Updating to Remain the Same

Habitual New Media

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Contents

3 The Leakiness of Friends, or Think Different Like Me

The constitutive public sphere sweeps aside as merely private all obstacles, privileges, special rights, atavisms, and peculiarities that stand in the way of the public establishment of this order.

—Oskar Negt and Alexander Kluge[1]

One of the key dimensions of the fantasy of intimate love is its stated opposition to all other forms of social determination even as it claims to produce a new form of social glue. The intimate event holds together what economic and political self-sovereignty threaten to pull apart.

—Elizabeth Povenelli[2]

Love is blind; friendship closes its eyes.

—Anonymous, or Friedrich Nietzsche

How are networks inhabited? What sustains connections, and what is the relationship between the experience and image of networks?

To respond to these questions, this chapter begins by contrasting the Internet of the 1990s, in which freedom and empowerment allegedly stemmed from an anonymity that was no anonymity, to that of the early twenty-first century, in which authentication and authenticity supposedly save users from dangerous strangers. This safety, based on the transformation of users into reciprocal and reciprocating 'friends,' was and is no safety, for online **friends are an extremely leaky technology**. Online friendship—a concept that muddies the neat boundary between public and private, work and leisure—encapsulates the promise and threat of networks: the promise of an intimacy that, however banal, transcends physical location and enables self-made bonds to ease the loneliness of neoliberalism; the threat of a security based on poorly gated 'neighborhoods.' That is, to update Margaret Thatcher's famous quip, "there is no such thing as society. There is [a] living tapestry of men and women and people," now there is a

monstrous, undead chimera of 'friends' constructed through neighborhoods of likeness and difference.[3] This authenticating friendship, this chapter also emphasizes, perverts traditional concepts of friendship by transforming it from an essentially broadcast (and private) action—an unreciprocated act to love/like someone—to a banal, reciprocal, and 'authentic-like' relation.[4] Through this impoverished friendship, relations are mapped and extrapolated: habitual actions—liking, retweeting, posting, etc.—used to create profiles to carefully track, preempt and craft consumption. Regardless of your own individual actions, **YOU are constantly betrayed by people who 'like YOU' and who are algorithmically determined to be 'like YOU.'** If cyberporn catalyzed the emergence of markets on the Internet, 'friending' practices have made the Internet itself a market of YOUs.

The Internet, as It Once (Never) Was

The popular imaginary of the Internet changed radically from the mid 1990s to the mid 2000s. This change is as extreme as the Internet's earlier transformation from a noncommercial, military, academic, and governmental 'public good' to a mass medium, when its backbone was sold to private corporations in the early to mid 1990s.

As outlined in chapter 2, in the mid 1990s, the Internet emerged as "cyberspace," a space of freedom and anonymity. In 1996, John Perry Barlow infamously declared the independence of cyberspace, writing, "We [in cyberspace] are creating a world that all may enter without privilege or prejudice accorded by race, economic power, military force, or station of birth. We are creating a world where anyone, anywhere may express his or her beliefs, no matter how singular, without fear of being coerced into silence or conformity."[5] Science fiction grounded this belief in the Internet of the mid 1990s as cyberspace, as an ideal space free from physical coercion. Sitting at a typewriter and inspired by the world of video arcades and punk rock, William Gibson coined the term "cyberspace" in 1982, eleven years before the National Center for Supercomputing Applications (NCSA) introduced Mosaic, the first graphics-based web browser. In his 1984 novel *Neuromancer*, which fleshed out a dystopian post-World War III future in which the United States had disappeared and the world was dominated by Japanese *zaibatsus*, Gibson described cyberspace as "a consensual hallucination": "a graphical representation of data abstracted from the banks of every computer in the human system."[6] In this space, elite marauding console cowboys disdainfully referred to their bodies as meat.[7]

Despite the vast differences between William Gibson's vision of cyberspace and the Internet as it actually existed in the mid 1990s, this conflation of the Internet and cyberspace spread far beyond fans of cyberpunk fiction.[8] The notion that the Internet was fundamentally ungovernable because it was a global ethereal space grounded arguments against the enforceability of the Communications Decency Act (CDA). The famous *New Yorker* cartoon perhaps best encapsulated the dreams surrounding the early Internet as cyberspace: "On the Internet, nobody knows you're a dog" (figure 3.1). Freedom supposedly stemmed from anonymity, from no one knowing who you were. In this space, the authentic self could finally be revealed and an authentic public sphere could emerge because discrimination—which 'naturally' stemmed from the presence of raced bodies rather than racist institutions—could be eliminated. Although this idea seems incredibly naïve to us now and seemed so even then (it was

"On the Internet, nobody knows you're a dog."

Figure 3.1
New Yorker cartoon. Reprinted with permission. Peter Steiner/The New Yorker Collection/The Cartoon Bank.

criticized heavily in the mid 1990s as hype), it remains powerful: Snowden in the documentary *Citizenfour* (2014) for example, explained that he decided to go forward with his leaks because he remembered this Internet, in which children were taken as seriously as experts in online spaces. This utopian version of cyberspace promised technological solutions to political problems. Through its popularization, cyberspace bizarrely moved from foretelling a dark future to signaling a happy one, and the liberal position on technology moved from one of protest (for example, the 1980s anti-nuclear movement that informed Gibson's cyberpunk vision) to one of enthusiastic embrace.

The promise of the Internet as a bodiless public was made most clear in rhetoric surrounding the Internet as a raceless space.[9] It seemed impossible to advertise the Internet in the mid to late 1990s without featuring happy people of color singing its praises. One particularly compelling and influential commercial, MCI's *Anthem*, contained dialogue such as "There is no race," "Utopia? No, the Internet." The message of these commercials was not even the banal "Do not discriminate," but "Get online if you want to avoid being discriminated against." In addition to assuming that these raced bodies (rather than racist bodies and actions) caused discrimination, these commercials presumed a racist attitude, for they assumed that viewers would see these bodies and then automatically understand why these 'others' would be happy to be on the Internet. These representations also did not reflect then-current Internet demographics, the same corporations that touted the Internet as the great equalizer also sponsored round tables on the digital divide. The point of this rhetoric, however, was not to get more people of color online, but rather to get the 'general public' online. These dreams were strongest and this imagining most compelling at a time when very few people were on the Internet. Indeed, once there existed a certain density of Internet users, these commercials disappeared (they lasted longer in Japan, where the initial Internet uptake was slower than in the United States). Cisco Systems' *Are You Ready?* television advertisements made this logic clear: they featured interchangeable people from around the world, who accosted viewers with predictions about worldwide Internet usage and asked, "Are you ready? We are." The phrase "We are" revealed the threat behind these seeming celebrations: get online because these people already are. It was "we" against "you."

As I argued in *Control and Freedom*, this notion of the Internet as a medium of the mind, in which body and soul, physical and mental location, could be separated, relied on a very odd understanding of the Internet—one that ignores the actual operations of TCP/IP (the control

protocol that is the Internet). As any packet sniffer quickly reveals, our computers are engaged in constant, incessant, and promiscuous exchanges of information, without which there could be no communications at all. That book thus started with the question: Given that the Internet is one of the most compromised and compromising forms of communication, why has it been bought and sold as empowering and freeing—as a personalized medium?

The question that drives this book and this chapter is different, for the dominant imagining of the Internet in the early twenty-first century has moved away from this odd understanding of the Internet, with its intimately intertwined dreams of cyberspace and virtual reality, toward another equally strange one. In the first decade of this century, with the advent of Web 2.0, the Internet has become a semipublic/private space of 'true names' and 'authentic images' (figure 3.2). Rather than being a form of virtual reality, the Internet is now viewed as augmenting reality. In this semiprivate or semipublic space, freedom stems not from anonymity, but rather from knowing who is a dog and who is not.[10] The authentic increasingly stems from the privately authenticating, from what I term YOUs value.

Figure 3.2
Image of author posted by friends to Facebook

Crucially, this new version of the Internet envisioned trusted social interactions as based on transparency and conceived of the default user not as a lurker but a friend. This move toward transparency responded to the failures of the initial Internet to live up to its hype as an ideal marketplace of ideas, as the Athenian agora come true. By the early 2000s, the early promises of the web were exposed for what they were: unfulfilled and perhaps unfulfillable imaginings. Like the newsgroups that preceded them, chat rooms were often nasty spaces subject to "Godwin's Law," and open listservs were dying, killed by spam and by trolls, whose presence was amplified by those who naively 'fed' them and others who admonished them for doing so.[11] Further, the Internet was filled with phishing scams, and seemingly private email accounts were flooded with spam messages advertising pornography, body modification tools, and dodgy pharmaceutical companies.

In particular and very early on, child pornography was seized upon as encapsulating the threat of the Internet (it has now been supplemented by terrorism). As discussed earlier, the first attempt to regulate the Internet's content coincided with its deregulation: the Communications Decency Act (CDA) of 1995, an act that passed the U.S. Senate with an overwhelming majority after senators perused tightly bound printouts of "perverse" images that Senator James Exon's 'friend' had downloaded for him.[12]

Pornography was, and still is, central to the two issues that map the uneasy boundary between public and private: regulation and commerce. The Internet's privatization paved the way for "cyberporn," to the extent that it made digital pornography a hypervisible threat/phenomenon. Cyberporn, in turn, paved the way for the "Information Superhighway" to the extent that it initiated the Internet gold rush and caused media, governments, and commercial companies to debate seriously and publicly the status of the Internet as a mass medium. Before the Internet went public through its privatization, legislators had shown no concern for minors who accessed the alt.sex hierarchy, or who logged onto "adult" bulletin board systems (BBSs); pornography's online presence was so well known among users it did not even qualify as an open secret. Upon 'discovering' the obvious, the media and politicians launched a debate about 'free' speech focused on assessing, defining, and cataloguing pornography. The impact of this debate on the Internet was profound. Although the CDA eventually was ruled unconstitutional, debate over it and its credit card–based safe haven provisions helped foster the first successful online businesses: commercial pornography sites. Actors on both sides of the CDA debate portrayed these sites as responsible, rather than greedy, for charging for information that

had been freely accessible for years (even though minors could easily get access to a credit card). The profitability of these sites was key to convincing less risqué businesses that, contrary to initial public wisdom and skepticism, an online marketplace was possible: news media, such as CNN, reported that secret consultations occurred between porn web mistresses and representatives of mainstream businesses, such as IBM, seeking to create an online presence.[13]

The CDA was eventually defeated, in part due to an overriding belief in the Internet as a medium of freedom and anonymity. According to Judge Stewart Dalzell, who granted a temporary injunction against the CDA, the Internet proved true Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes's famous assertion that "the best test of truth is the power of the thought to get itself accepted in the competition of the market."[14] More soberly, Justice John Paul Stevens concluded his decision upholding this injunction by celebrating the phenomenal growth of the Internet and declared, "the interest in encouraging freedom of expression in a democratic society outweighs any theoretical but unproven benefit of censorship."[15]

Many, although not all, now blame anonymity, which once grounded the dreams of the Internet as a utopian space of the mind, for destroying the possibility of a civilized public sphere. Corporations such as Google and Facebook, which needed and still need reliable, authenticated information for their data-mining operations, promoted the tethering of online and offline identities as the best way to foster responsibility and combat online aggression.[16] Randi Zuckerberg, marketing director of Facebook, argued in 2011 that, for the sake of safety, "Anonymity on the Internet has to go away." Eric Schmidt, CEO of Google, made a similar argument in 2010 stating, "in a world of asynchronous threats, it is too dangerous for there not to be some way to identify you."[17] These arguments were not new or specific to Web 2.0: ever since the Internet emerged as a mass medium in the mid 1990s, corporations have framed securing users' identities as crucial to securing trust. Two assumptions drive this argument: one, that the worst dangers come from anonymous strangers rather than friends; and two, that transparency guarantees better actions (again, Zuckerberg's opinion that people act better if they give their real names).

Many scholars have challenged this linking of trust and security, most insightfully Helen Nissenbaum. Writing in 2001, Nissenbaum noted that, although security is central to activities such as e-commerce and banking, it "no more achieve[s] trust and trustworthiness, online—in their full-blown senses—than prison bars, surveillance cameras, airport X-ray conveyor belts, body frisks, and padlocks, could achieve offline. This is so because the

very ends envisioned by the proponents of security and e-commerce are contrary to core meanings and mechanisms of trust."[18] Trust, she insists, is a far richer concept that entails a willingness to be vulnerable. The reduction of trust to security assumes that danger stems from outsiders, Nissenbaum writes, rather than from "sanctioned, established, powerful individuals and organizations."[19]

The development of the Internet has made Nissenbaum's words prophetic. With 'transparency,' we have seen not only an explosion of e-commerce but also a blossoming of dataveillance, cyberbullying, and cyberporn. The naïve presumption that transparency would 'cure' the evils of the early Internet—pornography, trolling, flame wars, etc.—has proven to be false. Cyberbullying takes place most effectively within the trusted structure of 'friend' networks, for it is most traumatic when both parties are known or are assumed to be 'friends of friends.' Steubenville, and many more events like it, involved real names.[20] Further, child pornography is expanding—figure 3.3 has come true—but not in the terms initially imagined. Rather than being produced by lecherous old men for lecherous old men, it is being produced by teenagers for teenagers: participatory culture in flagrante delicto.[21] Child pornography, through sexting, has become crowd-sourced. The fact that teenagers are the produsers (producers + users) of these images, though, does not protect them from prosecution. In one early (2004) high-profile case in Florida, A.H., a sixteen-year-old girl, took photographs of herself and her seventeen-year-old boyfriend J.G.W. having sex. The sex was consensual and legal, and these photographs were never distributed to a third party. Regardless, both minors were convicted of knowingly producing, distributing, and promoting child pornography.[22] In Florida, they could marry; they could have sex; but, due to laws introduced in the 1990s to protect them from the Internet, they could not legally take images of themselves having sex without becoming sex offenders. So, even though their names cannot be published because they were minors at the time, they will have to register as sex offenders for the rest of their lives. Intimate expression is now imbricated in public structures in ways that unsettle our long-standing conceptions of privacy and security.

Most forcefully, this reveals that the desire for a reciprocal and authenticating, if not entirely authentic, type of intimacy—for friendship as 'friending'—makes the Internet a more deadly and nasty space, in which we are most in danger when we think we are most safe and in which we place others at risk through the sometimes genuine care we show for them. Given this, we need to ask ourselves: What exactly does 'friending' do? How have we all become friends?

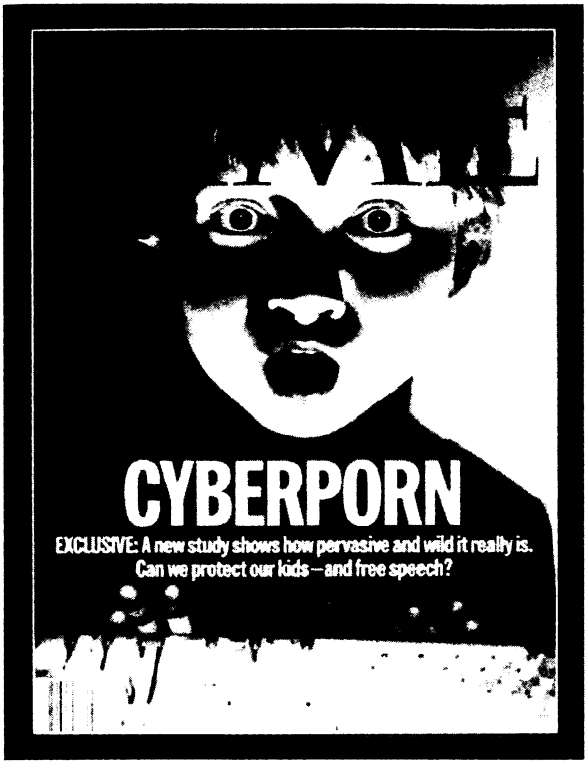

Figure 3.3
July 3, 1995, cover of *Time Magazine.* Reprinted with permission.

The Friend of My Friend Is My Enemy

How and why did we suddenly become friends online? What kind of notion of friendship drives online networks?

In the early years of this century, *Friendster.com* made popular the notion of an online friend within the United States. Users of the site created a profile page that consisted of spaces for testimonials and for a listing of one's friends. Conceived of as a dating site, *Friendster.com* was launched in beta mode in 2002 and was initially popular with three subgroups: attendees of Burning Man, gay men, and bloggers, all mainly living in San Francisco and New York. As danah boyd has revealed, the site quickly spread to other subgroups such as goths, ravers, and hipsters, and it garnered mainstream media attention by mid 2003. By October 2003, *Friendster.com* had more than 3.3 million accounts.[23]

The concept driving *Friendster.com* was simple: to compete with sites such as *Match.com*, it relied on semipublic declarations and testimonials by friends, rather than the results of extensive and complex surveys. Further, it leveraged already existing connections to create a user base larger than those actively seeking romance; the resulting instantiation of matchmaking was presumably more effective than its offline variant because it revealed more connections between friends than possible through purposeful matchmaking. These 'friends' were not only an important source of connections; they were also potential users of the match-making aspects of the site. The site exploited the muddy boundary between those looking/open and those taken/closed, while also seeming to respect this boundary by asking people to state their relationship status. Users were not offered a universal view of the site, nor access to all profiles, but were forced to navigate an egocentric network limited to profiles within four degrees of separation (friends of friends of friends of friends). This four-degrees limit was inspired by the sociologist Stanley Milgram's classic experiment, in which he (allegedly) showed that most people are connected within six degrees of separation. To maintain its legitimacy as a dating site, *Friendster.com* thus thrived and depended on authenticity and authentication of one's identity and character by one's friends.

The site, however, soon fell out of favor in the United States. By 2004, the majority of users were from Singapore, Malaysia, and the Philippines. boyd, among others, has linked the demise of *Friendster.com* to the "Fakester Genocide," a concerted effort by the *Friendster.com* management to delete the accounts of fakesters: people who created fictional accounts of things (such as Burning Man) or people (such as Angelina Jolie).[24] The management deleted these popular accounts because they viewed these fakesters as undermining the theoretical premise that grounded the site. According to founder Jonathan Abrams, "fake profiles defeat the whole point of Friendster. ... The whole point of Friendster is to see how you're connected to people through your friends."[25] By linking to a popular fakester—by joining a community of fans—a user quickly became connected to many people who were not connected to him or her via a 'real' friend. Thus, according to Abrams's logic, because these fakesters were so promiscuous, they thwarted the correlation between *Friendster.com* and real life. (This assumption ignored the fact that mutual interest in a fakester could serve the same purpose as being a friend of a friend of a friend of a friend (or a user's neighbor); it also revealed that authentication was valued over commonality.)

Besides undermining the theory driving the site, the fakester phenomenon demonstrated the potential for community to become a network

weapon: it seriously challenged *Friendster.com*'s technology because, with so many connections, the site ground to a halt. Deleting fakester accounts, though, led to an exodus not only of those violating the site's conditions of use, but also those sympathetic to the fakesters and those disconcerted by the heavy-handed tactics of the *Friendster.com* management. Still others left because others had because, without constant activity on testimonial boards, the site became boring and profiles became "frozen" relics of past conversations.[26] The mass exodus revealed the *Friendster.com* management's blindness to a basic social media fact that their site had encapsulated: online, to be is to be updated. Constant updates by others and oneself maintain online presence. As *Facebook.com*'s newsfeed and livestream have made clear, sharing surveillance with users not only makes users more comfortable with surveillance, it also makes them engage more with the site. The constantly changing newsfeed keeps the site 'alive'; making users' actions public keeps SNSs (social networking sites) from appearing frozen.

Despite its demise as a dating site, *Friendster.com*'s legacy is its popularization of a bizarre notion of friendship as reciprocal and verifiable—that is, a matter of mutual agreement. This notion of friendship resonates strongly with the concept of 'love' in neoliberal societies, as they both focus on and amplify the importance of individual decisions. As anthropologist Elizabeth Povinelli has asserted, "One of the key dimensions of the fantasy of intimate love is its stated opposition to all other forms of social determination even as it claims to produce a new form of social glue. The intimate event holds together what economic and political self-sovereignty threaten to pull apart, and it does so while providing an ethical foundation to a specific form of sex; stitching the rhythms of politics and the market to the rhythms of the intimate subject."[27] Intimate love, that is, builds new bonds that integrate individuals—released by love from other bonds, such as family—into the logic of the market. As she further explains: "Because this kind of self-transformation leans on the openness of other people to the same type of self-transformation, autological intimacy functions as a proselytizing religion. Like capital, intimacy demands an ever-expanding market; and, like capital, intimacy expands through macro-institutional and micro-practices."[28] As *Friendster.com* revealed, the desire for love spreads quickly and creates networks, but friendship expands even more rapidly, its weakness compared to love its strength. Friends embody the neoliberal spirit of independent choice, for we choose our friends in ways we cannot choose our family or those with whom we fall in love. Through friends we craft our affiliations and our selves. Already weaker than love, friendship is made even weaker by its transformation from what Derrida and others have

described as a nonreciprocal relation to a benign mutual agreement: a click that confirms that one recognizes the other.[29] It is also, however, a click—a response to a call—that, as Emmanuel Levinas has claimed, makes one hostage to the other.[30]

As boyd notes, this impoverished notion of friendship—which reduces all sorts of relationships to YES/NO friendships—creates all kinds of dilemmas. Most particularly, it compromises the separation of work from leisure, family from friend. Yet these boundary crossings, and the crises they provoke, are not merely unfortunate side effects; they are the point. As boyd herself comments, the purpose of a *Friendster.com* friend was to confuse the boundaries between public and private: it "public[ly exhibited] private relationships in order to allow for new private interactions."[31] These publicly exhibited private interactions complicate traditional understandings of the public sphere. The site's stretching of the notion of a friend was also key to its expansionist logic. To provide the best authentication and the most variety, it had to move beyond normal notions of friendship. Further, this compromising of the boundary between work and leisure was its business model. Through acts of 'friending,' writing on people's walls, etc., content is freely provided for these sites, and the connections between users, which SNSs profit from, are revealed. 'Friending' is a key part of what Tiziana Terranova has called "free labour."[32]

Social networking sites that followed in the wake of *Friendster.com*, such as *MySpace.com* and *Facebook.com*, inherited the dilemmas and benefits of this banal, and therefore even more dangerous, definition of friend. The early evolution of *Facebook.com* and its relation to its print predecessors reveal the attraction and power of enclosed open spaces, that is, spaces that feel 'free' because they are enclosed. Facebooks are traditionally print publications circulated at liberal arts institutions that feature pictures of students along with some information about them. These books were key to creating something like community, that is, transforming "friendly strangers" into friends, or at the very least acquaintances, whom one knew by name. Various eating houses at Princeton would invite freshmen to their parties based on their pictures in the *Freshman Facebook*; faculty at Harvard were given facebooks with the hope that they would learn the names of their students. Facebooks were thus key to that perhaps wonderful, perhaps creepy sense of community for which one pays so dearly at these institutions. *Facebook.com* was started by a Harvard undergraduate, Mark Zuckerberg, in 2004 to give students in various Harvard residence halls a way to identify and meet other students. It soon spread to other universities in the Boston area and to other Ivy League colleges. Within two years, there were

at least 9 million users of *Facebook.com* in countries including Canada, England, India, Mexico, and Australia; by 2005, 85 percent of undergraduates in supported schools used *Facebook.com*, and 60 percent logged on at least once a day.[33] There were also corporate and high school versions of *Facebook.com* before *Facebook.com* gave up its school and corporate-based centers and began to adopt a more egocentric focus, similar to *Friendster.com* and *MySpace.com*.[34]

As the term "portal" makes clear, the early boundaries that *Facebook.com* established were as crucial as the connections they enabled, for a portal is an elaborate door that takes people inside, not outside (see figure 3.4). *Facebook.com* enabled users with valid email accounts to create personal profiles, which, in 2005, could contain photos, birthdates, phone numbers, courses taken, and descriptions of one's religious and political views. To view a detailed profile, though, you needed to be on the same network as the profile's and the profile's default had to be set to allow network access (the network could be as broad as Brown University or as narrow as faculty at Brown), or you and the profile owner had to be 'friends.' You could create a blog or leave messages on your friends' walls, as well as create a newsfeed detailing your latest actions. Like many Web 2.0 applications, *Facebook.com* actively discouraged anonymity. Although there was no way

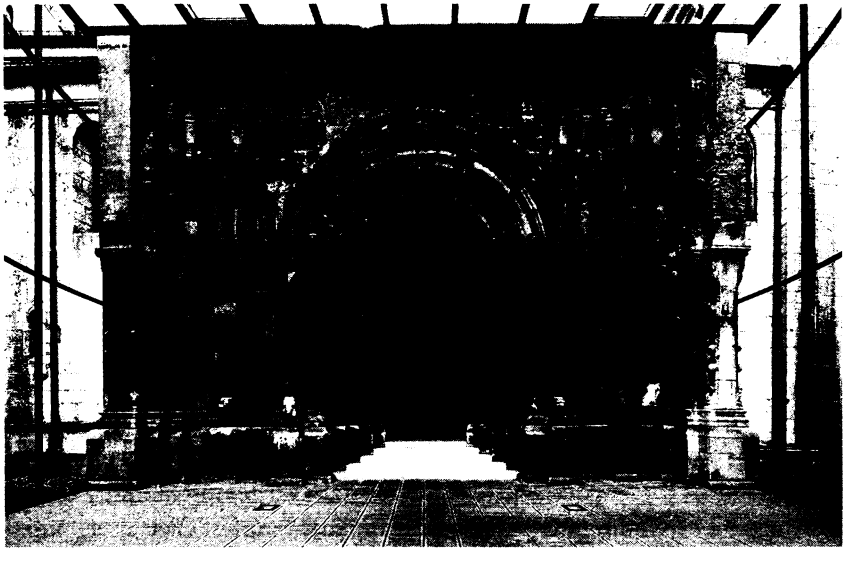

Figure 3.4
Schottenportal, Scots Monastery, Regensburg, Germany. Photo by Richard Bartz.

of verifying student photographs, many of them were framed as self-representations, and their sometimes compromising natures reeked of authenticity. Race, through these photographs, made itself visually present; there was no attempt to create a race-blind space, but rather a desire to make the Internet reflect—or better yet refract—one's physical space.

Social networking software such as *Facebook.com* and *Friendster.com* fostered a link between the online and the offline: one used *Facebook.com* to track down a fellow student. *Facebook.com* was thus popularly imagined as a safe space, that is, a network that one could control. The free flow of information—the cell phone numbers, the frank assessment of their classes, and compromising photographs that students would post—depended on a gated community that supported existing networks of privilege. Initially, for instance, a student at Texas A&M could not see the profiles and networks of Harvard students, unless she was explicitly friended by a Harvard student. Even then, she was offered access not to the entire Harvard network but to an egocentric network that depended on the default settings of other users. Rather than being an open university, *Facebook.com* was a geographically bound, sheltered space. The site took the perceived intimacy, so crucial to liberal arts institutions, to the 'masses' (larger public institutions) by creating semiprivate enclosures within seemingly open spaces.[35] *Facebook.com* was thus initially less appealing to high school students, who tended already to know people in their classes, than *MySpace.com*, which also required one to have a profile before one could view others but offered a more expansive environment. Everything changed when *Facebook.com* opened up its network, which it could do because of the sheer density of 'friends' it had enclosed.

As mentioned earlier, for all their rhetoric of safety and enclosure, *Facebook.com* and other SNSs, which enable users to 'choose' their friends and their level of exposure, are hardly safe spaces.[36] These sites reveal the lie of 'stranger danger.' As many studies have demonstrated, teenagers, with the exception of gamers, marginalized, and "at-risk" youth, do not develop friendships with strangers online.[37] Rather, as boyd writes, they use these tools to "maintain preexisting connections, turn acquaintances into friendships, and develop connections through people they already know."[38] Yet this maintenance has not meant that young adults have been free of harassment while in these spaces. Instead, because these sites also amplify offline relations by expanding the temporal and spatial range of their users' interactions, they have expanded the range and force of bullying. The pressure to accept a friend request—in order to be polite or to access another's 'private' profile—means that one is likely to be 'friends' with an enemy (again, to the extent that friends and enemies can be distinguished).[39]

Sexting among juveniles also reveals the fact that identification and authentication can further a more virulent "peer-based" harassment. As the 2012 report *A Qualitative Study of Children, Young People and "Sexting"* explains, the often-coercive demand for sexts comes from peers rather than unknown strangers.[40] Although sexting, especially within the United States, has far more dire legal consequences than cyberbullying (as shown in the example cited above), it is more common and was initially considered less upsetting than cyberbullying.[41] Sexting usually occurs on devices and through modes of communication imagined as even more private than SNSs: text messaging on one's mobile phone. Texting is considered more secure than SNSs such as *Facebook.com*—also called "baitbook"—even though it is easy to take and circulate screen shots of mobile phones.[42] The British authors of *A Qualitative Study of Children, Young People and "Sexting"* focused on the role of BlackBerry Messaging (BBM) in the spread and circulation of sexting. Again, perceived security leads to greater danger. Through BBM, which relied on secure PINs—and thus appeared extremely private and secure—demands for sexts became unrelenting, and these images were quickly distributed beyond their intended recipient. Through authentication, teens became involved in a serious criminal activity: the production of child pornography.

Given the failures of transparency and authenticity to guarantee safety, why did and does the concept of online friendship persist? What is at stake in 'friending?' 'Friending' and its creation of new voluntary and involuntary bonds have been crucial to the transformation of the Internet into a market: into a "Big Data" goldmine through the creation of affiliation networks.

YOU Matter, or If YOU See Something, Say Something

How is value generated online? However disappointing and deferred, why were Facebook's IPOs worth so much?

At a certain level, the answer seems simple. Value is generated online, and networks are valuable because information has become a commodity. As many scholars, including Manuel Castells, have argued, information has moved from an entity necessary for production to a product in and of itself.[43] Across the political spectrum—from Marxists to neoliberal capitalists—information/knowledge is portrayed as a valuable immaterial commodity. To those who seek to expand and exploit capitalist markets, information is power: It is valuable because with it, users can make the right (that is, profitable) decisions.[44] Goldman Sachs is therefore willing to pay millions of dollars to develop software that can process information and

help it to make decisions microseconds before its competitors. On the left, scholars such as Tiziana Terranova and Alexander Galloway have emphasized the link between immaterial commodities and labor processes. Terranova, focusing on the ongoing labor central to the success of any website, argues that with information, "the commodity does not disappear as such; it rather becomes increasingly ephemeral, its duration becomes compressed, it becomes more of a process than a finished product. The role of continuous, creative, innovative labor as the ground of market value is crucial to the digital economy."[45] Both on the right and the left, then, there is a sense that the value of information depends on timing.

The value of information, though, is not simply tied to its newness or initial discovery, and in this sense, the timing of networked information differs from that of its print predecessors, such as newspapers. Whereas Walter Benjamin, comparing the times of the story and of the news, could once declare, "the value of information does not survive the moment in which it was new. It lives only at that moment; it has to surrender to it completely and explain itself to it without losing any time," now newness alone does not determine value.[46] In the early twenty-first century, news organizations began charging for old information. In 2015, the *New York Times* online, for example, offered a certain number of current articles for free, but charged for its archive; similarly, popular mass media shows such as *This American Life* provided only the current week's podcast for free. Users pay for old information either because they want to see it again or because they missed it the first time, their missing registered by the many references to it (consider, in this light, all the *Youtube.com* videos referencing *Two Girls, One Cup* after that video was removed). Repetition produces value; repeated references and likes by friends and strangers mark something as valuable, as worth visiting, as worth downloading. Information—some event, incident, media object, etc.—becomes valuable when it moves from a singularly noted event to one that elicits 'mass' response (when it becomes 'viral'). This is why sociological analyses of sites such as *Twitter.com* take as their base unit retweets, likes, and other repetitive acts.

As this repetition makes clear, value is not generated by one YOU but rather by a plethora of YOUs: by the very interconnections between the various YOUs. YOU, again, is central to the operation of networks because it is both singular and plural. In its plural form, it still refers to individuals as individuals, rather than creating another communal subject, a 'we,' from more than one 'me.' In a network, that is, the nodes are still theoretically distinct, however aggregated. This YOUs value is related to and differs from other notions of networked value, which emphasize the importance of

crowd sourcing, peer-to-peer production, and the collaborative nature of knowledge, concepts that have been developed insightfully by scholars such as Yochai Benkler, Pierre Lévy, and Paolo Virno.[47] Whereas these notions emphasize the collective effects of voluntary actions, YOUs value emerges through the mainly involuntary effects of voluntary and involuntary actions, from searches to mouse clicks, from likes to posts. It is also produced by a certain politics of storage that makes possible affiliation networks, which trace and link users' online actions. If our world is data rich, it is not simply because users provide content for free, but also because every interaction is made to leave a trace, which is then tied to other traces and used to understand YOU, where YOU is always singular and plural. Whether any particular YOU is aware of it or not, YOUs constitute a latent resource. *Facebook.com*, *Amazon.com*, and *Google.com*, among other sites, mine user data not simply to identify unique users but also, and most importantly, to see how their likes, etc., coincide with those of others. Collaborative filtering algorithms developed by *Netflix.com* and *Amazon.com* to recommend purchases and classify users exemplify this, for they analyze and collect data in ways that suspend the difference between the individual and collective statistical body, even as they respect and insist on this difference by providing users with individual logins and pages optimized for them. This is why SNSs seek to be portals, for enclosing users within spaces is the easiest way to analyze and track these connections. Initially, *Amazon.com* filtered according to content: it made suggestions for further purchases based on what YOU and others have bought; *Youtube.com* made its recommendation based on covisitation counts—that is, how many users watch any two videos back to back.

Early on, *Netflix.com* relied on collaborative filtering: it filtered according to similarities between films and viewers. This was no easy task because, as Mung Chiang explains in *Networked Life*, the data is both very big and sparse—there are millions of subscribers and films, and yet very few users rate films.[48] To improve its recommendation system, *Netflix.com* famously issued a challenge: it offered a large chunk of its database and a lot of money to whoever could improve its recommendation system by 10 percent.[49] The winning algorithm employed the average rating and factors to compensate for user and movie bias; and, most importantly, it created "neighborhoods" based on the relationship between films and users. Intriguingly, a "neighborhood predictor" factored in both strong likes and strong dislikes—what mattered was how much a user deviated most from the norm with others. This use of the term "neighborhood" is telling, as it reveals once more the transformation of the Internet into a series of gated communities. The

segregation of films and users into neighborhoods based on strong likes and dislikes assumes that neighborhoods are forms of voluntary segregation—that YOU reside with people 'like YOU,' whose actions preempt and shape YOUR own. This is redlining on an entirely different level; as I pointed out in chapter 1, network analytics engage in discrimination under the cover of seemingly neutral proxies that target intersections of race, class, gender, and sexuality. These algorithms make no attempt at desegregation, at expanding one's point of view by exposing one to things that are radically different. Rather, YOU reveal YOUs, where these YOUs are closely lumped together, and YOUs are defined—whether or not users speak—through YOUR affiliations.

This intersection of data and methods designed to identify individuals and those to identify larger trends suspends the traditional separation between the two archival logics to incorporate the body that Allan Sekula influentially theorized in relation to the production of photographic evidence.[50] The first, derived from the work of criminologist Alphonse Bertillon, focused on identifying the individual, on inscribing the body in the archive (figure 3.5). The other archival logic, derived from the work of the eugenicist Sir Francis Galton, sought to identify the hidden type driving the body and thus to embed the archive in the photograph (figure 3.6). Currently, these processes have become inseparable at the level of data capture and storage. The same process captures the data necessary to identify individuals as singular and to identify their relation to certain groups. *Amazon.com*, for instance, tracks individual purchases not only to create a record of a user (a digital fingerprint), but also so that it can connect that user's actions with those of others in order to make suggestions for further purchases—that is, so it can predict and encourage future behavior that conforms to, and confirms and optimizes, statistical network analyses.

These algorithms and this mining assume that the data being gathered is reliable; that users' online actions are as indexical as their body measurements and mug shots. Tellingly, *Netflix.com* did not employ the winning algorithm in all its complexity, but rather turned to Principal Component Analysis (PCA) because its database became much richer once it began to stream films.[51] To help ensure this correlation, which values users' actions over their words or ratings, websites create login structures that link a person to an ID. They also benefit from the ways in which users' friends—their likes, their posts, their tags, their retweets (or via Gmail, their email messages to us)—authenticate a user and enmesh the user more thoroughly into these networks. Their actions also help target messages directed blindly toward users and 'register' their accuracy, even if there is no direct response.

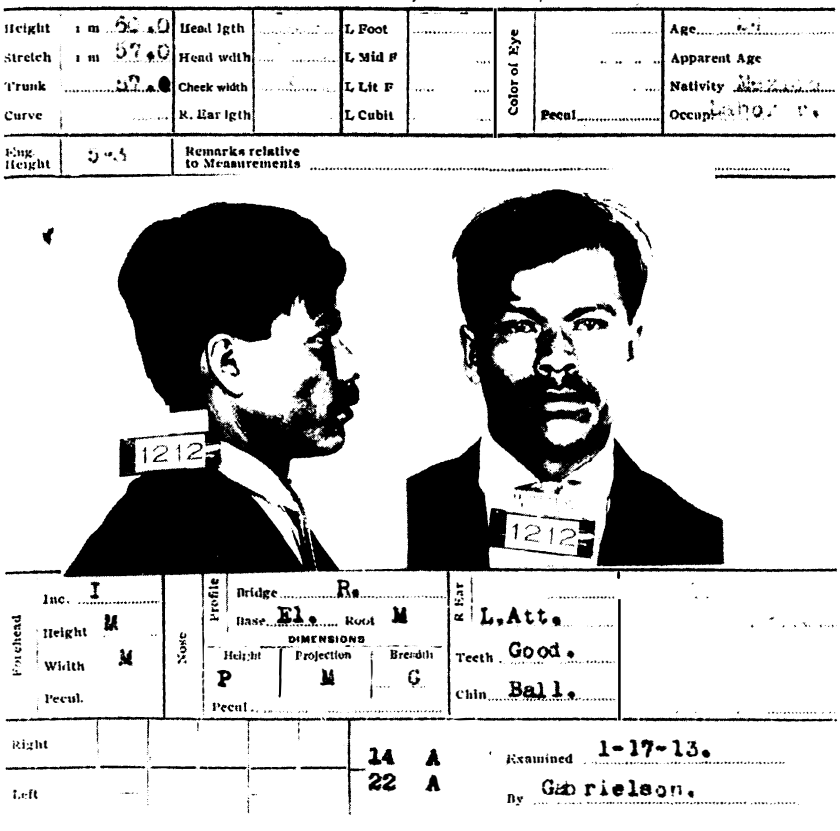

Figure 3.5
Bertillon card, 1913, reproduced in Allan Sekula's "The Body and the Archive," *October* 39 (Winter 1986): 3–64.

Whether or not YOU are aware of it, YOU are always following the mantra: If YOU see something, say something.

This mode of targeting, of the production of YOUs, resonates strongly with Louis Althusser's theorization of ideology. Drawing from the work of Jacques Lacan, Althusser argued that ideology "represents the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence."[52] By this, he did not mean that ideology is simply a figment of one's imagination, for one usually can only access one's real conditions of existence via the imaginary.[53] Further, the ego emerges through a process of imaginary identification with others (and other images). This identification is also always a

Figure 3.6
Sir Francis Galton's composite of "The Jewish Type," 1883, reproduced from Karl Pearson, "The Life, Letters and Labours of Francis Galton," plate XXXV, in Allan Sekula's "The Body and the Archive," *October* 39 (Winter 1986): 3–64.

misidentification, for one is not actually those other people or images (a mirror reflection both is and is not the body). Ideology, Althusser stresses, interpellates individuals as subjects. To explain this, he describes a policeman yelling "Hey you!" at a person on the street. He continues, "Assuming that the theoretical scene I have imagined takes place in the street, the hailed individual will turn round. By this mere one-hundred-and-eighty-degree physical conversion, he becomes a *subject*. Why? Because he has recognized that the hail was 'really' addressed to him, and that 'it was *really him* who was hailed' (and not someone else)."[54] By recognizing oneself as hailed, one makes the YOU and the I coincide and thus emerges as a subject of and to the law, and of and to society more generally. Althusser stresses that this hailing rarely misses its mark: "Experience shows that the practical telecommunication of hailings is such that they hardly ever miss their man: verbal call or whistle, the one hailed always recognizes that it is really him who is being hailed."[55] Ideology, as a telecommunicational event, provokes a response, which is also a recognition.

Richard Dienst has revised Althusser's notion of ideology to engage more closely with telecommunications.[56] Stressing the "hardly ever," Dienst

argues that if ideology can miss its mark, then it must "have been unstable as sign and as event, it can never simply be the transmission of a meaning to the subject." He goes on to contend that "ideology neither hails nor nails the subject in place, since both terms [subject and individual] only appear on the occasion of a telecommunication."[57] To think through this concept of ideology as an event or telecommunication, Dienst draws from Derrida's work on misdirection in *The Post Card*. Bringing together Derrida's and Althusser's arguments reveals that "ideology must be conceived as a mass of sendings or a flow of representations whose force consists precisely in the fact that they are not perfectly destined, just as they are not centrally disseminated. Far from always connecting, ideology *never does*: subjects look in on messages as if eavesdropping, as if peeking at someone else's mail."[58] There is always a distance between the "I" and the "Hey you." This does not mean, however, that ideology does not work; rather, "ideology requires a short circuit between the singular and the general so the *reception of a representation* becomes a sending back—a *representation of a reception*" (italics in original).[59] This sending back, which closes the circuit, also short-circuits the singular with the general, so that individuals respond to a general call as if it were directed at them in particular: the flows of messages create what are later identified as agents. Importantly, these flows are not directly addressed to these agents, but by responding to these calls (as when users seek out the message that they missed such as, for instance, the *Youtube.com* videos referencing *Two Girls, One Cup*), audiences become imbricated in particular expressive communities and systems of meaning.

Although Dienst developed his theory in relation to broadcast television, this description of ideology as short-circuiting the singular and the general describes the ways in which YOUs value works. In networks that track users, their captured actions involuntarily send back representations of receptions. In this sense, there is no "silence of the masses" in new media because interactivity thrives on constant, involuntary, and traceable exchanges of information.[60] This technological closing is complemented by another: through acts of friending, following, liking, and recommending, users register these receptions and they are also registered by others. Through these gestures, messages become both more directed and less general (better targeted) because users answer their friend's eavesdropped calls because they care.

Importantly, though, we still need to think through the ways in which these acts of friendship can overwhelm and compromise attempts at enclosure and attempts to master YOUs value. First, these associational links produce too much information. In the era of "Big Data," it is impossible to

address all trends and information. As a 2012 article in the *Wall Street Journal* opined, "the problem that a lot of companies face is that they don't know what they don't know."[61] Second, in addition to producing controversies within these sites, caring actions also threaten to overwhelm the network and spread viruses and spam. As I argued in the last chapter, through users' efforts to foster safety, they spread retrovirally, thus defeating their computer's usual antiviral systems.

To be clear, though, I do not simply want to condemn the desire for intimacy and its dangers, for that desire is perhaps what is wonderful and productive about the Internet as well. A fascinating corollary to *Friendster.com* was the emergence of flash mobs, which emerged at the same time (2003) in New York City. As an example, consider this email message inviting a group of mainly youngish hipsters to take part in MOB #4 in New York City:

Date: Wed, 9 Jul 2003 16:40:21-0700 (PDT)
From: The Mob Project
To: themobproject@yahoo.com
Subject: MOB #4

You are invited to take part in MOB, the project that creates an inexplicable mob of people in New York City for ten minutes or less. Please forward this to other people you know who might like to join.

FAQ

Q. Why would I want to join an inexplicable mob?

A. Tons of other people are doing it.

Q. Why did the plans to MOB #3 change?

A. The National Guardsmen with machine guns had something to do with it.

Q. What should I do with my MOB $1 bill?

A. Spend it, if you like. But you may be asked to make another, for a future MOB.

Q. Can we do a MOB downtown, for a change?

A. Sure.

INSTRUCTIONS—MOB #4

Start time: Wednesday, July 16th, 7:18 pm

Duration: 10 minutes

(1) At some point during the day on July 16th, synchronize your watch to http://www.time.gov/timezone.cgi?Eastern/d/-5/java/java. (If that site doesn`tworkforyou,tryhttp://www.time.gov/timezone.cgi?Eastern/d/-5.)

(2) By 7 PM, based on the month of your birth, please situate yourselves in the bars below. Buy a drink and act casual. NOTE: if you are attending

the MOB with friends, you may all meet in the same bar, so long as at least one of you has the correct birth month for that bar.

January, February, March: Puck Fair, 298 Lafayette St. (just south of Houston). Meet just inside the front door, to the right.

April, May, June: 288 (a.k.a. Tom & Jerry's), 288 Elizabeth St. (just north of Houston). Meet in the back to the left, by the jukebox.

July, August, September: Bleecker St. Bar, 58 Bleecker St. (at Crosby). Meet in the back to the right, by the jukebox. ...

(3) Then or soon thereafter, a MOB representative will appear in the bar and will pass around further instructions.

(4) If you arrive near the final MOB site before 7:18, stall nearby. NO ONE SHOULD ARRIVE AT THE FINAL MOB SITE UNTIL 7:17.

(5) At 7:28 you should disperse. NO ONE SHOULD REMAIN AT THE MOB SITE AFTER 7:30.

(6) Return to what you otherwise would have been doing, and await instructions for MOB #5.

The first flash mob converged on the rug department of a Macy's department store; the fourth overran a Soho shoe store. As mass acts of benign communal action, flash mobs were one's friends lists come to life: ephemeral interventions into quasi-public or at the very least open spaces, enacted by familiar strangers; latent publics, activated.[62]

Intriguingly, although the organizers constructed these mobs to be as banal as possible—engaged in actions such as shopping for shoes and placed in the "safest" of public spaces (the third New York flash mob moved from Grand Central Station to the lobby of the Hyatt Hotel because of the presence of "National Guardsmen with machine guns")—they were still treated with great suspicion. As the then-anonymous New York organizer "Bill" noted, "There seems to be something inherently political about an inexplicable mob."[63] Indeed, the gathering of a mob, speaking in a language not entirely understandable in the words and gestures of official politics (that is, in a language not easily recognized as political), recalls the traditional "noisy" claiming of rights.[64] The fact that these flash mobs were deliberately nonpolitical and couched in terms of play and yet were so disruptive—coupled with the fact that they would later mutate into highly orchestrated commercial public relations events and criminalized swarms, as well as TXTmob—also exemplifies the dangers of occupying and opening this liquid space between public and private, the dangers and possibilities also exemplified by the opening that is a friend.

As well as considering the political possibilities opened and shut down through 'friending,' we also must explore other nonreciprocal modes of

relation, which do not demand that ties between agents be explicitly acknowledged or bidirectional. Further, we need to consider how involuntary acts of spamming might be key to embracing the possibilities for community and action. I thus conclude with a personal anecdote to start us in this direction.

Spam, or Another Way to Say I Love You

In 2013, I fell victim to a phishing attack. The term "fell victim" is a little strong, for as soon as I clicked on the link, I knew something was wrong, and, had I not been distracted by two small children and using my iPhone at the time, I would never have made that mistake. This attack taught me what I should have already known: there is no innocent surfing online; babysitting is dangerous.

This attack, however, was brilliant: it was one of the most successful on *Twitter.com* to date. It consisted of a "private message," poorly typed and seemingly urgent, from a follower stating, "i cant believe this but there are some real nasty things being said about you here gourl.kr/Ag9hlR." I received this message from a former student, who also ran an important collaborative website, and I had just returned from a conference: The circumstances were perfect, even though the spelling errors and language should have signaled the falsity of this message (this student was far too professional to send such a message). This phishing attack did not just compromise my *Twitter.com* account; it also led to everyone following me on *Twitter.com* to be phished in turn, so it outed me as being naïve and possibly paranoid.

Predictably, many folks contacted me directly letting me know what I already knew—that I had been phished—and I had to amplify my public embarrassment by contacting everyone else and letting them know that the "private message" I had sent them was anything but. This experience made me realize that I had been taking the wrong approach to social networking. Clearly, I should only friend and follow people I hate.

There was, however, a surprising upside to this that made me decide not to take this new approach. Given that I hardly ever tweeted, the phishing attack allowed me to reach out to people who cared enough to skim over 140-character comments I might make. Spam, or phishing, became another way to say I love you.

One particular exchange made this point to me. A close colleague of mine received my phishing message and said she was honored to do so (I think she had also fallen victim to it). A brilliant graduate student I had met

that summer posted this in response: "Yeah, my first thought was 'wendy chun thought of me!!' Then my heart sank a lot, then I realized it was spam.:)." In response, I posted: "perhaps this is the upside of spam—contacting everyone with love for me." Although I was half joking at the time, there is something to the idea of spam as love: this exchange led to my thinking through the relation between Povinelli's discussion of the physical sores that mark contact in impoverished areas of Australia to virtual sores that are allegedly tied to "emerging" nations and markets. Both, that is, create "attitudes of interest and disinterest, anxiety and dread, fault and innocence about certain lives, bodies and voices and, in the process, form and deform lives, bodies, and voices."[65]

This loving side of spam also undermines the difference between spam and not-spam, human and inhuman. After all, what is the difference between semiautomatic "happy birthday" postings on Facebook pages and the emails, allegedly from friends, asking users to buy drugs from dodgy Canadian pharmacies? Involuntary (or not entirely voluntary) messages from others remind users that they are somehow connected to others, that they are in their address book, that others care enough about them to put them at risk. Also, as the founder of Slashdot, Rob Malda noted, slashdotting a site often makes it inoperable: a hug from a mob is indistinguishable from a distributed denial of service attack.[66] Again, moments of synchronous 'we,' of communal action, can destroy networks; YOUs value has the power to undo itself.

These interactions remind us that freedom and friendship are experiences that deny subjectivity, as much as they make it possible. As experiences, they are not contractual, but rather are perilous efforts, and we do not know in advance where they will lead. As Jean-Luc Nancy has argued, freedom is an experience. It is "an attempt executed without reserve, given over to the *peril* of its own lack of foundation and security in the 'object' of which it is not the subject but instead the passion, exposed like the pirate (peirātēs) who freely tries his luck on the high seas."[67] The Greek root for "pirate" is also the root for both "peril" and "experience."

Friendship's freedom comes without guarantees. Further, it is not a thing we possess, not something that anyone can own or grant another, even if it generates YOUs value that some can temporarily capture. It is a force that breaks bonds: a form of destruction that, Nancy argues, enables both friendship (habitation) and total destruction. Friendship as an experience is a moment of both terror and hope: a moment of hosting without meaning to and of being hostage to the other.

9. Ibid., 202.

10. Ibid., 219.

11. Ibid., 211–212.

12. Gabriella Coleman, "Our Weirdness Is Free: The Logic of Anonymous—Online Army, Agent of Chaos, and Seeker of Justice," *Triple Canopy*, January 2012, accessed August 30, 2014, http://canopycanopycanopy.com/issues/15/contents/our_weirdness_is_free.

13. See Danielle Allen, "Anonymous: On Silence and the Public Sphere," in *Speech and Silence in American Law*, ed. Austin Sarat (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 124.

14. See Laura Poitras's *Citizenfour* (Praxis Films, 2014).

15. See Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. Thomas Burger and Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1991).

16. Eden Osucha, "The Whiteness of Privacy: Race, Media, Law," *Camera Obscura* 24, no. 1 (2009): 67–107.

Chapter 3

1. See Oskar Negt and Alexander Kluge, *Public Sphere and Experience: Toward an Analysis of the Bourgeois and Proletarian Public Sphere*, trans. Peter Labanyo and Assenka Oksiloff (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), 54.

2. See Elizabeth Povinelli, *The Empire of Love: Toward a Theory of Intimacy, Genealogy, and Carnality* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 190.

3. Margaret Thatcher in Douglas Keay, "Margaret Thatcher Interview," *Woman's Own* (1987), http://www.margaretthatcher.org/speeches/displaydocument.asp?docid=106689.

4. Jacques Derrida in *The Politics of Friendship* argues, "friendship ... is first accessible on the side of its subject, who thinks and lives it, not on the side of its object, who can be loved or loveable without in any way being assigned to a sentiment of which, precisely, he remains the object. ... This incommensurability between the lover and the beloved will now unceasingly exceed all measurement and all moderation—that is, it will exceed the very principle of a calculation." See Derrida, *The Politics of Friendship* (New York: Verso, 1997), 10.

5. See John Perry Barlow, "A Declaration of the Independence of Cyberspace," *EFF.org*, February 8, 1996, https://projects.eff.org/~barlow/Declaration-Final.html.

6. William Gibson, *Neuromancer* (New York: Ace Books, 1984), 52.

7. Ibid., 6.

8. For more on this, see "Why Cyberspace?," in Wendy Hui Kyong Chun, *Control and Freedom: Power and Paranoia in the Age of Fiber Optics* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006), 37–76.

9. See Chun, *Control and Freedom.*

10. For more on the relationship between semiprivate spaces and critical thinking, see Ellen Rooney, "A Semiprivate Room," *Differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies* 13, no. 1 (2002): 128–156.

11. See Geert Lovink, *My First Recession: Critical Internet Culture in Transition* (Amsterdam: Institute of Network Cultures, 2011).

12. See Chun, "Screening Pornography," in *Control and Freedom*, 77–128.

13. Ibid.

14. Abrams v. United States, 250 U.S. 616, 630 (1919) (Holmes, J., dissenting).

15. Reno v. ACLU, Supreme Court, Department of Justice brief, No. 96-511, filed January 21, 1997

16. See Bianca Bosker, "Facebook's Randi Zuckerberg: Anonymity Online 'Has to Go Away,'" *Huffington Post*, July 27, 2011, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/07/27/randi-zuckerberg-anonymity-online_n_910892.html; and Terrell Ward Bynum, "Anonymity on the Internet and Ethical Accountability," *The Research Center on Computing and Society* (1997), posted September 5, 2010, http://rccs.southernct.edu/on-the-emerging-global-information-ethics/. Importantly, this was not the only solution offered to foster critical public dialog: competing against this simple connection of transparency with responsibility were formalized "reputation systems," such as the one developed by *Slashdot.org*, which were based on pseudonymic usage. These systems evolved through long-term use and communal evaluation, two features that would prove essential to any functioning online space, whether pseudonymic or transparent.

17. See Bosker, "Facebook's Randi Zuckerberg: Anonymity Online 'Has to Go Away'"; and Bianca Bosker, "Eric Schmidt on Privacy (VIDEO): Google CEO Says Anonymity Online Is 'Dangerous,'" *Huffington Post*, August 10, 2010, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2010/08/10/eric-schmidt-privacy-stan_n_677224.html.

18. Helen Nissenbaum, "Securing Trust Online: Wisdom or Oxymoron?," *Boston University Law Review* 81, no. 3 (June 2001): 655.

19. Ibid., 662.

20. To cite two of the more canonical examples: after Phoebe Prince, a fifteen-year-old transfer student at South Hadley High School in Massachusetts, hanged herself, comments such as "she deserved it" and "mission accomplished" appeared on her *Facebook.com* wall. In addition, several of her enemies created a "We Murdered

Phoebe Prince" page, featuring a digitally altered image of her, in which knives were shown piercing her eyes. The perpetrators were apparently four girls and one boy who were upset over Phoebe's romantic entanglements with their 'friends.' See Alyssa Giacobbe, "Who Failed Phoebe Prince?," *Boston Magazine* (June 2010), http://www.bostonmagazine.com/2010/05/phoebe-prince/. Later that year, Tyler Clementi jumped off the George Washington Bridge after his roommate Dharun Ravi and his hallmate Molly Wei, using Ravi's webcam, twice spied on Clementi's romantic activities with another man. After the first episode, Ravi had tweeted: "Roommate asked for the room till midnight. I went into molly's room and turned on my webcam. I saw him making out with a dude. Yay"; he also "dared" people with iChat to participate in the second viewing. See Lisa Foderaro, "Private Moment Made Public, Then a Fatal Jump," *New York Times*, September 29, 2010, http://www.nytimes.com/2010/09/30/nyregion/30suicide.html?_r=3&).

21. Janis Wolak, David Finkelhor, and Kimberly J. Mitchell, "Trends in Arrests for Child Pornography Production: The Third National Juvenile Online Victimization Study (NJOV-3)," *Crimes against Children Research Center*, Durham, NH (CV270), April 2012, http://www.unh.edu/ccrc/pdf/CV270_Child%20Porn%20Production%20Bulletin_4-13-12.pdf.

22. Amy Kimpel, "Using Laws Designed to Protect as a Weapon: Prosecuting Minors under Child Pornography Laws," *New York University Review of Law and Social Change* 34, no. 2 (2010): 299.

23. danah boyd, "Friendster and Publicly Articulated Social Networks," Conference on Human Factors and Computing Systems (CHI 2004) (ACM, Vienna, April 24–29, 2004), http://www.danah.org/papers/CHI2004Friendster.pdf.

24. Ibid.

25. Katherine Mieszkowski, "Faking out Friendster," *Salon*, August 14, 2003, http://www.salon.com/2003/08/14/fakesters/.

26. danah boyd and Jeffrey Heer, "Profiles as Conversation: Networked Identity Performance on Friendster," Proceedings of the Hawai'i International Conference on System Sciences (HICSS-39), Persistent Conversation Track Kauai, HI: IEEE Computer Society (January 4–7, 2006), http://vis.stanford.edu/files/2006-Friendster-HICSS.pdf.

27. Povinelli, *The Empire of Love*, 190.

28. Ibid.

29. See Derrida, *The Politics of Friendship*.

30. See Emmanuel Levinas, *Otherwise Than Being, or, Beyond Essence*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (Boston: Martinus Nijhoff, 1981), 127.

31. boyd, "Friendster and Publicly Articulated Social Networks."

32. For more on free labor, see Tiziana Terranova, "Free Labour," in *Network Culture: Politics for the Information Age* (London: Pluto Press, 2004), 73–97.

33. Michael Arrington, "85% of College Students Use FaceBook," *TechCrunch*, September 7, 2005, accessed August 30, 2014, http://techcrunch.com/2005/09/07/85-of-college-students-use-facebook/.

34. *MySpace.com*, of course, also engaged in a slippage between the private and public. Although profiles seem focused on the self (as the name implies), they depended on friend traffic and friend listings in order to generate interest.

35. *Google.com*'s 2012 decision to link its various databases that tracked user movement in seemingly separate spaces reveals the extent to which the Internet—even in its allegedly most open form—is increasingly a closed space. This logic of enclosure, however, was evident in *Google.com*'s initial form: a database. When one enters a term in *Google.com*, one does not search the Internet, but rather *Google.com*'s database, a simulacrum of the Internet.

36. As anthropologist Elizabeth Bernstein has argued in her work on the ramifications of changes to prostitution laws on the actual lives of sex workers, private spaces are often far more dangerous than public ones. Bernstein's notion of "bounded authenticity," of the transformation of prostitutes to "girlfriends for hire," also resonates with the transformation of friends outlined in this chapter. See Elizabeth Bernstein, *Temporarily Yours: Intimacy, Authenticity, and the Commerce of Sex* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007).

37. danah boyd et al., "Friendship," in *Hanging Out, Messing Around, Geeking Out: Kids Living and Learning with New Media*, ed. Mizuko Ito et al. (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2008).

38. Ibid., 91.

39. Intriguingly, in terms of sex crimes involving juveniles, "the largest number of cases involving SNSs [social networking sites] was undercover operations in which investigators set up web pages and profiles in the course of portraying minors online." See Kimberly Mitchell et al., "Use of Social Networking Sites in Online Sex Crimes against Minors: An Examination of National Incidence and Means of Utilization," *Journal of Adolescent Health* 47, no. 2 (2010): 185. The profile of those caught in "sting" operations—which in 2003 constituted a larger group than those arrested for actually soliciting youth—intriguingly differed from other online molesters. They were "older and more middle class in income and employment compared with those who solicited actual youths. They were also somewhat less likely to have prior arrests for sexual offenses against minors or for nonsexual offenses or to have histories of violence or deviant sexual behavior." See Janis Wolak et al., "Online 'Predators' and Their Victims: Myths, Realities, and Implications for Prevention and Treatment," *American Psychologist* 63, no. 2 (February–March 2008): 119. Wolak et al. speculate that this difference might be to due to the fact that "the offenders

most likely to be fooled by undercover investigators lack suspicion about law enforcement because they have less criminal experience and higher social status. It could also be that some such individuals are less experienced or skilled and more naïve in their pursuit of youths and are thus more easily caught" (ibid., 119). SNSs, because they reek of a certain authenticity, seemed to be more effective at "catching" would-be naïve offenders.

40. Jessica Ringrose et al., *A Qualitative Study of Children, Young People and 'Sexting': A Report Prepared for the NSPCC* (London: NSPCC, 2012), 7.

41. Ibid., 13.

42. Ibid., 27.

43. Manuel Castells, "The New Economy: Informationalism, Globalization, Networking," in Castells, *The Rise of Network Society*, vol. 1 of *The Information Age* (New York: Blackwell, 2000), 77–162.

44. See, for example, Sanjeev Goyal, *Connections: An Introduction to the Network Economy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007).

45. Terranova, *Network Culture*, 90.

46. Walter Benjamin, "The Story Teller," in *Illuminations* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1969), 90.

47. Yochai Benkler, *The Wealth of Networks: How Social Production Transforms Markets and Freedom* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006); Pierre Lévy, *Collective Intelligence: Mankind's Emerging World in Cyberspace* (New York: Plenum, 1997); and Paolo Virno, "General Intellect," in *Lessico postfordista* (Milan: Feltrinelli, 2001).

48. For more on this, see Mung Chiang, *Networked Life: 20 Questions and Answers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

49. See "The Netflix Prize Rules," *Netflixprize.com*, 2009, http://www.netflixprize.com/rules.

50. Allan Sekula, "The Body and the Archive: The Use and Classification of Portrait Photography by the Police and Social Scientists in the Late 19th and Early 20th Centuries," *October* 39 (1986): 3–64.

51. Casey Johnston, "Netflix Never Used Its $1 Million Algorithm due to Engineering Costs," *Wired*, April 16, 2012, http://www.wired.com/2012/04/netflix-prize-costs/.

52. Louis Althusser, *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays* (London: New Left Books, 1971), 162.

53. Jacques Lacan, "The Mirror Stage as Formative of the Function of the *I* as Revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience," in *Écrits: A Selection*, trans. Alan Sheridan (London: Tavistock, 1977), 1–7.

54. Althusser, *Lenin and Philosophy*, 174.

55. Ibid.

56. Richard Dienst, *Still Life in Real Time: Theory after Television* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1994). See in particular chapter 7, 128–143.

57. Ibid., 141.

58. Ibid.

59. Ibid., 141–142.

60. On the possibilities contained in the silence of the masses, see Jean Baudrillard, *In the Shadow of the Silent Majorities, or, The End of the Social, and Other Essays* (New York: Semiotext(e), 1983).

61. Ben Rooney, "Big Data's Big Problem: Little Talent," *Wall Street Journal*, April 29, 2012, http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424052702304723304577365700368073674.

62. Adam, one of the organizers of a proposed London flash mob, commented: "Flash mobs anchor the online world into the real world—they are a manifestation of your 'cc' list." See Sandra Shmueli, "'Flash Mob' Craze Spreads," *CNN.com*, August 8, 2003, http://www.cnn.com/2003/TECH/internet/08/04/flash.mob/index.html?_s=PM:TECH.

63. Quoted in Leander Kahney, "E-mail Mobs Materialize All Over," *Wired*, May 7, 2003, http://archive.wired.com/culture/lifestyle/news/2003/07/59518.

64. See Jacques Rancière, *Disagreement: Politics and Philosophy*, trans. Julie Rose (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999).

65. Povinelli, *Empire of Love*, 35.

66. Quoted in Trent Mankelow, "Quotes from Webstock 2012," *Optimal Usability Blog*, February 23, 2012; accessed August 30, 2014, http://www.optimalusability.com/2012/02/quotes-from-webstock-2012/.

67. Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Experience of Freedom*, trans. Bridget McDonald (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993), xx.

I Never Remember; YOUs Never Forget

1. See "Maria Marroquin, Dream Activist Pennsylvania," *Youtube.Com* (April 5, 2011), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aFXTNk3YOnY. This video is arguably the most popular because an article by the Center for Immigrant Studies targeted her as an "illegal alien" working for Obamacare; see James R. Edwards, Jr., "Illegal Alien Heads Obamacare Navigator Program in NYC," *Center for Immigration Studies*, October 15, 2013, http://cis.org/edwards/illegal-alien-heads-obamacare-navigator-