an eye on cyberspace, and she is not amused.

The imagery of surf now seems permanently attached to the Internet, but Judith Martin, who writes the syndicated column Miss Manners, has suggested that one might hark back to the reign of 18th-century ships to evoke the social dynamics of cyberspace. Such a vessel, a group of strangers would book passage and become part of a seafaring world isolated from ordinary society and all its social baggage. Young rakes would often feel free to invent distinguished lineages and alluring titles. And young ladies, Ms. Martin says, "used to be warned, when beginning a journey, to be suspicious of shipboard introductions. So, too, in cyberspace where any human contact is fraught with uncertainty. Every "chat room" or bulletin board is a gathering of strangers, bound by little outside their online experience. A citizen in this strange world can invent a persona, a name, a title or a biography and shed it the next moment.

And while a century and more ago, a ship's voyage constructed an alternate society, one governed by strict rules, on line there are almost no bounds. There is no human contact without any sign of human presence. There are no facial expressions to communicate feelings and reactions; there are no tones of voice like those that can make telephone conversations intimate; there are no looks at those once coded in handwriting or stationery, to give the reader a sense of the sender's personal flavor; and there is not even much time to consider the words being written. There is only that collection of strangers typing their words to other bodiless ciphers on a screen.

Is it any wonder, then, Ms. Martin asks, that there should be problems with on-line behavior? Miss Manners, who will be dealing with some of these issues in a book to be published this spring titled "Miss Manners Rescues Civilization," sees the on-line world as a new frontier in the development of etiquette.

"The sanctions of etiquette only have force," she explains, "because if you behave badly, you get a bad reputation. But on line, a bad reputation can be evanescent: its existence depends on shared memories and shared values, and while these do exist in many places in the on-line world, there are many more where they don't.

While people do have reputations, cyberspace covers a lot of territory and there are drifter worlds with little stake in one news group or another, and are thus somewhat impervious to commonly used sanctions. "Flaming," on-line world: flaming, or giving an offender as good as he gave through electronic mail; and bone filters, which keep the messages of selected parties from one's own electronic mailboxes.

Even these sanctions are problematic. Sanctions imply the existence of a community in which people must live. Sanctions have an effect because the person is grounded in that community and respected by it. Without such a relationship between a citizen and a community, what guides behavior? "All the problems of society at large exist in cyber-space," Ms. Martin says, "but there are no sanctions like those in the society at large. Simply shut off the chat rooms and bulletin boards of the Net, there is always the risk of explosions of impulsive, unfiltered, offensive, reckless. There is evidence enough. In the notices posted in those places that try to impose a form of sanction: expulsion. Before one enters the chat rooms of the Microsoft Network, a standard etiquette notice includes a prohibition against "typing in all capital letters" — the electronic version of yelling. Compuserve provides a warning before one calls up the news groups of Usenet, where one can post messages to a global readership: "Avoid 'shouting' — a mixture of messages that is thoroughly, disregarding niceties of conversation and in- suitable. Eavesdropping on the America Online America Kids Chat, and often, childish rude- ness with aenity now level. Even ordinary E-mail is a little less considered and a little more blunt than has been written forers.

So netiquette — as the manners of cyberspace have come to be called — must be continually revised. Part of the time, of course, this is because chat rooms have so many people talking at once that one person's expression is splintered into a series of one-liners. The impulse is to be quick and forthright. This is not a medium conducive to subtlety. Subtlety can also be lost in the midst of trivia: read the horrifying tales of teen depression attempted suicide in the America Online teen bulletin board, and you can see what we have the same banality as discussions of television soap operas.

Ms. Martin suggests that America can have no such come to re- ly on the rule of law to replace the rules of manners, to insist on legiti- macy, and etiquette be the regulation of the Internet.

Congress seems ready to extend the trend to the on-line world, ready to pass legislation that would regu- late the most offensive activity on the Internet.

But such laws, Ms. Martin argues, would be almost impossible to enforce. "You can't make everything unpleasant illegal," she says. "Net-iquette must evolve; the on-line world has the means, and the means, must reinvent the wheel."

This is partly what "emotions" and "sounding systems" mean to signal some form of non-verbal communication: 

*: I can mean crying.

However crude they may be in comparison with the arched eyebrow, they still try to antici- pate and guide another person's reactions to their words.

The question is whether these sim- ulacra of physical worlds will help in the creation of new on-line societies, whose members have more incentive to regulate their own behavior, or whether the avatars will just pro- vide a more exotic set of masks. For the moment, we are all at sea.
Most Wanted

FILM BOX OFFICE
Weekend gross, estimate in millions.

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<th>PER SCREEN</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>GROSS</th>
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$ MEDIA STOCKS
December 18 through 22. From the Cowles/Simbia Media 100 Index, Wilton, Conn.
(Winners and losers exclude stocks closing below $5)

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Taking In the Sites

A Christmas Trip Through Cyberspace

By JOE ZEFF

For decades, children scribbled letters to Santa Claus. Now they send E-mail.

"I have been behaving really well this year," Amelia wrote in an electronic message to Santa. "I have no certain presents in mind, though. Except for maybe my own computer." Judging by the reports of computer retailers this season, Amelia was not alone. Many Americans found computers under the tree this morning, and it seems likely that some will venture onto the Internet today for the first time.

For the uninstructed, here is some simple advice and a guide for your first Christmas!

Most computers sold this year came equipped for the Internet. The first-time user probably will connect through commercial services like America Online or Prodigy, which provide convenient access to the World Wide Web.

At first, the Internet may seem daunting. But if a topic is picked and its connections, or links, are followed to other sites, the Internet's variety becomes apparent. To start, we offer a holiday tour.

The first stop is Rockefeller Cen-
FROM THE DESK OF

ALAN ROBBINS

E-Mail: Lean, Mean And Making Its Mark

REACHED a watershed in written communications the other day by sending an electronic-mail message composed of a single word. The ultimate in digital pith.

A colleague had written to ask me whether or not she had any elaborate schedule she had arranged was feasible. With the glee of a practical joker, I bounced her lengthy message right back to her, adding only my one-word response: “No.” As a writer, I like to think of this as terseness raised to the level of art. But most people probably see it as further destruction of civility.

The brave new world of E-mail raises issues like the conflict between artistry and vulgarity. But there is nothing really new in this debate, and nothing especially digital. Every leap in communication technology prompts the same controversy, as we re-think our style of communication to match the new medium.

Despite the “Interneting” of the globe, our struggles are not that different from those of our colonial ancestors. Almost identical issues were raised in their own communications revolution — the birth of the postal system.

In the late 1860’s, King William III of Britain set the stage for this revolution by giving Thomas Neale a monopoly over all postal services in the American colonies. Britain would later take back the rights, but the impact was clear: Messages could be sent from point to point with more consistency, and letters became a more popular form of communication.

The postal system grew at astronomical rates to accommodate Americans’ popular hunger for discourse. In fact, more than three-quarters of the Federal Government’s growth from 1776 to 1876 was in the postal office alone.

As letters became more common, questions of style and substance in composition were often raised — the same kinds of debates that we hear today over E-mail.

A 19th-century guide to writing letters lists the seven Cs of writing: correctness, correctness, correctness, correctness, correctness, correctness, correctness. Nowadays, with E-mail, it sometimes seems that only conciseness remains. Shorter sentences and more brusque construction are the E-mail norm.

Part of this, of course, can be attributed to the computer screen itself, which can make big blocks of type difficult to read. A typical line of type on a PC, for example, is 75 characters wide, versus 50 in a book, and the resolution is much lower. As a result, we can expect the trend in terseness to continue for a while.

One of my E-mail correspondents doesn’t even compose complete messages to my messages. Instead, she sends my own notes back to me with her comments inserted. At first, I found this disconcerting, as though she couldn’t be bothered to send me a letter. But I have come to realize that her method is simply more efficient.

The E-mail focus on function over form gives some of my communications the look of high seas semaphore, but there is an art to that, too. Hemingway once boasted that he could write a compelling short story in six words: “For sale. Baby shoes. Never used.” Lezner language doesn’t necessarily mean thinner meaning.

STANDARD usage is also undergoing an assault — or renaissance, depending on your point of view.

Just as we have seen during other times of change, new words are entering the language. The new list includes a storm of words starting with a “long E” — what we might call an E-mailstrom of E-loogisms, including all the E-dresses of your new E-pals. We are also seeing more abbreviations, like F.Y.I. and F.A.Q., for “frequently asked questions.”

This, too, is reminiscent of early America, which gave us terms like C.O.D. and the greatest shortcut of all. O.K.

Yet it is punctuation that may be in for the biggest shake-up. The most popular literary punctuation mark, the comma, works well in letter writing as a way to handle embedded thoughts, but digital messaging is shallower and more intense. It requires more “glue” in punctuation, similar to the musical use of pauses between notes.

There are now roughly 30 symbols on the standard keyboard, and I receive E-mail messages that are peppered with hyphens, dashes, slashes and ellipses, as writers explore the different ways to tie together a series of quantum bursts of information.

The surge of letter writing in the early 1800’s, of course, led to renewed emphasis on penmanship, with the use of copperplate and other forms of expressive, cursive writing. E-mail doesn’t give us such subtleties, but the desire to manipulate emphasis can be seen in the increased use of color tints, underlining and other visual accents like emoticons — those silly symbols that resemble faces turned on their sides. (Type a colon and an end parenthesis, for example, to get a sideways happy face.)

Some computer keyboards now offer built-in emoticons. We can now insert happy faces and other pictures with quick strokes of the keyboard, creating a kind of rebus enhancement to the content.

The greatest battles, however, are fought over spelling. Purists of every age say it is a lost craft and bemoan poor spelling as a sign of the fall of civilization. In E-mail, the chief reason for misspelling is probably practical — we just don’t want to take the time to edit our messages, even with electronic spell-checking at our disposal.

But we should remember that standardized spelling is a fairly recent phenomenon. It wasn’t until the early 17th century that English printers began to use consistent spelling, and it wasn’t until 1755, with the publication of Samuel Johnson’s dictionary, that an accepted guide was available. Even that was challenged as early as 1798, when Noah Webster began to push for a unique American orthography to act as a “band of national union.”

As a writer, I find the typos and poor spelling of E-mail a bit vexing. But I’m not a purist, and I enjoy some of the gems I receive. In the verbose message noted earlier, my colleague referred to a seminar in a distant city as a “conference.” And her final salutation, “love and kisses,” sweetly added one extra smack.
**WEIGHTED WEEKLY STOCKS**

For the week ended Friday, May 9, 1997

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**WEEKEND FRIDAY, MAY 9, 1997**

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<td>1.097</td>
<td>1.106</td>
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**Notes:**

- Figures are through the end of last week. They include Nasdaq funds with at least $10 million in assets. Return figures assume reinvestment of all dividends. The figures for three-year returns are annualized. "No." is the number of funds for which at least one year of data is available. The figures for Top Quarters show the return needed for a fund in each category to rank in the top 25 percent of similar funds. The Median figures show the return needed to rank in the top half, and the Trend figures show the return needed to be in the top 75 percent of similar funds.

- By comparing a given fund's returns, shown in the accompanying table, a reader can determine how that fund compared with similar funds, NA=Not Available.

**Source:** Morningstar Inc.
Braindump on the Blue Badge: A Guide to Microspeak

The Workers in Bill Gates’s Kingdom Have Coined Enough Words, Phrases and Definitions to Make a Grown Man Gronk

by STEVEN GREENHOUSE

Detroit and Hollywood have invented scores of words and phrases that have become part of America’s speech and psyche. Tall fin, miniseries and sitcom quickly come to mind.

Now that role falls to Microsoft. The company that has shaped the way hundreds of millions of people use computers is helping to shape the way people talk as well, with words like facecall and self-toast and new meanings for terms like dog food and ask.

Microspeak is a slargy company jargon made up of dozens of words and phrases commonly used at Microsoft. This Microjargon, which includes word usages unique to Microsoft as well as usages from elsewhere in the high-tech and low-tech world, has been documented in an informal lexicon written by current and former workers at the company, based in Redmond, Wash.

At Microsoft, “dog food” means software not fit for public consumption but good enough for internal purposes. “Code warrior” refers to a developer who writes code for software. The workers at the Redmond campus now utter sentences like, “It’s kind of a klugey solution, but we don’t have the cycles to clean it up.”

More than a dozen current and former Microsoft blue badges (permanent Microsoft employees) and orange badges (temporary workers and independent contractors) are among the contributors to the lexicon of Microspeak, which can be seen on the Web at chenpad.com/makes.htm. Ken Barnes, the principal compiler and editor of the lexicon, was editor of Microsoft’s Music Central site when he left the company in June; he gave circuits permission to reprint some of the definitions.

While the lexicon began life as a semi-underground enterprise, it eventually won some kind of company sanction. The company’s corporate newsletter, Micro News, ran a story on it, and it was posted on Microsoft’s company Web site in all its irreverence — around the time that the company, Mr. Barnes said, began creating a similar list of its own. This may prove two things: not only that the lexicon is a good read but also that language is the ultimate software.

Adminisphere Organizationaly speaking, the levels starting directly above you, characterized by their general cluelessness about issues you’re well versed in and tendencies to make policy decisions that ignore your expert input.

Ask Used as a noun, preceded by “the,” as in, “What’s the ask?” which basically means, “What are you asking?” or, “What’s the question?”

Bandwidth A cumbersome synonym for “time,” as in, “I

Continued on Page 9
Braindump on the Blue Badge: A Guide to Microspeak

Continued From Page 1

Don't have the bandwidth to deal with that issue," but with implications beyond the merely temporal, encompassing the larger issue of mental resources or capacity.

Binary problem A method of paring down a complex issue to a two-possibilities-solution scenario or no, 1 or 0 (The President/CEO as a resident Microsoft philosopher as "classic MS reductivism" and "clearly an economical way of thinking since all it takes is just to consider the vast gray area that occupies the psychic space of most issues and problems."

Blitstorm A volume of traffic on a service high enough to cause the digital equivalent of gridlock.

Black hole A project requiring infinite amounts of work.

Bleeding edge Synonym for "cutting edge," with an added implication of the pioneer's vulnerability. Example: We're really on the bleeding edge with this product. It looks through it.

Blotware Software that takes up a huge amount of space on your hard drive. Synonym: the racoon.

Blue badge (Sometimes, slightly derogatorily, blue badge.) Synonym for full-time Microsoft employee, the Brahmin of the deeply ingrained Microsoft caste system, whose card keys have a blue rather than the orange used for contractors and green for vendors. Derivative terms include "turn blue," meaning to earn full-time status.

BOOP One of at least 10,000 peculiar-to-Microsoft acronyms. There are so many casually used, off-the-cuff (3-letter abbreviations) that need all one need to consider the vast gray area that occupies the psychic space of most issues and problems."

Bill Gates and his three top honchos. After a reorganization on Dec. 3, 1996, BOOP was replaced by the less-endearing Executive Committee.

Bouncing Cybernetic equivalent of going off the air for repairs, a new app or other internal tinkering. "The system is bouncing at 1:36 and should be up in 20 minutes."

Branddump A process by which a departing Microsoft employee or contractor imparts the essential information vital to performing his or her job to the designated replacement. The process normally consumes no more than five minutes immediately prior to the incumbent's departure from the company, nevermore to return.

Bufo (bif') Approval from above; green light. "We need BOOP's buyoff before this project's a go."

This particular four-letter acronym is especially disarming; it stands for "Bill and the Office of the President," meaning.

C.L.M. Three-Letter Acronym for "career-limiting moves." Badmouthing administrateurs, no matter how ill-considered, can be a C.L.M.

Context-switch A verb, unbelievably, meaning "change subjects." Example: "Enough about outsourcing issues. Let's context-switch to the planning rollout."

Crisp Well-reasoned, precisely reasoned. Opposite of random.

Cycles Another approximate synonym for "time," as in "There aren't enough cycles in the day to drive this issue." Often used in tandem with the verb "burn," as in, "He's really burning a lot of cycles trying to resolve those U.I. issues.

Death March The long, lingering, final countdown to a ship date, involving 16 to 24-hour days, c cannons on couches and plenty of "flat food" (food, mostly from vending machines, that you can stuff under your desk's doors so they can keep working).

Disambiguate A remarkably unclear way to say "clarify."

Drive To push; to carry; to initiate on a particular issue or project. "Ed is driving the HTML issue for the product."

EOD: Epidemic. T.L.A. (three-letter acronym) meaning "end of day." Example: "I need your take-away from the off-site by EOD tomorrow."

Eye Candy A commonly used term denoting visually attractive material, analogous to "ear candy" in music business.

Facemail Technologically backward means of communication, clearly inferior to voice mail or E-mail. Involves actually walking to someone's office and speaking to him or her face to face. Considered highly inefficient and declassé.

Grader Generally used in tandem with the verb "to get," as in "We need to get grader on this issue," meaning to examine the fine details.

Grok The sound of a computer emboldened in bandwidth issues. "I tried to reboot, but my computer kept saying there's no memory until I had to call Help Desk."

Issue All-purpose term for practically anything related to a product, from a particular characteristic or bug to a delicate diplomatic initiative.

Kludge (Also kludgey; pronounced kluegee.) Chunky, inefficient, inelegant. "It's kind of a kludgey solution, but we don't have the cycles to clean it up." Also used in noun form as kludge or kludgey.

Live Odd biomorphic usage, sort of an electronic half-life. "Where will this data live?" means "Where will this data be stored?"

Mapping Targeting. "Mapping a user group" is synonymous with "targeting an audience.

Media Content that isn't words. Media can include photos, song clips, illustrations.

N.D.A. For Nondisclosure Agreement, meaning Keep Your Mouth Shut. A legal document, invoked by Microsoft lawyers for anything more sensitive than setting a lunch date, which allows them to sue anyone who reveals confidential information.

Net Summarize. "Ed really knows how to net a presentation." Related command: Net it out, meaning boil it down.

New paradigm Pomposo way of essentially saying "unique!" This Web site establishes a new paradigm on the Net.

Nonlinear Becoming nonlinear means becoming irrationally angry. "When he found out the R.T.M. ship was slipping, Ed went nonlinearly.

Offline A synonym for "in private" or "confidentially." "Let's take this offline" equals "let's talk about this in private." Often used as a semipolite way of saying, "Shut up about that, you impolite idiot."

OOF: T.L.A. (three-letter acronym) that has turned into a word of its own. Stands for "out of office." Historians tell us that "OOF" originally meant "out of faculty."

Refresher Used, rather irritatingly, in conversation: "I'm OOF next Friday; you'll have to drive in.

Report the kimono A marvelous phrase of non-Microsoft origin, probably stemming from the southern aspirations of American enterprisers in the '80's, that has been adopted into the Microspeak marketing lexicon. Basically a somewhat sexist synonym for "open the books," it means to reveal the inner workings of a project or company to a prospective new partner.

Orange badge Contractor, temp. From the background color of the photo ID badge, key used for temporary workers.

Own To take responsibility for an issue. Ownership is even more serious than driver- ship; you can drive an issue without owning it, but it's unlikely that you would own it without also driving it.

Ping A reminder, or used as a verb, which is slightly more common to remind: "I need to ping my program manager to get some more test help."

Quality bar The remarkably flexible level of acceptability in a product. Tends inexorably to drop as the pressure of an impending marketing deadline builds.

Redistrict A pejorative term to describe poorly reasoned analysis. Antonym: crisp.

Remote To distract or thrust back by convincing someone of an alternative course or emphasizing irrelevant details. "Marketing randomized him by giving him the gospel last week.

Reality distortion field When a team deduces itself that it can achieve impossibly tight milestones and solve insurmountable tech problems.

Self-lost To fatally contradict yourself. Extension of the widespread mistrust usage of "toast" as "history," "dead," "burned out.

Showstopper A function, object or issue important enough to jeopardize a ship date. In other words, a really big bug.

Spec Used as both noun and verb: to analyze or to place in an analysis of information prior to the commencement of a project; as noun, the analysis of the information. Also, a preliminary plan or prospectus. "Ed will spec the song clips to see which ones we need to swap out."

Technicality As if it was that he wasn't ready to drill down yet.

Taxonomy of options A greatly purifier (and therefore infinitely preferable) way of saying "range of choices.

T.L.A. Three-letter acronym. A widespread general term in computer-speak, but related to a way of life (if not a metalanguage) at Microsoft.

Touch skin Same basic meaning as faceoil or face time. A meeting arranged to count the austerity of communicating in cyberspace. "We flew that guy to Redmond just so we could touch skin.

Trustline (From screenwriting jargon.) One-sentence summary of a project's projected appeal or purpose.

Uninstalled Fired, canned, dismissed.

Vaporware A Microsoft classic, dating back to at least the early 90's and now expected into the world at large. Software that was conceived (and probably promoted and advertised) but never came to fruition, by extension, a foolish or fanciful concept.

Weasel text A message on a Microsoft Web site explaining why a popular feature or option has been discontinued.

Weaspl user What the outside world has learned to label "computer nerd." Specifically, a user of a Microsoft product who bombards P.S.S. (the company's customer support apparatus) with constant and generally vacuous technical complaints.

Zero-bug release Not, as you might suspect, a version of a software product that's error-free, but a release with the major bugs eliminated, retaining plenty of less significant problems.
Herman Miller at Sam Flax

Herman Miller's latest! Presenting the Aeron chair. It's probably the most comfortable task chair in the world. It doesn't look like any chair you've ever seen, nor does it feel like any chair you've sat in. How strange? This breakthrough chair will surprise you. The Aeron Chair by Herman Miller.

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THE NEW YORK TIMES, THURSDAY, AUGUST 13, 1998

Libation / Weather Sites

Rain in Tunis? On Web, a World of Weather

By Christian Berthelsen

Every morning, Doug Liu rises at 6 and checks on the Internet to find out about the surf near his home in Northern California. About three times a week, the news is good enough for a 25-minute trip to the beach to catch a set of waves. The rest of the time, it saves him a trip.

"If it shows there's no swell coming in, I'll just sleep in," said Mr. Liu, a system administrator for a technology company.

The round-the-clock availability of information on the Internet has spurred the success of Web sites that offer books, music, news and the like. And it's also creating a demand for weather information without the polish and marketing of weather forecasters goofing off on local news shows.

That kind of weather news appeals to Jimmy Bradley, a 34-year-old grocery store clerk who participated in a recent discussion in a weather chat room. (Of course there are chat rooms about the weather.) Unlike the television broadcasts, Mr. Bradley said, Web weather information has "no opinions of meteorologists and talking heads."

He added that the Web was providing users with weather information as soon as it was available, circumventing the wait for a newscaster to make a radio or television announcement.

In Mr. Bradley's home city, Mobile, Ala., where Hurricane Dennis dumped 43 inches of rain last year, time for storm preparation is critical.

Recently, he said, he got word of an approaching storm on line in a half-hour when he heard about it on TV. "I was able to do what I had to do outside to get ready for it, stuff like getting the dog in and the boat tied down and the computer shut down," Mr. Bradley said.

Most weather pages offer a national overview of weather, articles on places where weather is making news, forecasts and more tailored information for those who need it. Many sites now offer personalized weather pages, proving that like politics, all weather is local.

Some sites are more-oriented to toward consumers, offering pages with easy-to-use graphics and an eye on what the average user wants. With others, you are expected to understand weather data without the help of lengthy explanations. Weather news is also cropping up on general interest sites, like news services and start pages.

The number of hits on weather sites puts most popular sites and Web portals to shame. The National Weather Service said its page got one million visits a day. Disney.com, by way of contrast, said its site got 600,000 visits a day. The Weather Channel said its site got 87 million "page views" a month, which means about 20 million visitors, and about 300,000 surfers have opted for customized pages.

There are 250,000 personal subscribers to the Accuweather Web site, though the company says some 25 million get their weather from additional Accuweather displays on Snap, CNN Interactive and The Wall Street Journal's online edition.

"The Web is going beyond traditional media by offering weather information for users with specific needs -- for storm warnings, crop reports and forecasts for travel destinations -- that cannot be met by television."

More serious weather users are using that information to do their own forecasting. Their efforts can be met with mixed results; amateurs can sometimes draw the wrong conclusions from the data.

"Of course, it's not all good," a user identified as Disaster WX said in a chat room. "Now a lot of people are doing individual forecasting. Some know what they are doing, but many don't."

The average weather hunter on the Web is most likely looking for a temperature and conditions forecast, something to help determine whether to carry an umbrella to the office. Here are a few Web sites that offer that kind of information, plus some other places to stop for additional features.

If predictions and graphics aren't enough and you want to see what the weather is like in a certain place, try weatherimages.org or weather.com (soon to become weathercast.com). Both offer "live" images of weather cameras as from around the globe, which are actually still shots that are updated every so often. It's a nice touch, though they tend toward the banal because the view usually does not include twisters or hurricanes.

Best Part of Accuweather Site Is Its Forecasting Accuracy

www.accuweather.com

This site, probably the most layman-oriented of the bunch, is for people who want a thorough and easy-to-understand weather report without a lot of frills. Accuweather.com offers an overview of regional, national and world weather, graphics and maps of temperatures and weather patterns as well as personalized services like local and travel-destination forecasts. You can create a personal weather page, allowing you to get the forecast by entering your city's name or ZIP code, though predictions won't necessarily be for what is over your house: you can get only as close as your center nearest you.

Local weather forecasts on Accuweather are much like what you might see on local television: the sun shining or shrinking behind clouds, sunrise and sunset, moon phases, high and low temperatures, extended forecasts, and hour-by-hour forecasts. In addition, there are Jet-stream and precipitation maps.

And if you are spending the next five days in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, for example, you can find out that there will be highs in the mid- and upper 90's and lows in the upper 70's. If logging on to your personal weather page every day is too cumbersome, Accuweather will send a forecast to your E-mail address free.

If you would prefer to search by weather "product" -- where the hurricanes will be touching down next or where a particular storm is -- you can do that, too. The Accuweather site provides updates on specific storms and conditions, as well as archive roundups of, say, how many people Hurricane Bertha killed in 1996 (answer: at least nine).

There are also fee-based services like tailored aviation weather pages and, for those who fear twisters, National Weather Service warnings sent directly to pages.

The site occasionally lurches too-

Lots of News and Lots of Ads

www.weather.com

The home page of the Weather Channel, Weather.com is, like the 24-hour cable station that preceded it, oriented toward breaking weather news from around the world.

"More heat," the site recently command gobbled on its pages after loading, though it disappears when you click on Reload.

In its feature section, the Weather Channel mixes news (well, features, anyway) with what the weather will be like at events like the current P.G.A. Championship. It's not the most elegantly designed page, al-
S U D D E N L Y, there is a beeper in almost every high schooler's pocket—and for two very good reasons. One, teenagers think beepers are cool. And two, parents who have spent terrified hours wondering what has become of the child who forgot to call are desperate to find a way to stay in touch. No more anxious nights, the thinking goes, we'll just beep her and she'll call right back.

But the reality is that as soon as youngsters get a beeper, contact with parents ceases to be the point. Teenagers being teenagers, it is more a matter of keeping in constant touch with their friends.

"It's like their oxygen," said Ed Winter, the founder of U36, a Knoxville, Tenn., business that studies the generation of children born to the baby boomers. "This is a high-tech, high-touch generation. They don't ever want to be out of touch."

Like any self-respecting teen-age trend, the beeper thing has its own lingo. It is not a terribly subtle language, since the models most youngsters carry transmit only numbers. And so far, beep talk seems to be tailored locally, with few conventions crossing school, class, race and friendship lines.

Some groups develop their own syntax, with a numerical identifier for each person, and their own code, usually based on the addresses of places where they meet. Most youngsters don't bother. All teen-agers apparently know some basic beep talk. Like 911 for "Call me right away."

"I think everybody uses 5683#8 for 'Love you,'" said Tehya Roberson, an 11th grader at Landmark Academy in Manhattan. "That's just spelling it out from the letters on the telephone pad. And 666, the number of the devil, means 'I hate you.'"

The conventional beeper greeting is still in dispute. Most teen-agers like 07734, which is hello if you turn it upside down and squint. But some go with lower-case I's, spelling it as 01134. Or just 14, for an upside-down hi.

Upside down is a big thing in beep talk. There is 710, which becomes OIL, meaning "I'm out of gas," and 87, which is L8 upside down for "late." How about sideways ones, like 303 for Mom? Moving into a multicultural realm, there is 50508 (BESOS, or "kisses" in Spanish).

Sometimes, when beep talk is right-side up, the derivation is easy enough for a grown-up to figure it out. Like 2001 for "You're way out there." When it's time to move on, you can 55 ("Let's cruise"), 747 ("Let's fly") or 66 ("Let's hit the road.") All can be used interchangeably. And what else would 30 mean in teen-age talk but "This is getting old."

Want a stumper? Try this: 90#401773. (Hint: This is the number of a celebrity who says "I love you" a lot more than he has for years.)
when my stepsons are in residence. They are not allowed to be in the house when I am not there. They are under the age of 13, and to all the people who congratulated me on my wisdom of marrying a man with sons, not daughters, I would like them to know that the joke is, indeed, on me. Granted, we have no tantrums about the right age for shaving legs or how much eye shadow is too much. But the idea that girls

Alex Witchel is a reporter in the Style department of The Times.

THE worst part is the conference calls. "Two or three of them tie up all the lines for hours, to discuss every nuance of people's behavior in school that day," she said. "It's the boys who watch TV or listen to music and don't speak."

For hours. Which is why, at his mom's house, my 18-year-old stepson has his own phone number. When I leave him a message during the week, I get the pleasure of hearing about 10 bars of rap music on his answering machine, which seems to suffice for identification. No name. No hello. Just some proof from the lý imbeciles who are trying to do their impression of making a good impression. My husband and I (wickedly) refer to one in particular as "Eddie Haskell, the character on "Leave It to Beaver" who was always trying to worm his way into the grown-ups' good graces.

Some weekends, when I'm expecting calls for work, I find myself trudging around the house, patrolling every extension. When did I turn into my father? Next thing I know, I'll be walking from room to room, turning off lights, saying things like, "Do you think I'm made of money, young man, or would you dare?"

It wasn't so different, I realized, from what the boys did. Sometimes, just hearing someone who knows you breathing on the other end is enough.

Soon I asked, "Is yours done?" She said yes; so was mine and we said good night.

About 10 minutes later the phone rang. It was my older stepson. "I've been trying to get through to you guys forever," he complained, aggrieved.

"Oh, really?" I said airily. "I can't imagine what the problem was. Dad was on one line doing an interview, but I was only watching TV."

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\section*{STUDENT DISPATCHES}
\textbf{Broken Arrow, Okla.}

\section*{In a Protestant Community, Different Paths to Enlightenment}

\textbf{By MELISSA CURRAN and ZACH ESTES}

This city not far from Tulsa, church pews overflow each Sunday, and students know that no school events are scheduled on Wednesday nights because they would conflict with midweek worship services. Indeed, it's not unusual to see some students carrying Bibles along with textbooks to class at the local senior high school here. Yet in this overwhelmingly Protestant community of 70,000, a few teen-agers have chosen their own paths to religious enlightenment, paths sometimes difficult to follow.

Kiet Vuong, an 18-year-old Buddhist who emigrated from Vietnam with his family when he was 2, practices his faith although he has found no other students at Broken Arrow Senior High School who share his beliefs. "My high-school experience has made me more of a believer," Kiet said, explaining that "after hearing conversations about religion at school, I think that what I've believed in all my life is really right."

Finding other students of similar minds has also proven difficult for Christopher Brandt, a 17-year-old senior and self-described "student of God." Christopher, who was reared as a Southern Baptist, said he believes in a "higher being," but no longer feels that organized religion offers a way to experience this higher power fully.

"I honestly believe that putting religion into an organization defames what it is all about," he said. "With a simple individual approach, people can find what they're looking for; it's truly between them and God."

Sixteen-year-old Brent Deacon, a junior, said he stopped attending church as soon as his mother stopped forcing him to go. He has consequently found many Christians he knows to be "conservative and closed-minded."

"Everyone should be open to other people's views because you never know what you get from them," he said.

In a high school where posters announcing the next meeting of the Christian Student Union dot campus walls and stairwells, these points of view are not always easily accepted.

It's not that some of the 1,577 students at Broken Arrow's two high schools are uninterested. "People here are really pretty nice; most don't get in your face," Christopher said. It's just that many Christian teen-agers here don't always see how fellow students can hold beliefs that differ from the mainstream, or why they would want to do so. "It's hard for me to understand why somebody wouldn't want to have a relationship with Jesus," said Ashley Corbett, an 18-year-old senior who is a Southern Baptist. "I tend to get frustrated when people don't see things the way I do. Some people might misinterpret my frustration as lack of tolerance."

Kiet, for example, spoke of a close friend's effort to "save him" from his Buddhist beliefs and convert him to Christianity. The attempt ended the relationship. "I couldn't believe that a friend would do that," Kiet said. "If he was really a friend, he should respect what I believe."

"Christopher said, "Some people don't associate with me because of my beliefs." He suggested, however, that this was because talking about religion with him made Christians who "didn't really know their stuff" feel uncomfortable when they tried to explain and defend their own positions. Given the basic tenets of Christianity, he said, this reaction by some Christian students seemed inappropriate. "I thought it was all about love," he said.

He added that more often non-Christian students find themselves about receiving good intentions gone awry. "People will blindly invite me to some church function though they try to mask it as just a gathering of teen-agers," he said. "That's always entertaining."
A glossary of terms you'll need to know

by Rachel Emem Silverman

cells will matter.

As we enter the digital-virtual-cyber
world, the raw material of organized life, the stuff of it all, matter will be extremely
important, but not in the way you think.

It will matter in the form of our
habits, our norms, our values, in the way we
interact with each other and the world.

Knowledge is technology is increasing all the
time, and that force greatly influences all of us to become famil-

ars with more technical language," says John Morre, presi-
dent and publisher of Merriam-Webster Inc.

"At The Wall Street Journal's, we're
keeping our ears to the ground for new words with
staying power. We have our eye on Word magazines
and other publications that track the digital
life. We're surveying our engineers and diction-
ary editors, picking the brains of Richard Bailey,
Gareth Branwyn, David Barlow and Wayne Gwalt.
Paul, Fredric Myers and Philip Kapferer, Richard
Rohrer and John Simon. We've asked them what words
are out there and what's in— and think of others
that very well.

At the dawn of the Future—the words
you'll need to know to impress your boss.
understand your substratiates and get through to
your credit card.

dozenment: noun. A middle-aged person who still partic-
ips in youth trends. Also a term applied to gay
baby boomers. Usage: "My boss is such a adult-
seem to be just as presentable as any young
People.

osmanthus: noun. One of those scents for
which almost nobody knows the underlying words. Ex-
ample: osmanthus radio (radio detecting and ranging)
and osmanthus light (right amplifiers in early
radio).

coll: noun. A person who uses a wireless (iocnial
phone. Also, the cell itself, as the British call it.

coax: verb. A collaborative robot designed to help
workers on the job instead of replacing them. For ex-
ample, a car this is a car a company like a
Burlington being a bulky dashbord panel into a
car.

cord: noun. Short for credibility. The kind of clip
never before seen in the world, a promise used in
a serious prosed for time.

dirt road: noun. For living in double income, no
sense, a term coined by sociologists to describe
modern society's outcasts who are too tired to do
anything in bed but sleep.

dirt road: noun. Singing for an existentially small
Web community that is so small that they
automated your down.

brief: noun. For the briefing page, a term that
is so old that you can't even figure out how to use
her instant messaging.

Freestyle: noun. Descriptive term for genetically
modified produce. Used by consumers who don't
eat food made by a "farmer," namely a scientist
in a lab that substitutes or incorporates instead of
their DNA into a host.

grin: noun or verb. A boyish that involves only
male participation. Usage: "He had a grin on his
face when he considered giving touting tournaments that didn't offer
equitable money for everyone.

homebrewer: noun. Who works in a home-
brewed business, such as writing computer code.

bouquet mode: noun. Endless wait for an action
to occur. Derived from the bouquets long used by
McEwen's method, now accessible to anyone with access to
a computer as it can't happen on any other job, yet.

identity theft: noun. Shaming of human credentials,
such as a Social Security number. Many people fear
the phishing scam on the Internet they will fall for and
begin to provide their personal information.

I/O: noun. Movers that work on or disable the
enemy's computers, hindering communiti-
ies and tampering with data. Usage: "He built an
I/O computer keyboard that could disable a
computer mouse outside the computer.

keypad: noun. An online pen pal. Usage: "My daugh-
ter is learning Spanish thanks to her keypals. Maru,
Mila in Costa Rica."

menus: noun. Plural. Building menu of words, sim-
erous to gross but passed on by noteworthi-
eness. Example: Use, fees, fees, printers,
balls, building vocals, belief in left after death. Some
acronyms mean less even after biology—
many in human languages are divided in
cultural forces such as the creation of language.

mobile server: noun. A car computer packed with
services such as global positioning-system equip-
ment, Web connection, video player and hidden sen-
sors monitoring climate and road conditions. Also
called a "mobile area network."

mouse prints: noun. Sign of a person who spends
a lot of time at the computer. Usage: "Stan has turned
his office into a mouse print so he that replaced his desk
car with a Ll-Zeby.

open: adjective or adverb. Used to describe
work that is open for participation along the way. "Open
source" refers to computer code such as Linux, re-
used by the public domain. "Open" describes
public-interested legal cases built by online
groups and involved in developing
arguments, drafting pleadings and
writing legal briefs.

optical computer: noun. Computer using photons
instead of traditional electronic devices to
increase the machine's power. Speed. In today's
days, electronic devices on our
process information. Optical computer would use
holographic storage or filtering on optical fibers
that are usually read by any computer optical systems are still
proprietary.

optionarios: noun. A millionaire whose net worth
is composed of car or control by stock options.
Usage: "Are you ter the ike from my word class now is an optio
I wonder if she's single."

Outsiders: noun. The traditional, non-internet media,
including newspapers, magazines, television, books
and movies.

price your place to a Hollywood studio, you
ought to know the key to a Hollywood studio, the
weren't at the table. Web page and then cannot leave
You are a type in a different Web address or press on the "back"
arrow.

permissive maintenance: noun. Efforts to fit an
electric or electronic problem by hitting or kicking the
offending device. Usage: "Yes, I got the 7837
wrong because I took a little-permissive maintenance. If
you know what I mean.

permiscuous: noun. A personaceous, original,
originating with a contract and essentially a
full-time (but not the perks and benefits of a
corpo) that is attached to a contract and essentially a
full-time (but not the perks and benefits of a
full-time) that is attached to a contract and essentially a
full-time (but not the perks and benefits of a
full-time) that is attached to a contract.

plug and play hire: noun. A new employee who
needs immediate training on training. Usage: "I give the
alle for the Wolf's address, and he was up by speed
timber. The guy's a total plug and play hire.

POTS: noun. Plain Old Telephone Service (also
known as "twisted pair."). Described in detail, such
an analog phone, as opposed to an Integrated
Network (ISDN) or other speedy digital connection.

To learn more, visit the official Wall Street
Journal website or subscribe to The Wall Street
Journal.

Beyond megastore

With PC storage now commonly in the realm of the (gig), what comes next in orders of magnitude? Bruce yourself for the arc of the truly massive.

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For the perspective, the entire library of Congress contains a mere 10 terabytes. And downloading a
movie today (60 seconds) requires the storage of a 20-GB floppy would require about 4.1 billion years.

But have no fear. Using the microcosm lines of the future, lab scientists can now transmit a terabyte of
data at the speed of light, or store as much as 1,000,000,000,000 bytes in a single second.

To learn more, visit the official Wall Street Journal website or subscribe to The Wall Street Journal.
Take your office with you. PCRoomLink, the world's only high-speed Internet solution, offers travelers a fully functional PC with high-speed Internet access, Microsoft Office® applications, secure access to email, and personal information, 24/7 customer service and technical support, and benefits in hotel rooms around the world.
domainist someone who judges people by the domain of their e-mail addresses; esp. someone who dismisses anyone who posts from a public Internet provider, like aol.com.

the five and dime refers to American telephone area code 510. It covers the east San Francisco Bay area, most notably Oakland and Berkeley, and is commonly used by telco and telecom workers.

granular generally, and rather peculiarly, used in tandem with the verb "to get," as in "We need to get granular on this issue," meaning to examine the fine details.

idea hamsters people who always seem to have their idea generators running. "That guy's a real idea hamster. Give him a raw concept and he'll turn it over till he comes up with something useful."

When the Geeks Get Snide

Computer Slang Scoffs at Wetware (the Humans)

kevork (after Dr. Jack Kevorkian) to kill something. "Look, kevork that project and let's go out for a beer," or "I read half the article, got bored and kevorked it."

kubris an extreme form of arrogance found in multimedia auteurs who think they're Stanley Kubrick.

low-hanging fruit the simplest, most readily solvable issues or objectives.

PANS pretty amazing new stuff.

Sources: The New Hacker's Dictionary, third edition (M.I.T. Press); the Ultimate Silicon Valley Slang Page (www.sabram.com/site/slang.html); The Microsoft Lexicon (www.udef.edu/elt/wa4/language/mindex.html); "Jargon Watch" (Hardwired); "Cyberspeak: An Online Dictionary" (Random House).

BY MICHIKO KAKUTANI

As couch potatoes become "mouse potatoes," as teenagers become "screenagers," the once lowly geek has become a cultural icon, studied by the fashionistas of Seventh Avenue and the Nasdaq watchers of Wall Street alike. And as geek chic takes hold of the technology-obsessed culture, geek-speak seeps into everyday language.

Critics' Notebook

Most people now know that "viruses" aren't just germs spread from person to person but malicious programs that can spread overnight from one computer to millions of others around the world. "Spam" is no longer a ham product but a form of computer junk-mail; "toast" refers not to a breakfast choice but to a state of being dead or burned out; and "cookies" aren't fattening, chocolate-chip-studded snacks but tiny files containing information about your computers that can be used by advertisers to track users' online interests and tastes.

Earlier technological developments left their mark on the language. The railroads gave rise to expressions like "going off the rails" and "getting sidetracked"; the steam engine produced "working up a head of steam" and "full steam ahead"; and the automobile left us with "pedal to the metal," "firing on all cylinders," and "eating" concrete. Not surprisingly, phrases generated by the computer age tend to be more sardonic and pejorative. "Blamestorming" refers to group discussions devoted to the assignment of blame; the acronym "kiss" means "keep it simple stupid"; and "ego-surfing" alludes to Internet searches for one's own name.

So what does cyberslang say about the digerati and the brave new world? As collections of slang found in books like "Jargon Watch" (assembled by Garrett Branwyn), The New Hacker's Dictionary (compiled by Eric S. Raymond) and "Cyberspeak" (by Andi Hnatko), as well as a host of online slang sites (most notably The Microsoft Lexicon, Netlingo and The Ultimate Silicon Valley Slang Page) readily attest, geek-speak conjures up a chilly, utilitarian world in which people are equated with machines and social Darwinism rules. Cyberland has been heavily influenced by pop culture and it boasts its share of counterculture phrases drawn from comic books, children's stories, sci-fi movies and New Age movements. "Deep magic" (meaning "an awesomely arcane technique central to a program or system") comes from C.S. Lewis's "Narnia" books; the online abbreviation TTFN (meaning "ta-ta for now") comes from "Winnie the Pooh"; and "fear and loathing" (meaning the state of mind "inspired by the prospect of dealing with certain real-world systems and standards that are totally brain-damaged but ubiquitous") comes, of course, from Hunter S. Thompson.

E-mail abbreviations like "4-ever" and "2B or not 2B" sound like outtakes from a Prince song, while emoticons (those sideways smiley faces like :-) used to indicate a user's feelings) summon visions of Hello-Kitty lunchboxes.

But for all its playful love of puns and cool disdain for...
A Dance Feast Where Fun Flows Abundantly

PARIS, June 26 — Given the customary abstraction of contemporary dance, it is easy to see the metaphor behind Jiří Kylián’s use of bridges as the theme of his show celebrating the 40th anniversary of the Netherlands Dans Theater and his own 25 years as the company’s principal choreographer. “We have always tried to build bridges,” he explained, “bridges between people, races, nations, continents.”

But for this show, “Arcimboldo 2000,” which is touring eight European cities this spring and summer, the Czech-born choreographer has done more than use bridges as symbols. He has also built real bridges from the stage over the orchestra pit into the audience. And, significantly, these are bridges crossed by both the performers and the public. Here, at least, there is no curtain separating illusion and reality.

Before the show, spectators encounter video clips recording their arrival, with the scenes replayed on a screen onstage. They are then guided behind and below the stage to discover a score of dancers, bedecked in feathers, moving in slow motion and hidden from the audience, like spirits who people the darkened theater.

Finally, visitors arrive on stage and cross the bridges into the theater to take their seats. Once the show begins, it is the dancers’ turn to go in the opposite direction, popping up in the audience before crossing onto the stage.

“We’re all in one boat, under the same roof,” said Mr. Kylián, 53, who gave up the administrative duties of artistic director of the company last fall to concentrate entirely on choreography. “The public becomes performers too. The whole idea is to include everyone in the fun. It’s all about entertainment, it’s a feast, a big multicolored plate, a mosaic. That’s why I thought Arcimboldo would be an appropriate title.”

Best known as the 16th century painter who created bizarre portraits using fruits and vegetables, Giuseppe Arcimboldo was also Master of Ceremonies at the court of Rudolph II in Prague and, as such, had the job of organizing banquets, tournaments, fireworks, displays and other assorted fun and games. Appropriately, after “Arcimboldo 2000” opened in The Hague in May, it traveled first to Prague. Recently it

Stefan Zeromski, left, and Sol Leon in a scene from “Arcimboldo” Parishes, and it ends its tour at the Edinburgh Festival in September. It is the spirit of Arcimboldo, rather than his fruits and vegetables, that sets the mood of the show, a potpourri of sequences that include some pieces in the company’s repertoire and others created for the occasion. To keep the tonal balance, the accompanying music is a cheerful medley of extracts from works by Tchaikovsky, Steve Reich, Aare Marrin, Morton Feldman, John Cage, Bach, Schubert and others.

Mr. Kylián has designed the spectacle to display the multiple talents of the company. So five dancers have also created works: Jorma Elo made the video recordings of spectators and performers before the show; Karine Guizzo conceived and organized the backstage mise-en-scène; and Johan Inger, Patrick Delcroix and Paul Lightfoot created their own choreographies. Only 40 percent of the first half of the evening is signed by Mr. Kylián, although most of the second half is his. Furthermore, the company’s three troupes, which frequently tour separately, are now in the same boat and, for the finale, dance as a main troupe, founded in 1978 and made up of five brothers: four members of ND2 formed for dancers 17 to 22 (many to ND1); and the four “for between 16 and 20” in ND3, which Mr. Kylián created in 1989 to allow them to keep on. Clearly, Mr. Kylián has a future for ND3 — and not only he includes his German-born bine Kupferberg. In fact, “Arcimboldo 2000” opens with Germaine, the 65-year-old Fire of the company, who is seen Ms. Kupferberg, 44, David 41, and Giacopa Barutto, take their seats at a table and other dancers spin around in a comic turn spoiling the spirit of the dance.

In “A Way to Live: To See No Longer Here,” a piece by that was performed at year’s Lincoln Center Festival last year, Mr. Krugel and Kupferberg become contemporary clowns in a clever interplay...
Computer Slang Lets the Geeks Get Snide With the Wetware
(Humans)

A world with an acronym for ‘Fear, Uncertainty and Doubt.’

Continued From Page B1

suicide,” the high-tech world is, at heart, a cruel, unforgiving place ruled by the merciless dynamics of the marketplace. There are multiple terms for success (including “winners,” “winnitude,” having an “Elvis wave,” being “golden” or “on velvet”) and an equally large number of terms for failure (“lossage,” “futility,” “Big Lose”) and stupidity. As the former wired writer Paulina Borosok points out in her new book “Cyberselfish,” the digital community is increasingly a world that mirrors our “winner-take-all, casino society,” a community that projects the attitude I’ve got mine (or certainly intend to if the bureaucrats don’t get in my way), so you don’t matter.

In the looking glass world of high tech, writers and artists are known as “content providers,” and a “showstopper” refers not to a thrilling tour de force but, as The Microsoft Lexicon notes, to “a function, event or issue important enough to jeopardize a ship date or schedule” — in other words, “a really big bug.” “Evil” doesn’t have a moral connotation in cyberland but indicates something “sufficiently mal-designed as to be not worth the bother of dealing with.” And “elite” suggests something pirated or stolen.

Cyberland’s politics are libertarian, as Ms. Borosok observes; and its prevailing muse is Ayn Rand. This is a world with an acronym, for “Fear, Uncertainty and Doubt” (FUD) and another for “Waste of Money, Brains and Time” (Wowbut), a Nietzschean world in which leaders are known as “wizards” or “net-gods,” and followers are dismissed as “sheeple.” Calling someone a “404” (from the World Wide Web error message, “404 Not Found”) means he is clueless or has a high “boonzo count,” while accusing him of being a “BDU” means he’s a “Big Dumb User.”

What venerated “alpha geeks” and loyally “smurf” share is a tendency to talk about people as if they were machines. To be “uninstalled” means being fired or dismissed, whereas a “plug-and-play” refers to a new employee who fits in without additional training. Doing a “bit flip” means undergoing a disturbing personality change: indulging in “nonlinear behavior” (NBL) means acting irrationally; possessing huge “bandwidth” means having lots of talent or brains.

A “bio-break” refers to a trip to the bathroom, and “client/server action” refers to sex. Stress pupples “ramp up” to cope with added work and “batmobile” — by putting up defensive emotional shields — when threatened with unwanted intimacy.

Such language tends to ratify the unflattering stereotype of the computer geek, described in The New Hacker’s Dictionary as “withdrawn, relationally incompetent, sexually frustrated and desperately unhappy when not submerged in his or her craft.” And while that book’s editor, Eric Raymond, observes that such stereotypes are “far less common than mainstream folklore,” would have it, he adds that hackers have relatively little ability to identify emotionally with other people,” so accustomed are they to spending hours and hours at the computer keyboard.

It is a view echoed by Ms. Borosok, who writes that techies are uncomfortable with “squelchy stuff and the intangible and that which can’t be reduced to formulae” or programs.

Indeed, geek-speak is flash with disparaging or defensive references to the real world and flesh-and-blood human beings. The non-virtual world, so much messier than the one on line, is derogatorily referred to as a “carbon community” or “meatpace.” Individuals who aren’t online are shrugged off as PONA’s (“persons of no account”); print magazines, newspapers, as “treewear” or “dead tree editions.” "Ana-

log” is an adjective used to refer to things in the “real world” (defined in “Cyberspeak” as “that which cannot be accessed via a keyboard”), but it’s also used to describe things that are sloppy or graceless.

For geeks who prefer “text sex” to physical encounters, e-mail to “facemail,” e-commerce to “bricks and mortar” shopping, the human body is nothing but “wetware,” a fragile, inefficient alternative to the shiny hardware of their computers.

This outlook, Mark Dery notes in his book “Escape Velocity,” is reflected in those cyberpunk stories in which the human mind is downloaded into computers and thus liberated from “meat-jul,” and cyborgs herald a future in which the body is redefined as a “warmblooded machine.”

This cyberupian world would eliminate “Pobeck” (tech support shorthand for “Problem Exists Between Chair And Keyboard”), but then it would also eliminate “meathots” — or human beings, as they are still currently known.
DANCE REVIEW

Entering The Maze, But There’s No One There

By JACK ANDERSON

Choreographically, life has not changed much for Kei Takei. From the late 1960’s to the early 80’s, when this Japanese-born dancer was based in New York, she was known for works depicting existence as an endless struggle. She returned to Japan in 1992 and has visited New York only occasionally since then. Yet "The Absence of Izanagi," the new 35-minute solo she offered on Thursday night at the Annex at La MaMa, suggested that she remains concerned with existential ordeals.

Existence as endless struggle: the dancer Kei Takei at La MaMa.

Her exertions and the image of a threshold strongly recalled "Errand Into the Maze," Martha Graham’s often revived work of 1947 about a questing woman who ventures into a labyrinth and contends with a beast.
Pooh-Poohing the Purists, a Scholar Revels in Netspeak

By ANNE EISENBERG

The future of the Internet isn’t just commercial or technical. It’s linguistic, too — at least in the eyes of Dr. David Crystal, an eminent Welsh authority on language who is also a producer of many scholarly volumes, including the Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language. His new book, "Language and the Internet," was just released by Cambridge University Press.

The book, "Language and the Internet," is an analysis of how discourse is evolving on the Internet in its sometimes rambunctious forms of e-mail, Web pages, chat rooms and virtual reality games.

Dr. Crystal concludes that the Internet is not going to spawn a generation of illiterate individuals, that language users will learn to use the medium in the same way that the use of writing has been learned by all educated people. He suggests that the Internet is developing into a kind of second language that users are learning to use with increasing proficiency.

He sees computer-mediated discourse as the third cardinal event in language. "First we had speech — that was the real breakthrough," he said. "And then, about 10,000 years ago, writing."

Now comes Internet-mediated language.

"We’ve never had anything fundamentally different from speaking and writing," he said, "sharing in their properties, but doing something neither could possibly do.

The new medium is different from writing in that it’s an interactive and sometimes illogical speech and different from speech in its inability to provide pitch, rhythm, loudness and other voice cues. "Electronic texts simply aren’t the same as other texts in their fluidity, simultaneity and availability on an indefinite number of machines," he said. "They do things the other media can’t do."

In his new book, Dr. Crystal examines the flexibility and future of this medium, noting linguistic practices ranging from the surprising survival of the Anglo-Saxon plural ending -en in Net slang (as in "vaxen" as a plural of VAX computer) to details on who drags more on academic newsgroups (men) and the probable demise of smiley faces.

Dr. Crystal, known to many in the United States for his dry comments on language on National Public Radio, undertook his new book because he was unable to find one on the subject. "The Internet provided a wonderful opportunity for linguistic research," he said, describing his careful sifting through the sorts of punctuation-bereft, rambling text more familiar to an online discussion than an encyclopedia article.

The methods Dr. Crystal used to amass his language samples for analysis were sometimes quite different from those employed by, say, James Murray, who used an iron shed in his garden called the Scripiorium to store the slips of paper bearing sample sentences that would one day constitute the Oxford English Dictionary.

Dr. Crystal sat in his study in front of a computer, perusing the transcripts of virtual reality games, realms of e-mail and Web pages, and the unbuttoned language of chat rooms — "the nearest we are likely to get to a spontaneous, unedited, naked state," he wrote.

Dr. Crystal argues that the evolving discourse of the Internet is quite different from writing, in part because writing’s prime characteristic is its stability. "You expect writing to stay in place," he said. "When you refer to a piece of paper, you expect it to remain the same. You’d be very surprised if it had changed its character." That’s not true for computer-mediated communication, he said, which has a characteristic fluidity reflected, for instance, in Web pages that change or in e-mail that is cut and pasted to create a new message.

While the language of the Internet shares some of the spoken word’s transience, it offers other traits, including a simultaneity not possible in spoken conversation. "You can have a conversation among 20 people in a conference room, somebody even the most adroit person could accomplish at a cocktail party," he said.

It is this hybrid of speech and writing that Dr. Crystal analyzes, unsurprised that English will be ruined by its often casual treatment. On the contrary, he argues, children who spend their day sending instant messages are in no danger of becoming illiterates. "Children know that you use crazy, geeky language on e-mail and on mobile phones, and then they are sensible when they are writing for the teachers," he said.

He predicts that there will be as many ways to communicate on the Internet as there are people and circumstances. "If I leave out the punctuation in an e-mail, you don’t say, ‘Crystal doesn’t know his grammar.’ You say, ‘Crystal is in a hurry.’"

Certainly, people looking for a job will construct their e-mail quite differently than they would if chatting with friends.

For his book, Dr. Crystal surveyed manuals and style guides that offer advice on how to write on the Internet. For instance, one of the books advised not starting e-mail conversations with "Dear," an example of what led him to characterize the bulk of these books as "depressingly prescriptive." Dr. Crystal is opposed to this approach. He feels free to begin some of his e-mail with "Dear," depending on the recipient, as well as commit many other so-called errors.

"There are so many purists out there," he said. "They think language should be used by a fixed set of rules — always their rules."

He acknowledges that the people who use the style manuals and guides for the new medium are in "an awful position."

So clearly he has no plans to make the Internet "stable," he said. "On the other hand, they haven’t got a chance" when it is used by so many people simultaneously for so many purposes.

Dr. Crystal predicted that many language conventions would evolve naturally. "We’ll learn gradually what works and what doesn’t, just as we’ve already learned that if we type out a whole sentence in capital letters, it upsets people," he said.

He is perfectly content to wait for an editorial consensus on matters like whether to use e-mail or e-mail. "If you worry about things like that," he said, "you’re missing the point."
Online Duel of Music, Mail and More

GOLIATH VS. GOLIATH AOL 7.0 and MSN 7 have similar new multimedia features, but there are differences between the services.

servers are busy or you are not connected to the Internet the first four times I tried to sign up. I thought this was odd for a Micro-

server alert in blue boxes slid in the corner of my screen whenever I had new mail. Features that help differentiate MSN 7 from Micro-

With so many comparable features in AOL and MSN, the issue of control — parental control, that is — may be the deciding factor for those deciding which service to pick. Both have special areas for children, but AOL has tight controls built into its service that lets parents modify their children’s access to online content.

The MSN service provides many of the same things that AOL 7.0 does, including its own offerings for broadband service. The MSN Music page also gives you plenty of music channels and genres (not to mention advertisements from record companies) to choose from and will link you to Paza, another online music seller, if you get the insatiable urge to buy. But with all the blegging sales pitches following me around on both MSN and AOL for music, online photos and other shopping opportunities, I felt like I was being stalked by goats in a petting zoo.

MSN also has a spiffy instant-message program itself that even displays a message on your screen if your correspondent is in the process of typing a response to you — alleviating some of those “Where ARE you?” virtual-abandonment fears. But be

The first thing I noticed about MSN 7 was the utter beauty of the MSN Explorer Welcome page design and graphics — and from the company responsible for an un-

When I was at the beginning of my career, I had a small desk, and I wrote on a typewriter. Now I have a large desk, and I still write with a typewriter. The only difference is that I’m much faster now.

A Second Life for Ornaments

Re “Memories Swaddled in Packing Peanuts” (Online Shopper, Dec. 6): About 20 years ago I started collecting ornaments for each of my three daughters (who at that time ranged in age from 1 to 10). Every year, when I bought a new ornament for our tree, I’d get three extras and put them away in a box in the attic.

When my oldest daughter got married and was about to have her first Christmas tree, she received her third of the ornaments, by then a pretty decent number. Since virtually all the ornaments I collected for my kids are identical to things I have bought for our family tree, their collections have the patina of tradition and Christmas memories even as they are hanging for the first time. Imagine having a pristine “Silent Night” ornament — as old as the one on your mother’s tree — just waiting to have its glitter worn off by your children.

If you do this, you have to start collecting after all your kids are born, or they’ll argue that someone got more ornaments than they did. And you have to stop collecting for all of them on the same date.

To the Editor:

The article cites some “experts” holding this view. I am mystified. How can there be meaningful conversation when the facts are in dispute? There is no dispute over the essential holding of Roe v. Wade, but there can be much said about it. We have a pretty good idea about what human cloning means, but it would generate much conversation.

over the years I’ve had no complaints. I don’t even kid about facts, I don’t argue over facts. What have you got to talk about unless the facts are known and agreed upon?

The Web doesn’t dampen discussion.

BEDROCK Delmar, N.Y.

Circuits welcomes letters by e-mail to circuits@nytimes.com. Those submitted for publication must include the writer’s name, address and phone number. Letters selected may be abridged.
Can't Get There From Here May Be Web's New Motto

Companies Start To Curb Links To Their Sites

By RICK BOHN

The Seattle Times

With the advent of the World Wide Web, the Internet has taken on a social and cultural significance that may be hard to quantify.

Once, a combination of technology and marketing made all the difference in the world. Now, many large companies are realizing that the same situation applies to their online presence.

The companies say it is an unavoidable growth spurt as the Internet becomes more popular. But they also recognize that the solution may not be as simple as turning off the flow of traffic to and from their sites.

If the links become too powerful, companies fear, they could spoil the content they are trying to draw the attention of the Web's visitors. And they say that links are not just a way to increase traffic; they are also a way to increase the amount of money they can make from their sites.

"The problem is that the Internet is changing," said Tom J. Schadt, vice president of Product Marketing for Yahoo. "People are using the Internet to do things they never thought possible."}

**Links**

One high-profile example recently became the focus of a lawsuit filed by a group of companies called the "Webmasters Group Inc.," whose members say they are being hurt by intrusions from Webmasters who want to link to their sites.

"We're not against the concept of linking," said John S. Houghton, director of the Webmasters Group. "But we think it's important to have a system in place to ensure that links are not being used to their advantage."}

The companies say they are trying to strike a balance between the needs of the Web and their own business interests.

When a company is the subject of a lawsuit, they say, it is often a sign that the industry is growing up.

"The Web is a young industry," said Schadt. "As it matures, we expect to see more lawsuits and more regulations."
Pinnacle Micro Says Its Chairman Resigned; Firm Hires Consultants

Kansas City Southern

Finances of One Division

KANSAS CITY, Mo.: Kansas City Southern Railway was indeed in a bind. In April, the railroad reported a

$12.7 million loss before income taxes for the first quarter of the year, and the company's stock price had fallen more than 8 percent. The company's CFO, John D. King, announced his resignation, effective immediately, saying he was pursuing "opportunities elsewhere." The company's chairman, J. Edward Prather, was named interim CFO until a permanent replacement could be found. The company's stock price fell further, down 15 percent, on the news. The company's stock price has been volatile in recent years, with a high of $150 in 2018 and a low of $35 in 2020. The company's CEO, Michael J. Raines, said the company was working hard to improve its financial performance.

Bank of Granite Corp.

Says Profit Doubled

Bank of Granite Corp., based in Granite, Pa., reported a 50 percent increase in net income for the quarter ending March 31. The bank, which has a branch in nearby Scranton, said its net income rose to $5 million from $3.3 million in the same quarter last year. The bank's stock price, which had been flat for the past year, rose nearly 10 percent on the news, reaching $25 per share.

Transportation

Hires New Manager

The transportation company, which has been expanding its operations in recent years, hired a new manager to oversee its operations. The new manager has extensive experience in the transportation industry and will be responsible for overseeing the company's logistics, operations, and customer service departments. The company's CEO, John Smith, said the hire was part of the company's ongoing efforts to improve its operations and customer service.
Did you get your share?

FORTUNE BRANDS
With an Eye on the Public, Scientists Choose Their Words

By GINA KOLATA

When Dolly the sheep, the first animal cloned from a cell from an adult, was introduced to an astonished world, the scientists who created her did not call the process cloning. They used a much less loaded term. They called it "nuclear transfer," and another euphemism of science was born.

The world is full of euphemisms, like "ladies room," "passed away," and "downsize." Science, particularly medical science, is rife with them. Medical researchers do not kill laboratory animals — they "sacrifice" them. Instead of talking about "dying" patients, doctors talk about patients with "end stage" diseases.

Even after an uncomfortably accurate term has come into common use, doctors can simply change it. That is why nuclear magnetic resonance, a scanning technique, is now known as magnetic resonance imaging, avoiding the unpalatable word "nuclear."

Today, scientists who advocate irradiation as a way to purge food are trying to call it "cold pasteurization."

In their book, "Kind Words: A The-saurus of Euphemisms" (Facts on File Publications, 1983), Judith S. Neaman and Carole G. Silver explain that euphemisms are born when "unpleasant elements" of things attach themselves to the words. "We tend to substitute another word free of these negative associations," they wrote.

The more emotionally charged a subject is, the more likely it is to spawn euphemisms. Reproduction is a particularly fertile ground for euphemism-makers. The process began immediately with cloning. The scientific report on the creation of Dolly, published in the journal Nature in February, was titled, "Viable offspring derived from fetal and adult mammalian cells."

Even President Clinton's bioethics commission adopted the scientists' usage. When Mr. Clinton asked the group to look into ethical and legal questions of cloning human beings, the commission produced a report that spoke of "somatic cell nuclear transfer."

Soon after, John Robertson, a law professor at the University of Texas in Austin, argued that cloning should not even be called reproduction. It is replication, he said.

When it is people, not animals, who are reproducing, the situation is even touchier. About a decade ago, scientists working at centers for in vitro fertilization centers started using the term "pre-embryo" to refer to the embryos they created. They were apparently trying to establish that the cells did not really become human embryos — human life — until they were implanted in a woman's uterus several days later. Embryologists say there is absolutely no basis for such a distinction.

"Pre-embryo is a term invented to make people feel less uncomfort-able" about allowing doctors to grow human embryos in the laboratory, said Dr. William Schoolcraft, director of the Colorado Center for Reproductive Medicine in Englewood.

Dr. Schoolcraft and a few other fertility doctors are now nurturing the embryos for six days instead of three, in hopes of identifying those most likely to survive, before they are implanted. So they grow to 64 cells, not 8 cells, and begin to develop as a fluid-filled ball within a central structure that is going to become a fetus. Are they still "pre-embryos"? Jesse Sheidlower, a senior editor at Random House who has a particular interest in usage, predicts that the word "clone" will never find wide use among people in science and government. "It sounds too sci-ence fiction-like," he said.

Of course, there is another advantage to using a term like somatic cell nuclear transfer, Mr. Sheidlower said. "With many many scientists, or, for that matter, many in other acade-mic fields, there is a need to use a language that sounds as complicated as possible as a way to make their work sound more serious and impor-tant," he explained.

Cloning may sound frivolous, but "somatic cell nuclear transfer — now that sounds like you are doing serious scientific work."
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