



Electronic Discourse: Linguistic Individuals in Virtual Space

By Boyd H. Davis

State University of New York Press. Paperback. Book Condition: New. Paperback. 236 pages. Dimensions: 8.9in. x 5.8in. x 0.6in. Investigates the new world of computer conferencing and details how writers use language when their social interaction is exclusively enacted through text on screens. This book examines interactive electronic discourse, exposing use of language that has the immediacy characteristic of speech and the permanence characteristic of writing. The authors created an asynchronous mainframe conference for language and linguistics classes in which they presented students with the task of analyzing the language used in original newspaper reports of the 1960s Civil Rights Sit-Ins. The authors observed how students wrote to each other across a wide range of social and virtual settings, how they built a real, if short-lived community within and across campus boundaries, and how they handled conflict while avoiding confrontation on sensitive issues of race and power. The result is a study that details how people use language when their social interaction is exclusively enacted through text on screens, and how their exchange is affected by computer conferencing. The students who wrote in the electronic conferences faced two interrelated tasks: participating in a multiparty conversation and negotiating the individual identities they...



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