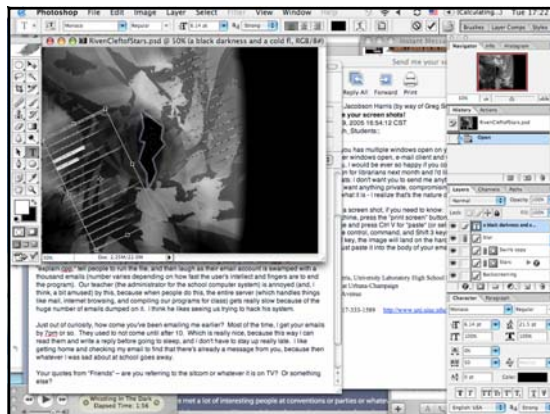


## Coming of Age Online

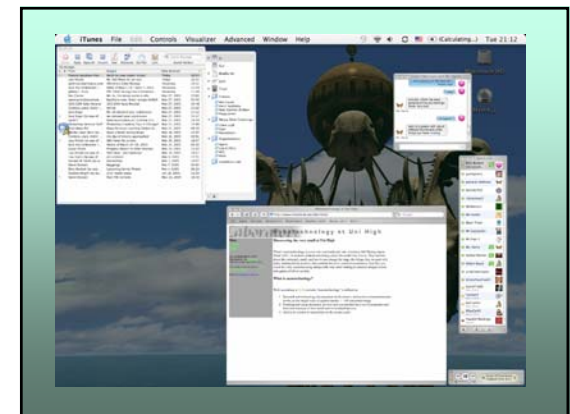
Frances Jacobson Harris  
Hawaii Library Association Conference  
November 12, 2005

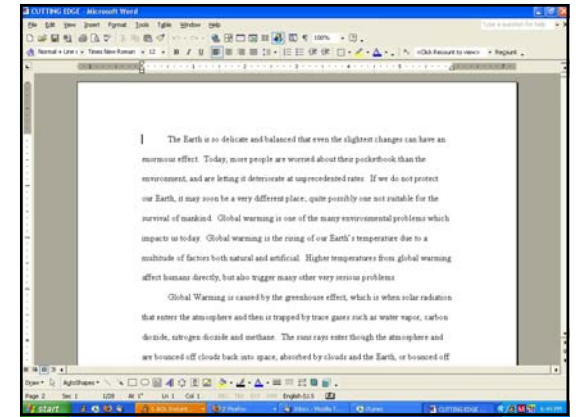
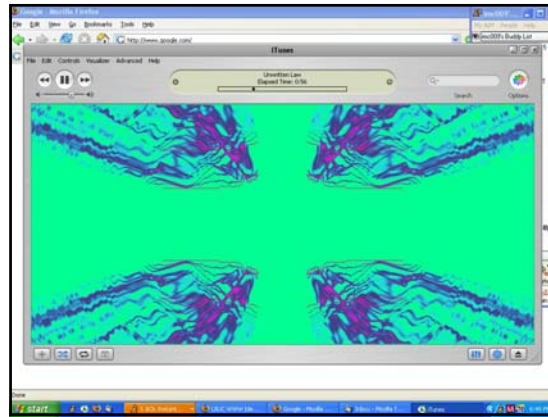
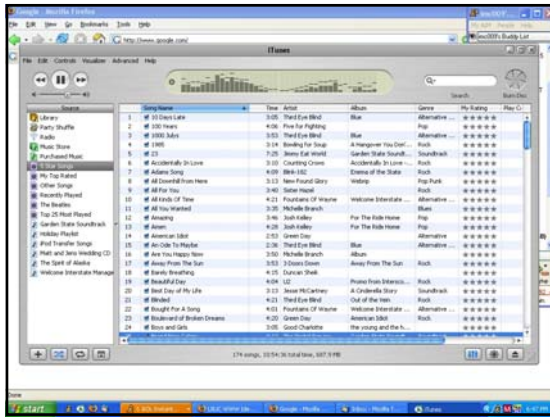
## Serial multitaskers

- Multiple activities
- Multiple modes of media
- Intertwining roles of information and communication technologies



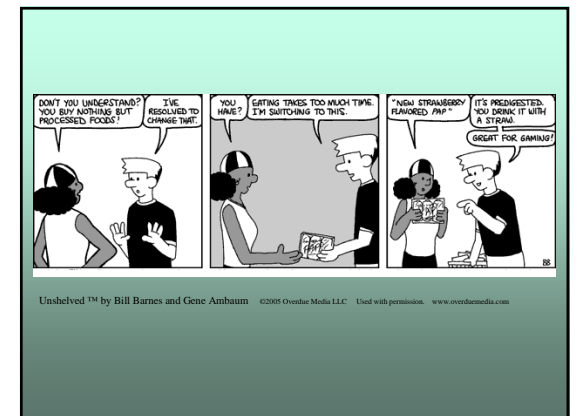
## Multitasking can be managed





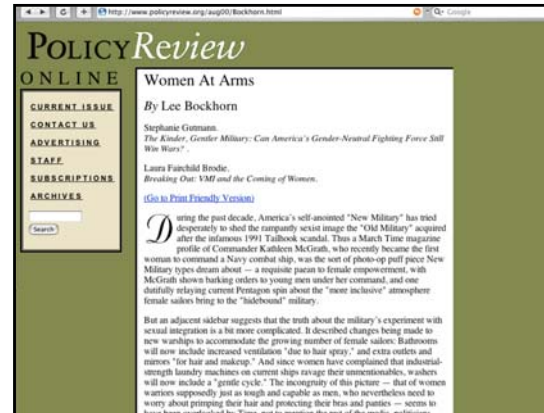
Except for gaming...

"I'm playing a game that fills the screen..."



## Format/source indifferent

- If all the world could be Google
  - Delivery through a single platform, single interface
- Continuum:
  - Print, online... makes no difference
  - Reference source, periodical, book, website, letter to the editor... makes no difference



## The teenager's "job"

- Identity exploration
- Community: how do I fit in?

## When a name is more than a name

### SCREEN NAMES

- azngrrl
- badkitty84
- Pimpboy27
- neodreamer
- sugalici0us
- duckyass
- bitchgoddess

### BLOG NAMES

- The savage truth
- Totally room temperature
- The grumpy muppet
- Indie super boi
- Car wash hair
- The pros and cons of breathing

## I am my avatar. Maybe.



## Profiles

- Anything but a "profile"
  - NOT "I'm Jenny, I'm in 8th grade, I live in Urbana"
- Forum for self-expression
  - "All our young lives we search for someone to love, someone who makes us complete. We choose partners and change partners. We dance to a song of heartbreak and hope, all the while wondering if somewhere and somehow there is someone searching for us."
  - "I am in desperate need of some chocolate"

## Me, myself, and I: Blogging

- A private experience made public
- Interactive, self-affirming





## In control

- ICTs are available 24/7
  - Outside normal times for congregating in person
  - Outside busy school schedules and after-school activities
- ICTs are unobtrusive
  - Text messaging makes no sound in class
  - Instant messages don't disturb family dinners

## Keeping parents at bay

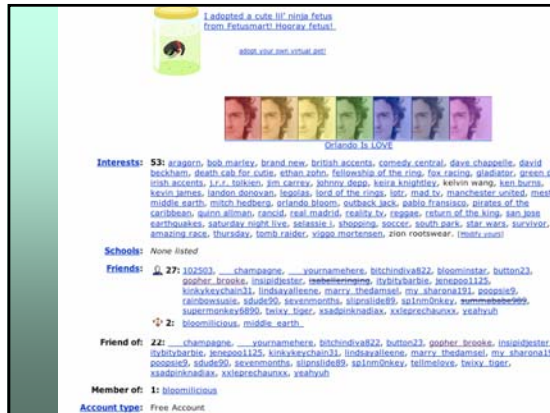
- ICTs operate under the parental radar
- Teens often know more than their parents do about technology
- Teens' definition of privacy: where parents are NOT

## ICTs as expressions of community

## Let me in

Social networking

- Flocking to the same blogging services
- Hard-wired opportunities for community building
  - Friends lists
  - Interests lists
- Invitation-only communities



“... an intriguing, unchecked experiment in silent group therapy -- a hive mind in which everyone commiserates about how it feels to be an outsider, in perfect choral unison.”

Emily Nussbaum, 2004

“i for one do not blog. spilling your guts to the world through the internet is just a little odd to me. other peoples blogs on the other hand...i loooooove to read other peoples blogs for the same reasons that i don't want my own. they're FULL of gossip. they're really entertaining and theres three or four that i read religiously because the way they're written is funny and the content is usually veeeery juicy. :-D”

“i had no idea i had so much in common with my classmates. i go along and write people off because i think i know them. [person] is a suck-up prep, [person] is a greasy pervert, [person] is a hardcore nerd. but then i read their blogs and relate to what they write, and i think what a shame it is that i'm not friends with these people in real life.”

The downside

- Teenagers drive IM traffic, yet are driven by it
- If you are not online, you become invisible
  - Source of social capital
  - Social norms in this environment too
- Let me out
  - Not wanting to miss out
  - Yet needing space, safety

“I usually use away messages so I can get some homework done. Every now and then, when I have a question to ask, I take off my message to see if anyone is online who can answer. I suppose I'm away, but not from my computer, just from the 'talking zone'.”

“I am in front of my computer trying to do some work. Feel free to distract me.”

“away messages can be a random statement of some sort, a quote from a song, a link. its only about half the time that they actually have something to do with where you are.”

Get them out! Let them in...

- Blocking
  - By one, of one
  - By many, of one
- Exclusive spaces
  - Chat rooms
  - Members/friends only

### Jargon

- Grows organically, reflects group norms
- Establishes speaker’s credibility
- Identifies the speaker’s milieu
- Can quickly shift, become dated

### For cultural historians...

!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!  
Became:  
!!!!!!!!!!!!111111  
Which became:  
!!!!!!!!!!!!1111111oneoneoneone

And misspellings became codified:  
“the” became “teh”  
“own” became “pwn”

Using asterisks and third person to denote action:

- \*eats her sandwich slowly\*
- \*falls on the floor, laughing\*
- \*leaves for a game of halo\*

## Leetspeak

d00d (dude)  
pr0n (porn)  
ph33r |v|y l337 sk11s (fear my leet skills)

“you may have noticed i’m fairly lax about grammar online (particularly capitalization). but things like StICky cAPs and webspeak (omg, ur so hott lol) and l33tsp34k (j00 iz n00b) annoy the hell out of me. I’ve found that in most forums and many blogs there are always a few morons who use one or more of the above, along with other annoying habits like TYPING IN ALL CAPS.”

## What’s real, what’s not

“I’ve had all kinds of arguments and fights over e-mail and instant messaging services. I block people, I warn people, I’ve been blocked, I’ve been warned -- both for fun and more seriously. It’s the nature of instant messaging.”

## Moral development and ICTs

- Lack of affective feedback and remoteness from harm
- Reduced fear of detection and punishment
- New environment means new rules
- Perceptions of fighting social injustice and corruption

Nancy Willard, 1998

## Trouble in Cyberspace

- Cheating
- Improper use of intellectual property
- Hacking
- Freedom of expression vs. freedom from expression
- Harassment and bullying

## Hacking

- In itself, not a bad thing
- Hacktivism
  - Ends justify the means
- Nerd discipline
  - Sense of power and entitlement
  - Rules only apply to others



## Freedom of expression vs. freedom from expression

Whose rights are being protected?

- Publishing photos of principal smoking (free speech)
- J. S. v. Bethlehem School District (obscene and libelous speech)

## Harassment and bullying

- ICTs support a hostile environment 24/7
- Loss of inhibitions
- Hard to trace and prosecute
  - No paper trail
  - Identity sharing and swapping
  - Schools fear violating student privacy

## The deep end: Content

- Spam and company
- Pornography
- Crackpots, wackos, and the demons of adolescence
- Hatemongering
  - Especially for teens: music as message

## Demons of adolescence

**pro-anorexia**

[unread] energetic

[unread] (hosbastark- the reason)

hey guys,

I have lost a pound... I am down to 109... I am really happy, so far I ahve eaten a special K bar... 90 cal... that's pretty good and I won't eat again until dinner so I am happy about that but I will be with my parents so I will ahve eat a real meal...oh well... I think it will be ok

[unread] (dougsterd noises?)

[unread] (KIK)

I've just worked out my body fat percentage and it's 20%! Makes me feel sick. Just thought I'd share!

## Hate and youth appeal

**DIEHARD RECORDS**

Top - Catalog

Best Buckles

Books/Magazines

Books/Braces

Compact Discs

DVD/Video

Jewelry

Mac

Patches

Pin/Badges

Posters

Rare/Out Of Print

T-shirts

Vinyl Records

New Products For March

Learn The Best Of... CD \$14.99

Instant Reproduction... CD \$14.99

Bring The Best Of... CD \$14.99

Wagner & The Ring... CD \$29.99

Shelburne... CD \$5.99

Surfer... CD \$5.99

Ethnic... CD \$29.99

Broken... CD \$14.99

Broken... CD \$29.99

Bring... CD \$29.99

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Use keywords find the prod, you are looking for

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What's New?

Ethnic... CD \$29.99

Bring... CD \$29.99

**Martin Luther King, Jr.**

A True Historical Examination

That night King retired to his room at the Willard Hotel. There FBI bugs reportedly picked up 14 hours of party chatter, the clinking of glasses and the sounds of illicit sex - including King's cries of "I'm f---ing for God" and "I'm not a Negro tonight!"

Historical Writings  
Essays, Sermons, Speeches & More

Truth About King  
Who He Fought and Fought For

Death of the Dream  
The Day King Was Shot

The King Holiday  
Bring the Dream to Life

Civil Rights Library  
History of People and Events

Jews & Civil Rights  
Who Led The Civil Rights Movement

Suggested Books  
The Life and work of King

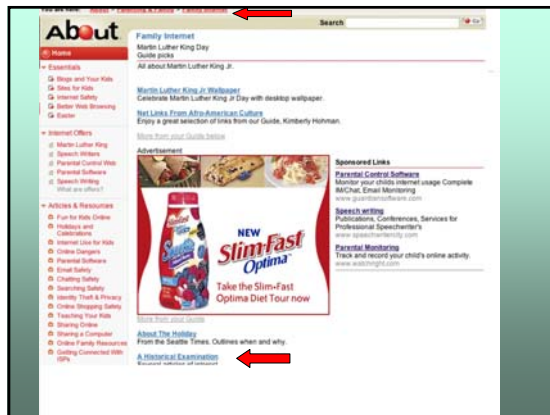
Rap lyrics...

Watch the new Martin Luther King Educational Video

Why the King Holiday Should be Repealed!

Learn more about Kwanzaa!!

Bring the Dream to life in your town!  
Download flyers to pass out at your school.



## Damage control

- Learning how to be: Behavior
  - At home
  - At school
- Learning how to see: Content
  - Identifying evaluation criteria
  - Developing deconstruction skills

## Forging new pathways

- “Give ‘em what they want”
  - Redefining “appropriate” and “inappropriate”
- It’s not all candy: adapting traditional services
- Ethics ‘r now-more-than-ever us
- Partnering with teens

Contact information:

Frances Jacobson Harris  
 University Laboratory High School Library  
 1212 W. Springfield Avenue  
 Urbana, Illinois 61801  
 217-333-1589

francey@uiuc.edu  
 http://www.uni.uiuc.edu/library  
 AIM: franceylibrarian