

**SI540 Understanding Networked Computing**

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**Blogs and Wikis for Classes**

# Outline

- Objectives for Student Writing
- Tech Basics
  - › Threaded discussion
  - › Wiki
  - › Blogs
- My experiences
  - › eCommunities 2005: wiki + blogs
  - › eCommunities 2006: wiki/blog hybrid

# Why Students Should Write

- Class Prep
  - › Students; faculty
  - › Faculty
- Sensemaking
  - › Individual; collective
- Memory
  - › Individual; collective
- Knowledge creation/discovery
- Community building

# Threaded Discussion

- Messages
  - › Replies
    - › Replies to replies
- Can make each reading its own discussion topic
- Needs not met (well)
  - › Tracking individual authors
  - › Tracking the new stuff
  - › Fine-grained responses
  - › Coherent summary
  - › (Scrollable/printable view of whole conversation)

# Wikis

- Browser-based editing
- Simple markup language
- Multiple editors for a single document
- Version history

## Useful links for Visitors to My Page

- [Job postings](#) for projects that I'm supervising
- My regular [homepage](#)
- [Office hours](#)

## Two truths and a tall tale

One of these three is **not** true; can you guess which? Please vote...

**[Rev. Jesse Jackson](#) once told me to "play another" song**

Select

**My favorite vacation ever was to Brazil**

Select

**In grad school, I sometimes woke up at 4AM because I was so excited to get back to programming on my thesis project**

Select

**In grad school, I sometimes woke up at 4AM because I was so excited to get back to programming on my thesis project**

# PaulResnick (edit)

See below for help in editing this page.

```
%TOC%

---+Useful links for Visitors to My Page
  * [[PRJobListings][Job postings]] for projects
that I'm supervising
  * My regular
[[http://www.si.umich.edu/~presnick][homepage]]
  * [[PROfficeHours][Office hours]]

---+Two truths and a tall tale
One of these three is *not* true; can you guess
which? Please vote...
%VOTE{id="PaulResnick001" style="total"
select1="[[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jesse_Jackson|
Jesse Jackson]] once told me to 'improvise a theory'!"
```

# Markup Language

```
---+Useful links for Visitors to My Page
  * [[PRJobListings][Job postings]] for
projects that I'm supervising
  * My regular
[[http://www.si.umich.edu/~presnick][homepa
ge]]
  * [[PROfficeHours][Office hours]]
```

l of Information University of Michigan

Jump: [

**Main**

[Edit](#) [Attach](#) [Printable](#)

Main.PaulResnick r1.10 - 11 Dec 2005 -

[org](#)

[me](#)  
[er](#)

**Web**  
[Web Home](#)

## Useful links for Visitors to My Page

- [Job postings](#) for projects that I'm supervising
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- [Office hours](#)

%TOC%

---+Useful links for Visitors to My Page

Main

Edit Attach Printable

Main.PaulResnick r1.11 - 11 De

[TWiki.org](#)

[Welcome](#)  
[Register](#)

**Main Web**

[Main Web Home](#)

[Users](#)

[Groups](#)

[Offices](#)

- ↓ [Useful links for Visitors to My Page](#)
- ↓ [Two truths and a tall tale](#)
- ↓ [Personal Preferences \(details in TWikiVariables\)](#)
- ↓ [Related topics](#)

**Useful links for Visitors to My Pa**

- [ChangePassword](#)
- [TWikiPreferences](#) has site-level preferences of TWiki.
- [WebPreferences](#) has preferences of the TWiki.Main web.
- [TWikiUsers](#) has a list of other TWiki users.
- [WelcomeGuest](#) to learn TWiki
- [Sandbox](#) web to try out TWiki
- [PaulResnickSandbox?](#) just for me

[to top](#)

[Edit](#) | [Attach image or document](#) | [Printable version](#) | [Raw text](#) | [More topic actions](#)

Revisions: | [r1.10](#) | [>](#) | [r1.11](#) | [>](#) | [r1.10](#) | [Total page history](#) | [Backlinks](#)

### Added:

- > Due to a missing space, the first 20 votes for Jesse
- > Jackson were apparently not counted. However, by process of elimination, I infer that 14 thought it was "true", 6 "false".

I'm not sure what this says about the "wisdom of crowds". Collectively, people seemed to have no idea which of the three was false, although a few more seemed to think that Brazil was false than the others. They were right. I've never been to Brazil --

[PaulResnick](#) - 12 Dec 2005

# Wikis

- Browser-based editing
- Simple markup language
- Multiple editors for a single document
- Version history
- Main Advantages
  - › Fine-grained response possibilities
  - › Coherent collectively produced document

# Blogs

- Collection of posts by an author
  - › Multiple authors for group blog
  - › Presented newest first
- Others can reply
  - › With “trackbacks”, entry in one blog can be shown as reply in another
- Aggregator can combine multiple blogs
- Main Advantage
  - › Collection creates an individual narrative

# Wiki + Blog: 2005

- One wiki page per course reading
  - › One student as editor
    - › **Posts initial summary**
  - › Document template
    - › **Summary**
    - › **Critique**
    - › **Connections**
- One blog entry per student per week
  - › Connect readings to term project
- Participation graded (lightly)

# 2005 Experience

- Wiki
  - › Occasional queries and comments in-line
  - › Never direct editing of other students
  - › Students added another section to template
    - › **Class Discussion(!)**
      - › Like a message board
      - › But occasionally rearranged to add coherence

## SIECommunities : Sproull2004

HomePage :: Categories :: PageIndex :: RecentChanges :: RecentlyCommented :: Login/Register

**Sproull2004:** Sproull, L., Conley, C., & Moon, J. Y. (in press). Pro-social behavior on the net. In Y. Amichai-Hamburger (Ed.), The social net: The social psychology of the Internet. New York: Oxford University Press.

Discussion leader/summarizer: [YongKim](#)

### Research Question

This study attempts to address the pro-social behavior on the net from theoretical perspectives and discusses the effects and implications. ([KathyLee] What about these from p. 5?)

- why do people help when they cannot see the potential recipient and so may find it difficult to judge if he or she is worthy?
- why do people help when they cannot see other potential helpers and so may find it difficult to judge if their help would be useful?
- why do people help when they have no tangible reminders of the social benefit of their help?

### Key Points/Claims/Methods

Online pro-social behavior is mostly salient in e-communities such as public discussion groups and public volunteer work groups in which the activities are publicly visible, organized, and relatively more convenient. In Ackerman's words, the combination of technical affordances and social affordances facilitates such group activities. The authors claim that social learning and social identification theories provide a good explanation for how pro-social behavior emerges and is maintained.

#### Social learning and social identification

- Social learning theory suggests that behavior that is visible and socially reinforced will be learned.
  - Visible peer recognition of help and contribution reinforces learning.
  - The entry barrier of a small contribution is relatively low in online communities, which helps social learning
- Social identity theory help explain why people exhibit substantial pro-social behavior over time. People enhance

facilitate their participation. Apparently, social learning and social identification theories do not provide a comprehensive answer.

## Connections with other readings, ideas etc.

Hogg's social categorization, depersonalizations, and group behavior, one of last week's readings, provides very juicy theoretical perspectives on online volunteers' motivation to contribute their effort and time to their public discussion and volunteer work groups. In addition, Ackerman and Palen's Zephyr study exemplifies what technical and social mechanisms are required to facilitate the use CMC for help.

## Class Discussion

CaRichardson: I was confused by the quote about the Linux developers on page 7 "... identification with the developers in the linux subsystem in which the respondent was participating, but not identification with the Linux user community as a whole, was positively related to the number of hours spent on the Linux project." This seems to contradict the common interest / common bond literature from last week. I guess you could consider "identification with and commitment to the core group of volunteers" to be a connection to a prototype instead of a common bond between the core group members.

CathyLu: CaRichardson, what do you mean by a "connection to a prototype" here? Isn't "identification with the developers in the linux subsystem" a trait of an identity group (not the whole Linux user community but the developers community)?

I think this article would be more persuasive in its use of the social learning theory to explain pro-social behavior in the net if it gives us some details of account how it started in the first place. The theory on social learning "which suggests that pro-social behavior is visible, learnable, and socially reinforceable" (YongKim's summary) seems basically derived from offline context without being verified in the online context.

PaulResnick: I think the point of that paragraph was to talk about a bonds-based attachment to the core group. "Identification with the developers is a way of saying bonds with them. Identification with the Linux user community as a whole is what we were talking about as "identity-based attachment" last week.

# 2005 Experience

- Wiki
  - › Occasional queries and comments in-line
  - › Never direct editing of other students
  - › Students added another section to template
    - › **Class Discussion(!)**
      - › Like a message board
      - › But occasionally rearranged to add coherence
- Blog
  - › Few entries
  - › Not sufficient material for term papers
  - › Students rarely comment

## 2006 Hybrid

- Custom modification to Drupal
- “Blog this” for any reading
  - › Summary, critique, connections, *and application*
  - › Replies
- Entries displayed on reading’s page
  - › Also on individual blog page
- Voting on blog entries
  - › Higher scores shown first
  - › Leader boards

# Live Demo

- <http://icd.si.umich.edu/684>

## What's Still Needed

- Finer-grained commenting
- Experimentation with voting/leader boards
- Experimentation with tagging

# Conclusions and Questions

- Multiple Goals
  - › Sensemaking, memory, prep, knowledge discovery/sharing, community building
- Can they all be met, or do you have to make tradeoffs?
  - › Larger research question of (re)presenting conversation
- Is it worth it, compared to other ways students could spend time?