

CONTENTS

Introduction	xi
Acknowledgments	xiii
1. The Internet and Social Change	1
Communication Technology and Cultural Change	3
Cyberspace: Perceiving a Conceptual Place	4
Changing Concepts of Time and Space	6
The Internet as Interpersonal Communication	8
The Internet and Media Studies	11
2. Transforming the Internet Into Social Environments	13
IPCT-L: Academic Discussion Lists as Media Environments	22
Conclusion	32
3. Internet Discussion Lists and Forms of Address	33
Orality and Literacy	36
Group Dynamics	40
Lurking on the Net	43
Flaming and Disruptive Discourse Styles	45
Case Study: Flaming as Social Initiation	49
Evolution of a List	50
Conclusion	55

4. Gender Issues in Online Discourse	57
Have You Ever Met a Female Computer?	58
Gender Inequality	61
Online Gendered Styles of Behavior	65
Anonymity Online	67
Changing Gender Styles	70
Gender and Self-Disclosure	73
Case Study: Phillips and Werman Bonding Over the Wires	75
Gender Blindness	78
Going Beyond the Gender Boundaries	80
Conclusion	81
5. Characteristics of Interpersonal Communication in CMC	83
Voluntary Involvement and Technology Skills	89
Media and Identity	90
Fantasy and Real-Time Game Interaction	94
Exchanging Playful Messages	98
Developing New Forms of Expression	100
Personal Disclosure in Mediated Space	102
Conclusion	105
6. Building Interpersonal Relationships in Mediated Environments	107
Shared Experience	108
Security and Satisfaction	114
Understanding the Other	116
Role-Play	118
Relationships are Built on Reciprocity	121
Online Techniques of Reciprocity	123
Benefits	126
Relationships in Progress	128
Conclusion	133
7. Love Online—Changing Concepts of Physical and Perceptual Space	135
Chat Rooms	138
Cyberdating	140
Gay Romance	143
Online Deception	145

Gender Switching	148
Cybersex	151
Cybersex and Spouses	152
Rape in Cyberspace	153
From Cyberspace to Real Space	156
Conclusion	157
8. Changing Social Concepts of Community	159
VC-L: A Case Study	161
Media Ecological Analysis	169
Text-in-Time	171
Symbolic Form	172
Virtual Feeling	173
Group Attitudes and Beliefs	175
Conclusion	179
9. Internet Support Groups—	
Online Environments and Social Consequences	181
The Rise of Usenet	182
Support Groups as Media Environments	184
Net Addiction	188
Internet Stereotypes	200
Ethical Issues Relating to Internet Support Groups	202
Conclusion	206
10. The Internet and Social Change	207
Net Anarchy and the Hacker Crackdown	209
Cyberterrorism and Hate Speech	213
Heavens's Gate and the Internet	214
Porn on the Net	216
Controlling Content on the Internet	220
Blurring the Boundaries Between Real and Simulated Experiences	221
Software and Its Challenge to Language	226
Conclusion	230
11. The Presentation of Self in Internet Environments	231
Language and Self-Identity	236
Net Persona	239
Initial Reading and GMP Eulogies	243

Media Environments and Presentation of Self	245
Presentation and Performance	249
Electronic Texts and Concepts of Time	250
Sharing Real Feelings in Virtual Space	252
Emerging Internet Cultural Attitudes	254
Conclusion	257
12. Closing Remarks	259
References	263
Author Index	285
Subject Index	291