Anthropology: social networking twitter

Anthropology: Social Networking/Twitter

Me and Twitter of the of the Concerned February 6, Me and Twitter Since the dawn of the Internet, the social networking sites have been there. Over the past ten years, the concept of social networking has metamorphosed into a full-fledged sub-culture, having its own norms and ethos, which differentiate it within the main culture of which it is a part of. Developments in communication and information technology have facilitated a new way, exploiting which, millions of individuals and groups can interact and communicate. In that context, I am also a part of the Twitter subculture. Though I am an avid social networker at Twitter, sometimes I wonder as to what attracted me to this trend to begin with. The essential reason is that in a very cliched way, I am essentially a social animal who feels good and safe to somehow have ones friends and loved ones real close and accessible. Besides I also like gossip and the general fiction that life involves. The irony is that modern social networks and relations are very fluid and mobile, which get dispersed and scattered over time. No matter have likeminded the members in a group are or how similar the interests they share, the relationships dilute or disperse over time, may be owing to a job change, marriage or a plethora of other reasons. It is this unavoidable fluidity of the contemporary culture that is nudging individuals like me to look for more stable, lasting and accessible subcultures. So my participation at Twitter allows me to be in contact with the people I like and love, in a more stable and lasting way, alleviating all the fears, uncertainties and fluidity associated with the conventional social networks. In a way, the virtual world is more safe, secure and stable as compared to the real world. In the contemporary

culture, I feel that my relationships are constrained by a variety of factors. However, Twitter does away with such constraints and allows me to be a part of a larger network, while feeling secure and safe about sharing factual and visual information related to me. Off course I am dismayed by the possibility of hangers on and eavesdroppers getting access to my personal information. Yet, privacy settings come as a great help to deal with such insecurities. Twitter allows for a multi-layered social interaction. The visible and outer layer primarily comprises of close friends and relatives. However, I find that as I penetrate through the subsequent layers, the communication becomes less personal, but meanders somewhere into the realm of groups and communities. So, twitter for me is a world within a world which provides an intensely personal world, at the same time allowing me to extend myself into larger local and global trends, concerns and issues. However, I do understand that human relationships are a more of a face to face concept. At least for me! There is no use retaining contacts on twitter, if I do not intend to meet them sometime. At least some of them with whom I am more intimate with. This realization is both heartening and frustrating at the same time. Word Count: 530 (2 pages)