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ABSTRACT

        A communications professor decided to teach an
undergraduate "theories of communication" seminar course that had
been listed but not taught for 12 years or more. The professor asked
for advice on how to teach the course by sending an electronic mail
message over an information network. The sometimes contradictory
advice concerning the proposed textbook (Littlejohn's "Theories of
Human Communication") convinced the professor to stick with this
challenging text with a philosophical bent. The professor decided to
relate issues of theory to what matters to students by using computer
mediated communication (CMC) as part of the learning process.
Students were provided with computer accounts and instruction in how
to send, receive, print, and save electronic mail messages. Even
though 20% of the students' final grade was based on a journal of
electronic mail, the students did not eagerly embrace CMC. A few
weeks before the end of the semester, students responded to a brief
questionnaire concerning their use of and attitudes toward CMC. A
total of 19 responses were received. Results indicated that: (1)
using electronic mail as it was done in this course is likely to
produce a fair share of student resistance; (2) access to computer
terminals was essential; and (3) most students liked the experience
and thought that it facilitated seminar participation. (Data from the
questionnaire is included, and a sample electronic mail log is
attached.) (RS)

Computer-Mediated Communication to Facilitate Seminar Participation and Active Thinking

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January 15, 1992

Running head: CMC & SEMINAR PARTICIPATION

Compute.-Mediated Communication to Facilitate

Seminar Participation and Active Thinking

From the history of prior technology we can glean
four points useful in thinking about the potential
consequences of new communication technology.
First, the full possibilities of a new technology
are hard to foresee. . . . Second, unanticipated
consequences usually have less to do with
efficiency effects and more to do with changing
interpersonal interactions, ideas about what is
important, work procedures, and social
organization. These changes may profoundly alter
how each of us works and even the work we do.
Third, these second-level effects often emerge
somewhat slowly as people renegotiate changed
patterns of behavior and thinking. Fourth,
second-level effects are not caused by
technologies operating autonomously on a passive
organization or a society. Instead they are
constructed as technology interacts with, shapes,
and is shaped by the social and policy
environment. Although as humans we decide our own
cultural responses to technology, an initial
technological change can set the direction of a
deviation-amplifying spiral. We can affect
technology design and policy and therefore
influence the second-level effects as well (pp.
7-8).

(Sproull & Kiesler, 1991)

The purpose of this paper is twofold: (1) to <u>tell</u> you

about my experience in using the computer to facilitate

seminar participation and active thinking in the Theories of Communication course; and (2) to show you artifacts like electronic mail, and student responses to questions about computer-mediated communication (CMC). This is not intended as a scientific study.[1] It is intended as a form of show-and-tell based on my experience in using the computer to develop the course and to promote student participation in the seminar. Ideally, this report of my experience with CMC should be of use to others teaching the Theories of Communication course (or other seminars) where CMC may facilitate student involvement and learning.

Some Background

Although I have thought about teaching the Theories of Communication course for years, it was during the winter of 1990-91 and the spring of 1991 that I actively prepared the course. The Theories of Communication seminar had been listed in our undergraduate catalog, but it had never been taught in the twelve years I had been at my university. Put as briefly as possible, I was prompted to teach the course for a variety of reasons: educational and political. My educational reasons range over both the students' interest and my own. For the student there may be nothing more

valuable we can offer than critical thinking. This means, in short, understanding the nature of theory and research. For myself, my educational goal was to sharpen my own understanding of theory and to take the time to read the literature on theories of (and in) communication. The political reason for teaching the theories course was simply to respond to the nagging questions concerning the disciplinary status of the field of communication, e.g., are you a discipline? do you have any theories? Aren't you communication people in the business of teaching students how to win friends and influence people?

One piece of additional background information that I believe is relevant and important concerns my own status at using the computer. Prior to exploring the use of CMC in my course, I had used electronic mail for a number of years, I had used the computer for word processing and some limited statistical analysis. I would consider myself minimally literate as a user.

Getting Started

Once I decided to teach the course I reviewed some of the leading textbooks. As it turned out, I decided to use the Littlejohn book, but I felt the need for advice from colleagues who had been through the classroom testing ground

with the book. Here is one place electronic mail became significant to me. I put out a call for advice over the Interpersonal/Small Group hotline of Comserve. It read:

> I am preparing to teach a theories of communication course this coming fall. It will be my first time at teaching the course. The course will be a senior level seminar with about 15 to 20 communication majors. I have reviewed a number of the texts available and I feel pretty confident that I will use Littlejohn's Theories of Human Communication. But I have not decided on the exact structure of the course yet, assignments, student lead discussion. I am interested in advice and syllabi from others who have taught the course. I am Lenny at Portland and I am a subscriber to Interpersonal, Ethnomethodology, Gender hotlines.

While I did not receive a large number of responses, what I did receive was very helpful. Interestingly, both students and faculty responded. Since the responses came to me via a public form, a computer bulletin board, I will recite several of the responses, but I will not attribute the author's name to the quotation.

To begin with, the sort of response that got me thinking that this course may not be without its serious problems came from a student perspective. The advice read as follows:

> I took a theory class using Littlejohn's book about a year ago. It was the worse Comm class I had to ever take. What was offered in the book had no relevance to my everyday world. I hope

that you are able to connect the two themes (the written theories and everyday practice) and have an exciting class.

Good luck

That one got me thinking about the difficulty theory presents to undergraduates. How could I have forgotten the lesson of 17 years of teaching? Undergraduates often do not understand the nature of theory, what it is, what it's for, its value, nor are they typically able to apply criteria to the critical assessment of theory. This message from a student perspective alerted me to the potential of a serious breach between my appreciation for the Littlejohn textbook and the student's appreciation for it. If this one response was representative of a significant number of students (and it seemed to me that it might well be, based on my experience with undergraduates), then I needed to address the problem of connecting the theories more closely with the students' experience outside of the classroom. I needed to be concerned with the relationship between theory and practice.

At about this same point in time I received a second response from a student who praised Littlejohn's book to the skies. Confused and still in need of advice, now even more so, I sent out this message over the Interpersonal/Small Group hotline:

I recently requested advice on teaching the undergraduate course on communication theory and I received some helpful comments, suggestions, etc. But, being a novice at teaching the course (just preparing to teach it for the first time, although I have taught communication courses since about 1974), I remain uncertain about the state of the art. I received two very helpful comments from people who had taken such a course. But they seemed to express widely different points of view. One praised Littlejohn's text to the skies and the other damned it. I am thinking of using the book, but now I don't know what to do. 'The point that has emerged seems to be that Littlejohn's book (Theories_of_Human_Communication) is an excellent book but for graduate students, not undergraduates. Any thoughts--from students-- former students who had such a course-- or used Littlejohn's book--and from faculty? Any thoughts on how much student lead discussion belongs in such a course (senior seminar); any thoughts on how computer mediated communication might work to encourage writing? Also, just how far can such a course go toward connecting theory and practice? Is theory intended for practice in the non-research setting? And if so, in what way is theory useful in the non-research context? Or, in other words, should student papers concern theory-research or theory-practice, or some combination?

Your thoughts on this will help me think this through. I know that I won't be able to answer many of my questions until I teach the course at least once. But, still, I want to make good choices going into the first try.

The big question at this point, to my mind, was this: Is the Littlejohn book and the course, generally, "dangerously theoretical"? And, if so, is a special approach required to maintain and facilitate student interest and involvement in the essence of the course, critical thinking about ideas?

Perhaps some of the responses I received at about that
time will help to show just how I arrived at a decision on
how to structure the course (and just how CMC played a role
in the course even at this early stage). Here is a response
from a faculty member who had experience teaching the
theories course:

At X University we have used Littlejohn through
all editions in our introductory upper division
(junior level) comm. theory class. In my view it
is still the most comprehensive and at the same
time comprehendable text available. (That may not
be the case if Stephen's next edition wanders even
farther into the un-American wasteland of critical
theory.) Stephen has been at it longer and does
it better. In my view, the text challenges the
best and devastates the lazy. The philosophy for
usage is that the student who learns his or her
way through Littlejohn will meet very few
strangers in terms of research and theory studied
in depth in other upper division courses. Our
introductory theory course is also our "writing
emphasis course" which is required of every
department in the university and of the majors in
that department. Fifty percent of the grade is
based upon written work. The written assignments
vary from metatheoretical to applied, depending
upon instructor. I've heard the course referred
to as "The Killing Field" of the department, and I
suppose there is some of that, but it also makes
good copy for our upper division students to use
on the lower division. Over the years I have had
former students drop by and tell me with some
pride that they still have their copy of
Littlejohn. Often, these have been the ones for
whom learning Littlejohn was a true rite (and
right) of passage. And often I have suggested
their 1978 edition was a bit out of date. I
routinely tell majors that they are going to be
expected to know something about communication no
matter where they find themselves after
graduation, and everbody's an expert on
communication. They might find having a resource
book available a comfort-- and they aren't going

to do much better than Littlejohn.   For what it's worth.

By this time I was largely convinced that I wanted to stick with a book that promised to be challenging and of high quality and of a philosophical bent.   But I also felt that I needed to be conscious of the possible pitfall--that students might see theory as removed, abstract, something to do until reality came along, i.e., non-practical.   The nagging question remained: How do I engage active thinking, critical thinking about the theoretical issues of communication? How do I get students to carry theory out of the classroom with them and get them to bring the results of that extra-classroom encounter back into the seminar?   How do I relate issues of theory to what matters to students?

Enter_CMC

Several years ago I became introduced to the concept of CMC as an adjunct to the classroom.   I no longer remember just how I first became aware of the concept of providing student and teacher with electronic mail capability as part of the learning process; it may have been when I joined in on a CMC conference on CMC coordinated by Norman Coombs of the University of Rochester.   Or it may have been when I

became aware of the Edutel hotline and began to receive electronic mail from serious CMC people. However the idea presented itself, I understood at least this concept: that CMC was using electronic mail. And I have been using electronic mail from the time I was introduced to the mainframe computer in about 1984. For anyone who hasn't encountered the idea of electronic mail, it is simply sending and receiving written messages via computer. Messages can be sent and received with people currently sending and receiving--on line. Or, a message can be sent to an ID and it is available whenever the recipient next logs onto the computer. Obviously, for messages to go from one terminal or computer to another, the computers must be linked, as they are through a mainframe computer. There is an embarrassingly simple description, but it is my understanding of e-mail and, as far as I know, it is accurate.

My own experience with electronic mail has been as a faculty member (sometimes department chair) at a medium size university.

Getting_CMC_Going

I was happy to discover just how easy it was to get CMC going, as far as gaining institutional support. Our

university's person in charge of running the computer center was extremely helpful. He listened to my idea, which apparently had not be used by any other faculty member at our campus of over ten-thousand students. He was intrigued and wanted to learn more about CMC. I was able to supply him with a bibliography and CMC sources on Bitnet. He provided me with handouts on electronic-mail and the mainframe's word processing system, both files he sent me over the mainframe and which I could print and give to students to get them started. There were no other manuals needed. Our friendly expert generated id's for my students and was willing to come to two sessions of my classes to introduce electronic mail to my students. I reserved the university's computer classroom, where each student can sit at a terminal and observe on their own screen just what the instructor is demonstrating. By the end of the two and one-half hour session, every student was logging on and off, and knew how to receive and send electronic mail. They knew how to save their mail (both what they received and sent), and they knew how to view what they had saved in the mainframe's word processing system.

Following that one-time session, they were set loose to use CMC. They were repeatedly reminded by me that anyone who was experiencing difficulty with CMC should let me know and I would meet with them and clear it up. As it turned

out, a handful of students took me up on this offer. We met on weekends or after class and in all cases within an hour their confusion was cleared up.

Surprise

To my great surprise, the students did not embrace CMC with open arms, blind faith, and true devotion to me as their savior. It took a number of weeks for this realization to sink in with me. They needed time to adjust to the fall semester, to their newly acquired ability to send mail, to the Littlejohn text. Moreover, I couldn't be certain that they were not sending e-mail to one another.

So, in the seminar that met once a week, it was not until the fourth meeting (9-25-91) that I asked point blank, why haven't you been using e-mail? Are you sending messages to one another? What I heard struck me as lame excuses. For instance, some said that now that they were about to graduate, they didn't think that learning how to use the computer would be useful--it's too late. They should have been shown how to use the computer when they were freshmen. One student said that he always forgets to bring his list of id's from our seminar when he goes to the computer center, and that it is hard to find out which terminals are linked to the mainframe. Several said that it is hard to find time to go to a terminal.

It was time for a pep talk. After explaining to them
that they are about to graduate into a world where use of
computers is apt to increase, not terminate, and after some
more gentle instruction and encouragement, we moved on.
Soon afterwood, messages began to flow more frequently.
Still, not everone joined in, and this, in spite of the fact
that 20% of the grade was allotted to the CMC journal. I
consider this lesson #1: real care is required in getting
the student (new to CMC) started on CMC. A study of the use
of CMC in large undergraduate (approximately 50 - 200
students), classes was carried out at Indiana University
(Hansen, Brown, Chong, Kubota, Totten, and Hubard, 1991).
In large part, the Indiana University project was to explore
the use of CMC to facilitate discussion. While results
varied between classes and according to the exact use of
CMC, the overall findings (simplified) suggest considerable
student resistance to using CMC and to debating. The
results of the Indiana University project, although based on
large size classes, are in line with my experience in a
seminar of sixteen students and one of nine students.

What Did the Students Think of CMC?

A few weeks before the end of the semester, I asked the students in each of the two sections to respond to a brief ten item questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed simply to get at the students' use and perception of CMC. Results are as follows:

1. Did you ever use electronic mail before this

course?

	Yes	No
Section 1 (N=14)	2	12
Section 2 (N=5)	0	5

2. Was the instruction in electronic mail sufficient

to get you going in using electronic mail?

	Yes	No
Section 1 (N=14)	9	5
Section 2 (N=5)	3	2

3. Approximately how often did you use electronic

mail this semester?

	Section 1 (N=14)	Section 2 (N=5)
1. less than once a week	3	1
2. once a week	8	4

3.	3 times a week	3	0
4.	daily	0	0

4. What did you use electronic mail for?

(if respondents marked more than one choice, they were all included in the tabulation)

		Section 1 (N=14,	Section 2 (N=5)
1.	social talk	7	2
2.	discussion of text	12	4
3.	classroom talk	6	3
4.	details about when assignments are due, etc....	4	1
5.	other	2	1

5. Who did you write to?

(If more than one choice was made by the respondent, then that is what was entered in scoring)

		Section 1 (N=14)	Section 2 (N=5)
1.	your self	2	0
2.	specific classmates	11	5
3.	all the seminar members	7	1
4.	the instructor	12	4
5.	people outside of our seminar................	1	0

6.__Did_any_one_thing_about_electronic_mail_work

well_for_you?

	Yes	No
Section 1 (N=14)	8	6
Section 2 (N=5)	4	1

What_was_it?

computer experience

a way to get to know other students

maintaining a journal

stimulated conversation about the issues--got me thinking--
it helped me write my first paper and gave me direction for
my 2nd paper

availability of networks to contact other than within USM

Comserve PhilCom

it was easy to express my opinions without anyone shooting
down my opinions or ideas. I felt free to express

Hotlines, ideas, thoughts

7.__Was_electronic_mail_more_of_a_pain_than_a_help?

	Yes	No
Section 1 (N=14)	4	10
Section 2 (N=5)	not enough responses	

How so?

Sometimes at the beginning. Probably because I am still learning tricks with computers and my skills need more polishing.

I did not want to take the time to use it. My schedule was already too full of other assignments.

It was very interesting. My access to the computer center wasn't as often as I would've liked--wish people at the center were familiar with electronic mail.

It took me quite a few times to actually understand how to use it, so I missed out on a lot of mail sending.

It could have been more helpful to me if I was on campus or lived in Portland. The fact that I live 1/2 hour away does make it a pain.

Getting the time to sit down and do it was difficult.

At first it was, now I realize how much of a valuable tool it was.

Because it was such a struggle to get into the computer and different commands, I spent too much frustration on that instead of spending time on actually sending mail and answering mail. If I had another class with you and you used the electronic mail, then it would be a help.

Should be introduced with COM 102 (Introduction to Communication)

My schedule made it extremely difficult to make trips to the computer lab.

Just getting down there to work with it.

It was a help to those with no knowledge of computers

8.__Did_using_electronic_mail_facilitate_seminar

participation_and/or_thinking_in_this_course?

	Yes	No
Section 1 (N=14)	9	4
Section 2 (N=5)	4	1

How_so?

As the course progressed e-mail was beginning to be a help, less of a hindrance.

It spurred "electronic" conversation about interesting issues that were brought out in discussions.

It generated a lot of class discussion about topics in class and encouraged participation.

A little bit in that sometimes I saw another perspective on things.

It was more of a forum for questions after presentations.

Answering individual questions via e-mail gave everyone equal opportunity to participate.

Questions were discussed.

It helped me to reflect on other issues that might not be related to class talk.

I was able to ask questions outside of class. This allowed me to think through things more thoroughly.

Occasionally found some of the topics discussed rather confusing; some points of view were even more confusing.

Especially questions from X.

9. Could you think of a way that electronic mail

could be used to further facilitate seminar

participation and thinking about text

issues, discussion issues?

Sure, have the university issue everyone their own home PC so you could use e-mail anytime!

Present writing assignments.

If you ask (mail) a question and have everyone write back a response --use it as a way to test.

Make sure the mainframe was connected to Portland Hall (a dorm).

Beyond required assignments, no.

Specific assignments about text passages--discussion, comment, interpretation.

If it had been used more by everyone it would have been an excellent tool.

More grade weight.

Easier access.

If we all had terminals more available to us and more people participated more often.

It would be better if everyone had better access to a computer. All of the computers in Masterton (the microlab) now have the program so that has made it easier to get in the system.

Maybe mandatory answers on certain philosophical type questions to be discussed in class--or exchanged between students via e-mail.

If everyone had one at home like Lenny.

Give specific assignments through mail. The professor teach the class more about e-mail connected to c universities.

10. Open ended: Your impressions, thoughts, on our

experiment with electronic mail

Our experiment with electronic mail started out as just that. For me the biggest obstacle to e-mail was me. As I got more comfortable with the system it became clear to me that this definitely is the wave of the future. . . . Once I started writing and talking with the computer as my friend, I found that the words seemed to pop out at me. Being comfortable with e-mail makes a world of difference. Keep up with the experiment.

E-mail would be great for a business situation. It is nice to know how to use e-mail. I just wish I had more time to experiment with it.

It was fun. It's great exposure to what people are thinking about, issues that wouldn't come up in "regular" conversation.

I thought electronic mail was a positive experience and I hope to use it more in the future. Thanks!

It was interesting.

At first it was a pain. The more I was exposed to it, the more I found it useful. Better access would facilitate more use.

I like it. I have no sympathy for those who didn't use it, didn't have time, and so on.

After I got used to it, I liked it and used it more and more, but then it was the end of the semester. I can see it being very useful.

Introduce e-mail in COM 102 (Introduction to Communication) for all majors.

At first it was a pain, but after you begin to use it, it actually began to be fun.

I think the e-mail is a fantastic idea and could help in class, but . . . The time factor for some is a serious issue--and because there are so many commuters, it is difficult to get to the lab.

I had a great time with electronic mail, and I think that forcing me to get involved will prove beneficial in the long

run. I met a lot of people, and am very glad I had the experience.

Very interesting. Wish I had been introduced to a computer much sooner via a communication class.

Some Tentative Conclusions

It is obvious that this "experiment" in the use of CMC and the data gathered make for a preliminary and tentative bit of learning for all concerned. What I do think we can carry away from this "experiment" are some rough conclusions. What does encourage some belief in the conclusions that I have come to from this experience is the discovery that the research literature seems to bear out the conclusions reached here. [2] What follows is a statement of some of the "findings" in this study that seem to sit up and ask to be noticed.

Using electronic mail the way it was done here [with minimal student training in its use, with 20% of the grade tied to it, with no real mandatory assignments (other than a journal of e-mail correspondence to be handed in), over a one-semester period of time, without students having computers with modems in their homes, with students who have never used a mainframe computer before] is likely to produce a fair share of resistance. These same students will leave

the course thanking you for the experience. The instructor will need to decide whether or not it is worth the anxiety generated by the resistance, and whether or not it is worth the hand-holding that is required to walk students through it.

Much like what one reads in the research literature, ACCESS to computer terminals is central (see endnote #2). In addition, the students seem to agree with one another that mandatory assignments (apparently in addition to handing in a journal) would increase student use of CMC.

Interestingly, in spite of some resistance to its use, most of the students seemed to like the experience and most thought that it facilitated seminar participation and thinking. That is central to this "experiment," i.e., that most thought that CMC did facilitate the course.

I count the "experiment" a success, but then I am biased in this conclusion. Students rated the course and the instructor highly. Class discussions flowed easily and seemed to be enjoyable and. productive. Students thought that e-mail aided class discussions. I believe that if you want to try a similar "experiment" in your class, that this report should get you off to a headstart.

When I do it over again (and I intend to this spring semester), the one change I am going to make is to give more specific assignments to be carried out with CMC. For instance, the first computer assignment will be to write a brief autobiographical sketch, introducing yourself to the class and to send that to everyone within the first week or two.

Finally, the Littlejohn book worked well. I recommend it!

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Wells, R. (1991). Computer-mediated communications for distance education and training: Literature review and international resources (Report No. ARI Research Product 91-06). Alexandria, VA: U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences.

APPENDIX: SAMPLE E-MAIL LOG

+++++++ +++++++ +++++++ +++++++ +++++++ +++++++ +++++++

Received: from RPIECS(INTERPER) by PORTLAND(LENNY) id 0871;
(MAIL R2.5) Thu, 26 Sep 91 09:08:31 EDT

Received: by PORTLAND (Mailer R2.03A) id 9098; Wed, 25 Sep
91 15:12:54 EDT

Date: Thu, 26 Sep 1991 00:14:12 +1000

Reply-To: Interpersonal/small   group   communication
<INTERPER@RPIECS.BITNET>

Sender: Interpersonal/small   group   communication
<INTERPER@RPIECS.BITNET>

From: jackie@DIEMEN.UTAS.EDU.AU

X-To: Interper@VM.Ecs.Rpi.Edu

To: Lenny Shedletsky <LENNY@PORTLAND.BITNET>

Would you be willing to participate in a small research
project on computer based work? I am a masters student in
the Department of Sociology, University of Tasmania,
Australia. I am studying collaborative computing work
groups. My research involves testing a range of group based
techniques mostly by comparing computer mediated groups and
face to face groups using similar techniques (eg Focus
groups and computer conferences). However, I also want to
investigate how delphi groups would operate via remote
computer based interactions.   Participation would involve:
-> replying to a short questionnaire by e.mail (so I know
who I'm talking to). -> writing a short summary of your
opinion on an issue (which I will specify) to do with the
future of information technology.   -> reviewing and
responding to a report on this issue.

If you are willing to be involved can you contact me as soon
as possible. Jackie Robertson.

+++++++ +++++++ +++++++ +++++++ +++++++ +++++++ +++++++

Subject: you are doing well

In-Reply-To: just testig mail

References: <IP15112.9109260925240portland.maine.EDU>

Message-Id: <LENNY.910926141448@portland.maine.EDU>

From: LENNY@PORTLAND (Lenny)

To: IP15112@PORTLAND (Joanne Mac)

Date: Thu, 26 Sep 91 14:14:48 EDT

this looks great!

now, it's time to start responding to or initiating talk
about the book--

+++++++ +++++++ +++++++ +++++++ +++++++ +++++++ +++++++

Subject: agreed

In-Reply-To: Lenny send

References: <LENNY.910922133547@portland.maine.EDU>

        <IP15071.910926112522@portland.maine.EDU>

Message-Id: <LENNY.910926141912@portland.maine.EDU>

From: LENNY@PORTLAND (Lenny)

To: IP15071@PORTLAND (Laura Hyman)

Date: Thu, 26 Sep 91 14:19:12 EDT

the paramecium example does speak to this issue--as for
classifiying, the way i see it, the question the experts are
raising is whether or not something is an example of
communication--in other words, what is communication? what
defines it? what features make it up?

i don't know how one proves or supports a position in this
area--i tend to go along with the idea that unintended
events are communication--

+++++++ +++++++ +++++++ +++++++ +++++++ +++++++ +++++++

Subject: debate is on the horizon

Message-Id: <LENNY.910926142707@portland.maine.EDU>

From: LENNY@PORTLAND (Lenny)

To: IP15065@PORTLAND (Scott Bezanson), IP15066@PORTLAND
(Dennis   Dix), IP15067@PORTLAND (Gregory Doyon),

IP15068aPORTLAND   (Kimberly   Granger),
IP15069aPORTLAND (Dale Haskell),   IP15070aPORTLAND
(Scott   Honey),   IP15071aPORTLAND   (Laura   Hyman),
IP15072aPORTLAND (Scott Keenan),   IP15073aPORTLAND (Cyndi
Morrow),   IP95831aPORTLAND (Kevin Nash),   IP15074aPORTLAND
(Christopher Talbot),   IP15075aPORTLAND   (Lynn Tibbets),
IP15076aPORTLAND (David Weare),   IP15077aPORTLAND (Joseph
Ziddle), IP15078aPORTLAND (Chris Havenstein)

Date: Thu, 26 Sep 91 14:27:07 EDT

please someone other than me (Lenny) pick up the ball and
run with it-- if your names file is functioning, we are on
our way

------- --------   Forwarded Mail Follows   -------- ----

Received: from PORTLAND(IP15076) by PORTLAND(LENNY) id 0905;
(MAIL R2.5) Thu,

 26 Sep 91 13:53:35 EDT

Received: by PORTLAND (Mailer R2.03A) id 0534; Thu, 26 Sep
91 13:37:07 EDT

Subject: chap.4 informative vs communicative

Message-Id: <IP15076.9109261112952aportland.maine.EDU>

From: IP15076aPORTLAND (David Weare)

To: LENNYaPORTLAND (Lenny Shedletsky)

Date: Thu, 26 Sep 91 11:29:52 EDT

I'm going to think on paper here. It could be confusing at
first.   Intention is the key word.   Do I deliberately, in
an   act of   volition,   intentionally convey   meaning?
Sometimes.   Ekman and Friesen refer to those nonverbal
behaviors   that   intentionaly   convey   meaning   as
'communicative'.   They use this term 'communicative' in a
specific, limited way, and in relation to other terms such
as 'usage' and 'interactive'. It is not to be confused with
the dictionary meaning of the word.   Nor should we confuse
it with any definition arrived at through group discussion.
'Communicative' as Ekman and Friesen coin the term and
<<communicative>> as we commonly use it are quite different.
Ekman and Friesen should have choosen a word other than
/communicative/ to label the acts they were studying. Their
choice   creates confusion.   What   Ekman calls   a

'communicative act' is (meaning + intention). What Ekman calls an 'informative act' is (meaning - intention) or just plain (meaning). I don't understand Lenny's 'initial reaction' to reading p.65. I think he is using an idea similar to the following. "3.328 If a sign is useless, it is meaningless. That is the point of Occam's maxim. (If everything behaves as if a sign had meaning, then it does have meaning.)" Wittgenstein's Tractatus...

I believe the three acts discussed on p. 65 are quite distinct. A 'non-random idea' can be induced by all three distinct acts. Intention is not Hypothetical but part of the definition of Ekman's 'communicative act'. Have I misunderstood you Lenny? Please forward, at your discretion, to my classmates.

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Subject: i will try to tell her

In-Reply-To: who is this really from?

References: <LENNY.9109260927333portland.maine.EDU>

         <IP15068.910926133650aportland.maine.EDU>
Message-Id: <LENNY.9109261432193portland.maine.EDU>

From: LENNY3PORTLAND (Lenny)

To: IP150683PORTLAND (Kimberly Granger)

Date: Thu, 26 Sep 91 14:32:19 EDT

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Received: from PORTLAND(IP15068) by PORTLAND(LENNY) id 0906;
(MAIL R2.5) Thu,

 26 Sep 91 13:53:35 EDT

Received: by PORTLAND (Mailer R2.03A) id 0546; Thu, 26 Sep
91 13:39:09 EDT

Subject: who is this really from?

In-Reply-To: check this out! Tasmania

References: <LENNY.9109260927333portland.maine.EDU>

Message-Id: <IP15068.910926133650aportland.maine.EDU>

From: IP15068@PORTLAND

To: LENNY@PORTLAND (Lenny)

Date: Thu, 26 Sep 91 13:36:50 EDT

Lenny if this is going to you, tell the Tasmanian lady that
I would like to perticipate in her study. I guess I'm still
in the fascination /playing stage with email.   Anyway, I
didn't catch her I.D.   number, so will you tell her I'm
interested?   Thanks, Kym

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Subject: let's see what happens--tasmania today, tomorrow
south portland

Message-Id: <LENNY.9109261444113@portland.maine.EDU>

From: LENNY@PORTLAND (Lenny)

To: IP15068@PORTLAND (Kimberly Granger)

Date: Thu, 26 Sep 91 14:41:13 EDT

------- --------   Forwarded Mail Follows   ------- -----

Subject: collaborative computing groups

Message-Id: <LENNY.9109261436099@portland.maine.EDU>

From: LENNY@PORTLAND (Lenny)

To: jackie@diemens.utas.edu.au

Date: Thu, 26 Sep 91 14:36:09 EDT

I am a professor of communication at the University of
Southern Maine. I am trying out cmc for the first time this
semester--i have 2 seminars in theories of communication,
both trying to learn how to use the computer-- so they and i
are new at this--i have hopes of writing up my experience of
using cmc   to instigate   discussion--your request   for
participants intrigued me--i sent your request along to my
students--one answered--asked me to send her interest along
to you -- her id is ip15068@Portland.Bitnet and her name is
Kimberly Granger--please let me know if she and i could
participate --i will pass on word to you if others show
interest

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Subject: kim --give me a call at 774-5147

Message-Id: <LENNY.910926173728@portland.maine.EDU>

From: LENNY@PORTLAND (Lenny)

To: ip15068@portland.maine.EDU (Kimberly Granger)

Date: Thu, 26 Sep 91 17:37:28 EDT

i don't really understand the green light problem--perhaps
on the phone it will be easier to understand

----- -------   Forwarded Mail Follows   ------- ----

Received: from PORTLAND(IP15068) by PORTLAND(LENNY) id 0928;
(MAIL R2.5) Thu, 26 Sep 91 17:28:45 EDT

Received: by PORTLAND (Mailer R2.03A) id 0700; Thu, 26 Sep
91 14:37:30 EDT

Subject: help

In-Reply-To: debate is on the horizon

References: <LENNY.910926142707@portland.maine.EDU>

Message-Id: <IP15068.910926143600@portland.maine.EDU>

From: IP15068@PORTLAND

To: LENNY@PORTLAND (Lenny)

Date: Thu, 26 Sep 91 14:36:00 EDT

I'm trying ot create a names file but i keep getting a green
light when I try to   type in the userid. can you give me
information on this?

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Subject: Jackie

Message-Id: <LENNY.910926174534@portland.maine.EDU>

From: LENNY@PORTLAND (Lenny)

To: interper@vm.ecs.rpi.edu   .

Date: Thu, 26 Sep 91 17:45:34 EDT

i tried to send e-mail directly to your node Diemen but that
failed so i am trying to respond via the hotline--

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Received: from MITVMA(MAILER) by PORTLAND(LENNY) id 0931;
(MAIL R2.5) Thu, 26 Sep 91 17:28:45 EDT Received: from
MITVMA.MIT.EDU by PORTLAND.MAINE.EDU (Mailer R2.03A) with
BSMTP id 0721; Thu, 26 Sep 91 14:44:24 EDT
<LISTSERV%RPIECS.bitnet@VM.ITS.RPI.EDU>

Subject: Output of your job "INTERPER"

To: LENNY%PORTLAND.bitnet@VM.ITS.RPI.EDU

Your mail file (1132) was successfully DISTRIBUTEd to list
INTERPER.

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Subject: have i already responded to this? test worked

In-Reply-To: just testig mail

References: <IP15112.9109260925240portland.maine.EDU>

Message-Id: <LENNY.910926190730@portland.maine.EDU>

From: LENNY@PORTLAND (Lenny)

To: IP15112@PORTLAND (Joanne Mac)

Date: Thu, 26 Sep 91 19:07:30 EDT

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Subject: how's the spelling of your name now?

Message-Id: <LENNY.910926191821@portland.maine.EDU>

From: LENNY@PORTLAND (Lenny)

To: IP15077@PORTLAND (Joseph Zidle)

Date: Thu, 26 Sep 91 19:18:21 EDT

so where's mail from you?

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[1] Wells, in her 1991 review of the literature on computer-
mediated communications for distance education, tells us
that it is rare to find experimental studies on CMC.
She reports: "Indeed, various endeavors in distance
education seem to be inspired by an 'everyday
rationality and . . . embryonic conceptualization of
distance learning' (Marland and Store, 1982, p. 72). . .
. In fact, most of the literature on distance education
consists of either case studies or
conclusions/recommendations that may or may not be
accompanied by empirical evidence" (Wells, 1991, p. 3)

[2] For instance, Wells (1991) in her review of the research
literature on CMC, reports that "CMC is particularly
well-suited for courses involving discussion, group
interactions and projects, and conceptual rather than
hands-on training. . . . . CMC must be integral to the
course or it will be under-utilized. . . . .
Completion is facilitated when students are not allowed
to self-pace" (p. 21).

With regard to access to computers, Wells reports:
"Ready access to a computer is virtually a prerequisite
for successful performance in CMC. . . . . low usage
was reported for students who had to use computers at
local study centers, compared to other groups who had
computers in their homes (p. 27). . . . . One of the
most robust findings in the literature is that tacking
CMC on to existing materials may negatively impact usage
rates. . . . . strictly voluntary usage meant low
usage. . . . . Despite a small number of case
studies, it is clear that CMC will be used only when
participants are required to do so. . . . . Motivation
may be encouraged by requiring a mandatory number of
logons per week, a minimum number of messages, and so
on. . . . Usage may also be encouraged by insuring that
important information (such as quiz questions and
answers or instructor responses to questions) is only
accessible through the computer. . . . Students almost

unanimously blamed lack of time as the reason they

tended to lurk rather than make substantive

contributions. However, Mason (1989) notes that this

'constant refrain begins to sound like noise generated

to cover a more basic cause--the lack of a clear model

on which to base their conception of how to participate'

(p. 137)" (Wells, pp.36 -37).