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The Other Side of Technology

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Editorial Preface

The first 2006 issue of PsychNology Journal collects contributions from disparate areas of the human relation with technologies, in compliance with the typical multi-disciplinarity of the Journal. Some papers may sound like ethnographic reports from foreign territories to some part of our readership, and will strike with unexpected similarities and insights.

The first contribution, '*Navigating Information Space: Web site design and lessons from the built environment*' is authored by a well known scholar in the area of human-computer interaction and information spaces, David Benyon, who has recently joined the Editorial Board of PsychNology Journal. The paper suggests that territories otherwise distant such as digital and physical places have an activity in common, 'navigation.' This commonality can be exploited by designers of information spaces to liberate the possibility of the medium without forgetting the principles learnt by so many years of experience with the human navigation in physical environments. The paper offers a rich discussion on these principles accompanied by examples from actual applications. It ideally goes back to PNJ issues on Space, Place and Technologies (PNJ 3[1-2]), where the idea of virtual spaces having their spatial coordinates defined by human activity was a central one.

The second contribution comes from Francesca Cilento and Carlo

Galimberti and is entitled '*Stereotypes and Gender Identity in Italian and Chilean Chat Line Rooms*'. Similarly to David Benyon's, this paper also goes back to a previous issue of PsychNology Journal (PNJ 3[3]), where the topic of gender difference in mediated environments was addressed from the perspective of gender gap. Cilento and Galimberti take a slightly different perspective and examine the extent to which gender stereotypes emerge from Italian and Chilean conversations. A peculiarity of this work is the effort of matching the results of quantitative and qualitative analysis, showing that one approach can highlight differences to which the other one may be blind. Another interesting point is the discussion on the use of 'flames' as a socialization device, in which gender seems to play a significant role.

The third contribution is by Francesco Martino and Andrea Spoto, and represents an overview of Social Network Analysis and of the ways in which it can serve the study of mediated interaction. This approach is increasingly used to make sense of the relational patterns experienced in on-line communities where the amount of actors connected to each other is huge and needs to be effectively described and represented in its spatial and temporal unfolding. '*Social Network Analysis: a brief theoretical review and further perspectives in the study of Information Technology*' is able to gently touch the mathematical basis

of the method and to take a future-projected historical perspective on it.

The fourth contribution is entitled '*Radiology Informatics and Work Flow Redesign*' and is authored by Guido Vaccari and Claudio Saccavini. It addresses the use of images in medical practice, and offers another journey in the way in which technical advances and professional practices pursue each other in a continuous reciprocal chase. The extent of this change is well represented by the space occupied by image handling: if in the past radiologists used to walk along the walls of the department, commenting on the photographs hanging there, today they engage in a virtual navigation similar to the one described by David Benyon, with archives from all over the world being accessed and compared via a networked computer.

The possible connections interlacing the themes in this issue are countless, including a possible social network analysis conducted on the different laboratories exchanging radiographic images through the Internet. The issue is closed by '*The Pasion project: Psychologically augmented social interaction over networks*', an invited paper where Cristina Brugnoli, Francesco Morabito, Richard Walker and Fabrizio Davide describe the background, thrust and plan of a EU funded research project on augmenting social presence that involves a large group of European research centres.

Before concluding, we would like to express our infinite gratitude to the anonymous reviewers, prominent scholars

who give a fundamental contribution to the papers' publication but do not receive any direct benefit from this; the editorial assistants who have collaborated to this issue, Marta Nicolosi and Giovanni Petrucci and their patient formatting and reformatting of the files; especially, we would like to thank the authors who decided to disseminate their work and thoughts through our Journal.

Sincerely,
The Editors-in-Chief
Luciano Gamberini,
Anna Spagnolli,
Giuseppe Riva