



CS 6474/CS 4803

Social Computing:

Social Computing Theories: Identity

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Identity and Deception in the Virtual Community

Summary

- Identity in the Usenet environment (newsgroups).
- Models of honesty and deception
 - Assessment signals: They are costly and the cost is directly related to the trait being advertised.
 - Conventional signals: Here, the signal is correlated with a trait is by custom or convention: the sender need not possess the trait in order to make the signal.
- Assessment signals are reliable, since sending an assessment signal requires that the sender possess the relevant trait.
- Conventional signals are not reliable.
- Identity in voice and signal.
- “Signatures” to indicate identity.

Class Exercise 1a

What kind of “punishments” currently exist to prevent deceptive behavior? What new “punishments” can be incorporated?

Class Exercise 1b

Let us assume that there was a way to infer and alert (an end user) immediately if someone was being deceptive on a social media platform.

What are the sender and receiver costs in this scenario? What is the cost for a wrong inference (false positive or false negative)?

4chan and /b/: An Analysis of Anonymity and Ephemerality in a Large Online Community

Summary

- Study of 4chan's /b/
- Contributions:
 - Dominated by playful exchanges of images and links
 - Most threads spend just five seconds on the first page and less than five minutes on the site before expiring
 - 90% of posts are made by fully anonymous users, with other identity signals adopted and discarded at will

Does anonymity always have to be a design feature? Is it possible to be anonymous on a platform where this is not the case?

Class Exercise 2a

/b/ users also adopt various textual, linguistic, and visual cues to signal social status, e.g., in-dialect writing (/b/ slangs) serves as an entry-level signal of membership and status.

What other methods are adopted in other communities for the same?

Do you see such signaling only in anonymous sites?

Over the last few years since the three studies, many new platforms have emerged. What are additional ways/cues people use to manage their identity?

Class Exercise 2b

The million dollar question! How can we allow people to be self-disclosing (via anonymous identities) but still be civil?