The evolving TecfaMOO Book - Part I: Concepts

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VERY Rough and quite empty Draft! At early this stage, actual writing is "the crime" of D.S. and has not yet been approved or modified by the co-authors. Sorry for spelling and grammar !

The main purpose of "book" is to look at a certain number of "interesting" topics. Note that this "book" is not meant to be a finished product, but rather a collection of thoughts, observations that can be reused in the future as *resource book* for everybody wanting to build a MOO or looking for source materials for publications. Note that screen dumps from various MOO may have changed. They are here to illustrate principles.

In this "evolving book" we also state the initial mission of this MOO as related to our research[1] in computer mediated communication[2], to its use as communication tool for our diploma in educational technology[3] and to student projects in the STAF-14[4] course.

This book can bee seen as complement to TECFA's WWW page on educational MUDs[5].

The **TECFA**MOO is a text-based virtual reality[6]. It is a Virtual Space for Educational Technology, Education, Research and Life at TECFA, School of Psychology and Education, University of Geneva, Switzerland.

[1] http://tecfa.unige.ch/tecfa/tecfa-research/CMC/CMC-overview.html
[2] http://www.rpi.edu/Internet/Guides/decemj/icmc/top.html
[3] http://tecfa.unige.ch/tecfa/tecfa-teaching/teaching-overview.html#postgrad
[4] http://tecfa.unige.ch/tecfa/tecfa-teaching/staf14/staf14-overview.html
[5] http://tecfa.unige.ch/edu-comp/WWW-VL/eduVR-page.html
[6] http://tecfa.unige.ch/edu-comp/WWW-VL/eduVR-page.html

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Chapter 1

Introduction

> "Cyberspace. Interactive Television. Networked Multimedia. The Great Convergence. The Information Superhighway. The National Information Infrastructure. These are all names for the same thing: a huge network connecting people to other people using computers. Billions of dollars are being invested to develop this connectivity, ignoring the experience already available from the on-line industry. Cyberspace is the next important telecommunications paradigm: many-to-many communications. [...]" ([Farmer et al., 1994, Abstract]).

What the authors of this quote will argue later in their article is that the key issues of Cyberspace are not things like "Video on Demand", "3-D high-resolution VR", but simply the fact, that most people *don't want to connect to machines, but to other people.* First and foremost, Cyberspace is about many-to-many communications, about virtual communities. We can do that today!

> Philosophers and postmodernist critics discuss the way humans communicate, engineers and computer systems designers create ever- integrable networking capabilities and work to improve human- computer interfaces, but at the crossroads, people are playing games. While the philosophers and engineers sleep, the MUDers are at their computers, hour after hour, playing in the cyberspace. In Multiple-User Dungeons/Dimensions (MUDs), text-based virtual realities accessible via Internet, thousands of people share fantasy space, or "live" electronically. They walk and talk, build and destroy, hug and have sex while sitting at isolated computer terminals scattered throughout the world. ([Young, 1994, Opening Screen]).

This quote from a literary critique (VERIFY THAT!!!) nicely describes the phenomenon of MUDDING from a social point of view. We add to that:

An increasing amount of people do very productive work with that new medium.

Several publications are now available discussing the "serious" aspects of MUDing or MOOing for work support: E.g. [Bruckman et Resnick, 1993], [Curtis et Nichols, 1993], [Dieberger et Tromp, 1993], [Evard, 1993], [Hand, 1994], [Henstell, 1993], [Masinter et Ostrom, 1993], [McDonough, 1995], [Roush, 1993]. Others stress its value for education: [Ackermann, 1994], [Fanderclai, 1995], [Hall, 1994], [KORT, b], [KORT, a], [KORT, c]. .... and more could be cited [DO THAT!!!].

1.1 The birth of TECFAMOO

The **TECFAMOO** project has been started as a small informal project in the fall of 1994. Currently we have been using MOO technology as CMC tool for our own teaching and research. Since April 1st 1995 our MOO has become the main technical vector in an effort to create a virtual space for European researchers and practitioners in Educational Technology. This project is supported partly by the European VMDL ("Virtual Mobility and Distance Learning" project. MOO technology also plays a major role in three European 4th framework bids (LEARN-NETT, European University Network for Trainers, VORTEX, Distributed European Research Laboratories EUCOSITY, An European Collaborative Tele-University)

Since April 24 (!) the **TECFAMOO** has an experimental World-Wide Web interface allowing to take increased benefits from both technologies. This latest development will increase our commitment to MOO technology

TECFAMOO is largely an international project. Its main contributors are the authors of this report.

1.2 A List of "Questions"

Creation of **TECFAMOO** has been started in fall 1994 without precise purpose. It seemed to us that MOO technology had a promise for several purposes and and it seemed appropriate to have a MOO handy that could be used whenever needed. Since TECFA's mission is research and education in Educational Technology such an "exploratory stance" could easily justify the investment needed.

What could we use our MOO for ?

- The MOO as internal communication tool. See for instance [Evard, 1993].

- Support for international exchange Research and Development: A project (see 4.1.2) on using **TECFAMOO** for various research groups in Education Technology has started in April 95.

  - Virtual Cafes, i.e. place where people from various fields can meet in an informal way.
  - Collaborative work

- Education
  - Tutorial support for semi-distance class-room teaching: This item is of interest for our diploma in educational technology.
  - Tutorial support for distance teaching
  - Environments for "Just-in-Time-Open Learning", e.g. resource centers.
  - Educational Environments (Learning by doing)

- The MOO as information tool
  - A Spatial Integrator for Information Retrieval and Exchange: This becomes a very "hot" topic for "webbed" MOOs. See for instance one of Dieberger's[1] articles (e.g. [Dieberger et Tromp, 1993], [Dieberger, 1994a] and [Dieberger, 1994b]) for a general discussion of "spatial" hyper media.
  - "Exhibition of activities", related to the previous item this means that organizations can build virtual information centers on the MOO.

- Interesting other issues
  - Dynamics of interactions in a virtual space
  - Social and Political issues in virtual worlds
  - The Mud as a new form of literature

[... more to come]

1.3 This is *not* an article!

As stated in the abstract, this report is not meant to be an "article" but rather a collection of thoughts, observations that can be reused in the future. Note that screen dumps from various MOO may have changed and postings to various MOO mailing lists may have disappeared. They are here to illustrate principles.

We took the liberty to quote in length descriptions, postings and so forth found in various public MOOs. We feel that those quotes illustrate the richness of text-based virtual realities and they constitute an an important source for discussing or building up "serious" MOOs. Readers, please note that some of those quotes do not come from "polished" articles and they have to be interpreted as contributions to on-going discussions.

Quotations allow to find the original. Excerpts from mailing lists use the following syntax: ¡MOO mailing list¿@¡name of the MOO¿ (article number, date).

[1] http://www.gatech.edu/lcc/idt/Faculty/andreas_dieberger/A.Dieberger.home.html

Chapter 2

MOOs and other VR and CSCW

2.1 What is needed for a Cyberspace?

Without doubt, future Cyberspaces will go beyond the technical abilities of todays low-band-with and mostly text-based MUDs and related technologies. But, consider this early statement by by Chip Morningstar and F. Randall Farmer ([Morningstar et Farmer, 1990]), main contributors to the Lucasfilm Habitat [1] project started in 1985 and thriving today in Japan as "Fujitsu Habitat":

> The essential lesson that we have abstracted from our experiences with Habitat is that a cyberspace is defined more by the interactions among the actors

[1] "Lucasfilm's Habitat project was arguably one of the first attempts to create a very large scale commercial multi-user virtual environment. A far cry from many laboratory research efforts based on sophisticated interface hardware and tens of thousands of dollars per user of dedicated compute power, Habitat is built on top of an ordinary commercial online service and uses an inexpensive & some would say toy & home computer to support user interaction. In spite of these somewhat plebeian underpinnings, Habitat is ambitious in its scope. The system we developed can support a population of thousands of users in a single shared cyberspace. Habitat presents its users with a real-time animated view into an online simulated world in which users can communicate, play games, go on adventures, fall in love, get married, get divorced, start businesses, found religions, wage wars, protest against them, and experiment with self- government." ([Morningstar et Farmer, 1990]). Note that the front end home computers used were Commodore C64 models.

"Habitat is a graphical many-user virtual online environment, a make-believe world that people enter using home computers connected via telephones and packet nets to a centralized host running on a commercial online information service. It was originally available under the name Club Caribe through the Commodore 64-only QuantumLink service. It is currently thriving in Japan as Fujitsu Habitat on the NIFtyServe service. Efforts are underway to port the Fujitsu version of Habitat to America on PCs and Macs for Christmas of 1994." ([Farmer et al., 1994, lines 141ff.])

> within it than by the technology with which it is implemented. While we find much of the work presently being done on elaborate interface technologies & DataGloves, head-mounted displays, special-purpose rendering engines, and so on & both exciting and promising, the almost mystical euphoria that currently seems to surround all this hardware is, in our opinion, both excessive and somewhat misplaced. We can't help having a nagging sense that it's all a bit of a distraction from the really pressing issues. At the core of our vision is the idea that cyberspace is necessarily a multiple-participant environment. It seems to us that the things that are important to the inhabitants of such an environment are the capabilities available to them, the characteristics of the other people they encounter there, and the ways these various participants can affect one another. Beyond a foundation set of communications capabilities, the technology used to present this environment to its participants, while sexy and interesting, is a peripheral concern.

Similar arguments can be heard in the MOO community. They all can be summarized by the following statement:

We can build effective interactive many-user Cyberspaces today

People feel a strong need to talk to people on the Internet *while* retrieving and uploading information, and the MOOs offer one todays best "many users space" for that.

2.2 MOOs vs. other CSCW tools

Other CSCW[2] tools such as the popular CUSEME or more sophisticated ones such as SUN's "ShowME" do offer advantages for small group work. They have voice and video support. Also, most tools offer shared white boards on which people can draw. Now there are certainly situations where such tools are needed. Voice support is good for people who can't type, video support is interesting for non-verbal communication [3] and being able to draw things improves solving a interesting class of problems. Note that the Jupiter system (Xerox's multi-media MOO extension, REF !!!) does add a white board. For most academic cooperative work, all those tools are nice, but not a necessity. Tools like CUSEME can be quite easily installed, but more powerful tools are expensive and/or difficult to install. They are appropriate for tightly knit working groups that do have the necessary equipment. On the other hand MOO clients are free and easy to install.

In addition we always should be aware of the bandwidth problem. Despite recent fiber optics technology, bandwidth always will be a scarce resource. MOOs (and its successors) should be open to take advantage of that. Let us also note that for design reasons, many-user virtual worlds still should be based primarily on objects that represent textual content.

[2] http://www.tft.tele.no/cscw/

[3] Note however, that non-verbal communication can be simulated quite efficiently in a MOO

Language will remain the primary vehicle for communication and information despite all the recent multi-media hype. [More and better stuff needed here].

2.3 What is great about the MOO

One of the main advantages of the MOO stem actually from their reduced band-width, i.e. texts. A MOO connection is non-intrusive. One can still do other work while interacting on the MOO. Since people have to type, no transcripts are needed to store interactions (practically all MOO clients do allow logging, and some MOO artifacts, e.g. "VCRs" can tape conversations). Furthermore, text-based interactions allow somebody to have several simultaneous conversation without overload after a few hours of getting used to it. One can talk, whisper, page, show, radio, mail, post and more all at the same time. Somebody mastering those basic communication commands is very efficient in getting a lot of work done at the same time. Now try that with 5 real people in your office, 3 telephone calls, 2 CUSEME sessions, a few open mail folders on your screen and more ....

One question to be answered honestly is of course: Do we really need synchronous communication in order to be productive at work? In this case, is is not more efficient to use email for person to person communication, Usenet news or mailing-lists for group communication and the Web for putting up information? Delayed communication offers the advantage that people have time to think, to structure before they send out messages. The answer [add details!!!] is that synchronous communication is more efficient in many cases.

Of course, efficiency is not everything: "people want to connect with people, not with letters or papers from people". This is one of reasons why people go to conferences after all.

> " "It's not the shock of recognition," a Wired magazine reporter wrote after experiencing MUD, "it's the shock of communication. The organic sensation that you're connected to people evaporates from the printed page" (Quittner, 93) but is alive on MUD. This novel form of communication appeals to a basic desire to connect directly with others. There is no other medium that allows so many people to interact remotely in a common 'space.' But if merely interaction was the goal, why would people choose this mode of personal gathering over face-to-face encounters? The answer lies in looking at how this new interaction is structured – its MEDIUM (the computer), FORM OF LANGUAGE, and CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK – to see why networking on MUDs forms a new type of community: one which allows people to negotiate a strong sense of self and individuality while participating in public space." ([Young, 1994, lines 163ff.]).

Summing up, the MOO is a new medium that in some aspects outperforms other modes of communication and in addition it is *the* new market place.

2.4 What is really missing?

The biggest problem in traditional MUDs were in our opinion the interfaces to large structured or unstructured text. Conceived a long the same lines as "Unix-style man pages" or files sitting in some directory, larger text was hard to read while having simultaneous discussion. Information was sometimes hard to find and most important: the MOO was cut from the rest of the world. A few in-MOO solutions were to build "books", "tutorial rooms", menu-based "news-papers" and such which already provided users with friendlier interfaces. Also, gopher and www slates allowed to access those popular Internet services via a simple line browser. Despite their usefulness, those tools still put unnecessary strain on todays average professional users (who do have a networked computer on their desk). The emerging WWW-MOO interfaces do handle those problems very well. The user can concentrate on communication in the MOO client and on reading and inspecting objects via the WWW client.

Other problems are related to the fact that MOOs were designed for enthusiasts and not for casual users. This is no issue for social MUDs, but it is for "serious MUDs" who do not want to exclude people by their ability or will to cope with the help system and remembering of dozens of commands. One big problem is editing. Todays users certainly don't want to play around with the moo note editor. This is a problem that could be easily solved via better clients. Indeed, the MOO allows shipping editing tasks to other applications in principle, but so far none of the most popular clients seem to take advantage of that. Also, many features should have a standard "menu-based" interface. Although menus are slower for experienced users, casual users can't remember all the commands needed e.g. for news-groups (mail) manipulation and don't want to read the documentation all the time. Sequences like "help + help @mail + @subscribe + @subscribed + @mail on *general + help @mail + @mail 1-$ on *general + @read 2" not mentionning all the commands missed or mistyped are just too long. Even Unix's good old rn or mail did better than that.

Chapter 3

On Building a MOO world

3.1 How much planning do we need?

Traditional software engineering can be characterized by the idea that things can be planned and designed in advance and then implemented according to detailed specifications. Clearly, most MOOs are not built up this way. They are never finished. However, the questions of (1) what has to be there before users are invited to join and of (2) what can be done to insure and master growth and change have to be asked in an early stage. The danger in MOO mangement is that the MOO wizards and other important "players" view the MOO from their perspective. In fact, the complexity of the MOO is rather a result of all users perspectives (or more precisely of what they do (build, interact, etc.) in the MOO.

Central planning can be done in similar ways as it is done in large social bodies. Note however, that the phenomenology of a MOO world is rather open (topology, means of navigation and communication, etc.) Elements needed are:

- Rules that define a purpose of the system: The theme of the MOO should be defined in a way that target users feel attracted to the MOO but also in a way that is open for evolution.
- Rules that govern social interactions (including rules about changing those rules): See chapter 8 for more.
- A basic topology and rules for extending it.
- Rules that define the phenomenological properties of the world.

This list clearly shows that planning is as much concerned with social issues (the MOO is a living thing) as with building and adding code. A larger quotation from Lucasfilm habitat corroborates this opinion:

> "Again and again we found that activities based on often unconscious assumptions about player behavior had completely unexpected outcomes (when they were not simply outright failures). It was clear that we were not in control. The more people we involved in something, the less in control we were. We could influence things, we could set up interesting situations, we could provide opportunities for things to happen, but we could not dictate the outcome. Social engineering is, at best, an inexact science (or, as some wag once said, *in the most carefully constructed experiment under the most carefully controlled conditions, the organism will do whatever it damn well pleases*).
>
> Propelled by these experiences, we shifted into a style of operations in which we let the players themselves drive the direction of the design. This proved far more effective. Instead of trying to push the community in the direction we thought it should go, an exercise rather like herding mice, we tried to observe what people were doing and aid them in it. We became facilitators as much as we were designers and implementors. This often meant adding new features and new regions to the system at a frantic pace, but almost all of what we added was used and appreciated, since it was well matched to people's needs and desires. We, as the experts on how the system worked, could often suggest new activities for people to try or ways of doing things that people might not have thought of. In this way we were able to have considerable influence on the system's development in spite of the fact that we didn't really hold the steering wheel & more influence, in fact, than we had had when we were operating under the illusion that we controlled everything.
>
> Indeed, the challenges posed by large systems are prompting some researchers to question the centralized, planning dominated attitude that we have criticized here, and to propose alternative approaches based on evolutionary and market principles [16-18]. These principles appear applicable to complex systems of all types, not merely those involving interacting human beings." ([Morningstar et Farmer, 1990, lines 613ff.]).

In a more recent paper ([Farmer et al., 1994, lines 296ff.]) the authors of habitat emphasize the need of planning for change again:

> "Communities must be able to grow and transform. Many emerging electronic communities die for lack of the ability to adapt to change. Just as companies and small organizations go through serious growth pains and often disintegrate when they can't adapt, so too have early Cyberspace colonies. This type of adapt-or-die transfor- mation occurs eventually in every growing virtual com- munity we've experienced. A successful system will plan for it. Plan for growth. Plan for change. Sense of place is critical to the growth of community, as people adopt the emerging culture as part of their own."

Anyhow, despite the fact that most of the planning should be rather spent on "how to meet user's needs" in accordance to the theme, a few things (both MOO objects and related rules) are essential in early stages, like:

1. Handling of First Time Users and Beginners
2. A basic definition of the topology of the MOO: a minimal set of rooms defining a world (i.e. a city, a campus or whatever to start with) and at least minimal rules on how to add to that.
3. A few rules on what kind of navigation and communication means are appropriate.
4. At least in "serious" MOOs, aids for finding appropriate rooms and activities should be provided. Let's cite the Points of Interests at DU or BioMOOs "applications" in the WWW interface.

3.2 First Time Users and/or Beginners

Several places and features are important for first time users:

1. The "Welcome Screen" which is displayed before connecting with a character to the MOO
2. The "Welcome Area" where people land when they connect (unless they built a "home".
3. Tools for assistance and visitor centers around the welcome area
4. General information tools such as mailing lists, maps and so on
5. "Tour buses" or equivalent that give people a guided tour to interesting places
6. Tutorials and guidelines for using the MOO and building rooms and objects

This section is based partly on an assignment in the STAF-14[1] class. We gave a short introduction to our students on how to navigate in the MOO world and then asked them to visit a few MOOs and evaluate it among a few criteria, among which "how beginners are handled".

3.2.1 The Welcome Screen

The welcome screen should give some information on the purpose of the MOO and tell people (including guests) how to connect (or how to obtain a character). Most MOOs have a set of standard commands enabled like "who" displaying who is on the MOO.

Let's look a few of those screens:

[1] http://tecfa.unige.ch/tecfa/tecfa-teaching/staf14/staf14-overview.html

```
------------------------------------------------------- CollegeTown 4/95

             -----------------------------------------------
            /                                               \
            |            EDUCATION FOR SERVICE               |
            |________________________________________________|
                |    |_      /           \ _    |      |
                |  |__   |  /             \  |_  |  |_ |
                | _  _ |   /               \_  ______  |
                |_ |  |   _|    WELCOME     | |      | |   PLEASE REMEMBER:
                |  _|   |  |      TO        | |PLAQUE| |
                |     _    |  COLLEGETOWN   | |______| | THIS IS AN ACADEMIC
                | | _   |  |                |    _     | ENVIRONMENT *NOT* A
                |__________|                |__________|    << GAME >>

 COLLEGETOWN is a text based virtual ACADEMIC community running on a NeXT
 computer at Buena Vista College in Storm Lake, IA. Users who appreciate our
 educational mission are welcome to participate in COLLEGETOWN events.

         connect name password                        PLEASE TYPE
         connect guest                               'HELP MANNERS'.
         @quit

----------------------------------------------------------------------------

------------------------------------------------------------------- DU 4/95

                                 WELCOME TO
                            DIVERSITY UNIVERSITY
                               (East  Campus)
               Running version 1.7.8p4 of the LambdaMOO server
                  Address: MOO.DU.ORG (192.101.98.5) 8888

  Diversity University MOO campuses are Internet locations for serious
experimentation in network-based, interactive teaching, learning and social
services.  Those wishing to further this community development are welcome!

The DU administration would like to thank the many volunteers contributing
time and effort to further this vision.  We would also like to thank the
Internet Multicasting Service, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University (ERAU),
and the Annenberg/CPB Project for their support in this venture.
```

```
Supporters of this project are not responsible for the content of any material
which may be found on this system.

            connect guest          | to have a look around
            @who                   | to see who is online
            @quit                  | to exit Diversity University

---------------------------------------------------------------------------

------------------------------------------------------------   BioMOO 4/95

~%HHH!*%nx.    HM           ~4HHH:      :HHHH~    .xH*""tx.       .xH*""tx.
  MMM   `MMM   `"             MMMM:     MXMMX    MMM     #MM.    MMM     #MM.
  MMM    MM"  +nn   .n*%x.    M`MMM    M XMMX   MMM       MMM,  MMM       MMM,
  MMM!**MX.    MM  MM   4Mh   M ?MMM  X~ XMMX  'MMM       MMMX 'MMM       MMMX
  MMM    MMM:  MM  MM   'MM   M  ?MMMd"  XMMX  'MMM       MMM' 'MMM       MMM'
  MMM    MMMf  MM  MM   'MM   M   MMMf   XMMX   `MMk     :MM#   `MMk     :MM#
..MMMk..HM*"  .MM. `MX..M*  .:M..  MM   .MMMM.    "Mh...xM"'      "Mh...xM"'

                                  ...the virtual meeting place for biologists.

Type:
'purpose'                     to read a statement on BioMOO's purpose
'connect (userid) (password)' to connect, for example: connect Elmer stu888ph
'guest (name) (any-password)' to connect as a named guest,
'connect Guest'               to connect as an anonymous guest,
'create'                      for information on how to get your own userid,
'who'                         just to see who's logged in right now,
'@quit'                       to disconnect, either now or later.

Multimedia interface (WWW): http://bioinfo.weizmann.ac.il:8888
For human help please email to Gustavo@bioinformatics.weizmann.ac.il.

---------------------------------------------------------------------------
```

3.2.2 The Welcome Area

We could observe several models for the welcome area:

1. Most educational MOOs have people land in area which gives access to a lot of information. Sometimes (as in Collegetown shown in figure 3.1) this area is also a central room of the MOO.

2. Culture and leisure MOOs more often tend to let people arrive in a "closet" or other room devoid of interest. A visitors is center is sometimes adjacent sometimes not and it has to be found.

3. Others like Diversity University MOO and more so EON have a "stage" approach.

```
------------------------------------------------------ CollegeTown 4/95

The Forum
You are standing on the Granite
floor of a large Hall.             North    __________     ____________
       ___________________________ Quad ____| Seminar|_____|  Newbie  |
       | Ken's  |                 |    |    |  Room  |    NH    Hall  |
       | Office   K                  N      |___  ___|       |__  ____|
       |________|                              SR            | Guest  |
 WEST _|                                                   G   Lounge |
 QUAD__  W                                    ------         |________|
       |________          << THE FORUM >>      Pool          | PaulB's|
       | KBVC   |                             ------       P   Office |
       | Radio    KB                                         |________|
       |________|                                           /         |
       |   TV   |                                       CL   Coffee   |
       | Studio   TV    UW          S          - up -     /   Lounge  |
       |________|______/-/________|   |_______|stairs|____|___________|
                  Underground     SOUTH
                    Walkway       QUAD

You see a newspaper, Reflecting Pool, CollegeTown Flag, Clock, Map of Collegetown, Buzzword Generator, Public Bulletin Board, INTERESTS DIRECTORY, BANNER, and [marilyn] here.

---------------------------------------------------------------------------
```

Figure 3.1: The Welcome screen of CollegeTown

Let's now have a closer look a Diversity University MOO (DUM). DUM is interesting because of its size and solutions found there may be of general interest. At DUM one lands first in a general welcome room which has been rather designed to keep certain behavior or people from this MOO.

```
------------------------------------------------------------------- DU 4/95
```

```
                ***** DIVERSITY UNIVERSITY IS NOT A GAME *****

It is a place where many people from various backgrounds come to do work and
interact in a mature and responsible environment, and as a visitor you are
expected to behave in an appropriate manner.

   Swearing, offensive language, obscenity, harassment, and rudeness will
   not be tolerated here.  If you must do that, do it somewhere else.

 If you're not sure if something is ok or not, ASK FIRST.  If someone asks
 you to stop doing something they find objectionable, STOP.  For a more
 complete list of what behavior is and is not considered appropriate here,
 type 'help manners' once connected.

NOTE:  You can and will be booted off the system and barred further access to
       this MOO if you cannot behave responsibly.  Under some circumstances
       your actions on this system can be logged or monitored as well. Your
       connection site is being displayed in your description; anyone can
       see where you are connected from.

If you do not wish to agree to these conditions, type @quit to leave the MOO.
[Press return to continue or type '@quit' to disconnect]
Orientation Room

Welcome to Diversity University!  This is the Orientation room and is
 deliberately quiet to allow new users to read the helps.  This room is in the
 Student Union so when you are ready to explore, just leave by the exit to the
 hall or read the help on @rooms.

ATTENTION Teachers! - Please do not bring your students onto DU as guests.
 Please ask a wizard about our VSPO system for bringing on groups.

    help newbie  -  Basic help for those new to this
     help theme  -  Describes the purpose of Diversity Univ.
            map  -  Displays a map of Diversity Univ. You are currently
                    located in the sw corner of the Student Union

To see this room description again, type:   look

Exits include: [out] to Learning Hall (3-4)
You see Application Folder, DU manners (look manners), MOOTutorials, A map of
```

```
 Diversity University, and Social and other MOOs List (read sml) here.

-----------------------------------------------------------------------------
```

Next, people land in a room where they are given a chance to look at basic MOO commands and are also pointed to further information.

```
--------------------------------------------------------------------- DU 4/95

Learning Hall (3-4)
This is one segment of the hall leading off the Main Foyer of the Student
 Union.  To reach the Student Union, travel east.

Type:   tutorial       to enter a walk-through tutorial of MOO basic commands.
Type: @go edu  then   southeast  to get to more tutorials and helps in the
 MOOteach learning center.

Exits include: [east] to Learning Hall (1-2), [south] to Orientation Room,
 [tutorial] to An Introduction
You see MOOing Services Board (Type --> Look board) (3 notes) here.

-----------------------------------------------------------------------------
```

Next people can enter a corridor ...

```
--------------------------------------------------------------------- DU 4/95

Learning Hall (1-2)
A long, quiet hallway. A door leads east back to the main entry.
This hall leads to rooms that will teach basics about many things, such as how
 to navigate and use a MOO as well as how to study better.  Feel free to
 explore the rooms.
Exits include: [east] to Student Union Center, [west] to Learning Hall (3-4),
 [south] to study aids (public)

-----------------------------------------------------------------------------
```

... which leads to the Student Union Center which contains all the information a regular user of this MOO is interested in.

```
--------------------------------------------------------------------- DU 4/95

Student Union Center
```

```
--------------------
You are standing in the Student Union of Diversity University.  There is an
old red couch in the corner, usually occupied by sleeping students.  Several
halls lead from the room, and large glass doors on the southern wall lead
outside.
Warning: Anything said in this room is subject to being logged for research
 purposes.  Research is vital to the continued survival of DU so we hope you
 will understand.

Exits include: [west] to Learning Hall (1-2), [south] to LSU Street (200
 block), [east] to Underground corridor (SU <-> Admin), [north] to
 Entertainment Hall, [northeast] to Student Union Elevator, [northwest] to
 Universities Room, [Up] to Help Desk
SPrince (asleep), JackieC (asleep), RayJ (asleep), Jason_J (Always keeping one
 eye open!), and Kaspar (idling) are standing here.
You see Transporter Booth, DU Places of Interest (poi), Test Survey, DU
 Directory, EVENTS (8 notes), Yellow Pages!, Aquarium, and Diversity Survey
 here.

----------------------------------------------------------------------------
```

Diversity University is currently the biggest Educational MOO and several information and navigation tools had to be created. Of particular interests are:

- DU Places of interest (poi): An index of major educational activities allowing to jump to the location in question.
- The yellow pages: A directory of people, places and things

3.2.3 Work in progress

When we sent out our students to look at MOOs in December 1994 after a 2 hour MOO training session most students found that handling of beginners and more so of first time users was insufficient. Despite having pointed out "Diversity University" as the primary educational MOO, our students were somewhat "afraid" of it. Since then, a lot of improvement could be observed on this MOO (see: section 3.2.2).

Collegetown (among the MOOs studied) overally got the best marks, also for its general ergonomics. Since some of out students were psychology students EON's stage model (see section 5.2.4) was found to be interesting. However, it was noted that EON needs a lot of involvement and one student who tried to learn something about Unix by looking at an "aircraft carrier" complained about feeling really lost.

[more to come]

3.3 Communication and Navigation on the MOO

3.4 Topology and Navigation

"Topology" is very important issue since the MOO has a spatial orientation and since "places" in real life always have certain "uses". By defining a global topology rooster and building rules in a MOO one addresses several related questions:

1. User Interface issues
2. Navigational Issues (how do we want people to move)
3. "Urban planning" issues: What activities where
4. "Social and political Issues": What can be built?
5. .....

Among educational MOOs one can find several kinds of topologies.

The "Campus" Model The best known example is the Diversity University MOO. It is modeled after a typical American Campus. Another example is the Bio MOO.

The "Chamber" Model Certain activities are confined to areas. At EON for example, those areas are reachable by a train and access is controlled.

The "City or World" Model This is the model adopted by **TECFA**MOO . There are reserved areas for academic work (both teaching and research) but the MOO is also designed to be a social space. We fully agree with this quote from College Town:

> [...] Recognizing that a great deal of real research and learning goes on 'outside the classroom' we are augmenting the classrooms with a realistic nurturant community. Creative thinking may find its freeest play while walking on a beach and a small seminar may become much more meaningful if hosted at a colleague's home in the woods...

A combined Campus and City Model

3.4.1 Building on CollegeTown

Among all educational MOOs, College Town probably comes closest to **TECFA**MOO . There are differences, e.g. building rules at TECFA are (and will probably remain) less strict (e.g. geography can spread out of Geneva, and even known space and time) and we do not plan make available our MOO to very young kids.

Here are CollegeTown's building rules as of March 27 1995:

```
------------------------------------------------------------------ CT 4/95

>look building
  1) All rooms and objects must comply with our overall theme. We are a
     small college town situated in the scenic countryside. Our mission is
     to provide a platform for academic research and learning. Recognizing
     that a great deal of real research and learning goes on 'outside the
     classroom' we are augmenting the classrooms with a realistic nurturant
     community. Creative thinking may find its freeest play while walking
     on a beach and a small seminar may become much more meaningful if
     hosted at a colleague's home in the woods...
  2) All rooms must be connected. (Ask any wiz for assistance.)
     Every exit should be listed/shown.  Hidden exits are discouraged.
     'Leave', 'oleave', and 'oarrive' messages should be set on each exit.
  3) Room descriptions should be a combination of text/graphics not to
     exceed 20 lines. Rationale: The average screen holds 24 lines of text.
     One line is used for the name of the room and at least 3 lines should be
     reserved for listing contents and occupants.
  4) The spatial integrity of the moo *must* be respected. If your house is
     in the  Primeval Forest you cannot logically have an exit to the
     Western Shore <grin>. Fantastical teleport type exits are discouraged.
  5) Generally one room is sufficient for a house.
     Use 'out' to leave your house.
     Housing Sites are listed in the HOUSING INFO bulletin.
  6) Please remember that this MOO serves children as well as adults. Do
     not build anything you would not want your own child to encounter. Rooms
     have a special toggle that you can set to keep kids out if there is any
     question.
  7) Because of our realistic environment we encourage REAL NAMES, common
     nicknames, or real name variants. We are not a phantasy moo.
  8) The building of weapons is expressly forbidden.
  9) Additional quota may be requested for building rooms and objects in the
     public interest, subject to wiz/council review.

--------------------------------------------------------------------------
```

3.4.2 Building Rules on TECFAMOO

There are a few basic rules for building in the **TECFA**MOO which builders should follow:

1. The topology of Geneva has to be vaguely respected.

2. Certain types of activities should be restricted to certain areas. The major focus of this MOO is exchange in educational technology, education and research. However other activities are welcome too.

3. All major education and research activities should take place in the virtual "Geneva Basin" (see the next page). They will be connected with a room (currently the "underground corridor") or a similar "direct access" artifact.

4. Strange stuff can be added, but preferrably "outside" of Geneva. An airport, a train-station and such will be provided.

Education and Research Activities in the **TECFA**`MOO` are centered around a few areas. Currently, there are several sites planned for such activities:

- People form the U of Geneva (including TECFA) should use the locations of their real buildings (although they may be enhanced).
- All teaching on MOO using/building/programming etc. should go to the MOOseum area.
- Educational Technology, i.e. our domain", is in and behind TECFA. see the EduTech exit in the underground corridor
- The Forest Campus. Meet Dave_E for more information!
- Space for an International Virtual University is provided at IVC (in Archamps, a place over the border in France). You can build as you like (maybe we should fix a few rules for that place).
- Other stuff can be negotiated of course.

Chapter 4

MOOs for Research Work

4.1 Virtual Meeting Spaces

The concept of "Virtual Meeting Space" covers several possible setups for synchronous communication among communities:

- "Virtual Cafés" are places where people can hang out and meet in very informal ways in a similar fashion as in corridors of a conference or in the cafeteria of a university. Since on most "serious MUDS" people have descriptions of their research interests which can be accessed either by "looking" at a person or by using a command like "whois xxx", "finger xxx" contacts of persons sharing the similar interest are even easier than in real life.

- "Virtual Lobbies" or similar "rooms" can be used to display information about an organization. A good example is "GNA Central" (#4156) at Diversity University MOO.

- A similar function is fulfilled by "Resource Centers". A good example is the Ed-Tech Resource Center (#15169) on Diversity University MOO.

- "Meetings Rooms" fulfill the same function as real ones, i.e. provide space for regular meetings. Such rooms can be structured by adding "tables" (a device for group discussion), white-boards, projection devices and such.

- "Offices" can be used for meeting persons in a private space, "idle quietly", or for providing more information about a person. An office also adds an anthropological touch by providing a "home" where characters can connect to and "sleep".

4.1.1 A look at other MOOs

MOOs as virtual meeting spaces for professional communities are becoming increasingly popular. Well known examples are the MediaMOO[1] (Media Researchers), AstroMOO[2] (Astronomers), BioMOO[3] (Biologists) and PMCMOO[4] (Post Modern Culture).

Let's have a look at the purpose of MediaMOO (obtained by typing "help purpose"):

```
------------------------------------------------------------- Media MOO 4/95

>help purpose

MediaMOO is a professional community for media researchers.  It is a place to
come meet colleagues in media studies and related fields and brainstorm, to
hold colloquia and conferences, to explore the serious side of this new
medium.

Unlike other MUDs, characters on MediaMOO are identified.  You can find out
who anyone is with the @whois command (except for a few early members who are
still anonymous) so that you can contact them to continue professional
discussions.

To become a member of MediaMOO you must be doing media research.  We are more
interested in knowing about what you are doing than what you are interested
in. Most college and pre-college students who apply are not really doing media
research.

If you're looking for a place to hang out with interesting people, LambdaMOO
is at lambda.parc.xerox.com 8888.  In fact, if you read the USENET newsgroup
rec.games.mud.announce, you'll find a list of hundreds of MUDs and MOOs,
almost all of which have no requirements for membership.

A note to teachers:
Unfortunately, we must discourage you from bringing classes of students here.
Although these experiments are interesting, this is not the appropriate place.
MediaMOO would become a very different place if it were filled with, for
example, hundreds of freshman composition students.

Welcome!
```

[1] telnet://purple-crayon.media.mit.edu:8888/
[2] telnet://brando.ipac.caltech.edu:8888/
[3] http://bioinfo.weizmann.ac.il:8000/
[4] http://jefferson.village.virginia.edu/pmc/pmc-moo.html

```
Sincerely,

Amy Bruckman
September 1993

---------------------------------------------------------------------------
```

This message written in 1993 clearly tries to emphasize distinction between a place dedicated to one specific task (being a place for a community) and multi-purpose MOOs such as **TECFA**MOO .

BioMOO shows a similar statement, but is also used for educational purposes.

```
-------------------------------------------------------------- Bio MOO 4 /95
>help purpose
----------------------------------------------------------------------------
BioMOO is a virtual meeting place for biologists, connected to the Globe-wide
Network Academy. The main physical part of the BioMOO is located at the
Bioinformatics Unit of the Weizmann Institute of Science, Israel.

BioMOO is a professional community of Biology researchers.  It is a
place to come meet colleagues in Biology studies and related fields and
brainstorm, to hold colloquia and conferences, to explore the serious
side of this new medium.

All characters on BioMOO are identified.  You can find out who anyone is
by using the @whois command, so that you can contact them to continue
professional discussions.

BioMOO is continuously growing and changing. Your ideas for new additions
and modifications are welcome. Please contact Gustavo by email to
Gustavo@bioinformatics.weizmann.ac.il

If you're looking for a place to hang out with interesting people,
LambdaMOO is at lambda.parc.xerox.com 8888.  In fact, if you read the
USENET newsgroup rec.games.mud.announce, you'll find a list of hundreds
of MUDs and MOOs, almost all of which have no requirements for
membership.

---------------------------------------------------------------------------
```

4.1.2 Meeting Spaces at TECFAMOO

One of the motivations for creating **TECFA**MOO has been the creation of a virtual space for researchers and practitioners in Educational Technology. This project is supported partly by the VMDL ("Virtual Mobility and Distance Learning" project.

[More to come: Sandrine Tognotti[5] will work on this]

We plan to let organizations such as GNA build campuses.

[5] http://tecfa.unige.ch/%7Etognotti/

Chapter 5

MOOs for Education

5.1 Virtual Classrooms

Virtual Classrooms are probably the theme best developed in the Educational MOO community. Based on earlier work at Lambda-MOO and other almost mythical MOOs, a certain number of people like Ken Schweller[1] or DaveM [] have developed very interesting artifacts for teaching and tutoring in the MOO. Most of those objects can be found on DU 5.1.1 but many have also found their way into other MOOs. Also, consult the *MOOteach mailing list on DU.

At **TECFA**MOO we made enthusiastic use of the Tutorial Room and a Generic Classroom which are put up on display in our MOOseum.

A very useful tool not just in virtual class- and tutoring rooms are the www-slates (by shkoo@eon) which allow accessing www pages from within the MOO. Those slates can be "pretuned" (or book-marked) to a set of pages, so that teachers can put on display somewhat preconfigured www-boxes in certain areas of the MOO.

Note that virtual classrooms and similar artifacts are not *the* only way to use a MOO. After all they just replicate more or less traditional teaching via distance. See section 5.2 for a start on other directions.

5.1.1 Education Tools at Diversity University

Donald, in his Education MOOs and Tools[2] article quotes a number educational artifacts available at DU:

```
  5) Education Tools: Generic objects at Diversity University
```

[1] http://othmar.bvc.edu/faculty/schweller.html
[2] http://tecfa.unige.ch/edu-comp/DUJVRE/vol1/no1/education_MOOs.text

```
   --------------------------------------------------------

Some notable Educational Tools at Diversity University including
ported ones, known affiliations do not imply development sites.
NOTE: These lists are not complete but attempt to be accurate.

* Larry and Joe@JaysHouseMOO (Grump and JoeFeedback)
   - 'MOOGopher'(Copyright (c)1992, 1993, Larry Masinter and Erik Ostrom)
     was implemented at JaysHouseMOO and is a useful tool found in most MOOs.

* Ken or cdr (@Collegetown, @media, @DU)
   - Media set 'TV', 'VCR', 'Camera', and 'Tape' showing text has an
     'Editing room' to transform raw 'Tapes' into a polished product.
   - 'Lecture note' lines can be prepared ahead of time.
   - 'Slide shows' can display 15 lines of text at once.
   - 'Classrooms' include 'blackboards', 'seats' and other features.
   - Other Education objects include the 'Theatre complex',
     a 'conversational robot' and introductory MOO Programming tapes.

* Michele (@JaysHouseMOO)
   - Walk through '@Tutorial program' from JaysHouseMOO
    is very easy to use, even for a beginner.

* Gustavo (@BioMOO, @GNAlab, @DU, etc.)
   - 'Generic Recording device' records activity in a room.
   - 'InterMOO feature object' allows communications across MOOs.
   - 'GNA forum' is a virtual conference room that straddles
     BayMOO, BioMOO, CollegeTown, Diversity University, EON,
     Global Village, GNAlab, MediaMOO, TecfaMOO and VOU
     in five different countries.
   - 'InterMOOwalk' moves characters from GNAlab to BioMOO or back.
   - BioMOO/WWW interface developers include Eric Mercer, Paul Hansen,
     Jaime Prilusky, and Gustavo Glusman.

* Jeanne with programming by Richelieu(@DU)
   - 'VSPO', the visiting student character class allows teachers to
     control class and handle some administrative work as well.

* Mogue
   - 'simulation rooms' like 'Agincourt' show 100 year war. Experience
     history from the perspective of various period characters.
```

```
* DaveM
   - 'notice board' is an all purpose tool created to save 'quota'.
     It finds use as a bulletin board, a note book, a variable slide
     projector, and a tutorial and, now has its own mailing list even.
   - 'Tutorial room' also saves quota and is easy to use.
     Hypertext versions are in development.

* Doppler
   - 'slide show' stores presentations in a variable length format.

* Richelieu
   - 'Generic chaptered Book' (@copyright Richelieu) has chapters.

* Shkoo@EON  (@BioMOO, nils@DU)
   - 'WWW slate' is a World Wide Web text based browser. Shkoo first
     implemented the WWW slate at EON, where the server is.

PLEASE! : To 'port' the MOO programming code of any MOO object to another
MOO, please contact and obtain permission of the original author.
This is a courtesy that also helps the author to distribute upgrades.
```

5.1.2 Ken's generic classroom

Todays (April 95) probably best tested, liked and known classroom has been built by Ken Schweller[3].

Upon creation of a classroom a short tutorial and help is available:

```
---------------------------------------------------------------------------

>@tutorial
* * * * * *   Using the GENERIC CLASSROOM : A Brief Tutorial   * * * * * * *
     The Generic Classroom was created to give teachers greater flexibility,
 creativity and control in conducting MOO classes.  Here are the basics of
classroom use. You may type 'help here' at any time for a brief summary of
the room commands.
DESIGNING THE CLASSROOM:
     You may create your own desks, tables, shelves, bulletin boards, walls
or whatever using the @addfurniture command. Let's suppose you wished to
add a Lab Table to the room.  After typing '@addfurniture Lab Table' you
would be asked to describe the table and indicate whether it is 'sit-able'
```

[3] http://othmar.bvc.edu/faculty/schweller.html

or not. While most furniture is 'sit-table' some things like walls and bulletin boards are clearly not. Students can 'sit Lab Table', 'put <anything> on Lab Table', 'get <anything>', or 'look Lab Table'. Objects on the Lab Table will only be seen by persons sitting there or persons who look at the table. Walls, shelves, and bulletin boards are obvious places to 'put' things like calendars, lab equipment, or notes. To remove furniture type '@rmfurniture <object>'. Note that each room has a built in blackboard and a clock. Just 'look blackboard' or 'look clock'. You can write on the blackboard by typing 'writeb hello class!'.

SETTING UP A CLASS ROSTER:

To set up an 'Intro to Theater' class type '@mkclass Intro to Theater'. This creates a class roster for registering your students. If you would like Ken to be able to teach a different class in your room you must '@authorize Ken'. This enables Ken to use the @mkclass and other commands to create his own class. You can now register your students. Type '@setup Intro' to activate Intro to Theater as the 'current' class and then type 'register Bill', 'register Mary', and so on. Students registered in the 'current' class can enter the classroom even when the door is closed. To allow only authorized persons to make furniture, register students or setup classes just type '@restrictions on'. You may type '@status' at any time to see which class is 'current', who is registered or authorized, and whether restrictions are in place.

MODERATING THE CLASS:

One of the main advantages of using the Generic Classroom is to moderate extraneous talking and emoting. Have the students 'sit Lab Table' or wherever. While they are seated they can only be heard by others sitting with them. This enables students to talk with each other or carry on small group discussions without disturbing others. Students who wish to be heard throughout the room need only 'speakup <anything>', or 'stand' to be heard. Emoting can be limited to tablemates only or made visible to the entire room through the use of '@stifle on/off'.

It is a good idea to type 'door close' and '@sign on' when you begin a class so folks not registered in the 'current' class cannot drop in uninvited. The @sign command informs others that your class is '(in session)' when they do an @who listing.

MISC:

There are numerous additional commands that can be used in the Generic Classroom. Type 'help here' for examples of their use.

AN INVITATION:

The Generic Classroom was designed to incorporate the ideas and wishes of many MOO teachers. It will continue to evolve as we all make new teaching discoveries. We invite *you* to participate in the development of this

```
experimental teaching technology by bringing forward your critiques and
suggestions. They are most welcome!  -ken/cdr
<end of tutorial>

>help here
Seminar Room (#184):
----
                        How To Use This Room
     To create new tables, desks, shelves, bulletin boards etc. use the
'@addfurniture' command. You can 'look', 'sit', or 'put' things on most
objects you create. While sitting you are heard only by others sitting
with you. If you 'stand' or 'speakup' everyone can hear you. 'Look' at
objects to see what's on them.
GENERAL
   look blackboard        sit Big Desk             @status
   writeb Hi There!       stand                    put map on Bulletin
   eraseb 4               speakup I think that..   get map
   to Ken Hi there!       look clock               look Big Desk
SPECIAL
   cleanb                   - erase entire blackboard
   register/unregister Ken  - add/rm Ken from *current* class
   @addfurn/@rmfurn Desk    - add/remove a piece of describable furniture
   door open/closed         - restrict entry to persons in *current* class
   @mkclass/@rmclass Math   - add 'Math' to list of classes taught here
   @setup Math              - makes 'Math' the *current* class
   @stifle on/off           - disable seated persons emoting to everyone
   @sign on/off             - show 'this.session_msg' at @who command
   @authorize/@unauth Ken   - add/rm Ken from list of authorized users
   @restrictions on/off     - restrict Special verbs to authorized users
   @tutorial                - view a short tutorial on using classroom
   @fix                     - correct seating mixups if they occur

---------------------------------------------------------------------------
```

Ken's generic classroom has been developed in tight interaction with teachers on DU and other MOOs.

5.1.3 Please don't disturb!

A major problem on giving classes on the MOO is to insure that other users on a MOO don't disturb. §First of all users of a "serious" MOO (as well as on other MOOs can be trained to respect certain rules, i.e. to knock before entering a "closed" room.

Furthermore, certain types of rooms such as the "Generic Classroom" can be closed by the authorized instructor or he can expel people if needed. Also, as Marcus Speh (posting on *General@DU) noticed: "As a first step towards a better 'indoor policy', people should check their own 'arrive_msg' and 'join_msg' properties, some of which are excessive."

MOO Teachers need to be trained both in using educational artifacts and MOO netiquette. Tari Fanderclai (University of Louisville) has been recruited on DU to help organize the business of coming up with policies for teachers and their classes who use DU, and a program for orienting and preparing those teachers. See the *MOOteaching list and Zak' MOOteach Learning Center (@go #1578) both on DU for further details.

Tari Fanderclai in *MOOteach@DU(5, Dec 16 94) listed some things needed in order to avoid problems with MOO classes:

```
--------------------------------------------------------------------------

[...]

``---Require that teachers be familiar with MOOetiquette and basic
MOOcommands, plus whatever more advanced MOOoperations they might
require their students to use.
---Require that teachers provide their students with documents on
MOOmanners and the MOOcommands they need (they should have a way to
print these, esp. the commands; new users usually work better with
printed info); perhaps also an easy way to get the MOO programming
manual--e.g., a copy on-line locally or FTP instructs for getting it.
        Requirements like the above can't really be enforced, but can
   be made known as responsibilities teachers are assumed to take on.
---If we decide to have special teacher commands and/or special
classrooms, teachers could be required to complete a tutorial in
ZAK's MOOteach center that teaches use of those.
---One way to make sure that teachers have a thought-out plan (in my
experience, students sent onto M*s without directions/something to
accomplish are generally disruptive and not only to their own class)
would be to ask that they submit a short description of what their
students will be asked to do in their first couple of visits.  While
we can't exactly judge a lesson plan, asking to see that one exists
should be sufficient.''

[...]

--------------------------------------------------------------------------
```

After discussion the following statement was published by Tari Fanderclai on the same list (*MOOteach@DU 23, Jan 14 94):

```
---------------------------------------------------------------------------

****************************************
DU welcomes classes of all kinds, and does its best to accommodate
a wide variety of teachers' methods and philosophies.  It is
assumed that a teacher who wishes to bring classes to DU will
spend time getting to know the social, political, and technical
environment here her/himself before leading students in.
Teachers who bring classes to DU have these responsibilities:
---To familiarize their students with the etiquette of DU and
to make sure the students understand that they are responsible
to behave appropriately or suffer the consequences outlined
by the wizards.
---To teach their students the "MOOoperations" the
students will need to use for their class, and to
provide those students who want it information beyond what
the class is actually using.  For example, even if the students
are not being asked to build or program, they should know how
to use the help screens and where to get the programmers
manual and all the other help sources available.
---To check news and other information sources frequently so
that they are aware of new DU procedures, events, and other
important information.
---To comply with policies and procedures set by the wizards,
and to see that their students do also.  Where a student becomes
a problem to the DU community, the student's teacher is expected to
cooperate with the wizards in their decisions about the problem.

We also hope that each teacher who uses DU will make a contribution
to the DU community as a whole.  For example, they could bring
useful ideas to teachers' meetings; volunteer for projects;
agree to be an Official Helpful Person; build or program an object
that becomes a permanent part of DU, etc.  We believe that it is
important that each teacher becomes a part of the DU community.
*****************************************************

---------------------------------------------------------------------------
```

5.1.4 So what is new ?

Educational activities on MOOs can be broadly distinguished among those who:

- try to replicate traditional class-room setups
- tend to use the MOO for new ways of teaching and learning (and therefore get away from the "class-room" metaphor

However, one can ask the question how virtual classrooms are different from real ones and how they could exploit extra-potential from the MOOs. This latter question is very important since virtual "MOO" classrooms clearly have disadvantages.

Now several advantages of the virtual class room could be cited, like the following ones:

(1) Virtual Classrooms in a MOO allow for "layered communication" over different channels. This allows for instance students to discuss among themselves without disturbing the class or to isolate tutor-one student interactions which are not of general interest. More sophisticated classrooms can be furnished with "tables" suited for group-work (a setup that can be found often in real primary school).

(2) Provided that a good Mud client is available to the student, class-room teaching (an specially lecturing) looses some of its not always desired linearity. At anytime a student can scroll back and (provided he can split the screen) still monitor what is going on.

(3) Along the same lines, a virtual class-room has a "memory". Teachers do not have to repeat things as frequently and at the same time things said before can be pasted back into the discussion.

(4) Students may have better access to "external sources" such as other tutors, on-line books and so during a class.

Of course there is a limit to all that. It is well known that human processing power is very limited for structured cognitive tasks. We can do only a small amount of things at the same time. So MOO teachers whish to exploit those and other extra-functionalities they will have to take into account those limits and "slow down", but make sure that students don't get bored or involved into other activities at the same time.

In any case, in most situations it is probably best to avoid using the MOO for lecturing (that can be done by providing a text over the WWW) and use those classrooms for more interactive tutoring instead.

Interested readers may want to look at those transcripts from a MOO-programming lesson: [retrieve the thing from colin]

5.2 MOO Learning Environments

Moos can be used to implement various sorts of interactive learning environments, not just sophisticated text-based virtual classrooms. [Fanderclai, 1995] for instance makes this point very clear: "I am hopeful, therefore, that the near future holds more of these changes. MUDs are places for self-directed learning, learning that blends work and play, that often looks chaotic but that is uniquely effective. A MUD is not an environment that can be controlled; to use MUDs effectively, educators must replace control with structure."

In the **TECFA**`MOO` , several persons started building more "theme oriented" places like the "Ticinese" 5.2.2 village and the Social-Psychological Experiments 5.2.3 within a setup for an on-line class.

Several examples of interactive exhibits can be found at Diversity MOO. A few of them are related to anthropology (see for instance The Physical Anthropology Hall (5-6) #10375). An other nice example is the interactive simulation of Agincourt battle (#3300). It allows users to navigate a historical area and to interact with objects and artificial people. Also interesting is the Rain Forest (#8134) located off the Biology Hall.

The Ohlone Village at BayMOO (see section 5.2.1) hanging off the "Past Revisited Room" also leading to to "Gold Rush San Francisco", "Hippie Haight", and "City Lights", this simulation teaches the culture and some of the words of the Ohlone Tribe that was located in the Bay area.

Interactive exhibits are one direction to go. More interesting are structures activities where students have to do something, cooperatively. First of all, one could consider every MOO as an environment which teaches about itself. Some do it better than others. One good example is EON 5.2.4 who acts as a holistic environment to learn "MOOing" and "MOO programming". Hopefully, MOOs will grow into more than self-centered constructivism.

5.2.1 The Ohlone Village

The Ohlone village (visited on 5/95) is another interesting example of a historical simulation (Type 'go ohlone village' on BayMOO to get there).

```
---------------------------------------------------------------- Bay MOO 5/95

>village
Ohlone Village

A village of 12 reed dwellings at the tip of the San Francisco peninsula. In
 the center of the village, two women are scooping acorns from their tule reed
 baskets. A group of young men hesitate before entering into the sweathouse to
 be instructed by the tribal shaman.

 Type  ENTER to learn the lessons of Coyote, Eagle, Hummingbird and Gismen.

Obvious exits: NOONO to Ohlone Language Pit House, PAST to The Past Revisited,
 and ENTER to Sweathouse

---------------------------------------------------------------------------
```

The Ohlone visage is designed both as a puzzle and an exhibit. To enter certain rooms, objects have to be found and carried by "understanding" and typing words of the Ohlone language. A specially designed "translation room" does word to word translation of some short English sentences. Look at the next transcript for an illustation of this principle.

```
----------------------------------------------------------------- Bay MOO 5/95

>ENTER
Sweathouse

The intense heat and thick redwood smoke make the interior of the sweathouse
 almost unbearable. Through the haze you can make out bows, arrows, clubs and
 knives stacked against the earthen walls.

In one corner, two hunters are conversing in Ramaytush, the local Ohlone
 dialect. One boasts that, in preparation for the coming hunt, he has neither
 touched nor nor looked directly at his wife for three days. His friend
 confirms that, for his part, he has eaten no meat or salt for the same period.

The the far corner of the room, her eyes closed, sits the ancient shaman. She
 clutches her medicine pouch in one hand and a cooking basket in the other.
 The other occupants of the sweathouse keep a respectful distance from her.

You see an opening that leads to the Coyote's den. Type COYOTE to get there.

Obvious exits: VILLAGE to Ohlone Village
You see Sharkeen here.

>activate sharkeen
Kaspar activates Sharkeen.
Sharkeen exclaims, "Aue!"
Sharkeen says, "[to Kaspar] cahnah roote ratichma maato roote xiwej Ohlone
 muwekma."

[......]

>noono
Ohlone Language Pit House
A place to turn English words into Ohlone, and Ohlone into English. The
 vocabulary is derived from several of the local Ohlone dialects.
Obvious exits: VILLAGE to Ohlone Village and WORD to -Word St. North-
>"cahnah roote ratichma maato roote xiwej Ohlone muwekma
```

```
You say, "I be woman who be shaman Ohlone people"
>@go sweathouse

[....]

>coyote
You must possess the Coyote's Tooth before you can enter his den. Ask the
 shaman Sharkeen about Coyote, and she will tell you the room that holds the
 Coyote's tooth.

>"majan
You say, "majan"
>"coyote
You say, "coyote"
Sharkeen says, "[to Kaspar] To enter the Coyote's Den you must possess the
 Coyote Tooth! Seek his tooth in room Kapapan iwesse kapapaniwesh utcahin. Go
 to the Ohlone Language Pit House if you need to translate my words."

[....]

----------------------------------------------------------------------------
```

By looking at objects and manipulating them, more things about the ohlone culture can be found out as the following transcript shows:

```
----------------------------------------------------------------- Bay MOO 5/95
[....]

>coyote
The smoke around you dissipates as you are transported from the  Sweathouse to
 the domain of Coyote.
Coyote's Den
Water covers the earth as far as the eyes can see -- except for the distant
 peak of Mount Diabolo. From your perch atop Mount Tamalpais, you look down
 the mountainside toward the encroaching ocean. You see a furtive movement
 within a manzanita bush. Slowly, cautiously, a bedraggled coyote emerges. It
 eyes you briefly, then begins to slink away.
Obvious exits: EAGLE to Aerie
You see Coyote here.
                               _
                              / \      _-'
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        \/       \/                     \/     \/          \/     \/     \/


>l coyote
A sharp and shifty beast. Type STORY1 COYOTE to hear a tale about him, and
 type INVOKE COYOTE to hear what he has to say.
>INVOKE COYOTE
Kaspar, in search of the Ohlone way of wisdom, invokes the Coyote spirit!

 So you've come to me for advice? My friend, you couldn't have done better.
 Brother Eagle and Sister hummingbird have their own ideas about life, of
 course. But my wisdom is seasoned by generations of living on the ground, as
 you do. Life with dirt underfoot is treacherous, seeker, as you well know
 already. Not strength nor love will get you your heart's desire. But cunning
 will. So heed me.
           +------------------------------+
           |Coyote fixes you with a stare.|
           +------------------------------+

[more cut....]
---------------------------------------------------------------------------
```

Animals found in the "rooms" will tell stories illustrating the culture. They are displayed in "VCR mode", e.g. displayed paragaph by paragraph including breaks so that people can read them at a usual pace.

Alltogether the Ohlone village offers shows a nice example of what can be done with MOO technology. The simulation is probably not polished enough for real use (on 5/95). For example, entering the "coyote lesson" was not really ergonomic: Reading the message "Ask the shaman Sharkeen about Coyote, and she will tell you the room that holds the Coyote's tooth..." in the sweathouse does not really tell the user that he has to type "say coyote" in order to cross the exit to "Coyote's den".

5.2.2 The Ticinese Village

Utilization de differents services Internet pour une simulation historique[4] by Eric Sciolli[5]

5.2.3 Social-Psychological Experimentation

Within the framework of "Teaching the Religion and Methodology of C.G. Jung", Patrick Jermann[6] uses a psycho-social setup[7] to improve learning.

5.2.4 The MOO as Learning Environment: The case of EON

This section is largely based on course-assignment work of two TECFA STAF students: Virtual Education Environment:the case of EON[8] by Eric Berthoud[9] and Analyse d'une activité pédagogique dans un MOO[10] by Patrick Jermann[11]

TECFA has a special relation to EON in several ways. When D.S.[12] decided to introduce MOO-technology in our unit he became interested in EONs constructivist approach towards virtual educational environments and its progressive "chamber system". Furthermore, TECFA was very lucky to able to recruit xymox[13] as its first "wizard". [14]

The goals of the EON Virtual Educational Environment[15] can be found by typing 'help goals' in the EON MOO[16]:

[4] http://tecfa.unige.ch/%7Esciolli/staf14/villaggio-ticinese/welcome.moo.html
[5] http://tecfa.unige.ch/%7Esciolli/
[6] http://tecfa.unige.ch/%7Ejermann/
[7] http://tecfa.unige.ch/%7Ejermann/staf14/projet-14-main.html#loge
[8] http://tecfa.unige.ch/%7Eberthoud/staf14/eon_overview.html
[9] http://tecfa.unige.ch/%7Eberthoud/
[10] http://tecfa.unige.ch/%7Ejermann/moo_01.html
[11] http://tecfa.unige.ch/%7Ejermann/
[12] http://tecfa.unige.ch/tecfa-people/schneider.html
[13] http://mcmuse.mc.maricopa.edu/%7Exymox/
[14] He spontaneously agreed participating in an informal international exploratory project. This spontaneous enthusiasm for cooperation is also characteristic of many other persons in the "MOO" space. Without his initial help, our project maybe would never have "gotten of the ground" in the first place.
[15] gopher://mcmuse.mc.maricopa.edu/11/courseinfo
[16] telnet://mcmuse.mc.maricopa.edu:8888

```
---------------------------------------------------------------------------

>help goals
1.  Create an environment where students can learn and receive college
credit through self paced study.  Such an environment:
    a.  Is social, supporting collaborative learning (e.g., synchronous
        communication)
    b.  Teaches learners how to use it without requiring separate "manuals"
        or "instructions" external to the environment.
    c.  Allows learners to prepare and share cognitive maps of what they've
        learned.
    d.  Is not a closed system.  That is, provides collaborative access
        to all Internet resources within the environment itself.
    e.  Is as schema-friendly as possible.  That is, the methods of
        interaction seem familiar to the learner.
    f.  Supports a variety of interface technology: vt100 (e.g., lynx),
        gui (e.g., mosaic) and potentially interface virtual reality
    g.  Allows for extension of the environment.  That is, learners may
        democratically add to and modify Internet resources.
    h.  Makes learning fun.

For information on the theoretical basis (constructivism) for Eon, type:
help theory

---------------------------------------------------------------------------
```

This clearly indicates a tendency also observed in some educational technology to move away from producing “teaching systems” towards producing “learning environments” centered on exploration and “active doing”.

Learning by Immersion at EON

Most “Immersion-based” learning at EON is related to the MOO itself (learning how “to MOO”) and to MOO programming.

> The new player, called learner in EON (this goes with the ideology of EON: everybody connected on EON is a learner), is placed in a tutorial environment (Chamber 1). The first virtual room the learner is entering in is a metal cube. (Answer will come to know whether in the conception of EON, that room was so designed in order to figurate the box of knowledge, see: 2001 Space Odyssey directed by Stanley Kubrick).
>
> The learner has to find his way, moving, looking at signs and notes and interpreting them correctly in order to find oneself in the ”Science Compounds”

of EON. Wise, the learner will move to "Information Center" and gain some information: an index of basic commands (newbie help) as well as the set of goals of EON. Information is also provided on the fact that there is a hierarchy among EON's learners. Learners carry badges: red is for guests, yellow is for registered learners, green is for programmers.

In order to receive a "official character" on EON, the player must register. If a learner can obtain this character, it is assumed that the learner knows "the rudimentary commands for moving around" EON, as stated in a description of chamber one[17]

Once an official character, the learner wishes to know more about EON. Passing through to chamber 2 is allowed. That is where the learner will find parts of a city with streets, buildings and so on.

Here the learner will learn more ways to move about and to communicate. Opportunity will be given to meet other learners, to find the "Green Badge Distribution Cubicle" and to be made a programmer. An example of this ceremony is available here[18]

Many other rooms are built in Chamber two. Let me mention a hotel, where a room can be made available, shops, bars, etc. But the most important site of chamber two is evidently the Convention Centre . There, the learner finds a room where the "Unix people" meet, usually, most of the wizards spend some of their time on EON there. ¡P¿ Just next door is the Internet room allowing for tutorial, grading and Internet connections. Adjacent are located the Internet Exploratorium -leading to a room meant to allow connection to the WEB and Gopher- as well as The Reporting Room.

A learner going into the Reporting Room will be expected to use it to report of the experiences gained using Internet and to ask for grading on the report. This room has mainly been built as a check point for the Internet classes of Greg Swan.

Linked to the Convention Center Corridor, the InterVVE Communication room offers a mean to see who is connected to EON via others VEE like BayMOO, DU, **TECFAMOO** , etc.

[...]

Once entitled to a green badge, a learner may venture to others parts of the world (EON's).

(Quotations from Virtual Education Environment:the case of EON[19] by Eric Berthoud[20]

[17] http://tecfa.unige.ch/%7Eberthoud/eon_chamber1.html
[18] http://tecfa.unige.ch/%7Eberthoud/eon_gbcer.html
[19] http://tecfa.unige.ch/%7Eberthoud/staf14/eon_overview.html
[20] http://tecfa.unige.ch/%7Eberthoud/

5.3 Private Immersion in the MOO

Most regular MOO users are strongly involved with those virtual worlds. Education can take benefit from that phenomenon. As states [Ackermann, 1994, p. 13], "interactivity is a key to learning" and "An increasing number of software designers, cognitive scientists and educators have come to the view that experience is actively constructed and reconstructed through direct interaction with the world, and that, indeed, knowledge *is* experience".

The fact that users can create their identities and/or habitats and share them with others augments this "heads-in" effect. In a very broad sense MUDs are "Virtual Realities" because they form a habitat or micro-world in which many users can play-out some imagined scenario onto a tangible and responsive support (see [Ackermann, 1994, p. 13] again).

Chapter 6

The MOO as new form of text and literature

One of the most interesting aspects of MOOs are their linguistic dimensions in several aspects.

In a very first perspective, MUDs (and associated phenomena) have created a new form of language that is neither written, nor oral, nor in between. It has implications and potential that is not fully explored yet, e.g. see: [Cherny, 1994b], [Cherny, 1995a], [Cherny, 1995b], [McDonough, 1995], [Serpentelli, 1995].

[VERIFY, ADD HERE !!!]

Note, that new language is always tied to new forms of thinking and social interaction. (See chapter: 7).

Third, all MOOs can be considered as literature several levels: descriptions, layout, properties of artefacts, (at least some) of the living exchanges between participants. Especially social MOOs (such as LambdaMOO) and some simulation/gaming MOOs (like 2025) are worth being mentionned as sorts of "living" books through which one can wander in awe sometimes. Some MOOs are specializing in being an explicit literary medium or are at least devoted to literature, like University of Texas Computer Writing and Research Lab[1]'s AcademICK MOO[2], PMC MOO[3] from the Institute for Advanced Technology in the Humanities[4] (University of Virginia), Hypertext Hotel[5] (telnet link).

[1] http://www.en.utexas.edu/
[2] http://www.en.utexas.edu/researchpoints/mudpage.html
[3] http://jefferson.village.virginia.edu/pmc/pmc-moo.html
[4] http://jefferson.village.virginia.edu/
[5] telnet://duke.cs.brown.edu:8888

6.1 A new textuality: written conversations

Jeffrey R. Young [Young, 1994, lines 36ff:] makes a strong claim that the MUD is a different medium from either the spoken or the written text:

> "THE ARGUMENT MUDS offer new and HIGHLY COMPELLING LANGUAGE EXPERIENCES. In both LANGUAGE STRUCTURE and SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS, MUD allows people to express themselves and explore identity in a simple (text only), user-controlled environment. The medium's primary mode of dialog – two-way typing in real time – takes advantage of the newest means of communication: computer networks. WRITING 'CONVERSATIONS' is thus a new concept, one which hovers between resembling speech and resembling writing, but which in its mixing of forms gains entirely new resonances and characteristics. Since writing is expected to take longer than speech to produce and can be drafted and honed in isolation before being sent out over the MUD, input is usually better structured and more topically focused than spoken exchanges. However, like speech, the sense of 'breath,' or distinct presence in time, and the freedom to move freely in the text base forces words into smaller spaces (TEXT BITS) than in traditional written works on paper. The device that transmits the communication of MUDs, the COMPUTER SCREEN, further blurs distinctions between writing and speech. On the screen, written words are both concrete and fleeting, making words more malleable than in bound books, but more solid than speech. NEW VISUAL CUES mix with language characters to compensate for seeing the objects described in these on-line discussions, furthering a sense of presence and engagement. In the virtual text world of MUD, the reader is in control. They control WHAT THEY SEE OF THE VIRTUAL WORLD and WHAT THE VIRTUAL WORLD SEES OF THEM through the use of MUD's OBJECT ORIENTED PROGRAMMING ENVIRONMENT. The framework that allows PERFORMATIVE LANGUAGE control constantly reminds readers of their authoritative stance and critical distance from their own speech and experience. As a result the text gains a unique BLEND OF TRANSPARENCY AND OPACITY, as players constantly shift stance from immersion in the imaginative space to evaluation and control over the textual objects."

MUDs like other text-based many-user virtual worlds (like the French Minitel System) do indeed change things: Clearly, the "performative language control" aspect is very interesting, especially since one can "backtrack" in a MOO client and have a "look" at what one has engaged in a conversation. Along the same lines, written conversations are not only (or one could say necessarily) more "solid" because words are preparred in advanced before sending them off, but also because they can be retrieved at any time and pasted back into a conversation by the author or another participant. "Malleability" despite increased "solidity" is the correlate. Therefore written conversations are not just in between spoken and written text but they add avantages of their own !

Chapter 7

New ways of thought and interaction

wait, or read: [Bruckman, 1992], [Bruckman, 1993], [Carlstrom, 1992], [Cartwright, 1994], [Cherny, 1994a],
[Curtis, 1992], [Dibbell, 1993], [Dworschak, 1994], [Farmer, 1993], [Fleissner, 1995], [Foner, 1993], [Germundson, 1994], [Ito et Ito, 1993], [Ito, 1994], [Hiltz et Turoff, 1993] [Morningstar et Farmer, 1990], [McAdams, 1995], [McDonough, 1995], [Nagasiva, 1992], [Quittner, 1994], [Reid, 1994], [Rheingold, 1993], [Rosenberg, 1992], [Serpentelli, 1995], [Young, 1994].

[some homework!]

7.1 Better than real?

There are claims that in some aspects life on the MOO is better than in the real world. Young makes a very general claim in this direction:

> "So what KINDS OF EXCHANGES happen in this new medium? Because of the both distanced and direct nature of MUD interaction, players are more socially confident than in face-to-face situations: MORE INPUT IS OFFERED, input IS MORE FREELY OPINIONATED, and there is LESS PRESSURE FOR PARTICIPANTS TO CONFORM TO NORMS.
>
> The surprising trend that people are more friendly, emotional, and expressive in this decentered medium highlights deep inadequacies and disintegration in present real-world societies. The promise of Computer Socializing is that, should MUD become more widespread, it could become an important SUPPLEMENT TO REAL LIFE. If this new communication medium, one that merges

> literary and oral strengths, is in fact closer to human thought, and represents a MORE GENUINE FORM OF EXPRESSION, perhaps cyberspace will be the choice location to meet and develop relationships with real-world others. And perhaps our real world will gradually be shaped by tendencies of the Net, just as telephone and television technologies have influenced our view of ourselves and our surroundings." [Young, 1994, lines 70ff.].

Young's claim is probably somewhat too strong. He should not forget that each MOO tries to force a certain style on its participants (and that it has the means to do so, see for example chapter 8 for more, e.g. the section on manners [8.3].

However, MOOs can certainly play a wonderful rule to bring disabled people in touch with the world. A good example are blinds. With the help of specialized terminals and/or speech syntheziers they can interact in the same way as any other participant. DU has made this an important issue:

> "In future editions you will read how DU and other MUDs are being redesigned in sometimes apparently invisible ways to better serve people with disabilities and by people you might never expect. You will be touched as I was by Samantha's article "How I lost 20 pounds on the New MOO Diet", an account of how the ability of the MUD environment to provide accomodation had a vital impact on the physical life of a person. Dr. Zenhausern's article in this issue sheds considerable light on a disability that many of use who swear by computers may even have and not realize. Computers can be used as assistive devices in more ways than most of us realize." [McWhorter, 1994, 3].

Samantha Scolamiero([Scolamiero, 1994]) shows with her own experience that her activity on a MOO did not just gave her access to a better virtual world, but that this contact had strong therapeutic effects: A few quotes are an indicator of the progression detailed in this article.

> "Cyberspace empowers the disABLED. Those who cannot, CAN in cyberspace. Someone with cognitive overload can maintain an active social life because they can control their environment. A person who must always rely on a wheelchair in real life can run and jump and play at the MOO, just like everyone else. A person whose hearing is impaired can now "listen" to a group conversation in room full of talkative people. Can you imagine the impact these newfound freedoms have on people's perception of themselves and ultimately upon their lives???" ([Scolamiero, 1994, 43])
>
> "Diversity University gave me my personality back. I can exercise the REAL me who is unfortunately trapped by a brain that doesn't work like it used to. It gave me back real life capabilities. I can run around the campus meeting every one, talking and socializing, like the maniac that I am, but in silence. It is the

social environment I desperately needed that is not physically debilitating or painful." ([Scolamiero, 1994, 43])

"Using the MOO technology I saw my productivity increase. I saw the differences between trying to manage in real life and managing better with computer assistance. This realization gave me the confidence to try other "assistive" technology. I finally broke down and got a walking stick. (Don't call it a cane or I will bop you with it.) Now I can walk longer distances and therefore I get more exercise. THAT is how I lost 20 pounds on "The New MOO Diet." :-)" ([Scolamiero, 1994, 43])

Chapter 8

Ruling, rules and other social Issues

8.1 The organization of a MOO world

Roughly there are several levels on which users can participate in various ways.

1. The “theme level” or “purpose level” of the MOO.
2. The infrastructure level
   - The “topology level” defining what can be built and where
   - The “communications” and “transportation level” defining how people can interact and move
3. The social level: What manners are encouraged or/and allowed

The most important question to start with when designing a MOO is maybe not so much “who should rule?”, but “what should be ruled and how?”. One aspect of ruling is therefore devoted to building rules that participants should observe, an other is enforcing them and only a third is about “governing”.

MUDs are a sort of microcosm that can be related to larger societial bodies such as “states” as well as to electronic artefacts such as the Internet. Many questions asked there can be asked here. Chip Morningstar (Lucasfilm Ltd.'s Habitat project manager) in a talk on the electronic frontier related the creation of both the “Net” and his habitat world to the creation of a nation:

> “I hear a lot of the rhetoric associated with electronic media speaking in terms of ”creating a new world.” My experiences lead me to believe that this

> is a poor choice of metaphors. Instead, I would prefer to speak of "settling a new world." Although the electronic environment is, to be sure, the creation of people, it is not the creation of any single person or group. While each part of it is designed and organized by somebody, the totality is not. It is, in Hayek's words, "the product of human action but not of human design." The metaphor of creation implies a creator, which leads you to the constructivist view I described earlier. The metaphor of settlement implies a diversity of actors, some individuals, some groups, some large organizations, each with its own aims and its own local knowledge. As the settlements grow, their boundaries brush up against one another. The various participants encounter each other and interact, and evolve conventions for getting along together peaceably.
>
> Consider the settlement of North America by Europeans and the growth of our nation. Nobody "created" or "designed" the United States of America in the sense that we now know it. It was formed in a piecemeal fashion and evolved the complex structure we see today as it grew. This growth did not, however, take place in a vacuum. The various settlers drew on a variety of intellectual, legal and cultural traditions in the formation of their new nation. This, of course, is the non- constructivist model. It is also, I believe, a better model for the actual way the Net has grown up until now." [Morningstar, 1991, lines: 267ff.]

Morningstar's "constructivist" and "non-constructivist" [1] categories are interesting, but we relabel them in order to avoid confusion with the well known psychological terms:

[1] "The class of problems which interests me here relates to how we think about the nature of the electronic community itself. Two schools of thought contend for dominance in this area.

The first maintains that computer networks are simply extensions of existing institutions (e.g., the press) and therefor subject to the same constitutional protections and moral and ethical principles that govern traditional media. I believe this is the position taken, for example, by the Electronic Frontier Foundation. Oddly, this position can accurately be called both liberal and conservative. It is liberal in the sense that the principles that its proponents wish to apply in the electronic realm are liberal principles. It is conservative in the sense that it draws on tradition for its sense of direction and denies that new technology invalidates fundamental ethical standards. However, both labels already carry so many emotional and ideological associations in most people's minds that I hesitate to use either of them.

The second school of thought maintains that these new technologies are different in kind from anything that has come before and therefor that the old rules do not apply. Instead, they maintain, a new set of rules must be drafted, based on the unique characteristics of the electronic medium. Notable support for this school comes from two groups that in most other respects are antithetical to each other. The first group consists of the utopians and revolutionaries who wish to create in the electronic realm a new (and presumably better) world, entirely free of the mistakes and problems of the present one. I met a number of these people last year at the First International Conference on Cyberspace. The second group includes certain authoritarian establishment members who view existing constraints on their powers (e.g., constitutional limitations on state authority) as annoying restrictions that merely hinder them in attaining what they believe to be worthy goals. The latter group would like to see these constraints confined to as limited a sphere as possible; consequently, they readily adopt the position that electronic media are "different" and therefor not subject to existing protections. One might include in the latter group a number of the law enforcement officials whose actions last year incited the formation of the EFF. Both of these groups really subscribe to the same belief, namely that the electronic realm represents an opportunity to fashion an order whose form they can design and control. Adopting a term from F. A. Hayek, I will refer to this position

1. The *Constructionist* view (Morningstar's "constructivist") claims that cyberspace worlds can be built according to new rules
2. The *"Grounded in Real Life View"* (Morningstar's "non-constructivist") claims that such worlds are simple extensions of other organizations or more generally the body of social knowledge the participants bring along.

While those fundamental stances can be debated in length, a few related basic questions are important for this section, such as: What should grow more or less unplanned in a MOO ? What can and should be planned ? In what world do we let inital users "let loose" ? On what tradition should we build ? Do we need to write down a constitution like the nation states did in the last century ?. More such questions can be asked and not all get the same answer for all kinds of MOOs. However, one single practical theme can be abstracted for MOOs like the **TECFA**MOO and that is:

A MOO needs a good "constitution":

- One that is clear about the theme and very basic (and acceptable) social rules
- One that is open for the future.
- One that allows people to extend their real work place in a organic way.

Some sort of stability and openness are not the only issues, a "serious MOO" is not really a closed world, it's got be efficient as tool in the same way other artefacts like "real life" conferences and workshops *including* "life around those events" are.

8.1.1 The role of player classes

On most MOOs there are several social classes and institutions fulfilling different functions:

At the technical level we can distinguish different classes of players:

1. The archwizard (or owner)
2. The wizards (or janitors)
3. The programmers
4. The builders
5. The players (or basic users)
6. The guests

as "constructivism", the belief that one can construct a society according to a definite plan. I suppose then that I can call the first position I outlined, the both- liberal-and-conservative-position-with-no-good-label, "non-constructivist." " [Morningstar, 1991, lines: 117ff.]

On most MOOs different kinds of democratic rights are given to those classes since they have different technical "powers". The most powerful figures are the wizards. On some MOOs they have almost godly powers, on others they rather have system (and accessorily police) duties like any system administrator on large systems. In addition, most do a lot of programming too.

Many forms of "government" can be observed.

[better stuff to come]

8.2 The role of quotas

8.2.1 Byte vs. object quota

By default, the Lamdbda MOO core database implement object quota, i.e. each object created takes 1 quota. Typically a new receives about 7 quota allowing him to build 1-2 rooms, 3-4 exits and 1-2 additional objects. Byte quota measure the total amount of space the user's objects occupy. A frequent figure of initial quota is 25000. So far, we haven't seen CPU quota (how much time verbs, i.e. procedures take to execute).

Both systems have their advantages and disadvantages. Byte Quota certainly mesaure in a more accurate way what space (i.e. how much memory) a user takes. However, Byte Quota may incite users to save space omitting textual information (help texts, descriptions of rooms an so forth) in order to save space. However, since quota increments are handled by the MOOs administrators (wizards) this factor has to be taken into account in various ways. I.e. more quota should also depend on the quality of textual information.

8.2.2 An economic approach

In many MOOs quota are given out on a "merit" basis. Let's quote ([Farmer et al., 1994, lines 166ff.]):

> "Economies exist everywhere in Cyberspace. These economies provide a mechanism for the communities to flourish.
>
> MUDs have two constrained resources: memory and compute cycles. The memory problem is addressed using distribution units called "quota". Quota allows MUD citizens to create objects and extend their virtual world. A fixed amount of quota is allocated to each new citizen, usually by a system administrator. Each object created by a participant consumes some amount of quota, and when the preassigned amount of quota is exhausted, the user must appeal to the administrator for more. This is an economy, but a very socialist one. Several MUDs admin- istratively require that the person applying for more quota prove that their work is deserving of consideration, perhaps meeting some theme-oriented or social-improvement goal. Prove to the central government that you are worthy, and you shall be granted the power to create. Citizens are (usually)

> not free to trade quota with each other. In these systems, a large amount of quota is a powerful status symbol."

That idea can be pushed further, e.g. like on Habitat, or some MOOs like ptMOOt, 2025 a money system can be implemented. So why not use money to buy quota ? And conversely receive money from the government for having built nice objets ? This is certainly a good strategy for social MOOs where a lot of effort goes into building sophisticated MOO objects. In serious MOOs such an approach would fail for both social and technical reasons. Technical reasons are simple: You don't want to punish somebody for putting up large class-notes for example eating up all his byte quota.

8.3 Manners

Virtually every MOO tries to impose a minimal set of manners to its users. First of all respect of the theme is important, not just in research and education MOOs as the following quote from BayMOO shows:

```
----------------------------------------------------------------------------

>go theme
You step through the opening into the module named Theme of BayMOO.
Intro to BayMOO [Theme of BayMOO: Theme : Overview]
There are two major themes that make BayMOO unique among the all-text virtual
realities on the NET:
       1) The Humanities of the San Francisco Bay Area and
       2) The Meanings of Water.
  These are available to all who want to explore their uses, and the
janitors of BayMOO urge you to use them. But those who feel called to
other frontiers are also welcome to help build BayMOO.
   BayMOO has a one-word code of ethics: RESPECT
   As long as characters respect each others' feelings, BayMOO is a
wide-open textual terrain for the imagination.

----------------------------------------------------------------------------
```

The theme (and encouragement to respect it) is often shown in the Welcome Screen (see section 3.2.1). A lot of MOOs also provide a 'help manners' command or equivalent.

By looking at several MOOs (see: 8.3.1 and 8.3.2) one can kind find several major topics:

1. Politeness
2. Use of resources

3. Respect for property

Basically manners look at lot like manners expected in a real society. As in the real world different manners apply for different contexts.

8.3.1 Examples from social MOOs

Manners at Bay MOO:

```
-----------------------------------------------------   BayMOO May 5/95

>go manners
You step through the opening into the module named Manners.
Intro to BayMOO [Manners: Manners]
               ***       A Guide to Manners      ***

Welcome to BAYMOO.  As a member of this community or as a guest, we invite you
to join with us in supporting the following social interaction guidelines:

1. RESPECT OTHER PEOPLE.  Citizens here are of all ages and come from
        many different parts of the world.  Please do not offend
        others with your language or actions.
2. DON'T WALK OFF WITH OBJECTS THAT DON'T BELONG TO YOU.
        BayMOO is based on trust.  Put things back where you
        found them.
3. DON'T SPOOF.  Don't make it appear that other persons are
        saying or doing something they aren't.
4. ONLY TELEPORT YOUR OWN THINGS.
5. DON'T SPY.
6. ALWAYS BE POLITE.  It is always polite to to ask permission
        before entering someone else's home.
7. NO WEAPONS.  This is an cooperative environment.
8. NO HARASSMENT.
[ <l>ook; <q>uit ]

---------------------------------------------------------------------------
```

Manners at College Town: Interestingly College Town (A Educational MOO) has very similar rules:

```
--------------------------------------------------------- CollegeTown 5/95

>help manners
```

```
               ***     A Guide to Manners   ***

Welcome to COLLEGETOWN.  As a member of this community or as
a guest we invite you to join with us in supporting the following
social interaction guidelines:

1. RESPECT OTHER PEOPLE. Citizens here are of all ages and
     range from first grade students to college professors.
     They come from many different parts of the world. Please
     do not offend others with your language or actions. It
     is polite to ask permission before visiting someone
     else's home.
2. DON'T WALK OFF WITH OBJECTS THAT DON'T BELONG TO YOU.
     CollegeTown is based on trust. Put things back where you
     found them.
3. DON'T SPOOF. Don't make it appear that other persons are
     saying or doing something they aren't.
4. ONLY TELEPORT YOUR OWN THINGS.
5. DON'T SPY.
6. DON'T SPAM. Don't annoy others by overloading the screen.
7. NO WEAPONS. This is an academic environment.
8. NO HARASSMENT.

---------------------------------------------------------------------------
```

8.3.2 Examples from educational and research MOOs

Some educational and research MOOs such as Diversity University are more precise. It can be asked whether such long messages (especially on a small tty screen) are really read. But then basic manners also are addressed in some ways on the welcome screen.

```
---------------------------------------------------------------- DU May 4 /95

>help manners
         Expected Behavior and Manners for Diversity University MOO
         ==========================================================

This document describes the guidelines and expectations for acceptable
behavior on Diversity University MOO, as well as some general
suggestions for how to interact with others on the MOO.  Users are
expected to behave in a reasonable and responsible manner at all
```

```
times, as laid out by this document, and failure to do so can result
in disciplininary action by the wizards of the MOO.

General security issues and matters which involve the functional
integrity of the MOO, access to unauthorized abilities or areas, or
real-world legal concerns are not covered in this document.  For
information on these policies, please see 'help terms'.

Social Interaction
------------------

The MOO is not a game.  It is a real social environment with people of
all ages, from all walks of life, from all over the globe.  Citizens
of Diversity University are expected to act accordingly.  This means
the following:

1.  Harassment of other users will not be tolerated.  This includes,
but is not limited to, spamming (filling their screen with unwanted
text), teleporting them or their objects without their permission,
repeated paging or following them after they have expressed a desire
to be left alone, broadcasting messages to everyone on the MOO, or
actions done with the specific intent of causing another person
annoyance or discomfort.

2.  While freedom of speech is an important part of Diversity
University, obscene language, violence, unwanted sexual acts, or other
blatantly offensive behavior will also not be tolerated.

3.  Spoofing (displaying text that is not obviously attributed to your
character) to deceive others or avoid responsibility for one's actions
is traceable and is not allowed.  Moreover, programming or making
available verbs designed specifically to display text without
attribution or misattributed text is also not allowed.

4.  Spying on others is expressly prohibited.  All objects which relay
messages heard in a room to another person or location must clearly
state that they do so.  Silent teleportation is also a form of spying,
as is any mechanism intended to intercept messages not intended for
you through unanticipated loopholes (this last is also a security
issue, see 'help terms').

5.  Common courtesy is expected from all users toward others on the
```

MOO. In addition to the above points, this means paging others before joining them in a non-public space (a private room, a classroom, etc), asking before taking or using objects that do not belong to you, leaving objects where you find them, and all of the other courtesies you would follow when visiting someone else's house or place of business.

Users should also attempt to respect other people's sensibilities. Inhabitants of Diversity University come from a wide range of cultural, religious, and racial backgrounds which should be acknowledged and respected. Not everyone has the same feelings of acceptable speech and behavior, and consideration of others' feelings is an essential part of reasonable behavior on Diversity University.

Diversity University is also a family environment with participants of all ages, and actions and statements made in this environment should reflect this. Public use of language or actions which are not suitable for children will not be tolerated on this system.

Should you have problems with another user who is not following these requirements, please report their actions to a wizard or other designated authority. If none are immediately available, some commands for temporary sanctuary are available. For more information see help on @gag, @refuse, and @eject.

For tips on contacting wizards and other busy people, see 'help wizards'.

Polite Use of MOO Resources

Be considerate when designing verbs and objects to perform tasks on the MOO. MOO resources are shared amongst all the inhabitants, and badly designed systems can affect the performance of the entire MOO. Do not design code or create systems that consume inordinate amounts of processing time or resources without consultation with the wizards first, and always design code in such a way as to be as efficient and server-friendly as possible.

Help keep database size down. Use verbs such as @copy only when absolutely necessary. Do not copy nifty verbs someone else has made to yourself so you can use them. Ask them or a wizard to put the verb on a feature object instead. Use @rmm to remove personal mail

```
messages once you are done with them, and keep cross-posting (sending
the same mail messages to multiple recipients) to a minimum.

When copying or modifying other people's code, be sure to ask
permission first, and comply with any requests they have regarding the
use of their code.  Simply because something is readable does not give
you the right to use or copy it, and use of another person's code
against their wishes is both illegal and not allowed on this MOO.

Another limited resource of the MOO is player names.  Player names and
aliases, unlike the names and aliases of other types of objects, are
required to be unique.  This means that if you have taken a certain
name as your name or one of your aliases, nobody else can have a
character with that name.  For this reason, please keep the number of
your aliases, particularly common ones, to a minimum.  Users should
only have aliases that relate directly to their character's name, and
possibly one (reasonable) nickname.

---------------------------------------------------------------------------
```

```
------------------------------------------------------------- Media MOO 5/95
>help manners
The MOO, like other MUDs, is a social community; it is populated by real
 people that you interact with via network connections.  Like other
 communities of human beings, the members of this one have evolved certain
 guidelines for the behavior of the participants.  This article lays out what
 the wizards believe to be the general consensus concerning these `rules of
 courteous behavior,' or `manners,' on the MOO.

Many of the rules that follow are by no means `obvious' or even related to
 similar rules in the real world.  The MOO is not the real world; it has its
 own special properties that require new kinds of rules.  These rules have
 been worked out through our experiences with the MOO; they reflect what we've
 learned about what make the MOO an enjoyable place.

        >> Be polite.  Avoid being rude. <<
The MOO is worth participating in because it is a pleasant place for people to
 be.  When people are rude or nasty to one another, it stops being so pleasant.

        >> Turn the other cheek. <<
If someone is nasty to you, please either ignore it or tell a janitor about
```

```
 it if you must.  Please *don't* try to take revenge on the person; this just
 escalates the level of rudeness and makes the MOO a less pleasant place
 for everyone involved.

        >> Respect other players' sensibilities. <<
The participants on the MOO come from a wide range of cultures and
 backgrounds.  Your ideas about what constitutes offensive speech or
 descriptions are likely to differ from those of other players.  Please keep
 the text that players can casually run across as free of potentially-offensive
 material as you can.  If you want to build objects or areas that are likely
 to offend some segment of the community, please give sufficient warning to
 the casual explorer so that they can choose to avoid those objects or areas.

        >> Don't spoof. <<
Spoofing is loosely defined as `causing misleading output to be printed to
 other players.'  For example, it would be spoofing for anyone but Munchkin to
 print out a message like `Munchkin sticks out his tongue at Potrzebie.'  This
 makes it look like Munchkin is unhappy with Potrzebie even though that may
 not be the case at all.  Please be aware that, while it is easy to write MOO
 programs that spoof, it is also easy to detect such spoofing and correctly
 trace it to its source.  See `help spoofing' for more details.

        >> Don't shout. <<
It is easy to write a MOO command that prints a message to every connected
 player in the MOO.  Please don't.  It is generally annoying to receive such
 messages; such shouting should be reserved for really important uses, like
 wizards telling everyone that the server is about to be shut down.
 Non-wizards never have a good enough reason to shout.  Use `page' instead.

        >> Only teleport your own things. <<
By default, most objects (including other players) allow themselves to be
 moved freely from place to place within the MOO.  This fact makes it easier
 to build useful objects like exits and magic rings that move things as a part
 of their normal role in the virtual reality.  Unfortunately, it also makes it
 easy to move other players from place to place without their permission, or
 to move objects in and out of other players' possession.  Please don't do
 this; it's annoying (at the least) to the poor victim and can only cause bad
 feelings.
EXCEPTION:  Room owners should feel free to eject unwanted objects/players
 from their own rooms or to divert unwanted objects/players trying to enter
 their rooms.
```

```
        >> Don't teleport silently. <<
It is easy to write MOO commands that move you instantly from place to place.
 In writing such programs, please remember to print a message to all players
 both in the place you're moving from and in the place you're moving to.  It
 is disconcerting and otherwise unpleasant for someone to suddenly say
 something in a room without there ever having been a notice that that person
 had arrived.  Similarly, it is annoying to discover that you've been talking
 for some time to a person who has left the room without a sound.

        >> Don't hog the server. <<
The server is carefully shared among all of the connected players so that
 everyone gets a chance to execute their commands.  This sharing is, by
 necessity, somewhat approximate however; while players cannot completely shut
 out others, they can significantly degrade the server's overall performance.
 The most annoying way to do this is to run MOO programs that loop forever (or
 for a long time) using `fork (0)' or `suspend(0)' occasionally to keep from
 running out of ticks.  If you are writing a program that will run for a long
 time, please make it wait at least five seconds between iterations.  That is,
 if your task will run continuously, use `fork (n)' or `suspend(n)' where `n'
 is at least five.

        >> Don't waste object numbers. <<
Some people, in a quest to own objects with what they consider `interesting'
 object numbers (e.g., #17000, #18000, etc.) have written MOO programs that
 simply loop, creating and recycling objects until the `good' numbers come up.
  Please don't do this; it artificially inflates all object numbers and
 increases the disk space used by the server unnecessarily.

      >> Don't Crack <<
It should go without saying: attempting to break into the system to obtain
 more quota, power, other player's site information, etc. is *very* rude. See
 'help cracking' for more on this topic.

        ==============================

The wizards are always interested in hearing players' feedback on these rules
 of behavior.  The rules were developed by the consensus of players and can be
 expected to evolve that way, too.

----------------------------------------------------------------------------
```

8.4 Social Identities on MUDs

8.4.1 Should "serious" MOOs allow anonymity ?

At **TECFA**MOO we probably will take the option of making available a persons e-mail address. This insures in the owners opinion accountability of users acts and more importantly it reduces the amount of monitoring needed.

A different stance can be taken as shown by a message posted by Richelieu on *MOOteach@DU (21 and 24, Jan 14 94):

```
---------------------------------------------------------------------------

To tell the truth, I don't really like the idea of a student player
class at all (except maybe for young students), and I really don't
like the idea that teachers should have absolute control over what
their students can and can't do here.  This place isn't just a
teaching environment, it should be a learning environment too, and the
more you restrict what a student can do, the less likely they are to
want to learn what you're trying to teach them, and the less able they
are to learn anything else.

This is a brave new world, and I find it really distressing that
people seem to be falling back into RL preconceptions and ideas about
control.  Having lived in MOOs for a long time now, I've found that
even the more unruly people can usually be dealt with in much more
effectively if not simply grouped into one big category of
"troublemakers" and locked in shackles.  And I also don't believe the
point of Diversity University should not be to allow a captive
audience for someone because they can't control their students in RL.

Now, I do believe that some things are good ideas.  There should be
the ability for a teacher to make their classroom page-proof, and
prevent similar disruptive influences from outside, and to be able to
identify anyone they are responsible for (this does not necessarily
mean all their students.  By responsibility I mean primarily all
characters with a group RL email account, since registered email
addresses are the primary form of responsibility enforceable by the
wizards).  It must also, of course, be possible for a teacher to
ensure that they're dealing with who they think they're dealing with
when it comes to grades and such.

Beyond this, I am strongly in favor of anonymity for anyone who
```

desires it (please keep in mind that the wizards always have access to the information, and if there are problems, they are the ones who should be handling it anyway, so irresponsibility is not an issue here). The ability to be anonymous often results in people who are more likely to try new things, voice their opinions, ask questions, and generally experiment, particularly in the areas of social interaction, ideological preconceptions, psychological issues, and other things that they wouldn't necessarily feel comfortable dealing with in a RL environment, and I don't think that we should be so limited in our goals as to ignore this as a valuable potential part of D.U.s environment. I speak from experience in this respect, not only regarding others I have known but regarding myself as well.

Moreover, lack of anonymity has a significant effect on how people perceive this virtual space that they're in. If user information is available, people inevitably use it, and this place simply becomes a bunch of people with masks on, not real at all. With anonymity comes a much more real social structure and a feeling that one is part of something that isn't simply a game or a computer program somewhere, but a real society, which often leads to a very real sense of belonging (often, in the case of people who are normally troublemakers, for people who otherwise don't feel that they belong very much of anywhere), and a feeling of social responsibility to _their_ society.

While it is inevitably true that we will get our share of troublemakers and problem people, this will, for the most part, be unaffected by whether people are anonymous or not, and the treatment of real problem people will not be significantly improved by lack of anonymity anyway. I strongly believe that the ability of the individual to choose can not only significantly improve the academic atmosphere, but can lead to a better understanding of this new environment, and a much more mature attitude towards the MOO and the people in it.

[...]

[...] my point comes down to this: I have been in places that have complete anonymity and places that have very little. I have found almost exclusively that the places with anonymity are more interesting, have more discussion on a wider range of issues, and have a wider range of people and experiences available. It is my belief

```
that this is the type of place that Diversity University should be,
and it is my belief that a lack of anonymity is an unnecessary measure
that would only serve to hinder this.
```

In some cases anonymity has clear advantages. Like ceejay notes on *MOOteach@DU (27, Jan 14 94) there are cases where anonymity is necessary or an advantage:

```
[...]
an example might be a group of students for a class on human sexuality.  in
an ideal society i should be able to walk into this class and say that i
am bisexual without having to worry about the other students.  however,
i have been in classes where i was told that bisexuals were untrustworthy.
i could not reveal my sexuality in this class without having my opinions
of everything else colored by it.

another argument for anonymity would be so that another student is not
prejudiced by what obvious characteristics make up who i am.  for example
on a mud i can play a male or female character, or a character with no
gender that corresponds to genders in real life.  like it or not, there
is a great deal of stereotyping by gender in life.  my field experience
instructor appears to believe that females decide to stop liking math
in junior high because they (the students) don't think it will make
them appear feminine enough.  in my women's studies class, it was
believed that men could not discuss the topic because they just couldn't
understand.
[...]
```

8.5 wizards

[under construction]

Wizards are the organizational backbone of a MOO, as it is shown also in the discussion in section 8.1. We would like to address several questions here:

- The Wizard culture
- Owners and Wizards
- Programming vs. Ruling vs. Administrating

8.5.1 A story from the MOO Cows

In May 95 a kid posted the following message to the MOO-Cows mailing list:

```
Hi my name is Bryan Snyder and i would like to apply to be a wizard on any
MOO that is in need.Please write back at bjs1os@wizard.stark.k12.oh.us. I'm
an experienced at programming $features and $things.
                                                        Thanks,
                                                        Bryan Snyder
```

This question led to an interesting exchange on this list revealing a lot on the "wizard culture". Appearently the kid who posted the message is a "real" 7th grader, very enthousiastic about computers and MOOing, but quite unaware of what it takes to be a "real wizard". In the first place he mostly got friendly, but ironic remarks. Taking them badly he reposted short and socially inappropriate messages also badly lacking grammar. This lead to increasingly nasty messages by others but also to some who thought one should give the kid a break and more who reiterated friendly advice on how to become a "real wizard".

Anyhow the interesting thing was not the evolution of this particular exchange, but some of detailed remarks he got back from real wizards showing their understanding of their role and the of the path(es) leading to wizard function. In the following section we refer to this material as "Brian's request to be a wiz".

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