

Brave new world of digital intimacy

[Literature](#), [Books](#)



The article from the New York Times “ Brave New World of Digital Intimacy” by Clive Thompson vividly describes the experience of using Twitter and Facebook. The author pays attention to exploring several theories when discussing the impact of continuous sharing of daily details. The central idea of the article is that online contact is described as ambient awareness. Sociologists and psychologists have been wondering for many years how humanity would be adjusted to the anonymity of city life.

Modern awareness is argued to be a tool which reverses the original conceit of the Internet. From the very beginning Internet was viewed as a place, where it is possible to re-invent and to express one’s identity, but nowadays Internet is claimed to constrain human identity. Social media tools – Twitter and Facebook – offer intimate contact and they are very likely to give the new meanings in the virtual world. Ambient identity is defined as being physically near someone and observing their body language, gestures and sighs.

Parasocial relations are a new form of voyeurism. Finally, weak ties are remote acquaintances that increase problem-solving abilities. (Thompson, 2008) Ambient awareness is incessant online contact and Facebook is, therefore, not the thing in virtual world that offers interaction online. Microblogging has become a boom in the last years and research had to do their best to invent something new to attract customers. Twitter appeared to be one of the most popular new tools.

Twitter is a web-site that gives its users an excellent opportunity to communicate online with their friends. The negative moment is that

messages are limited to 140 characters, similar to mobile-phone messages. Additional services are ability to report where you are traveling and ability to toss quickly on-line stream of videos and pictures. Nevertheless, sociologists claim that people over 30 find an idea of describing blow-by-blow activities a little bit absurd. (Thompson, 2008)

Thompson argues that “ the growth of ambient intimacy can seem like modern narcissism taken to a new, super-metabolic extreme — the ultimate expression of a generation of celebrity-addled youths who believe their every utterance is fascinating and ought to be shared with the world”. (Thompson, 2008) Twitter has become some sort of mania, when people checking and - rechecking their accounts to see two-line updates in their friends' life. However, the popularity of Twitter can be hardly disputed.

Thompson argues that weak ties are a very good thing as they help to expand abilities to solve problems. For example, remote acquaintances are of help in looking for a job for you as they are afield and, at the same time, they are intimate enough to help you out. Many of the Twitter users explicitly use this dynamic for their worth as within ten minutes solution for any problematic issues will be found. Nevertheless, more than half of Twitter and Facebook users argue that ‘ unexpected side-effects of constant self-disclosure’ are present.

After days and weeks the act of checking account several times per day becomes a sort of philosophical act. Users are willing to present their activities and actions throughout the day with accuracy as it is necessary to keep the audience interested. Thompson concludes that in our modern age

of technologies and awareness the only person you know the best is yourself! (Thompson, 2008) Works Cited Thompson, Clive. (2008, September). Brave New World of Digital Intimacy. Available online at <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/09/07/magazine/07awareness-t.html> Accessed October 18, 2008.