

Theoretical Approaches to Studying the Internet in Communication-related Social Science Articles, 2000-2009

Ronald E. Rice

Arthur N. Rupe Chair in the Social Effects of Mass Communication
Co-Director, Carsey-Wolf Center for Film, Television, and New Media
President of the International Communication Association 2006-2007
Dept. of Communication, University of California

This paper will briefly review, summarize, and integrate major theoretical approaches to studying the social aspect of the Internet. It will include both pre-existing theories that have been applied or adapted, as well as new theories that have been developed to deal with some of the new characteristics of the Internet. This paper will focus on communication and social aspects, rather than strictly political, policy, economic, or technological aspects.