recommended and likely to give a clear understanding of famous novels along with some laughs.

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Internet Addiction

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Would it be a stretch to say that we live in a world, which runs almost entirely on technology? I don't think so. In fact, I think that this statement – minus the word “almost” – would be significantly accurate; especially with the introduction of bitcoins, which are in short, a form of online currency.

Most of these technologies in some way, shape, or form utilize the Internet which is defined by operators at dictionary.com as “the global communication network that allows almost all computers worldwide to connect and exchange information.” With the knowledge that we already use the Internet so much within our everyday lives, would it really surprise you if someone told you that they have been diagnosed with Internet Addiction Disorder?

As we know, extended time spent on the Internet can be productive (for example, a college student gathering research by viewing journal articles by other researchers of the same topic, via online databases) and we also know

that extended time on the Internet can be highly entertaining (for example, someone may spend hours on youtube viewing flash mob videos).

What some of us may not know, or maybe realize, is that this prolonged usage may interfere with daily life and things that may inhabit it. Things like creating new interpersonal relationships and sustaining old ones, or perhaps getting a job so that you can finally move out of your parent's basement.

In a nutshell, if you feel more comfortable talking to your online friends than you do with your real ones or perhaps when you can't seem to pull your self away from your computer, smartphone, online game, etc., even when it's extended use has unfavorable consequences, you may have Internet addiction disorder.

Internet Addiction Disorder occurs when the individual is troubled by impulses telling him or her to engage in numerous online activity. The most common of these activities include:

- Cyber Sex
- Cyber Relationships
- Net Compulsions and
- Information Overload

In most cases, Internet addiction is the result of someone trying to escape the realities of the real world as spending an extended period online can temporarily soothe feelings such as loneliness, depression, or anxiety. However the “soothing” rarely lasts.

This disorder can also lead physical discomfort such as Carpel Tunnel Syndrome, strained vision, severe headaches, pronounced weight loss, or gain. Some steps you can take to be relieved of Internet Addiction are:

1. by keeping track of how you use the Internet for recreational purposes, and by paying attention to any triggers that may provoke these impulses.
2. You can also set goals for when you can use the Internet. For example you might try setting a timer.
3. You can, in addition, replace your time spent on the Internet with healthy activities, such as engaging in a sport, or perhaps going to lunch with friends or family.

Though some may not consider Internet addiction as an actual disorder, it is; and is not one to be taken lightly.

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Online Prostitution

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Prostitution is something that I have heard about many times in my life. Rather it is on a movie, song, or even seeing it on cops. Although I had heard so much about it, it has never really played a role in my life because I'm from a small town where things such as this we never saw first-hand. However, with the growth of the Internet its true what they say you can find anything you're looking for and as I learned prostitution is no exception. The Internet really has changed everything as we know it.

Online prostitution is exactly what it sounds like, women and men who sell sexual acts using the Internet. With the way the Internet works anyone is able to post anything and some people see this as a way to make money.

When thinking about online prostitution you probably think to yourself how dangerous something like this can be, and while you are right the prostitutes see it differently. Considering most online prostitutes was or either still are street prostitutes they see this as less

dangerous. Their reason being you get to talk to and meet people before you engage in any acts. You can collect their information and inform people before leaving out. So if something were to go wrong people could inform authorities.

When you compare that to standing on a corner and waiting for the next car to come up and hopping in, Yeah online prostitution does seem a little bit safer.

Tamika Jones, a former prostitute, says on an online article at <http://www.pctyrant.com/hookers.html> that she enjoys online prostitution because she doesn't have to deal with pimps, cops, and crack heads anymore. Stating that the majority of the people she encounters in online prostitution are Caucasian and Indian males.

Another big thing is the money that can be made in online prostitution. Compared to making \$50 here and there prostitutes find that there are men out there willing to pay the big bucks. One prostitute states that she made \$20,000 in one night working a manufactures release party, and not only that she was flown first class their and back and had a limo waiting to pick her up. Which is more than many of us could say we've ever had.

One of the biggest reasons that Ms. Jones thinks they make more money is because anyone can drive down a

street see a prostitute and pick her up. When you actually take the time to sit down get on the Internet and find a specific prostitute however it shows that you value that service and are willing to pay more to receive it.

Another huge benefit of working in the online prostitution ring is the pay to the highest bidder opportunity. When working on a street corner if a car pulls up you have to take your chance because you don't know when the next car will be coming, but when you work online you can auction yourself off and let people bid against each other to get your maximum money.

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Hacker Culture

Bethany Hughes

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If you're anything like me, then you would probably relate the word hacker to some nerdy kid, with no social skills, typing furiously away on a beat up old computer at 3 am, with the only light in the room coming from the glow of the computer screen, and...well, you get the picture. You might also relate the word to science fiction, or to some illegal activity.

It turns out that hacking isn't really related to any of that at all. Or at least those who consider themselves to be hackers wouldn't describe themselves that way. In fact, this mental imagery that I've conjured up relates to American pop culture, and their description of what a hacker is.

Although there are some hackers who have been known to engage in illegal activity, most hackers tend to view themselves as self-assigned agents working to improve the overall experience of Internet society. But I don't want to get ahead of myself here. In order to understand the true nature of hacker culture, or what

hackers actually do with computers, it's imperative that I answer my initial question.

What is a hacker?

According to Svetlana Nikitina, it's difficult to define the word hacker because most definitions are contradictory, and there aren't many groups outside of the hacker culture who can come up with a satisfactory definition. Kim Komando describes hacking as "a dark spiral of teenage angst", whereas Merriam-Webster describes a hacker as, "An expert at programming and solving problems with a computer." Most definitions, however, tend to lean toward describing a mixture of the negative and positive activities that hackers engage in. Nikitina actually cites one author who describes this paradigm.

It's called a hack when you do something in an ugly way. But when you do something so clever that you somehow beat the system, that's also called a hack...ugly and imaginative solutions have something in common: they both break the rules.

With this opposing paradigm, Nikitina stresses the point that hackers are complicated contributors to the Internet society. There are times when hackers engage in illegal activity to make things better for society, such as

exposing a cyber crime ring; likewise, there are also times when hackers engage in illegal hacking activity for other reasons, such as raising one's personal hacking status or gaining a monetary reward. For those outside of the hacker culture, it can be difficult to determine the difference between these two types of hackers. This is most likely due to the fact that most people have pop culture as their main source of gaining information about hackers.

In light of all of this information, it seems important to determine the difference between the two different types of hackers. Those who live within the hacker culture have described hackers who engage in illegal activity for personal gain as “crackers”. When one views the actual hacking process, it really involves a “cracking” of various computer codes in order to gain access to information—whether the information is obtained illegally or not. Perhaps the thought of “cracking” computer codes holds a negative connotation with it, and thus seemed more fitting to describe this group of hackers.

There is one test that an individual can do to determine whether the hacker is a true hacker or a “cracker”.

According to Fred Turner, there are six specific values that all hackers are asked to follow while engaging

in the activity. These values, known as “hacker ethics”, are listed as follows:

1. Access to computers – and anything which might teach you something about the way the world works – should be unlimited and total
2. All information should be free
3. Mistrust authority – promote decentralization
4. Hackers should be judged by their hacking, not bogus criteria such as degrees, age, race, or position
5. You can create art and beauty on a computer
6. Computers can change your life for the better

Overall, it seems that if a hacker doesn't utilize these values while hacking, then they would most likely fall under the category of “cracker”. This especially applies to the first two values listed by Turner.

So, what is a hacker?

As you can see, trying to define what a hacker is can become pretty complicated. There are all different types of hackers. There are groups of teenagers who crack computer codes “for fun”, and could easily fit into Komando’s definition of a hacker.

Also, there are groups of hackers who are more academic in their pursuits of understanding computers better. These hackers probably had a lot to do with the establishment of the “hacker ethics” listed by Turner. Hackers are social agents who crack codes and engage in technological advancements to make computers better for the rest of society. Perhaps the most unifying aspect of the hacker culture is the fact that they all “break the rules”. In other words, a hacker beats the system in order to make the system better.

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Piracy

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Music, Movies, Images, Video Games, and Apps or programs, these all, among other things, are what is used by millions of people every single day to commit the act of piracy.

Piracy is the act of obtaining copyrighted files or data through downloading with out the permission of the initial distributor or paying for it. This act is considered to be a victimless crime and this is true to some extent. While the act of piracy does allow mass amounts of people to gain access to illegally obtained files for free which does take a large amount of money away from the distributors there is an upside. The more that the files are passed around, the more wide spread the artist or originator of the files becomes.

There are a multitude of ways that one may pirate something, music and movies being the main two. There are trillions of apps on the android market on smartphones that allow the user to import songs straight into their music library. There are trillions of computer programs

that allow the user to simply search for the title of a movie or the name of a song and allows them to download it. The act of sharing or mass producing and distributing these pirated files with others is also considered piracy.

One computer program that has been destroyed in 2010 was Limewire. This program allowed the pirated files to become more accessible to more people had it. This program allowed users to download music, movies, and images. This site, though now removed, is one of the trillions that allows the user to do the exact same thing.

Piracy is committed for many reasons. One of the simplest or easiest to think about is because..... “it's free”. This is the epitome of the classic “having your cake and eating it to”. Why wouldn't anyone want to get what they want and not pay for it?

Another reason that piracy is so common is because it is so accessible and easy to do. With all of the apps and programs that are about there that are free to get, people are practically putting the free copyrighted information right in front of you. Any media files you wanted right there with a click of a button or the touch of a finger is very enticing to anyone that has to ability to effectively use to the Internet and with the direction that this world is moving in, this appears to be almost everyone (excluding senior citizens).

At the end of the day, piracy makes sense to anyone, it is free media whenever you want and most important it's free. But also at the end of the day, this is still a crime.

According to the Business Software Alliance, more than 105,000 jobs and 5.3 billion dollars. This was reported in 2001, since then the cyberculture that we live in has increased on geometric rate as well as the rates of piracy and the amounts of jobs that are effected by the money loss.

The most simple way to avoid piracy is to not download media that is not sold to you as free. Hopefully this has been helpful to you in even the smallest manner.

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Cyberpunks

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Cyberpunks are science-fictional stories that are based in the near-future. All these books and tales are usually taking place on Earth. A popular example of cyber-punk is the story Blade Runner. One of my favorite animes, Ghost in the Shell, unknowingly to me, is another example of cyber-punk in the media.

A good number of these stories revolve around anti-heroes, like criminals and hackers. It also seems to me that most of these characters, these anti-heroes, are introverts. They seem extremely calculated and in-depth.

If I had to make a cyber-punk story, I would create my main character as a hacker that had discovered how to travel through the Internet as data, and be able to jump out of any PC or Laptop. However, the more he does this, the harder it becomes for him to be able to transform from human to data. To cure this, he begins collaborating with another experienced tech/med expert that needs him to steal secret files from government agencies to be able to develop a cure for our anti-hero before he completely

digitizes. This will make his condition worsen every time he travels in and out of cyber-space, and will add drama and a plot to build on.

In my own opinion, the best part about cyber-punk is that all these fiction stories could become facts in the near-future. There may be a day coming where we can actually be in cyber space. It's all fiction, don't get me wrong, but the best stories in this genre tend to add just enough realism to make them seem possible. Robo Cop, Mega Man, there are so many popular icons for cyber-punk.

Even Halo, for example. It is a video game/book series that has earth fighting against an alien covenant. To lead our soldiers into combat they genetically modified and enhanced young boys and girls, and trained them to become SPARTANS. Think about that. There are ways now where we take people and enhance them. Some prosthetic limbs we currently develop are better than our actual limbs!

I mean, personally at this time in my life, I would not consider removing a limb for a robotic/prosthetic limb. But there are limbs that can react and preform just like a regular limb! Think about a fire fighter that had a robot arm, and could pick up and move burning objects out of the way without harming him/her self. Instant game changer.

There are a lot of reasons why cyberpunk is becoming more of a “physicalpunk” in my opinion. Most of these ideas that we talk about and create in the cyber world, are becoming modern day mechanisms we use in order to better and enhance our daily life. Now, thanks to technology, the blind can see and the deaf can hear. Remember the reading rainbow guy that played the blind man on Star Trek? That show is based in the far off future and we already have better technology than they utilized in the show.

So much of our lives are enhanced thanks to the impact of cyberpunk, and most people don't even know it. The hover-boards in Back to the Future? They are developing them. The “tie-themselves-shoes”? In development. There are time machines being developed, as well as alternative realities. There's a new movie coming out called “Transcendence” that stars Johnny Depp, and in the movie they legit upload his brain to a COMPUTER. Like, he get uploaded to the Internet!

The difference in cyberpunk and reality, I believe, is that cyberpunk is the idea where as reality is taking that idea and creating it and making it happen. Think about it. There are many things in life we take for granted that we wouldn't think possible fifty years ago.

My Grandmother was born when we didn't have

televisions. She now sees on these 72-inch flat screens the huge displays and screens they have at Cowboy's Stadium and other huge sports arenas.

Everyday, more ideas are becoming tangible, all thanks to cyberpunk ideologies. I truly believe someday either we will be destroyed by technology, or become technology. By becoming technology, let me clarify. With all the enhancements and upgrades we are creating, soon enough we will make something better than ourselves, or the "real thing" as people put it.

There will come a day where someone voluntarily undergoes a difficult and life threatening procedure just to get an enhancement to their own personal body. It's not to crazy to believe, if you really think about it. Cyberpunk is ultimately every nerd's dream: "Science fiction becoming fact". And that, my readers, is a fact.

Cyber-Art

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“If you ask me what I came to do in this world, I, an artist, will answer you: I am here to live out loud.” - Émile Zola

I would say that ‘living out loud’ adequately describes the attempts of many artists today, including those who build and shape their works in the cyber medium. Émile Zola was a French novelist and playwright who is known for his works’ reflections of the revolution. I selected to quote Zola because I can see a connection between revolution and the Internet – sounds dramatic, I know. Understand, though, that we are connected today on a global scale that is unprecedented.

The French revolted when word got out to *enough people* about the corruption within the government. In 2014, billions of individuals can receive the same information within the same day. Some of the best examples of these global wildfires of interest that spread like French rebellion?

Art

The struggle of art is mixed in this country. We see it diminishing in schools and universities, yet pop culture celebrates art in a variety of forms: music, dance, acting, performance. In spite of any resistance, art is continuing to grow and change to meet the demands of the growing numbers of artists these days. The Internet provides an opportunity for creation and collaboration for the modern artist.

Cyberart is the term classifying all forms of art created with some kind of hardware and software. This can include [images](#), [websites](#), [music](#), and others. The development of cyberart is in the millions of artists who use the space on the Internet as their artistic-loudspeaker, as Zola might put it. The creative spaces being generated on the Internet to allow artists an opportunity to share their concepts will draw in more artists as the years pass. We can see a bright future for the development and expansion of art in the real and cyber worlds.

Cyber Racism

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Cyber racism is best defined as racially offensive content on the web through videos, pictures, comments and websites such as social media, emails and text messages. Cyber racism is a form of [racism](#). Online activities or published material that result in offensive comments in relation to a person's race, color or national or ethnic origin, have the same effect as similar offline activities. Cyber racism may present as racial hatred or cyber bullying, as defined here in the book.

It is seen very often on social media sites such as, Facebook, Twitter, and MySpace, YouTube etc. Cyber racism can be perceived on many public sites all over the Internet. You would think with it being a new era and with diversity being a major issue stressed to reinforce, people would not center a certain group of people out over the media, but it is the easiest form of racism.

Being racist over the Internet is easier than being racist face-to-face. There is no face-to-face confrontation and no room for hostile, physical contact, so people prefer

to hide behind their computers to discriminate another person or persons. The increased use of web 2.0 technologies (Facebook, Myspace, twitter and YouTube) has provided forums for racist material. The Internet has made it much more convenient for racist people to circulate their racist opinions. Cyber racism operates across national borders, making it harder on the different governments to fix the problem.

Someone should step in and help control the verbal abuse and racism that people are enduring over the Internet. America is not the only country racism is an issue in. Racism is happening all over the world. Austria is having a major issue with cyber racism right now. Even though the law is not the whole answer to cyber racism, it must be a critical part of the answer. Without the ultimate sanction of the law, the scourge of cyber racism will continue to grow unchecked.

I understand we all have the freedom of speech, but some of the comments, videos and websites need to be monitored and there should be consequences for the unacceptable comments and content. We need the sanction of the law. Even though the law is not the only solution to cyber racism, it is a critical part of the answer. Australia's Race discrimination commissioner rang the bell on cyber racism. There were complaints to the commissioner that

racial hatred rose 59 percent in 2012-13. Cyber racism accounted for 41 percent of the racial hatred complaints. Cyber racism happens to EVERY race in EVERY country, not just one. Read more: <http://www.smh.com.au/federal-politics/political-opinion/we-can-tame-the-cyber-racism-beast-20101118-17yxu.html#ixzz2urJfjx00>

<http://www.martinlutherking.org./rapperlyrics.html>.

This website is an example of a ‘cloaked’ website. At first glance it looks like it is all information on Martin Luther King. It has links to further information about him, the holiday named after him, and civil rights library etc. But if you look closer you can see where it says “Why the King Holiday Should be Repealed.” If you look under “Rap Lyrics” it only lists rap songs that talk about killing or hurting white people. This website tells you everything to look for. I thought it was interesting so thought I would share. <http://tuftsobserver.org/2013/10/cloaked-websites-the-dark-side-of-digital-media/>

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Podcasting

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There is no question that the proliferation of the Internet has rapidly revolutionized the way that we, as a society, think about and consume media. In the very recent past, a number of media devices would be required of someone who wished to experience television, film, music, and radio to the fullest. Now, in a very short period of time, a computer with access to the Internet has replaced the television set, radio, record player, and VHS, allowing a user to access any sort of media they wish with a single device. While the rise of the Internet has not necessarily created a fundamental shift in the type or content of the media we consume, it has dramatically altered the way that that media is distributed to and accessed by the audience.

The podcast is a new form of media that, while completely unique to the Internet, has its roots in traditional radio programming. [Definitions](#) of the word *podcast* vary from [source](#) to [source](#), but a podcast is generally agreed to be an audio or video file that is

downloaded directly onto a computer's hard drive, and that can be played directly on the computer or transferred to a portable mp3 device.

Once downloaded, a podcast can be played an unlimited number of times, whenever and wherever the listener wishes, obviously differentiating it from a radio broadcast, which is only available to listen to once, and only at the time that it is being aired.

A podcast is also distinctly different from a webcast or Internet radio, but in [a less apparent manner](#). Unlike a podcast, which is downloaded permanently to a hard drive, a webcast is streamed, or played directly in your web browser via your Internet connection.

Given that podcasts did not really come into prevalence until recent years, it may be odd to think that their [history](#) goes back nearly two decades, with early attempts at sharing digital radio and talk media limited by the more primitive technology of that time. The [development](#) of the MP3 format in 1991 allowed for high quality audio to be compressed into small files, innovating digital file sharing and setting the stage for the developments to come.

One such development was the introduction of the Apple's iPod, which allowed users to download MP3 files

from their computer onto the portable device, but despite what the name “podcast” might imply, it would be several more years until Apple introduced podcast support to the iTunes store.

The primary driving force behind the podcast was not Apple, but the refining of [RSS](#) (Real Simple Syndication) feed technology in 2003, which enabled users to subscribe to their desired content and have it delivered directly to their hard drive through their Internet connection at regular intervals, as the content makers post it.

The word *podcast*, a portmanteau of the words *iPod* and *broadcast*, was coined shortly after, in 2004, in an [article](#) that Ben Hammersley published in *The Guardian*. He wrote:

With the benefit of hindsight, it all seems quite obvious. MP3 players, like Apple’s iPod, in many pockets, audio production software cheap or free, and weblogging an established part of the internet; all the ingredients are there for a new boom in amateur radio.

And a [boom](#) there was. Hammersley’s article appeared in February and in September of that same year, Google’s search engine produced a mere 526 results for the word *podcast*. Less than a month later, the same search returned over 100,000 hits. The following year, Apple

integrated podcast software directly into their iTunes store, and the New Oxford American Dictionary dubbed *podcast* “Word of the Year.”

Since 2006, the general public’s awareness of podcasts has grown two-fold. As of 2013, there were approximately 250,000 unique podcasts in existence and around 100 million Americans had heard a podcast. Podcast topics cover everything from politics and economics to comedy to history to health to education.

They are not only free to download, but they are cheap to produce, and many traditional radio stations, such as NPR, have embraced the podcast as a means to reach audiences outside their scheduled broadcast times. Podcast listeners are still in the minority, and most are of a younger generation that relies more on the Internet than the older media formats of the past. While initially skeptical, advertisers are increasingly turning to podcasts as a platform to pitch their products.

As podcast content creation gets cheaper and more accessible, the number and variety of programs available will continue to grow. We are already living in an age where there is a very good possibility that with a simple search, anyone can find a podcast that relates to any one of their hobbies or areas of interest, allowing users to

personally cater their listening experience depending on their wants and needs.

It is expected that as more people turn away from traditional media forms and towards the Internet for the majority of their entertainment needs, podcasts will only continue to grow in number, diversity, listenership and quality.

Cybercrime

Chris McHargue

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When a crime is committed through the use of computers, networks, devices, and other various types of technology this is known as a cybercrime. Cybercrime can range from fraud, cyberstalking, and to infringements on copyright laws. Even more serious types of cybercrime could be the cause of terrorist activities, espionage, and messing with stock market numbers.

For every person who uses a computer, no matter where he or she is located on the globe, they are at risk of becoming a victim of a cybercrime if they are not careful.

Watching out for malicious software or “malware” is a great way to make sure that you yourself do not fall victim. Malware is a software that only purpose is to harm your computer and computer systems. But how did this virus come to be on your computer? There are several ways that this could happen. You could have either went to a suspicious website, a legitimate website that has been hacked, opening a link in a contaminated email, or seeing a message that asks you to download some sort of

software for your computer. Malware allows a hacker to obtain your personal information through these various types of viruses.

Three of the most common types of malware are: trojans, botnets, and scareware. When it comes to trojans the scariest thing is that you do not have to click on anything to obtain this virus. Just looking around a web page is enough for your computer to become infected. Trojans are also the most common virus that you will run into. You used to get them only through file sharing or porn sites, but not literally any site is capable of causing your computer harm. Trojans have developed to the point to where you can have this virus but your computer will show no symptom of having it. It is silent but deadly.

Botnets are considered to be the source of all spam. This virus is used in espionage, extortion, and identity theft. And when it comes to scareware it is not one specific virus. Instead it is any type of program or software that pops up and advertises for malware protection for your computer. And any click on one of these windows will open your computer up to trouble.

Cybercrime attacks more than just personal computers. If you want to avoid being hit by cybercrime it would be best for you to not end up working for a financial firm. A survey by a consultant firm PxC

(PricewaterhouseCoopers) reported that 39 percent financial services were victims of economic crime in 2012. Only 17 percent in other industries were affected by cybercrime. Andrew Clark of PwC stated that “Cybercrime is growing and the methods are constantly evolving. We see no abatement in attacks on banks’ infrastructure.”

When we think of cybercrime we tend to think of crazy advanced computers and security systems, geniuses, spy work, hard drives, thumb drives, and so on. Hollywood for decades has been making films that involve cybercrime: WarGames (1983), Live Free or Die Hard (2007), and Swordfish (2001) just to name a few.

However, cybercrime does not have to be this advanced or complicated. Social networking sites, such as, Facebook, Twitter, and Youtube can be used to commit a cybercrime. For example, a man named Jonny Craig, who used to be the lead singer of Lexington, Ky band Emarosa, became in trouble with the law when it was discovered that he was selling Apple MacBooks to adoring fans through his Twitter account in 2010 and 2011.

One might ask: what is the problem in selling laptops on line? Well, there is not a problem with selling laptops on line as long as you actually have a laptop to sale. Craig scammed at least sixteen fans out of money which is

somewhere between the amount of \$8,000 and \$12,800.

As can be seen, cybercrime is everywhere. As long as you are on the web you have the potential to fall victim of cybercrime. And cybercrime can effect people in different ways. Installing correct virus detection programs and updating it regularly can help you from falling victim. Also, just learning how to use the web and the dangers that come with it will help you in becoming safer user.

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Social Networking

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Social networking is something that I use often for many different tasks. It is also something from which I see both positive and negative impacts that can result from increased/unwise/incorrect use of.

Social networks have changed the way our culture communicates completely. It has made our world so much more connected than it has ever been before. Through social networking, not only can we contact people miles away, but we can also keep in touch with close friends that we may just not see all too often, see how they are doing, etc. I personally use Social Media for these reasons, along with a few others. Aside from connecting with friends and family members, one can also create and promote events on different social networking sites.

Being a youth minister, this is a great way to fill in all of my youth (who are all a part of the social networking world) on things that we have going on. Social networking has not only changed how we communicate but also how we view and understand relationships.

Many would say that the creation of social networking have also helped to speed up the process of forming relationships. However, one study done by Scruton (2010) found that new communication methods through technology do not help speed up the process of forming relationships, but simply changes how the relationships are “conducted and understood (2010, p. 49). The main concern with solely communicating through social networks is that your friend is only communicating to you through a screen. It is truly challenging to try to communicate all of your feelings without actually speaking. Scruton (2010) also stated that:

The more people satisfy their need for companionship through relationships carried out on screen, the less they will develop friendships of that other kind, the kind that offers help and comfort in the real trials of human life. (p. 49)

Rich verbal cues are crucial when it comes to communicating effectively. According to Media Richness Theory, different channels of communication have different levels of richness when it comes to verbal cues. Obviously, a communication channel such as face-to-face communication would be the most rich because there are all sorts of verbal and nonverbal cues involved. That is one thing that is lacking in communication via social networking. There is ultimately an absence of such cues in

any form of computer mediated communication. So, clearly, when communicating through social networking, it is crucial to keep in mind the social cues that are present and the ones that are lacking and to in order to communicate effectively through this channel.

While there are many channels for communication, there are really only two types of communication within those channels and those are effective communication and ineffective communication. But it is a two-way road. Whether or not the communication is effective or ineffective will depend on both the sender's wording, tone and intentions, and also the interpretation of the receiver. Social networking, depending on the way individuals use it, can either increase or decrease one's communication skills. It can be a great tool, if used wisely.

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The Authors

Bethany Hughes. Major in Communication Studies and Religious Studies. I chose to write a chapter about hackers and hacker culture because it seemed like this area in cyberculture was underrepresented in the mainstream media. Many people have misconceptions about what it means to be a "hacker", and I felt that it was relevant to reinvent the conception of this word by busting the myths surrounding it. I am interested in cyberculture because it is so prevalent in the daily lives of most people in the world today. There have been many times that my behavior has reflected the effects of cyberculture, and I had no idea of its impact on me until I took a class on it. Since I've taken this course, I've been able to put my experiences into words, and I can describe the world of the Internet in a way that is easy to comprehend. Whenever someone asks me about my life goals, I'm usually taken aback. I know that I should be more prepared for this question, but somehow I never am. If I were to put my life goals into words, then I think it would be sufficient to say that I aspire to be a good person. I want to give back to the people that give to me. Whether I accomplish this goal by doing something big or something small, I live for the satisfaction of knowing that my life has been lived for the benefit of others.

Candra Hall. Major in Popular Culture Studies and Minor in Folk Studies. I chose Cyberculture not only because it is an upper-level class that counts as an elective for my major, but because I consider myself to be a relatively well-educated citizen of the Internet, and I find the way that the rise and proliferation of the web is constantly changing our culture in a way that is both visible and and tangible, and ways that we cannot even begin to fathom yet, absolutely fascinating. The internet has become the most powerful driving force behind popular culture, and as such has serious and direct implications on our future as a society and a species. In the future I would like to go to graduate school for library science or some sort of museum or curatorial program. My dream job is to work for public radio as a librarian or archivist. I think that understanding and preserving our culture is the only way to continue to move forward and build a better future.

Chris McHargue. Major in Film Studies with a minor in Communication studies. My goal in life is to combine my passion for video production and what Jesus Christ has done in my life.

Cody Wooten. Major in Popular Culture Studies and Marketing. I choose Cyberbullying because it's an issue that is costing young lives, and I intend on not just

highlighting the issue, but providing creative and effective solutions. My goal in life is to become a musician and help create education and awareness for serious issues that can have severe consequences in regards to cyberculture.

Donald Simpson. Major in Communication Studies.

Donnie McHenry, Jr. Major in Communications with a minor in sales. I chose to write about online prostitution because I wanted people to see how we have evolved with technology and are finding ways to use the internet for every day uses. I have a very high interest in cyberculture because I think that it's something many people tend to not really pay attention to but it plays such a huge role in our everyday life. My goals in life are to go into sales and become successful.

Elyse Madigan. Major in communication studies and minor in international business. I chose cyberstalking because of its importance and relevance in today's digital world. My goal in life is to become a successful lawyer.

Ethan T. Mefford. Major in Communication Studies. I chose CyberArt because I am an ardent supporter of the humanities. Art is fundamental to any culture; creativity fuels innovation and development. Art in Cyberculture encourages the free expression of ideas on the interminable space of the internet, and I think that this

attitude will help broaden the possibilities for the public domain, both online and otherwise. My personal goals are to foster inclusive and hopeful ideologies in those around me, and to build a harmonious life for myself.

Hannah Burd. Major in Corporate Communications. I chose Cyber racism because I am against racism and discrimination. I hope I can do my part in changing the way people in our society thinks of each other. I have loved Cyberculture. I believe everyone needs to learn about it because our generation is evolving into where everything is technology based and social media is taking over. I learn many secrets about the web and the people behind it.

Isabelle Fuster. Major in Interdisciplinary Studies with a focus in Art. I chose cyber dating because it is a growing phenomenon in today's society. It is interesting to see how people are now meeting in such an informal way and making relationships work that last for lifetimes. I would like to learn more about the psychology behind cyberculture, studying the effects it has on all different aspects of life. My goals in life are to be happy! To live my life to the fullest and to never do anything because of money, but instead because I'm passionate about it. I want to travel more, eat more, dabble with organic farming and be a curator or promote local artists. The possibilities are endless.

Jeffrey Walker. Major in Psychology & Communication Studies. Cyberculture is important to me because technology is a growing entity and will become more important and influential in our everyday lives. I will go on to get my Masters Degree in Psychology and then my Doctorate and become a Psychologist.

Jonathan Martin. Major in Communication Studies. The topic that I chose was Social Networks and the reason I chose it was because I see great value in social networks. I also see the harm that it can do. I personally use social networking all the time for a variety of things such as planning events, keeping up with students in my ministry, and more. Therefore, it is very useful to me. At the same time, I hate to see others misuse this great tool which leads to nothing good. I am interested in Cyberculture because it deals with the primary means of how we communicate in today's society. It helps us to gain a better understanding of the technology we use and the billions of websites we visit on a daily basis. My goals in life are to first get my bachelor's degree in Communication Studies from WKU this May. Then, I will be getting married in August and hope to have a job as a full-time youth minister at a church by that time. I also hope to first get accepted and then to achieve my Master of Divinity Degree in Christian Ministry from the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. I hope to one day be a father as well.

Jordan Smith. Major in Communication studies. Internet addiction is something I recently heard about. I never thought someone could actually be addicted to the internet. Maybe very very fond of it, but not clinically diagnosed with an addiction to it. This peaked my interest. My goals in life are to be successful in what ever career path I choose and live comfortably.

Maggie Riney. Major in Communication Studies with a minor in Creative Writing. I chose to speak about censorship in the web because I am very interested in electronic censorship, especially in Asian countries. My goal in life is to teach English in South Korea after I graduate in December.

Minh Dao. Major in Communication Studies. I am interested in Cyberculture because I want to learn about the issues related to the Internet and how the Internet has changed the way we communicate, feel, and think. I chose to write about Collective Intelligence because I think it has become an important social phenomenon that needs to be addressed and informed. I have set many goals in life and hopefully I will make them all come true. For now, I want to have a successful career in Human Resources Development, to be an influential public figure, to make the world a better place, to travel around the world, to own beautiful houses near the beach and mountain, and to have

a happy family with a wonderful husband and beautiful children.

Monet Becker. Major in Communication Studies. I chose this major because I have always been intrigued by the methods in which people communicate and why. I hope to use my degree and go work abroad in Volkswagen's marketing department in Germany or for Volkswagen USA. I chose to write about web radio because I am an avid user of most all popular web radio sites, and the history of web radio interested me.

Paige Drazga. Major in communications with a minor in marketing and media & convention planning. I found Cyberculture to be very interesting because it shows you that the web is more than what meets the eye. People all around the world access the web which means they are as close as the click of a button. My future goals are to graduate from Western Kentucky University and eventually become an event coordinator for a major corporation.

Patrick Sparks. Major in Communication Studies. I chose this topic because I had no idea what it was, and it sounded interesting to research. My goal in life is to find a way to sustain happiness.

Peej Packer. Major in Communication Studies, with two minors in Broadcasting and Sales. I chose the topic of Netiquette because electronic communication is still a fairly new concept, compared to other forms of communication. In a sense, netiquette is the nonverbal cues of computer-mediated communication and it should be considered when posting on social media, sending e-mails, composing blogs, etc. Netiquette is only a small component of cyberculture and my interest goes far beyond this one aspect. Cyberculture is truly a fascinating way to think about the internet and how our world has changed because of this culture.

Robert Greenleaf. Major in Corporate & Organizational Communication. I chose cyber activism because I am very interested in that subject matter and how it relates to communication. My goal in life is to develop an appreciation for living in the moment.

About the Editor

Riverson Rios is an associate professor with the Instituto de Cultura e Arte of the Universidade Federal do Ceará (UFC) in Fortaleza, Brazil, where he's been teaching since 1986. He has a Ph.D. in Computer Science from the University of Ottawa, Canada (1998), a Master's degree in Computer Science from the Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro (1987) and a B.Sc. in Computer Science from UFC in 1983. He is the editor of three other books, and the author of four book chapters and eighty free full papers. Fluent in English, French, German, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish, he decided to learn Russian only recently, being *любовь* his favorite word. His main areas of interest include cyberculture, digital photography, web advertising and free software. When not doing research at the university, he can be seen playing on the sandy dunes of Fortaleza with his three kids and wife or practicing his beloved volleyball. This academic year prof. Rios is on a leave of absence from his home institution, interacting with new friends at the Western Kentucky University in snowy Bowling Green, where a part of his heart will always be.