

[T]he commands you type into a computer are a kind of speech that doesn't so much communicate as *make things happen*, directly and ineluctably, the same way pulling a trigger does. . . . And it's precisely this logic that provides the real magic in a place like LambdaMOO—not the fictive trappings of voodoo and shapeshifting and wizardry, but the conflation of speech and act that's inevitable in any computer-mediated world. . . . This is dangerous magic, to be sure a potential threat—if misconstrued or misapplied—to our always precarious freedoms of expression. . . .

Julian Dibbell, "A Rape in Cyberspace" 1993

In addition, text-based MUDs are a new form of collaboratively written literature. MUD players are MUD authors, the creators as well as consumers of media content. . . . As players participate, they become authors not only of text but of themselves, constructing new selves through social interaction. Since one participates in MUDs by sending text to a computer that houses the MUD's program and database, MUD selves are constituted in interaction with the machine. Take it away and the MUD selves cease to exist.

Sherry Turkle, "Who Am We?" 1995

You have on your desk, sitting in front of you, the capacity to compete with the publishing regime, even to overthrow it. You have a networked computer with a copy-paste function, with the capacity to download and upload files, and, if you have broadband Internet access, with the means to distribute and access a wide variety of information (text, graphics, audio, video) globally, quickly, and relatively easily. This technological capacity makes you as an individual a threat to the publishing industry and also to the recording industry and the music industry—those traditional media conglomerates whose economic interests depend on their ability to slow and control access to information and entertainment.

DeVoss and Porter,  
"Why Napster matters to writing: Filesharing as a new ethic of digital delivery" 2006

In early September, Matthew Foremski, the 18-year-old son of a Silicon Valley tech reporter, dug up an old version of Rose's MySpace page. She'd deleted it when she became Bree, but Google cached a copy, and Foremski posted the link to his father's blog. Within 48 hours, *The New York Times*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and a slew of TV stations ran the story. The jig was up. Many assumed the series would sputter and die. Media reports zeroed in on how viewers had been duped, suggesting an inevitable backlash. But the fans – raised on the unreality of reality TV and with the role-playing ethos of the Web – seemed to take the revelation in stride. One guy who had corresponded regularly with Bree wrote to ask if he'd been conversing with Jessica Rose. "No, you've been talking to Bree," came the reply (from Amanda). "If you want to talk to Jessica Rose, you can go to her MySpace page. If you want to keep talking to Bree, use this email."

Joshua Davis, "The Secret World of Lonelygirl" 2006

What is being called "Internet plagiarism" is presently understood almost exclusively in terms of access to text with expanded access itself believed to be the primary cause of the phenomenon. The history of text, however, reveals that previous revolutions in access to text, such as those precipitated by the advent of the printing press and again by mass education, also incited cultural fears. This time, the cultural fears are focused on issues of property and especially on students' incursions on the words and ideas of others. If, however, we consider not just access to text but also textual relationships, we can gain a more tempered, critical understanding of Internet plagiarism.

Rebecca Moore Howard, "Understanding 'internet plagiarism'" 2007