

Where I Started

What the Net Made of Me

My research started with the relationship between my online self and my physical self. I was interested in how growing up online shaped the way I communicate, create, and understand myself.

I thought of the internet as a kind of parallel social space. It gave me places to experiment with identity, find people with similar interests, and express parts of myself that did not always come out as easily offline.

As I continued researching, I became more interested in the idea that our online identities are not completely separate from us. They are shaped by the spaces we use, the people we are talking to, and the rules of the platforms themselves.

Starting Question

How does growing up online shape the way we understand and present ourselves?

Key Words

IDENTITY
ONLINE SELF
PERSONA
COMMUNITY
PLATFORMS

SELF-EXPRESSION
MEMORY
CREATIVITY

Prototypes

FREEWRITE

File · Edit · View · Insert

One memory I have online is when I was in middle school. I vaguely remember it. I used to follow this percy jackson/harry potter fan account. I think she posted fan art? I'm not sure. I think she was a couple years older than me. But she said she was going to Universal studios and if anyone wants, we could meet up there. She barely knew me, but I was going to be at universal too that day so I commented on her post saying I'd be there, and she liked my message — or responded saying she was looking forward to seeing me. Anyway, I begged my parents to go to Hogsmeade at this exact specific time and to no avail, she wasn't there. And my mom was soooo confused. To this day I remember it.

FORUM POST

The Great Hall | Fandom & IRLBoard index » Real Life

almost met someone from the internet



imsosillyandcool
★ Junior Member
Posts: 34

Posted: 3/24/15 | 4:47 PM

heyyyy guys, wanna hear something funny lol. so i follow this girl and she has some really cool posts about HP and PJ and she said she was gonna do a meetup at hogsmeade.... i asked my parents if we could go and they said yes, AND NO ONE SHOWED UP!!!! NOT EVEN HER! thats soooo embarrassing for me... but i got butterbeer so :P

replies: 0views: 47

CAPTION



imsosillyandcool

 hogsmeade, universal studios



12 likes
imsosillyandcool funny story im so embarrassed. i thought this fan account i liked was doing a meetup at universal so i showed up at the agreed spot and no one was there... yikes

2 HOURS AGO

DM



dude

dude.

there was this meetup at universal w this fan account i like

but NO ONE SHOWED UP :((((((

im soooooooo peeved i dragged my parents along and they thought i was making this whole thing up UGHHHHH

Delivered

iMessage

What I Discovered

Format Changes the Story

My biggest discovery was that format does not just change how a story is told. It changes what the story is about and which version of myself is doing the telling.

I started with one memory and told it four different ways. The basic events stayed the same, but the meaning kept shifting. I also found it interesting how my friend thought the one that was the most like me was the one that I felt wasn't like me at all.

What I (don't) Know

Questions I'm Following

(1) If the caption felt the least like “me” yet the most like “me” to someone who knows me, then what does that say about which version of myself has become my identity?

Follow up: Have we been trained to think in forms of captions? Are we just used to how people speak through captions?

(2) What gets lost when personal experiences are compressed into the formats platforms make available to us?

(3) What happens to our understanding of other people when we only encounter them through fragments?

(4) What kinds of stories are easier to tell on some platforms than others?