The Impact of Virtual Communities on Cultural Identity

Radoslav Baltezarevic, Borivoje Baltezarevic,

Piotr Kwiatek and Vesna Baltezarevic

Abstract: The emergence of the Internet and various forms of virtual communities has led to the impact of a new social space on individuals who frequently replace the real world with alternative forms of socializing. In virtual communities, new 'friendships' are easily accepted; however, how this acceptance influences cultural identity has not been investigated. Based on the data collected from 443 respondents in the Republic of Serbia, authors analyze this connexion, as well as how the absorption of others' cultural values is reflected on the local cultural values. The results show that the adoption of others' cultural values diminished the bond with the local community. The present paper adds to the theory of virtual communities by examining the relationship between the acceptance of an unknown person in a virtual community and its effects on cultural identity. This study contributes to the clarification of the impact that virtual networking has on cultural identity.

Keywords: cultural identity, cultural values, individual, virtual community.

Introduction

The way people perceived the world around themselves, until the emergence of the Internet and digital media, depended on their conception of reality based, inter alia, on cultural traditions and folk tales. The Internet restructured the way of organizing social and interest communities and enabled the emergence of new media that combine the potentials of previous media with the intention of creating hybrid social and cultural forms. The contemporary conception of reality is largely influenced by virtual networking. This marks the beginning of a revolution that, as Clay Shirky (2009) states, changes not only what we do and how we do it, but who we are. According to Alexandr Asmolov and Gregory Asmolov, "The idea of a virtual community was initially built around the need to present one's own true identity or, more precisely, personal identity on the network." (Asmolov and Asmolov 2009, 111) However, these new, technologically mediated, forms of social interaction have changed the very way people form groups and the way they exist within them. Communication within virtual community creates new opportunities for people to interact and communicate, facilitating the development of new social relations (Ellison et al. 2014).

In a virtual community, users can interact, exchange ideas, share information, provide social support, do business, direct activities, create art, play games, participate in a political debate, etc. All this is an indicator of the formation of a culture, which is directly opposed to the processes of maintaining the traditional linear culture and the values it represents. Digital media and modern technologies seem to prevail and suppress traditional cultural values and their content.

New technological inventions and the corresponding media stemming from them have become the means of modern identity transformation (Brigs and Berk 2006), because instead of genuine participation in social life, they provide a surrogate of sociality (Fenerback and Thompson 1995, 18). At the same time, the community culture is being transformed into a culture of isolation, within which people do not address real persons, but physically absent persons, represented by the computer screens (Makner 2006, 291).

This paper explores how the acceptance of unknown persons online influences cultural identity and how the absorption of others' cultural values affects the traditional cultural values of virtual community users.

Literature Review

The term 'virtual community' was coined by Rheingold (1993, 5), in the first edition of his book with the same title. As to the very concept of virtual communities, there is no consensus on the underlying phenomenon. For example, Linda Harasim (1993) argues that virtual communities actually belong to pseudo-communities, while Margaret McLaughlin, Kerry Osborne and Christine Smith (1995) hold that virtual communities should be treated as metaphors for communities.

The existence of virtual communities indicates that the Internet is not only the medium through which people access information, but through which they also reach out to other people, in order to talk, exchange opinions and build relationships (Sproull and Faraj 1997). Social networks today are the predominant type of virtual communities. They are based on either a website or a platform that focuses on forming relationships and allowing participants to invite their acquaintances. These are the people coming from different user network environments, such as family, friends, co-workers, and neighbours (Joinson 2008). Such platforms allow their users to "track the actions, beliefs and interests of the larger groups to which they belong." (Lampe, Ellison, and Steinfield 2006, 167)

Since a virtual community allows individuals to break social barriers and facilitates contacts with heterogeneous individuals, it allows for the formation of a virtual group identity. Members of a virtual community establish a group identity and a sense of belonging on the interactive network platform (Blanchard 2007). Further, through consecutive communication and information exchange among members, a bridged social capital is formed (Dixon 2005). "Through

virtual interaction with others, the individual gradually builds personal identity based on these experiences, while the media serve only as an accessible reference framework for the building of collective and personal identities." (Strinati 1995, 239) Interestingly, though, Mirjana Ule notes that "who or what we are, is not so much a matter of personal essence (beliefs, feelings, etc.), but of how we are constructed through a variety of relationships, interactions, etc." (Ule 2000, 249)

Virtual communities, as a product of mass culture, are breaking all intercultural barriers. In other words, as Dwight MacDonald shows, virtual community "mixes and scrambles everything together, producing what could be called homogenized culture." (MacDonald 2005, 42) In this sense, technologically mediated human activity may lead to alienation from nature and typical forms of social interaction. Undoubtedly, we can speak of a change in human nature, in the existing forms of socialization, in mutual interactions, and in understanding the world, a change which happens simultaneously with the process of remodelling the existing personal identity.

The development of virtual relationships and new identities provides increased opportunities for cultural, social and political exchanges on a global level, regardless of geographical locations and time zones. A decade ago, Sherry Turkle noted that new forms of interaction were already challenging "what many people have traditionally called 'identity'; a sense of self is recast in terms of multiple windows and parallel lives" (Turkle 1997, 73), which allows virtual communities' users to establish a connection with different cultures.

In this view, multiculturalism destroys personal perception of local beliefs and traditional cultural values by destroying distinctive traits of the local identity. This way, virtual culture, as a globally oriented culture, shapes the cultural elements of the common way of life of people through the process of globalization that inevitably undermines local cultures. "Therefore, it is perceived as an expression of sweeping and overwhelming that undermines local cultures. The latter, on the other hand, refers to variation and diversity of culture." (KOÇ 2006, 5)

Edmund Jandt (2012, 5) emphasizes that, according to Antonio Damasio, culture functions as a regulator of human life and human identity. He further argues that the development of the brain and human identity is opposite to the indifference of nature and opens the door to the emergence of culture – a radical shift on the evolutionary path and a new basis for the regulation of life, which he calls 'socio-cultural homeostasis.' Alan Fiske (2002, 8) emphasizes that "Culture is a socially constructed constellation consisting of things like practices, competences, ideas, schemes, symbols, values, norms, institutions, constituent rules and modifications of the physical environment."

In times of technological revolution, networked life and technology-mediated communication, there is a need for positioning cultural identity on the varied and plastic platform constructed upon the interrupted continuity of the

former 'solid' character of peoples and cultures, especially in relation to the context of globalization. Interpretation on the notion of identity in the process of globalization points to the question of the use of historical, linguistic and cultural resources in the process of constant formation of identity, not in function of what we are, but what we are aiming for, what we are becoming, how we are presented, and how identity is reflected on the ways we represent ourselves.

According to Douglas Kellner (1992), the question of identity continues to be a problem in the postmodern era; in contemporary society, instead of disappearing, identity suffers a process of reconstruction and redefinition. In this interpretation, identity becomes similar to a game of choice, in which a person radically changes identities at his/her own discretion, which can easily get out of control. Kellner's ambivalence reflects the actual ambivalence of the problem itself. Identity continues to be a 'problem,' as Kellner highlights, and, in the current changing context, influenced by the development of technology (social communities, networked life, the construction of online identity) it is not the same kind of problem as in the modern era, nor is it of the same complexity.

Virtual community has deconstructed the term 'friendship' and pushed it towards insignificance. Network users have ongoing interactions with people from different cultures. Media contribute to the rapid and wide spread of ideas in all cultures because virtual communities allow users to closely interact with other people (Schlegel 2001). The global world and barrier-free communication enable the development of a global identity that gives a sense of belonging to the world culture and allows users to communicate with people from different places through media technology (such as Facebook). Such changes can lead to a reduced innate identity in relation to a hybrid identity, through combining the elements of a local culture with the elements of the global culture (Hermans and Kempen 1998), which can lead to identity confusion (Hermans and Dimaggio 2007). However, regardless of the fact that virtual identities are different from physical identities, studies suggest that virtual identities become parts of physical identity (Boyd 2014). In contrast to this, Jean Baudrillard, in his *Simulacra and Simulation* states that "the society has developed too much of a dependence on the models, maps and representations of life that has caused us to lose touch with the realm of the real." He further claims that we live in a "state of hyperreal." (Baudrillard 1994, 4)

The formation of virtual communities changes the way we see reality and traditionally defined identity (Jones 1995), because globalization "refers to the expansion and intensification of social relations and consciousness across world-time and world-space." (Steger 2009, 15) Globalization as a dialectically dynamic process causes the transformation of a local cultural identity into a cultural identity of diversity, which is increasingly moving away from the local one and adheres to the global world.

Table 1. Terms and Definitions

Term	Definition	Source
Culture	Culture is not simply art, music and literature; it is the total collection of behavioral patterns, values and beliefs that characterize a particular group of people.	Novitz and Willmott 1990, 5
	Culture performs a role of 'identification of otherness.'	Friedman 1996, 72
	Culture as "a learned set of shared perceptions about beliefs, values, and norms."	Lustig and Koester 1993, 42
Cultural identity	The term *cultural identity* refers to an individual's sense of self derived from formal or informal membership in groups that transmit and inculcate knowledge, beliefs, values, attitudes, traditions, and ways of life.	Kim 2001
Cultural identity components	Cultural identity includes at least six commonalities: vocation, class, geography, philosophy, language, and biology.	Beamer and Varner 2005, 5
Unknown persons	People focus on meeting new virtual people and being seen by many people, rather than maintaining their already existing relationships. People from collectivistic cultures utilize social network sites to "maintain close relationships with a small number of ties instead of creating new connections with people."	Rosen, Stefanone, and Lackaff 2010

Radoslav Baltezarevic, Borivoje Baltezarevic, Piotr Kwiatek and Vesna Baltezarevic

Virtual identity	Virtual identity consists of two entities in both real world and the virtual world.	Halperin 2008
	Social networking sites allow users to keep in touch with existing friends and to develop new friendships.	Boyd 2004
Social network weak ties	Weak ties allow users to create and maintain larger, diffuse networks of relationships from which they could potentially draw resources.	Donath and Boyd 2004
	Weak ties provide benefits not available in close ties: information, resources, and novelty, as well as a sense of being 'known' in the larger community. Consequential strangers often act as 'bridges' to new people and groups.	Burt 1992
	Virtual environments provide the possibility of transformation and manipulation of identity.	Vander Valk 2008
Acceptance of unknown people in the virtual community affects the change of cultural identity.	"A person recognizes oneself through the adaptation to the concept of 'we' as a primary form of understanding where one belongs. In this phase, a person accepts the norms, beliefs and experiences of his/her group as a 'proper place of living,' because within the collective security, one escapes from loneliness and from the threat of the unknown world he/she is unable to cope with, after birth."	Golubović 2011, 28

	By communicating with virtual friends, people adopt their beliefs and cultural patterns, which inevitably lead to the reconstruction of their initial identities.	Jensen 2003
Adoption of others' cultural values influences the decrease in connection with the local community.	The use of new media leads to the destruction of cultural identity and the weakening of the intensity of relationships between people in the local community.	Singh 2010
	Internet use, they argued, would replace in-person interaction and long-distance online interaction would replace social interactions in local communities.	Nie 2001

Nadezda Bagdasaryan (2011) highlights that the speed and impact of new media have led to the inability of traditional values to keep pace with the new cultural values produced by new media. The use of new media leads to the destruction of cultural identity and the weakening of the intensity of relationships between people in the local community (Singh 2010), because virtual community users are opting for new ways of interacting with people from different cultures. Thus, virtual culture becomes a new form of common culture characterized by a higher degree of heterogeneity and a lower level of interconnection (Van Dijk 1998). By creating a space for establishing personal contacts within the network, with the flexibility of communication, new media directly influence the development of intercultural connections in a virtual community (Boyd and Ellision 2007; Donath and Boyd 2004) and the creation of a multicultural world formed by the implication of the experiences of those who are able to successfully move from one culture into another (Kim 2001). The transition from the local to the virtual cultural space presupposes a successful process of adaptation, that is, an acquaintance with an unknown cultural environment through the establishment and maintenance of a relatively stable, reciprocal and functional relationship with the environment (Gudykunst 2003).

This paper seeks to explore how the acceptance of unknown persons online influences cultural identity and how the absorption of others' cultural values is reflected in the traditional cultural values of virtual community users.

Radoslav Baltezarevic, Borivoje Baltezarevic, Piotr Kwiatek and Vesna Baltezarevic

Research Objectives

This article reports on a survey conducted to determine whether the virtual community acceptance of unknown persons as 'friends' influences cultural identity and how the adoption of others' cultural values in such a community is reflected in the connection with the local community. The objectives of this study are twofold:

  i. To test whether the acceptance of unknown persons in the virtual community affects the cultural identity of the respondents.

  ii. To test whether other cultural values that respondents adopt from virtual friends contribute to a decreased connectivity with the primary community.

By analyzing existing theoretical considerations on the consequences of activities within virtual communities on the traditional identity of their users, the following hypotheses have been advanced:

H1: Acceptance of unknown people in the virtual community determines/is associated with a change in cultural identity.

H2: Adoption of others' cultural values is associated with a decrease in connection with the local community.

Sample and Data Collection

The questionnaire with closed-type questions was composed of two parts. In the first part, questions were asked regarding the demographic profile of the respondents (gender, age and level of education). The second part of the questionnaire requested the respondents to answer closed-ended questions related to their behaviour on various virtual social networks, where respondents were offered answers in reference to the Likert scale of attitudes, anchored: 1. Strongly disagree, 2. Disagree, 3. Neither agree nor disagree, 4. Agree 5. Strongly agree.

The research was carried out by the authors through a specially prepared questionnaire sent to 556 addresses of employees and students at a private university based in Belgrade (Republic of Serbia). Data was collected from June 2017 to January 2018. A total of 443 fully filled questionnaires were selected for further research. The IBM Statistical Package for Social Science (IBM SPSS 2015) was used to analyse the data collected from the survey. Data was analysed using descriptive statistic, chi-square test and measures of association.

Table 2. Demographic Profile of the Respondents (N = 443)

Demographic		n	%
Gender			
	Male	201	45.4

	Female	242	54.6
Age			
	<25	115	26.0
	26-35	128	28.9
	36-45	135	30.5
	46-55	43	9.7
	56-65	22	5.0
Education			
	High school	73	16.5
	Student	69	15.6
	Bachelor	166	37.5
	Master/Doctorate	135	30.5
Number of contacts			
	less than 100	36	8.1
	101-300	95	21.4
	301-500	85	19.2
	501 and more	227	51.2
Daily use of social media			
	less than 1 hour	59	13.3
	1-3 hours	205	46.3
	3-6 hours	98	22.1
	more than 6 hours	81	18.3

Table 2 shows descriptive demographics of the respondents. More female (54.6%) than male (45.4%) respondents are to be found, mostly in the 36-45 years of age group (30.5%), followed by respondents aged 26-35 years (28.9%) and by those less than 25 years of age (26.0%). The share of respondents above 45 years of age was 14.7%. Most of respondents had a university degree (37.5%), followed by the groups of respondents holding Master or Doctorate degrees (30.5%). The remaining groups are formed by respondents with completed secondary education (16.5%) and students (15.6%). Most respondents have 501 and more contacts (51.2%), followed by the groups with 101-300 contacts (21.4%), 301-500 (19.2%) and less than 100 (8.1%).

Most respondents use social media for 1-3 hours daily (46.3%), followed by those who spend 3-6 hours on social media (22.1%), more than 6 hours (18.3%) and less than one hour (13.3%).

Results and Discussion

(i) *Acceptance of unknown people in the virtual community determines/is associated with a change in cultural identity.*

Table 3. The attitude of the respondents towards the claim that virtual community participants accept unknown persons as friends

Scale position	n	%
Strongly disagree	18	4.1
Disagree	231	52.1
Neither agree nor disagree	127	28.7
Agree	55	12.4
Strongly agree	12	2.7
Total	443	100.0

Table 3 indicates that the highest percentage of respondents disagree that unknown persons should be accepted (52.1%), the next in percentage are those who do not have a fixed attitude (28.7%), followed by those who agree with accepting of unknown persons (12.4%), while the smallest percentage of respondents belongs to those who strongly disagree (4.1%) and those who strongly agree (2.7%).

Table 4. The attitude of the respondents towards the claim that virtual community affects the identity of its users

Scale position	N	%
Strongly disagree	25	5.6
Disagree	185	41.8
Neither agree nor disagree	103	23.3
Agree	117	26.4
Strongly agree	13	2.9
Total	443	100.0

Table 4 indicates that the majority of respondents (41.8%) disagree that virtual community affects identity, followed by those who agree that networks affect identity (26.4%), and those who do not have a fixed attitude (23.3%), while the smallest percentage of respondents belongs to those who strongly disagree (5.6%), and strongly agree (2.9%).

A chi-square test was performed to verify the existence of a relationship between the attitude towards acceptance of unknown persons and the attitude towards changing of cultural identity. The relationship between these variables was significant, $\chi^2(16, 443) = 87.053$, $p<0.05$. We subsequently tested the strength of the relationship between focal variables using gamma measure of association. The association is positive, moderate and significant ($G=.416$, $p<0.05$), which means that the more respondents agree with the view that virtual community participants accept unknown persons, the more they support the view that online cultural identity is changing. Furthermore, because gamma is a Proportional Reduction in Error type of measure, it can be concluded that

knowing the level of unknown person's acceptance improves the prediction of identity change by 41.6%.

(ii) Adoption of others' cultural values is associated with a decrease in connection with the local community.

Table 5. The attitude of respondents towards the claim that others' cultural values are being accepted within virtual community

Scale position	n	%
Strongly disagree	40	9.0
Disagree	47	10.6
Neither agree nor disagree	99	22.3
Agree	204	46.0
Strongly agree	53	12.0
Total	443	100.0

Table 5 indicates that the majority of respondents (46.0%) agree that others' cultural values are accepted within the network, with 22.3% without a fixed attitude, followed by a number of respondents who strongly agree (12.0%), who disagree (10.06%), while the fewest responses belong to those who strongly disagree (9.0%).

Table 6. The attitude of respondents towards the claim that the acceptance of others' cultural values influences the decrease of their connection with the local community.

Scale position	N	%
Strongly disagree	25	5.6
Disagree	60	13.5
Neither agree nor disagree	107	24.2
Agree	215	48.5
Strongly agree	36	8.1
Total	443	100.0

Table 6 indicates that the highest number of respondents (48.5%) agree that the acceptance of others' cultural values leads to a decrease in the connection with the local community, while 24.2% do not have a fixed attitude, followed by those who disagree (13.5%), those who strongly agree (8.1%), while the smallest percentage of respondents strongly disagree (5.6%).

A chi-square test was performed to verify the existence of a relationship between the attitude towards accepting others' cultural values and the attitude towards the connection with the local community. The relationship between these variables was significant, $\chi^2(16, 443) = 410.949$, $p<0.05$. We subsequently tested the strength of the relationship between focal variables using gamma

measure of association. We found a strong and positive association (G=.714, p<0.05), which means that the more respondents agree with the view that others' values are accepted, the larger is the decrease in connection with the local community. Again, because of PRE property of gamma measure, we can conclude that knowing the level of others' values acceptance improves a perceived decrease in connection with the local community by 71.4%.

Conclusion

Our study assumed two main objectives: to investigate the respondents' attitude on whether the acceptance of unknown persons in the virtual community affects cultural identity and to investigate the attitude on whether the others' cultural values that respondents adopt within a virtual community contribute to a decreased connection with the local community.

The media serve as a platform for building collective and personal identities that, due to the globalization process, are becoming uniform. Previous research confirmed the assumption that the acceptance of unknown persons online creates new opportunities for interaction and communication of people, facilitating the development of new social responsibilities (Ellison et al. 2014).

We conclude that our first hypothesis was confirmed because the results of the research demonstrated that there exists a connection between the attitudes about the acceptance of unknown persons within the virtual community and the attitudes about the change of cultural identity, and that this connection is moderate and positive. We established that the more respondents approved of other virtual network users' acceptance of unknown persons in the virtual community, the stronger was their agreement with the attitude that online cultural identity is changing. Our second hypothesis was confirmed, as well, because the results demonstrated that the identity transformation resulting from the acceptance of others' cultural values leads to a decreased intensity of social relations among people in a local community (Singh 2010).

The second hypothesis was also confirmed because we established that there exists a link between the attitudes towards adopting others' cultural values and the attitudes towards a decreased connection with the local community, and that this connection is strong and positive. We concluded that the more the respondents agree with the attitude that participants in the virtual community accept others' cultural values, the stronger is their agreement with the attitude that the intensity of relations between people in the local community is decreasing.

Limitations and Future Research

Since the data used in this research was collected based on a convenience sample, the reader should be cautious in making generalizations. The authors would like

to encourage other researchers to further investigate the dynamics of virtual communities with reference to the impact on cultural identity.

References

Asmolov, Alexandr G., and Gregory A. Asmolov. 2009. **"**From We-Media to I-Media: Identity Transformations in the Virtual World." *Psychology in Russia: State of the Art* 2009:101-122. http://www.psychologyinrussia.com/ volumes/pdf/2009/05_2009_asmo lovi.pdf. Accessed 12.01.2018.

Bagdasaryn, Nadezda G. 2011. "Intercultural Communication in the Context of New Media." http://www.itas.fzk.de/eng/esociety/preprints/ mediaculture/Bagdasaryan.pdf. Accessed 14.04.2018.

Baudrillard, Jean. 1994. *Simulacra and Simulation*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Beamer, Linda and Iris Varner. 2005. *Intercultural Communication in the Global Workplace* (3ʳᵈ ed). Boston: McGraw Hill/Irwin.

Blanchard, Anita L. 2007. "Developing a Sense of Virtual Community Measure." *Cyber Psychology & Behavior* 10 (6): 827-830.

Boyd, Danah Michele. 2004. "Friendster and Publicly Articulated Social Networking." In *CHI '04 Extended Abstracts on Human Factors in Computing Systems,* edited by Elizabeth Erickson-Dykstra and Manfred Tscheligi**,** 1279-1282. New York, NY: CHI '04. ACM.

———. 2014. *It's Complicated: The Social Lives of Networked Teens.* New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Boyd, Danah Michele and Nicole B. Ellison. 2007. "Social Network Sites: Definition, History, and Scholarship." *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication* 13 (1): 210-230.

Brigs, Asa and Peter Berk. 2006. *Social History of the Media*. Belgrade: Clio.

Burt, Ronald *S. 1992. Structural Holes: The Social Structure of Competition.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Dixon, Christopher M. 2005. "Strength of Weak Ties." In *Theories of Information Behaviour,* edited by Karen Fisher, Sanda Erdelez and Lynne Mckechnie, 344-348. *Medford,* NJ: Information Today.

Donath, Judith and Michele Boyd Danah. 2004. "Public Displays of Connection." *BT Technology Journal* 22(4): 71-82.

Ellison, Nikole B, Jessica Vitak, Rebecca Gray, and Ciiff Lampe. 2014. "Cultivating Social Resources on Social Network Sites: Facebook Relationship Maintenance Behaviours and their Role in Social Capital Processes." *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication* 19 (4): 855-870.

Fenerback, Jan and Brad Thompson. 1995. "Virtual Communities: Abort, Retry, Failure?" Originally presented as "Computer Mediated Communication and

the American Collectivity: The Dimensions of a Community within Cyberspace" at the annual meeting of the International Communication Association, Albuquerque, New Mexico. http://www.well.com/user/hlr/texts /VCcivil.html. Accessed 05.02.2018.

Fiske, Alan Page. 2002. "Using Individualism and Collectivism to Compare Cultures – A Critique of the Validity and Measurement of the Constructs: Comment on Oyserman et al." *Psychological Bulletin* 128 (1): 78-88.

Friedman, Jonathan. 1996. *Cultural Identity & Global Process*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Gudykunst, William B. 2003. *Cross-Cultural and Intercultural Communication.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Golubović, Zagorka. 2011. "An Anthropological Conceptualisation of Identity." *Synthesis Philosophica* 51(1): 25-43.

Halperin, Ruth and James Backhouse. 2008. "A Road Map for Research on Identity in the Information Society." *Identity of the Information Society Journal* 1(1): 71-87.

Harasim, Linda. 1993. "Networlds: Networks as Social Space." In *Global Networks: Computers and International Communication,* edited by Linda M. Harasim, 2-15. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Hermans, Hubert J.M. and Harry J.G. Kempen. 1998. "Moving Cultures: The Perilous Problems of Cultural Dichotomies in a Globalizing Society." *American Psychologist* 53: 1111-1120.

Hermans, Hubert J.M. and Giancarlo Dimaggio. 2007. "Self, Identity, and Globalization in Times of Uncertainty: A Dialogical Analysis." *Review of General Psychology* 11: 31-61.

IBM Corp. 2015. *IBM SPSS Statistics for Windows, Version 23.0.* Armonk, NY: IBM Corp.

Jandt, Fred Edmund. 2012. *An Introduction to Intercultural Communication: Identities in a Global Community.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Jensen, Lene Arnett. 2003. "Coming of Age in a Multicultural World: Globalization and Adolescent Cultural Identity Formation." *Applied Developmental Science* 7: 188-195.

Joinson, Adam N. 2008. "Looking at, Looking up or Keeping up with People? Motives and Uses of Facebook." In *Proceedings of CHI 2008,* edited by Mary Czerwinski and Arnie Lund, 1027-1036. New York: ACM.

Jones, Steven G., ed. 1995. *Cybersociety: Computer-Mediated Communication and Community*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Kellner, Douglas. 1992. "Popular Culture and the Construction of Postmodern Identities." In *Modernity and Identity,* edited by Lash Scott and Jonathan Friedman, 141-177. Cambridge: Blackwell.

Kim, Young Yun. 2001. *Becoming Intercultural: An Integrative Theory of Communication and Crosscultural Adaptation*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

KOÇ, Mustafa. 2006. "Cultural Identity Crisis in the Age of Globalization and Technology." *The Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology – TOJET* 5(1): 37-43.

Lampe, Cliff, Nicole Ellison, and Charles Steinfield. 2006. "A Face (book) in the Crowd: Social Searching vs. Social Browsing." In *Proceedings of ACM Special Interest Group on Computer-Supported Cooperative Work*, edited by Pamela Hinds and Martin Delesicia, 167-170. New York: ACM Press.

Lustig, Myron W. and Jelene Koester. 1993. *Intercultural Competence: Interpersonal Communication across Cultures.* New York: HarperCollins.

MacDonald, Dwight. 2005. "A Theory of Mass Culture." In *Popular Culture*: *A Reader*, edited by Raiford Guins and Omayra Zaragoza Crus, 39-47. London: Sage Publications Ltd.

McLaughlin, Margaret L., Kerry K. Osborne, and Christine B. Smith. 1995. "Standards of Conduct on Usenet." In *Cybersociety*: *Computer Mediated Communication and Community,* edited by Steven Jones, 90-111. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Makner, Brajan. 2006. "Technology: New Technologies and Media." In *Introduction to Media Studies,* edited by Adam Brigs and Pol Kobli, 275-295. Belgrade: Clio.

Nie, Norman H. 2001. "Sociability, Interpersonal Relations, and the Internet."*American Behavioral Scientist* 45: 420-435.

Novitz, David and Brett Willmott, eds. 1990. *Culture and Identity in New Zealand.* Wellington: GP Books.

Rosen, Devan, Michael A. Stefanone, and Derek Lackaff. 2010. "Online and Offline Social Networks: Investigating Culturally-Specific Behavior and Satisfaction." In *Proceedings of the 43rdHawaii International Conference on System Sciences*, edited by Ralph H. Spraque, 3019-3029. New Brunswick: Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, Inc. (IEEE).

Schlegel, Alice. 2001. "The Global Spread of Adolescent Culture." In *Negotiating Adolescence in Times of Social Change,* edited by Lisa J. Crockett and Rainer K. Silbereisen, 63-86. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Shirky, Clay. 2009. *Here Comes Everybody: The Power of Organizing without Organizations*. New York: Penguin Press HC. Penguin Books; Reprint edition (February 24, 2009).

Singh, CharuLata. 2010. New Media and Cultural Identity. *China Media Research* 6(1): 86-90.

Sproull, Lee and Samer Faraj. 1997. "Atheism, Sex and Databases: The Net as a Social Technology." In *Culture of the Internet,* edited by Sara Kiesler, 35-51. *Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.*

Steger, Manfred B. 2009. *Globalization: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University.

Strinati, Dominic. 1995. *An Introduction to Theories of Popular Culture*. London, New York: Routledge.

Rheingold, Howard. 1993. *The Virtual Community: Homesteading on the Electronic Frontier.* Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley.

Turkle, Sherry. 1997. "Multiple Subjectivity and Virtual Community at the End of the Freudian Century." *Sociological Inquiry* 67(1): 72-84.

Ule, Mirjana. 2000. *Sodobneidentitete: v vrtincudiskurzov* (Modern Identities: in the Whirl of Discourse). Ljubljana: Znanstveno in publicističnosredišče.

Van Dijk, Jan. 1998. "The Reality of Virtual Communities." *Trends in Communication* 1(1): 39-63.

Vander Valk, Frank. 2008. "Identity, Power, and Representation in Virtual Environments." *Journal of Online Learning and Teaching* 4(2): 47-79.