concepts of information

introduction:

the definitive approach

Concepts of Information

Jan 19, 2012

admin

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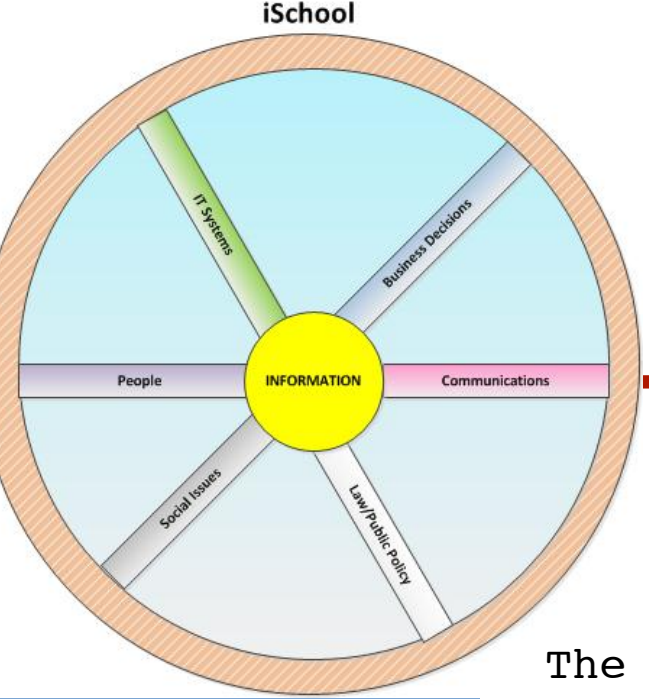


i-dentity

The iSchool is a multidisciplinary wheel that revolves around information. It differentiates itself from other domains by emphasizing a holistic approach to information problem solving. For example, the wheel contains spokes that encompass: communications, IT systems, people, business decisions, social issues, and law/public policy. By studying information and its associations as a whole, I hope to discover better methods for protecting information and information flows.

-- Mary Morshed

i-dentity

What is the School of Information? It's sort of an internet school. But really, they don't know. When I got accepted, I asked my to-be advisor to describe the department in his own words. He said, "That's a very good question. Let me tell you about the conversation we had about that at the last faculty meeting." He spoke for about 10 minutes, then apologized for not really answering the question. I told him that if he had been any more definite, I would have been disappointed. ¶Yes, I agree that the lack of coherence could potentially be a problem. I'm not so worried--I can always go back to being a programmer. Who knows what universities will look even look like in 5 years anyway? I'm just glad to not have a boss any more.

-- Sebastian Benthall

i-dentity

The iSchool is a department where people are researching a number of different things and those things generally have some association with technology. There are professors from fields like law, economics, computer science and sociology and students generally work in a few of these areas in the development of their projects and research.

Laura Devendorf

i-dentity

I think that the work of the iSchool is ultimately concerned with a fuller understanding of the various means by which people can (and do) make sense of their world. Part of this is a productive effort: creating and deploying tools that allow people to more clearly and carefully organize and interact with the bits of knowledge (information?) that they want to collect and consume. The other part of the iSchool's work is more theoretical: trying to get a handle on the myriad ways people seek and find the knowledge they need, and how these methods mutate with the passing of time and continuing changes in technology.

-- Padma Chirumamilla

i-dentity

The iSchool is a place where scholars and practitioners from a variety of backgrounds and disciplines try to understand how humans process the variety of experiences, images, messages, and other forms of "information" that make up their daily lives. "iSchoolers" are particularly interested in analyzing the tools, institutional systems, and social relationships that organize all that information, potentially with an eye toward making them function more usefully, efficiently, or meaningfully. Personally, I'm interested in how members of different communities may think of "information" differently – for example, many Ghanaians, if asked, associate specific questions or types of "information" with specific people, rather than with specific locations (such as libraries) or technologies (such as search engines).

-- Lindsay Bayham

i-dentity

Information as a category seems to make a tenuous claim about reducibility. It seems to depend on the idea that everything in the world which we share, exchange, produce, consume, is reducible to this one form - information, which then makes it amenable to particular modes of analysis. The Ischool (or any school) is, I hope, involved with examining this claim.

Kartikeya Date

i-dentity

Pure information is like white light. When information is passed through one's mind this colors information because thoughts are shaped by language. To communicate information text, numeric values and other data one must make abstract agreements on represented by symbols. The Information Schools are designed to train students in skills needed to combine aspects of computer science, cognitive science, psychology, sociology, economics, business, law, library/information studies, and communications.

Leslie Tom

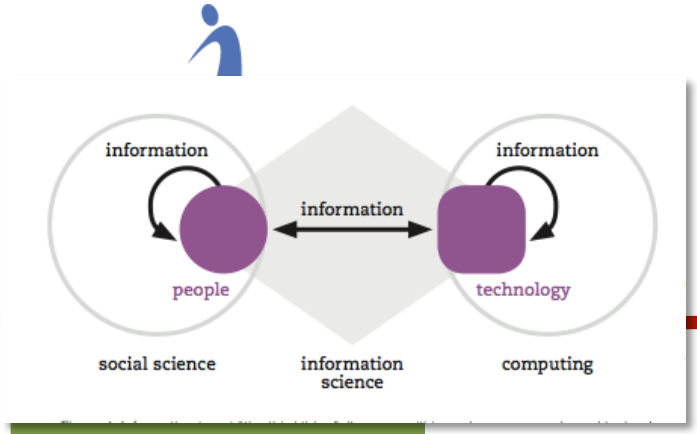
i-ndecisive?

"Information is hard to define and impossible to see, but it is everywhere. ...

"It is the thing that moves within and between people and technology making them interesting ...

"...where people and technology meet ... that is where the information exists."

-- Wobbrock et al,
"Exploring the Future of i-schools," 2010

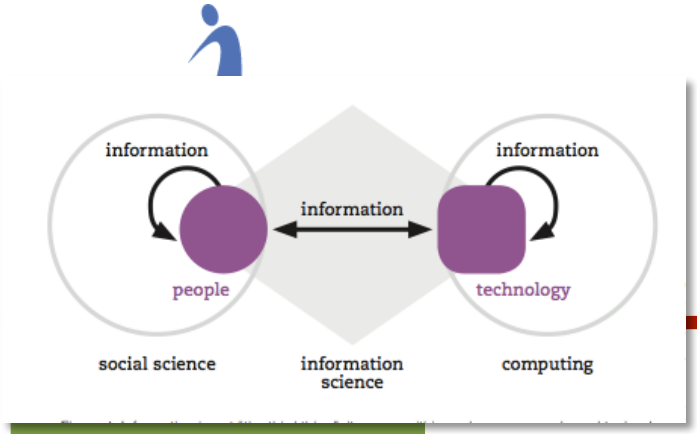


Ischools as nexuses

The best identity statement we have devised for iSchools is that they are places "where people and technology meet." They are places where social scientists study things and technologists invent things. Of course, by "technology" we mean information technology in its most inclusive sense. It may or may not be computerized—books and card catalogs are information technologies. Not all technologies of interest to iSchools will be computerized, but all will convey information.

"Reflections on the Future of iSchools from Inspired Junior Faculty,"

Wobbrock, Ko, and Kientz



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What are "Information Technologies"

What makes for "Information technology"?

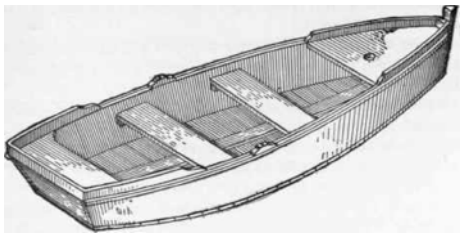
Prototypical instances of modern "IT"

More marginal instances of "information technologies"

More marginal instances of "information technologies"

Non-IT?

What isn't IT?



i-dean

"*Since the advent of the Internet, there's been an explosion in the influence of information. The information revolution changed everything: the way businesses and governments work, the way we do science and provide health care, the way we educate our children and entertain ourselves. There are all kinds of important questions involved in understanding and improving the ways in which we generate, collect, analyze, store, preserve, and disseminate information in the modern world. That's what we study in the iSchool.*"

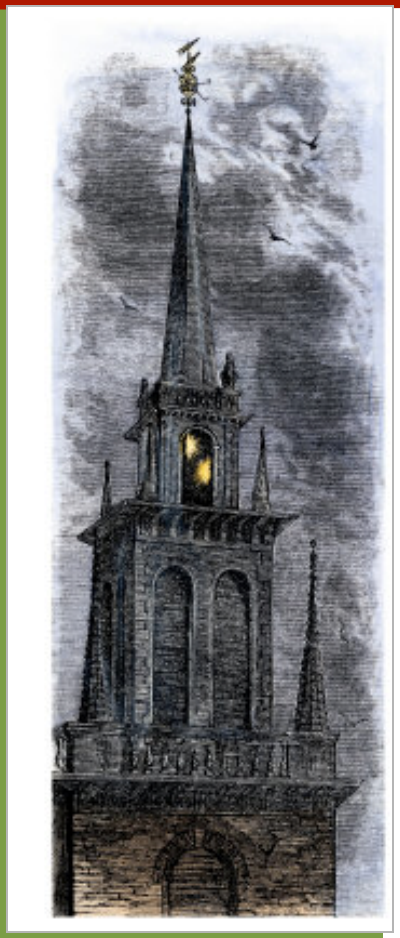
And often I add:

"*At our school, our slogan is 'Connecting People, Information, and Technology in More Valuable Ways.'*"

Rethinking "Information Technologies"

Rethinking "Information Technologies"

Rethinking "Information Technologies"

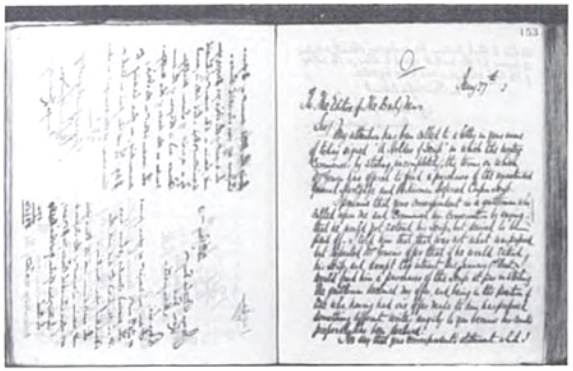


One if by land and two if by sea…

The Interconnection of Technologies: Managing correspondence

Letterpress and letterpress book, late 19th c.

2.1 A letter press in action. *(Catalogue for Yawman and Erbe, 1905. Hagley Museum and Library.)*



2.2 An open letter press book. *(Pennsylvania Railroad Collection, Hagley Museum*

Wooten desk

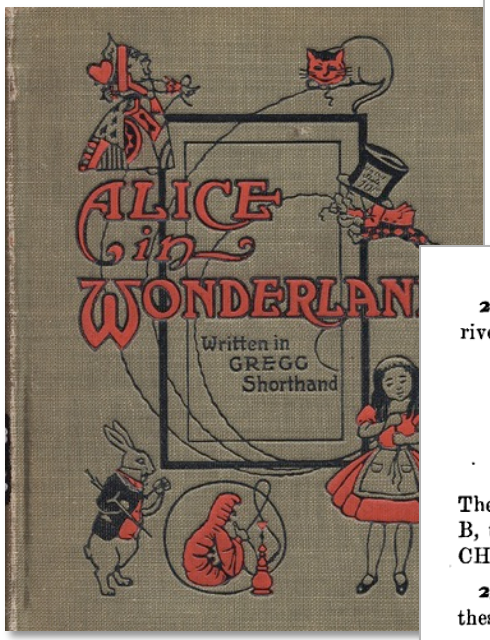
Mercantile Office, 1876

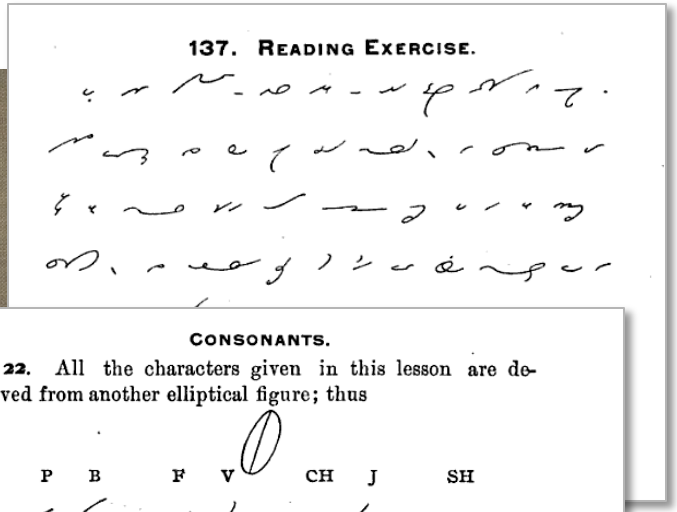
The Interconnection of Technologies: Managing correspondence

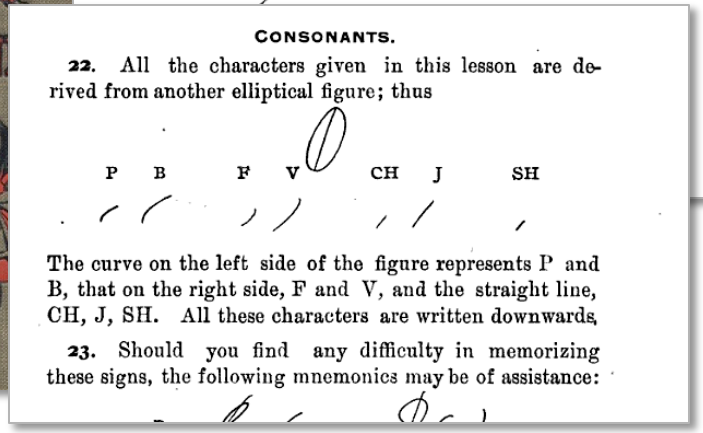
The Pacific Monthly, advertising section, March 1904 scanned by Lincoln Cushing
For more items on Library Culture, see www.docspopuli.org

The Interconnection of Technologies: Managing correspondence

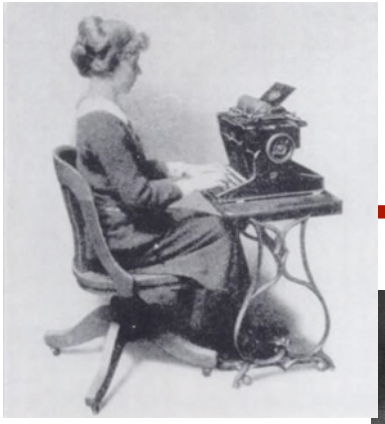
New systems of communication, internal and external



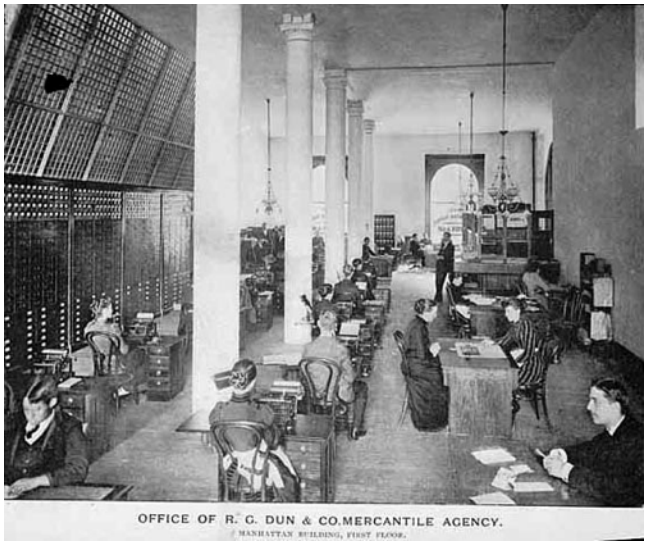




The Social Setting of Technologies: Managing correspondence



The Feminization of the Office Work Force



OFFICE OF R. G. DUN & CO. MERCANTILE AGENCY.
MANHATTAN BUILDING, FIRST FLOOR.

Fig. 1.1. Work in one of many filing areas at Metropolitan Life Insurance Company.

for Tuesday

Week 2

24 Jan: Playing With Words: "Technology," "Platform," and Other "Keywords"

Reading

- Marx, Leo. 2010. "*Technology*: The Emergence of a Hazardous Concept," *Technology & Culture* 51(3):561-577.
- Gillespie, Tarleton. 2010. "The Politics of 'Platforms,'" *New Media & Society* 12(3): 347-364.

Background

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- Jones, William. 2010, "No Knowledge but through information" 15(9-6).
- Rosenberg, Daniel. 2012. "Toward a Quantitative History of Data," Paper Presented at the American Historical Association Meetings, Chicago. [author's draft; available through bspace]
- Tuomi, Ilkka. 1999. "Data is More Than Knowledge: Implications of the Reversed Knowledge Hierarchy for Knowledge Management and Organizational Memory," *Journal of Management Information Systems* 16(3): 103-117.

Zeitgeist

- Kelly, Kevin. 2010. *What Technology Wants.* New York: Viking.
- Duguid, Paul. 2011. "Spin Cycle" (Review of Tim Wu, *The Master Switch*, & Kevin Kelly, *What Technology Wants. Nation*, January 10/17