DRAFT ONLY! Copyright © 2009 by Charles Ess. No copying, distribution, or citation without permission from the author: <cmess@drury.edu>

Brave New Worlds? The Once and Future Information Ethics

C.M. Ess

Interdisciplinary Studies Center, Drury University / Department of Information- and Media Studies, Aarhus University

Drury University, 900 N. Benton Ave., Springfield, MO 65802 USA

Voice: (1) 417-873-7230 Fax: (1) 417-873-7435

Email: <cmess@drury.edu>

Abstract

I highlight several aspects of current and future developments of the internet, in order to draw from these in turn specific consequences of particular significance for the ongoing development and expansion of information ethics. These consequences include changing conceptions of self and privacy in both Western and Eastern countries, and correlative shifts from the communication technologies of literacy and print to a "secondary orality." These consequences in turn imply that current and future information ethics should focus on developing a global but pluralistic *virtue ethics* - one that may offset the anti-democratic dangers of such secondary orality. (95 words)

Keywords

literacy, print, secondary orality, *phronesis*, autonomy, liberal democracy, Kant, Neil Postman, Orwell, Huxley, surveillance, self, relational self, switch-tasking

Exemplary persons seek harmony, not sameness. -- *Analects* 13.23

Introduction

As noted in the description of our panel, what we mean by “the internet” has changed dramatically in the decade that has passed since the founding of the International Center for Information Ethics. In addition to the characteristics listed there, I begin by highlighting several features and shifts - especially as affiliated with the so-called “Web 2.0” - that seem to me to be especially pertinent for considering the current and future agendas of information ethics. These features and shifts include: (a) the increased interactivity of contemporary applications and uses of the internet as manifest, for example, in social networking sites, content increasingly generated by amateurs (so-called “pro/sumers,” i.e. producers who are simultaneously consumers) on sites such as YouTube, etc. In addition, I point out that (b) the internet, as it is increasingly diffused and accessed via mobile devices (e.g., “smart phones” and inexpensive netbooks), thereby (i) becomes increasingly interwoven within the lives of those in developed countries, such that earlier distinctions between “virtual” and “real”, online and offline, are ever less meaningful, and (ii) the internet continues a dramatic expansion throughout developing countries, linking an ever larger proportion of the world’s population from an ever more diverse range of cultures and traditions.

These developments then immediately lead to a series of shifts and changes in (a) our most fundamental assumptions regarding the nature of the self in both Western and Eastern societies. Here I will highlight especially how in the developed West, (i) the modern “atomic” conception of the autonomous individual shifts increasingly towards a self-understanding as a “networked individual” (Wellman and Haythornthwaite, 2002) - and, in my terms, the “smeared-out self,” i.e., a sense of ourselves as distributed across the various communication possibilities enabled by the internet. Such a self likewise is increasingly characterized as a *relational* self - i.e., a self defined precisely by its multiple relationships with Others and others (terms whose meaning I will define more carefully), where these relationships are increasingly mediated by the network of networks constituting the internet. As well, (ii) the cross-cultural communication facilitated by an ever more global internet appears to foster an increasing *hybridization* of our sense of self - a hybridization apparent particularly in the contrasts and convergences between modern Western conceptions and Eastern conceptions. Finally, (iii) as in developed countries, as especially younger people favor more and more the audio-visual modes of communication made possible by increasing bandwidth, and as in developing countries, as interfaces for internet access are designed for non-literate peoples - we may be witnessing a major shift from the skills and abilities affiliated with literacy and print to what has been characterized as the secondary orality of cyberspace.

I conclude by drawing from these developments their consequences for the current and future agendas of Information Ethics. Briefly, these developments (a) bring to the foreground for us the increasing importance of *virtue ethics* - first of all, as the shift from a modern self to a relational self

restores the importance of virtue ethics from the Western ancients, now as reinforced by contemporary feminist and environmental ethics: at the same time, the hybridizing selves that appear to be emerging between Western and Eastern cultures bring in their train from the East the virtue ethics traditions of Buddhist, Confucian, and indigenous traditions. Such a virtue ethics thus stands as (b) a strong candidate for a central component of any emerging *global, cross-cultural* information ethics - which such a global, cross-cultural information ethics is increasingly required by the ever-expanding internet. As I have argued previously, such an information ethics must be *pluralistic* - i.e., conjoining shared norms with multiple interpretations and applications of those norms in diverse cultures and traditions, where such applications and interpretations both reflect and thereby preserve the irreducible differences essential to individual and cultural identities. While these developments may encourage a certain optimism about our global futures, (c) if basic theories that connect the modern self and democracy with the technologies of literacy and print are correct, the shifts from literacy and print to the secondary orality of cyberspace threaten to thereby undermine the sense of self requisite to modern liberal democracies. I urge us, then, to include on our agenda increasing attention to the broader social and political dimensions of internet use - especially as these run the risk of increasingly serving as technologies that largely serve to undo our capacity to think, and thereby eliminating the sorts of selves required for modern liberal democracies.

Internets Current and Future

There are any number of analyses of "the internet" these days, each with its particular perspective, strengths and limits - including the ubiquitous term "Web 2.0." While the distinctions and emphases underlying this taxonomy are contested among scholars and researchers, it seems reasonably clear that *interactivity* across network connections is a common feature emphasized in and exploited by a range of increasingly popular applications. These include social networking sites such as *Facebook*, *MySpace*, *LinkedIn*, and many others, as well as sites such as YouTube that feature content such as videos produced largely by amateurs for the enjoyment (and consumption) of friends, cohorts and potential fans - the so-called *pro/sumers* that some argue represent the dissolution of more traditional boundaries between professional producers and a largely passive audience of consumers (Burnett, Consalvo, & Ess 2009).

In addition, the internet connects an increasingly significant proportion of the world's population - currently ca. 24% (Internet World Stats, 2009) - a percentage that promises to increase especially with the advent and diffusion of mobile devices, i.e., "smart phones" and netbooks. As comparatively inexpensive alternatives to "traditional" networked laptops and desktops, such devices promise to dramatically increase internet access, especially in developing countries. This diffusion is significant in especially two ways. One, in the developed world, the internet thereby becomes increasingly interwoven within the larger fabric of everyday life - so much so that the 1990s' distinction between

"real" and "virtual" is no longer seen to be meaningful (Burnett et al 2009). Two, as mobile devices foster the diffusion of internet connectivity especially in developing countries, they will thereby constitute a "second wave" of internet diffusion, one that promises to dramatically increase not only the absolute numbers of persons who interact with one another online, but also the diversity of cultures and traditions those persons reflect and represent.

Consequences of internet diffusion

Self, privacy, and community: from atomic to relational / hybridizing selves

A first consequence of such diffusion is the emergence of what Barry Wellman and Caroline Haythornthwaite identify as "the networked individual" (2002). In the developed world, at least, prevailing patterns of internet use point towards an increasingly seamless interweaving between offline and online lives - and with it, our increasing sense of ourselves as interconnected with hundreds, perhaps thousands of others via various internet technologies. By and large, Wellman and others can document the benefits of such networking - for example, as internet-enabled communications help us maintain strong-tie relationships (i.e., with family and close friends) and establish and foster weak-tie relationships (e.g., our several hundred Facebook "friends," colleagues known to us only through listservs, etc.).

Moreover, I have come to describe this networked individual as the "smeared-out" self. This expression invokes what is intended as a weak analogy between contemporary senses of self and quantum mechanical descriptions of sub-atomic particles. That is, somewhat like a quantum particle that is conceived of as a set of potential locations "smeared out" in space, prior to its realization in one specific configuration upon observation or measurement - so we are increasingly aware of ourselves as distributed across CMC networks via social networking applications such as Facebook and Twitter that thereby represent hundreds, if not thousands, of simultaneous relationships/engagements, which we then realize one at time, even when multi-tasking or "switch-tasking" (Rubinstein, Meyer and Evans 2001). At the same time, this understanding of the self is fostered by shifts from cognitivist to enactivist models of the self as an *embodied* self (Stuart 2008). It is consistent, finally, with larger turns in recent decades in the West towards *relational* models of the self, beginning with environmental and feminist ethics (e.g., Warren 1990).

This relational sense of self starkly contrasts with the modern (Western) sense of the self as an "atomic" individual - e.g., a Cartesian rationality radically separate from its own body, much less from any other entities in its environment. As we will see more fully below, this atomic sense of self, especially as it becomes defined in terms of its essential freedom - in Kantian terms, its *autonomy* as its ability to give itself its own law - thereby becomes foundational for the modern liberal and democratic state. In addition, it is this atomic self that is thought to require a distinctive kind of individual *privacy* - one that in the U.S. context, has only been legally recognized and protected for a

little over a century (Meeler 2008). By contrast, relational selves focus more on communication and other practices intended to foster a sense of community. They thereby de-emphasize the self (and thereby individual privacy) as an atomic isolate, in favor of greater interaction and interconnectivity with both Others and others[1] - what Anders Albrechtslund has helpfully identified as "lateral surveillance" (2008).

This shift explains, among other things, why younger people *qua* relational selves seem far less worried about losing their privacy by way of online self-revelation of even the most intimate sort, as compared with their elders whose sense of *individual* privacy presumes an atomic conception of the self. At the same time, these turns towards a more relational sense of self and a correlative reduction in the demand for individual privacy, as I have argued elsewhere, points us in the direction of both pre-modern Western conceptions of the self vis-à-vis the larger community (perhaps most famously, Aristotle's dictum that human beings are naturally social - *Politics*, I.2, 1253a2) - as well as towards Eastern conceptions of the self as a relational self, beginning with Confucian thought (Ess 2005, 2006, 2007).

And while contemporary Western conceptions thereby seem to be pointing eastward, in such Eastern societies as Japan, China, and Thailand, conceptions of the self and affiliated notions of privacy are dramatically changing. To begin with, young people in these societies - in part, under the influence of Western cultural models - are increasingly demanding for themselves an *individual* privacy that confounds their elders who are wedded to more traditional understandings of the relational self, such that individual privacy is inevitably looked upon with suspicion and as working against the harmony and well-being of the community (Ess 2005). Moreover, Soraj Hongladarom has articulated a Buddhist conception of the 'empirical self' - in contrast with the absolute or enlightened self that understands that 'self' is a pernicious illusion to be overcome. His *positive* conception of the empirical self - in the context of Thailand's predominantly Theravadan Buddhism and hierarchical political traditions - is designed precisely to justify the sorts of individual privacies and other basic rights foundational for citizens in a democratic society (2007). In these two ways, then, we see what were once Eastern conceptions (i.e., conceptions clearly distinct from Western conceptions) mirroring changes in the West - i.e., as they point westward in adopting and adapting what were once exclusively Western conceptions of the self and privacy.

From literacy and print to secondary orality?

Finally, as dramatically exemplified by the development of interfaces for such devices for use among non-literate populations (Dyson, Hendrick & Grants 2007), the ongoing expansion and diffusion of the

[1] By 'Other' I intend to signal a sense of the other person as marked by *irreducible differences* from us - in contrast with the 'other' as something less than a person, a sort of 'place-holder' neither deserving nor requiring excessive attention or fundamental respect. This usage is intended to echo Levinas, beginning with his account of the Other as Other, as a positive 'alterity' or different-ness (1963).

internet appears to bring in its wake a correlative turn from the technologies of literacy and print to "the secondary orality of cyberspace" (Ong 1988). While Ong himself presumed that this transformation would occur in a "sedimentary" fashion (my term), i.e., that we would add the communicative and technological skills of internet connectivity to earlier skills affiliated with literacy and print - it may rather be the case that for the so-called "digital natives," i.e., those younger generations who literally grew up with the internet, their immersion into the orality of cyberspace results in a displacement and loss of earlier skills.

More carefully, the major schema developed by Harold Innis, Elizabeth Eisenstein, Marshall McLuhan, and then Walter Ong show strong correlations between the skills and communication technologies affiliated with literacy (in contrast with the earlier stage of orality) and the emergence of critical thinking and logic (with the ancient Greeks) and then between those affiliated with print and the rise of modern science and democratic governance (Chesebro and Bertelsen 1996; Baron 2008, 196f.). Along these same lines, the late Foucault described how literacy - especially in the form of diaries and letters - serves as a "technology of the self," i.e., ways of communicating and reflecting that foster the emergence of sense of self distinct from the sense of self affiliated with orality (1997; Foucault, Gros, Ewald and Fontana, 2005). In particular, as Maria Lüders has pointed out, in this work,

> … Foucault strongly emphasises the virtue of self-development, bringing the Greek philosophical idea of *epimeleia heautou,* or 'care of oneself', into the limelight, arguing that an ethical way of life concerns a certain, meditative way of considering life, behaving in the world, acting and relating to other people. (2008, 48; cf. Capurro 1996)

This virtue of self-development, finally, seems to depend crucially on the sorts of reflection and self-representation - if not self-construction - that writing makes possible.

In my view, taken together, these observations suggest that the communication skills affiliated with literacy and print in the modern era thus help construct a reflective and critical sense of the self - one that, in Kantian terms, is capable of functioning as a rational autonomy. Such a self, in part by expressing and reflecting upon itself via the technologies literacy and print, is able to rationally deliberate, posit and critique alternative ends and courses of actions - and thereby is enabled to freely choose and *judge* (in the technical senses of *phronesis* and Kant's reflective judgment) what is to be one's own conception of the good life, including political, religious, career, and other personal choices and commitments (in Kantian language, one's *ends*) and thus the appropriate and necessary *means* for achieving those ends. In these ways, the technologies of literacy and print thus facilitate the emergence of a sense of self that is foundational to the justification of modern liberal democracies (cf. Berlin 1969, 131). This sense of self, as we have seen in a preliminary way, is one that likewise requires *privacy* in a strong sense - i.e., a freedom from the interference and surveillance of others,

within which we are thereby free to reflect, express, and revise our thoughts and sensibilities, as part and parcel of the process of making such foundational choices (cf. Johnson 2001, ch. 3).

By contrast, as we are increasingly immersed in contemporary networks and communication technologies, we are, in Baron's words, in a state of being "always on" - always available, always connected. As Anders Albrechtslund has put it, we thereby engage in a participatory or voluntary surveillance (2008). To be sure, such surveillance, especially as "lateral" or peer-to-peer surveillance, mimics how earlier communities have worked to ensure the well-being (and conformity) of its members. At the same time, however, we are thereby increasingly habituated to what Baron calls "fast text" - the Facebook status update or Twitter "tweet" (limited in the latter case to 140 characters). Such texts are prolific - but also ephemeral. In a variety of ways, Baron (among many others) suggests that we run the risk of losing our facility with the technologies of literacy and print - e.g., as reading skills decline in the U.S., accompanied by shortening attention spans, etc. As a specific example, Baron refers to Ian Parker (2001) and Edward Tufte (2003), who argue that our increasing reliance on PowerPoint as visually-oriented form of communication thereby fosters "…a cognitive style quite distinct from that required for a well-constructed, sustained, even elegant argument" (Baron 2008, 188). Along these same lines, virtue ethicist Shannon Vallor has argued that the affordances of mobile phones - i.e., a preference for the quick and the easy - prevents us from acquiring the virtues of *patience* and *perseverance*, virtues essential to communication and friendship, both within and between cultures (forthcoming; cf. Gallagher 2009, Ess 2009a).

What is on the Agenda of Information Ethics?

As we consider the future of an information ethics driven in larger measure by an ever-expanding and evolving internet, it seems relatively straightforward to suggest that as information ethics continues to mature along with diverse communication technologies, a mark of that maturity with be greater attention to and, one would hope, thereby a greater coherency between Information Ethics and affiliated domains of applied and theoretical ethics - most notably, bioethics and nanoethics (including questions of technological enhancements of human beings, insofar as these enhancements may include implants that expand current ways of communicating with one another via the internet). At the same time, however, it seems to me that the developments I have highlighted above require us to move still further - first of all, to the development of a genuinely global and intercultural information ethics, one that I argue must be pluralistic first of all, and, correlatively, focus especially on developing a *virtue ethics* that will be central to such an information ethics for a number of reasons. Finally, I will argue that these emerging directions of an intercultural information ethics require us to expand our scope even further - so as to incorporate ethics in its broadest senses and applications, i.e., ethics as focused on the character, nature, goals, and virtues of the good life, both for the individual and the community.

To be sure, information ethics has already branched out to include an important focus on intercultural information ethics (e.g., Capurro 2006, 2008). Further, there is now - apparently

widespread - agreement that such an intercultural information ethics must take a *pluralistic* approach. As I have put it, such pluralism would conjoin shared norms that allow for diverse interpretations and applications - i.e., precisely as interpreted and applied through the "lens" of a specific set of local cultural traditions, norms, values, practices, etc. Such a pluralism thereby avoids the cultural imperialism inherent in imposing a single values system (and its source traditions, etc.) upon the world at large, while sustaining the irreducible differences that define specific cultural traditions - and thereby protecting and fostering distinctive cultural identities (2006, 2007). As Capurro has helpfully pointed out, such conceptions of pluralism are not unproblematic (2008, pp. 644ff.): nonetheless, they seem to be important candidates for efforts to develop a global information ethics that avoids both cultural imperialism and ethical relativism.

The possibility of developing such a pluralism is further enhanced as we recognize especially two features of a globalizing internet: such an internet increasingly interconnects diverse cultures with distinctive virtue ethics traditions, as it at the same time appears to foster the emergence of a relational self closely affiliated with such virtue ethics traditions - e.g., in Socratic thought and Aristotle (specifically, in their emphasis on developing the capacity for *phronesis*), in contemporary Western feminist and ecological ethics, and certainly in Buddhist and Confucian ethics as well as many indigenous traditions (cf. Paterson, 2007). Especially insofar as the development of the sorts of selves requisite to (as both justificatory and necessary for the functioning of) modern liberal democracies depends upon the *virtue* of care of oneself - including, we can now see, the sort of critical, rational, reflective self fostered by the technologies of literacy and print - it would appear that efforts to develop an intercultural information ethics that wishes to sustain modern liberal democracy will need to place the development of a pluralistic virtue ethics close to the top of its agenda.[2]

This focus on virtue ethics in conjunction with a commitment to both cultural diversity and modern Western liberalism means, finally, that such an intercultural information ethics inevitably intersects with the larger questions and issues of social and political philosophy. In my view, Neil Postman continues to offer the most clear and compelling reasons for expanding our attention in these ways. Already in 1984, Postman famously worried that Western societies, as increasingly saturated by diverse media, were already on the edge of "amusing ourselves to death." Postman made his case by contrasting two dystopias, Orwell's (better known) *1984*, and Huxley's (lesser known) *Brave New World* (originally published in 1931). To begin with - and well before the advent of the internet - Postman notes:

---

[2] It may also be in place to point out here a third aspect of a globalizing internet vis-à-vis virtue ethics: namely, the way in which the growth and diffusion of the internet may foster the (re)emergence of a *philosophical naturalism* - a fundamental affirmation of the intrinsic *goodness* of the material, created world. Such a naturalism is closely affiliated with virtue ethics in both Western and Eastern traditions, and is a primary consequence of the growth of networks and thereby networked selves drawn especially by Luciano Floridi (see Ess 2009b for discussion).

> Orwell warns that we will be overcome by an externally imposed oppression. But in Huxley's vision, no Big Brother is required to deprive people of their autonomy, maturity and history. As he saw it, people will come to love their oppression, to adore the technologies that undo their capacities to think. (1984, vii)

Consider this observation in light of the contrasts between the technologies of literacy and print, especially as these are affiliated with a particular sort of (modern) self that is rational, critical, and reflective in ways crucial for modern liberal democracies, in contrast with the sorts of selves we may become through our immersion in the internet and affiliated contemporary communication technologies, especially as these incline us away from the sort of critical rationality affiliated with literacy and print and towards a relational self affiliated with the visual and the secondary orality of cyberspace. The predominance of the visual, as Plato's analogy of the line in *The Republic* reminds us, restrains our focus on the concrete and the individual - in contrast with the intellectual and abstract, many components of which (e.g., beginning with simple mathematical definitions) can not be visualized (*Republic*, Book V, 509d-511e). Orality in its turn does not incline us in democratic directions: on the contrary, pre-literate societies are by and large authoritarian in terms of the predominance of the community and tradition over the individual and innovation. Especially in light of increasing evidence that our immersion in the internet, along with affiliated contemporary communication technologies, thereby inclines us in the direction of a secondary orality - and with it, a smeared-out self characterized by shorter attention spans and less capacity to engage with critical argument - it may not be an exaggeration to worry, following Postman, that the communication media of secondary orality indeed threaten to undo our capacity to think in the ways required for the autonomous self and liberal democracies.

Along the same lines, Postman further points out that

> Orwell feared those who would deprive us of information. Huxley feared those who would give us so much that we would be reduced to passivity and egoism. Orwell feared that the truth would be concealed from us. Huxley feared the truth would be drowned in a sea of irrelevance. Orwell feared we would become a captive culture. Huxley feared we would become a trivial culture, preoccupied with some equivalent of the feelies, the orgy porgy, and the centrifugal bumblepuppy. […]

Again, both Postman and certainly Orwell reflected and wrote well before the advent and global diffusion of the internet - but Orwell's fear of our drowning in a sea of irrelevance uncannily anticipates the contemporary problems of near-infinite quantities of information, if not simply noise, made available to us via the internet. Especially as driven by marketing models that emphasize the "user" as consumer - *contra* Web 2.0 enthusiasts who highlight the "prosumer" as short-circuiting the classic division between producer and consumer, the vast majority of information made available

online emphasize commercial appeals to the individual self or ego.[3] Such consuming egos, moreover, seem increasingly impatient with information gathering that involves anything more than a simple click or two …

Finally, Huxley's uncanny anticipation of the darker possibilities of contemporary society includes a focus on "…man's almost infinite appetite for distractions." Postman continues:

> In *1984*, Huxley added, people are controlled by inflicting pain. In *Brave New World*, they are controlled by inflicting pleasure. In short, Orwell feared that what we hate will ruin us. Huxley feared that what we love will ruin us. (1984, vii f.)

In short, like the media Postman worried would work to fulfill Orwell's darkest fears, the internet appears to even more perfectly and completely serve as a medium for controlling us by oversaturation, reduction to passivity - all done by way of apparently innocent satiation of our near-infinite appetite for pleasure and distraction. Of course, we are in love with this medium - but thereby, as Postman and Huxley suggest, we risk falling in love with the technologies of our enslavement.

This may sound too dire or too alarmist. But I hope that the developments I have outlined above, especially with regard to the shifts already apparent in our sense of self, i.e., from the modern critical-rational self made possible by the technologies of literacy and print, to a more relational - but also a smeared-out and more distracted - self intertwined with the technologies of secondary orality, make clear that these are potentially dire consequences of our increasing immersion into contemporary communication media, including the internet. To be sure, there is perhaps no end of wonderful consequences and possibilities that a globalizing internet can bring in its wake - e.g., greater cross-cultural encounters, enhanced health care for remote peoples, etc., etc., etc. At the same time, however, these contemporary shifts and developments argue for me that our developing intercultural information ethics must emphasize attention to the broader social and political dimensions of internet use - especially as these run the risk of increasingly serving as technologies that largely serve to undo our capacity to think in the ways necessary for the selves required for modern liberal democracies.

To paraphrase Neil Postman, I believe it essential that cross-cultural information ethics keep before us the possibility that especially as these communication technologies become increasingly interwoven with our sense of self and community, we run the risk of thereby falling in love with the technologies of our enslavement. Hence, in broadest terms, current and future information ethics must include, in my view, a crucial attention to what "the good life" might mean for networked selves inextricably interwoven with others in larger, increasingly more complex and technologically-mediated

---

[3] Perhaps not accidentally, McDonald's has made this focus especially clear and articulate: "You're immediately at the centre of attention - your individuality, your everyday life, situations in which you recognize yourself and where you would like to see yourself." <http://www.mcdonalds.ch> Cited in Würtz, 2005.

communities. Doing so, after all, is nothing new. The founding document of Western information ethics - Norbert Wiener's is shaped by an overarching concern for the impacts of computational technologies and a (utopian) hope that they might lead to a global *ethos* of "flourishing" (cf. Bynum n.d.). Thematic and consistent attention to these broadest questions, then, defines a once and future information ethics.

References

Albrechtslund, Anders. 2008. Online Social Networking as Participatory Surveillance. *First Monday*, vol. 13, no. 3 (March 3, 2008). <http://www.uic.edu/htbin/cgiwrap/bin/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/2142/1949>

Aristotle. 1968. *The Nichomachean Ethics*. Trans. H. Rackham. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Berlin, Isaiah. 1969. '*Two concepts of Liberty*', in: '*Four essays on Liberty*', pp. 118-173. London: Oxford UP.

Burnett, Robert, Consalvo, Mia, and Ess, Charles. 2009. *The Blackwell Handbook of internet Studies*. New York: Wiley-Blackwell.

Bynum, Terrell Ward. n.d. Norbert Wiener's Foundation of Computer Ethics. <http://www.southernct.edu/organizations/rccs/resources/research/introduction/bynum_wiener.html>

Capurro, Rafael. 1996. Information Technology and Technologies of the Self. *Journal of Information Ethics,* Vol. 5, No.2, 19-28.

Capurro, Rafael. 2006. Towards an Ontological Foundation of Information Ethics**.** *Ethics and Information Technology* Vol.8, Nr. 4, 2006, 175-186.

Capurro, Rafael. 2008. Intercultural Information Ethics. In Kenneth Einar Himma andHerman T. Tavani (eds.), *The Handbook of Information and Computer Ethics*, 639-665.

Chesebro, James, and Dale A. Bertelsen. 1996. *Analyzing Media: Communication Technologies as Symbolic and Cognitive Systems*. New York: Guilford Press.

Dyson, Laurel, Max Hendriks, Stephen Grant (eds.). 2007. *Information Technology and Indigenous People*. Hershey, PA: Information Science Publishing.

Ess, Charles. 2005. ''Lost in translation''?: Intercultural dialogues on privacy and information ethics (Introduction to special issue on Privacy and Data Privacy Protection in Asia), *Ethics and Information Technology 7* (1): 1–6.

Ess, Charles. 2006. Ethical pluralism and global information ethics. *Ethics and Information Technology*, Vol. 8, Number 4 (November): pp. 215-26.

Ess, Charles. 2007. Bridging Cultures: Theoretical and Practical Approaches to Unity and Diversity Online. Introduction to special issue, Information Ethics, *International Journal of Technology and Human Interaction 3* (3 –July-September, 2007), iii-x.

Ess, Charles. 2009a. *Digital Media Ethics*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Ess, Charles. 2009b. Floridi's Philosophy of Information and Information Ethics: Current Perspectives, Future Directions. *The Information Society,25* (3),159-168.

Foucault, M. 1997. *Ethics: Subjectivity and Truth.* New York: The New Press.

Foucault, M., Gros, F., Ewald, F. & Fontana, A. 2005. *The Hermeneutics of the Subject: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1981-1982.* New York: Palgrave-Macmillan.

Gallagher, Winifred. 2009. *Rapt: Attention and the Focused Life.* New York: Penguin Press.

Hongladarom, Soraj. 2007. Analysis and Justification of Privacy from a Buddhist Perspective. In S. Hongladarom and C. Ess (eds.), *Information Technology Ethics: Cultural Perspectives,* 108-122. Hershey, PA: IGI Global.

Internet World Stats. 2009. <http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats.htm>. Consulted 13 May 2009.

Johnson, Deborah. 2001. *Computer Ethics*. 3 ed. Prentice-Hall, Upper Saddle River, New Jersey, 2001.

Levinas, Emmanuel. 1963. La Trace de l'autre [The Trace of the Other]. Alphonso Lingis, trans. *Tijdschrift voor Philosophie* (Sept.), 605-23.

Lüders, Marika. 2007. *Being in Mediated Spaces: An enquiry into personal media practices*. (Ph.D. thesis, University of Oslo).

Meeler, David. 2008. Is Information All We Need to Protect? *The Monist* , vol. 1, no. 1 (January 2008), pp. 151–169.

Ong, Walter. 1988. *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word.* London: Routledge.

Parker, Ian. 2001. "Absolute PowerPoint." *New Yorker*, May 28, 76.

Paterson, Barbara. 2007. We Cannot Eat Data: The Need for Computer Ethics to Address the Cultural and Ecological Impacts of Computing. In S. Hongladarom and C. Ess (eds.), *Information Technology Ethics: Cultural Perspectives,* 153-168. Hershey, PA: IGI Global.

Postman, Neil. 1984. *Amusing Ourselves to Death*.

Rubinstein, Joshua S., David E. Meyer and Jeffrey E. Evans. 2001. Executive Control of Cognitive Processes in Task Switching. *Journal of Experimental Psychology - Human Perception and Performance*, Vol 27. No.4: 763-797.

Stuart, Susan. 2008. From agency to apperception: Through kinaesthesia to cognition and creation. (Special issue on Kant and information ethics.) *Ethics and Information Technology* 10(4):255–264.

Tufte, Edward. 2003. *The Cognitive Style of PowerPoint*. Cheshire, CT: Graphics Press.

Vallor, Shannon. forthcoming. Social Networking Technology and the Virtues. *Ethics and Information Technology*.

Warren, Karen. 1990. The power and the promise of ecological feminism, *Environmental Ethics* 12: 2 (Summer), 123-146.

Wellman, Barry, and Haythornthwaite, Caroline (eds.). 2002. *The internet in Everyday Life*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Würtz, E. (2005). Intercultural communication on Web sites - A cross-cultural analysis of Web sites from high-context cultures and low-context cultures. In C. Ess & F. Sudweeks (Eds.), Culture and computer-mediated communication: Towards new understandings. Special issue of *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, *11*(2: October). Retrieved from <http://jcmc.indiana.edu>

Biography

Charles Ess is Professor of Philosophy and Religion and Distinguished Professor of Interdisciplinary Studies, Drury University (Springfield, Missouri, USA). During 2009-2012, he will be Professor with Specific Duties (*Professor med særlige opgaver*), Department of Information- and Media Studies, University of Aarhus, Denmark. During 2007-2009, Dr. Ess served as President of the Association of Internet Researchers (AoIR - see <aoir.org> and served as its first chair of the ethics working group, which developed the first set of ethical guidelines for Internet research. He is co-chair of the biennial conference series on “Cultural Attitudes towards Technology and Communication” (CATaC) (see <www.catacconference.org>).