

# DIGITAL ANTHROPOLOGY

## RESEARCH SEMINAR

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A young girl with long, straight brown hair is shown in profile, looking down intently at a tablet computer she is holding with both hands. She is wearing a white long-sleeved shirt. The background is a soft-focus indoor setting, possibly a home or office, with a white wall and some indistinct shapes. The lighting is warm and natural, coming from the side, highlighting her hair and the texture of her shirt. The overall mood is focused and calm.

OUR FOCUS

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## DIGITAL ETHNOGRAPHER?

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Participant observation anthropologist as a measuring tool for analog reality

Going digital disassembled reality, disembodied experience

Digital anthropology how to do disembodied ethnography?

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**Digital anthropology** how to do disembodied  
ethnography?

- > digital technology in everyday use
- > living between online and offline
- > secondary orality and digitally mediated communication
- > “artificial humanity” of artificial intelligence
- > economics of attention / economics of experience
- > playing MOMG: participant observation in virtual worlds

A collage of World of Warcraft characters. On the left, a demon with large horns and glowing green eyes. In the center, a paladin in ornate armor holding a sword. On the right, a dragon with glowing orange eyes. The background is a mix of these colors and textures.

OUR METHODS

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WORLD  
WARCRAFT™

## SKILLS TO LEARN

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*How to become a digital anthropologist in an academic year*

- acquire skillful ethnographic vision : notice and observe digital world around you
- assemble multimodal experiences from various media
- appropriate technologies for understanding others
- construct an analytical narrative from your field data



A group of people, including men and women, are sitting on a wooden bench in what appears to be a public space like a train station or airport. Many of them are looking down at their mobile phones. The image is slightly blurred and has a semi-transparent orange text overlay.

PROJECTS WE WILL BE LEARNING FROM

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**Scope** Documenting current folklore functions today on the internet (memes, legends etc.)

**Method** Virtual ethnography: observing online communities online

**Example study** Online “groups of death”: what is actually happening there?

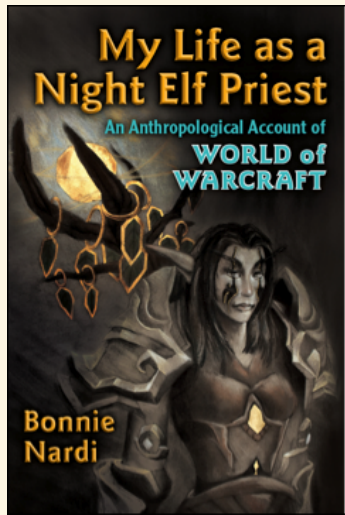
## DISCOVERY: MORAL PANIC TRANSFORMED RULES OF THE GAME

What is called “groups of death” is actually a form of netstalking, a game for the youth with a function somewhat similar to scary stories told in the dark. However through media this game caused a moral panic in the society which transformed the game itself. Before players were just waiting for the rules to be given, but after media hype started to part into “players” and “curators”.





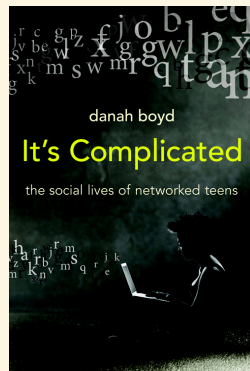
*Bonnie Nardi*



# DANAH BOYD: IT'S COMPLICATED

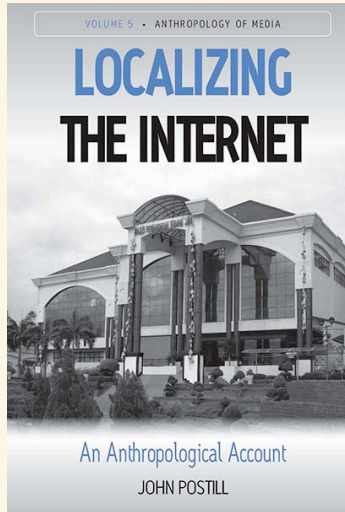


1. **identity** why do teens seem strange online?
2. **privacy** why do you share so publicly?
3. **addiction** what makes teens obsessed with social media?
4. **danger** are sexual predators lurking everywhere?
5. **bullying** is social media amplifying meanness and cruelty?
6. **inequality** can social media resolve social divisions?
7. **literacy** are today's youth digital natives?
8. **searching for a public of their own**



# JOHN POSTILL, “LOCALIZING THE INTERNET”

- Local internets:
  - internet activism
  - electronic government
- ...all in Malaysia



A photograph of a surfer with long blonde hair, wearing a dark wetsuit, riding a white surfboard inside the barrel of a large, curling blue wave. The background shows a coastline with green hills under a blue sky with light clouds. The text "JOIN THE TREND!" is written in a bold, orange, sans-serif font, positioned to the left of the surfer. A thin orange horizontal line is drawn below the text.

**JOIN THE TREND!**