Personal Home Pages in Academia: the Medium, its Adopters, and their Practices

Proposal Follow-up Meeting
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Overview of Research
- Personal home pages in academia as an example of an identity construction environment in the real world
- A case study to compare three analytic frameworks for explaining the meaning and use of personal home pages in academia

Thesis Statement / Questions
- Thesis Statement
  - Personal home pages in academia—the medium, its use, and its meaning—can be usefully and thoroughly explained using media theory, communities of practice, and core identity theory.
- Guiding Questions
  - What is the meaning and use of personal home pages in academia?
  - How do media theory, communities of practice, and core identity theory explain this meaning and use?
Approach / Method

- Design-Based Research
  - Improve (AniAniWeb) and study at the same time
  - Theory building
- Case Study
  - Allows for a small focus of extreme adopters
  - Using the case as a test bed to compare theories
    - Media Theory: focus on the technology
    - Communities of Practice: focus on the social aspects
    - Core Identity Theory: focus on the individual
- Interviewing as Qualitative Interviews

Media Theory

- The affordances of the technology are important to both society and the individual
- Useful terms
  - Hypermediacy and transparency
  - Extension
- Specific questions focus
  - Purposes and activities
  - In comparison to weblogs and wikis
  - In relation to other media

Communities of Practice

- All learning is situated and that situation matters to the learning
- Useful terms
  - Becoming and belonging
  - Peripheral to core engagement
- Specific questions focus
  - Interaction with the community of practice
  - Perception of the community of practice
  - Over different stages
Core Identity Theory

- The things that we create or design tell a lot about ourselves to ourselves as well as others
- Useful terms
  - Acting out vs. working through
  - Hard vs. soft style
- Specific questions focus
  - Why and how do people adopt?
  - How is that adoption indicative of their core identity?

Data Sources for Proposed Work

- Series of open-ended interviews with AniAniWeb adopters
  - Getting the extremes of adoption
  - Based on observed usage
- Faculty interviews
  - Supplement student interviews
  - Communities of practice

Completion Schedule

- Conducting student interviews
  - September to November
- Conducting faculty interviews
  - November to January
- Write-up results
  - December to April
- Defense of research
  - May